

Bexley Grammar School

SUMMER

Magazine 2016



Welcome to the Summer Magazine

Welcome to the last edition of the School Magazine from the current Magazine Team. Once again, a range of articles have been produced by students both on the team and by the younger years, so I would like to thank everybody for their brilliant contributions. As well as reports of the many exciting events that have taken place this year, this edition features some very interesting comments on the refugee crisis, the EU Referendum and Gay Pride, as well as some creative writing and a list of recommendations to keep you busy all summer.

We haven't tinkered with the magazine too much this year, with the exception of Alfie Cromarty's fantastic, multidimensional front covers, and a brief flirtation with changing the name of the Happy Pickle Pages (I fear we may have had an angry mob with pitchforks after us if we'd scrapped that long-running tradition). However, we have had many well-written, thought-provoking articles and I really hope you have enjoyed what the Team have produced as much as we have enjoyed putting it together. Mrs Johnson, Deepesh and Alfie (the much-needed tech guys), and everybody on the team, have put in a lot of hard work, so a round of applause for them and enjoy the read!

Eve Lynch, Chief Editor

Headteacher's Message

Students in different year groups have contrasting experiences of the end of a school year. Those students leaving the school will have feelings of excitement for their next steps in life, mixed perhaps with sadness at leaving friends and maybe some trepidation about their examination results. IB students will have received their results on 6th July and may already have more certainty about the year ahead as they enjoy the longest holiday they are ever likely to have. Year 11 students are also basking in the longest holiday they have had in years, most of them having taken a day to join us and external student applicants for one of three Induction Days for the Sixth Form. Wherever they are headed, both Year 11 and Year 13 students have been a credit to the school during the stressful external examinations season and deserve to achieve excellent results. Year 13 have a potentially record-breaking array of university courses lined up - best wishes to them all!

By the end of the term we will also have said goodbye to a number of teachers: Miss Adler (Computing), Mr Elliott (Geography+SAM+DofE), Mr Goodman (Maths), Mrs Long (Psychology), Miss McCarron (Science+SAM), Mr Murray

(Science+KS5 Physics), Mrs Spencer (History), Mr Ward (Science+DoS), and Miss Whittle (Maths). We thank all these staff for their tireless contributions and their commitment to getting the very best from our students. It is worth noting that Mr Goodman and Mrs Spencer have given ten years or more to BGS and Mr Ward, more than twenty. (Mr Ward retires after seeing his Year 11s through their GCSEs having taken them all the way through from Year 7; he is also an ex-BGS student.) These will be difficult goodbyes.

Another year has flown by with a remarkable flurry of exciting events and rewarding experiences that are charted in our weekly newsletters. Scarcely a week goes by without something outstanding to celebrate and although the Public Examinations dominate the lives of so many students during the summer period, a succession of key events has continued this term: Year 12 UCAS evening, the New Year 7 Parents' evening, the BGS Top Universities Conference, the Sports Day and Summer Fayre, an Enrichment week completed by our final ECM day of the year, Language trips to France, Germany, Spain and Sardinia, the Sixth Form Induction days which I've already

mentioned and, this year's musical production – 'The Sound of Music' which promises to be another West-End quality hit. The annual Art Exhibition is once again a showcase for the remarkable creativity of our students and the Jazz concert rounds off the year in style.

I feel privileged in my role and I am deeply grateful for the commitment of our staff to make this tremendous variety of opportunities available to students. In turn, I am delighted to see so many students willing to help and to take on leadership opportunities with such dedication, enthusiasm and talent. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the parents of our students for their support – without your foundation, we would be unable to build the BGS of which we are so proud.

Finally, I would like to wish staff, students and their families a relaxing and enjoyable summer holiday. I look forward to welcoming our students back in September, refreshed and ready for another rewarding year.

Mr Elphick

Top Universities Conference 2016

On Friday 17 June, the school looked a little different. 100 students from around six local schools, plus 50 of our own Year 12s, attended a conference to give them all a chance to learn together about what it is like to study at one of the very top universities, and how to increase your chances of getting there. Over 20 of our former students joined BGS teachers and representatives from Cambridge, Imperial, King's College London, LSE, Oxford and UCL for personal statement workshops, subject taster sessions (including Earth

Sciences, Population Health and two very popular medicine sessions in addition to a full range of school subjects), to give the students an idea of what they need to be doing over the summer holidays to prepare for university success next year. There was a real academic buzz in the air, and we think this was our best conference yet.

Mrs Stoddard



House Report

The House Competition for 2015 to 2016 came to an end as we broke up for the Easter Holidays back in March. The Annual House Showcase marked this occasion with a fantastic evening of performances by the students of their House Drama, Dance or Music entries from this year's competitions, much to the delight of an audience of invited guests, parents, friends and fellow students. The winners, Johnson House with 415 points were announced. Prothero came

a close second with 410 points followed by Mabbs 384, Kirkman 377, Collins 368 and Wellman 360 points. This marked the end of a very busy year and gave parents and friends the opportunity to get just a glimpse of what goes on during our big three competitions. I'd like to thank all the House Captains for their hard work throughout the year and also the PE department for organising all the sporting events both during and after school. Now is the time to welcome our newly

appointed House Captains and wish them all the best for this new House Year.

Mrs J Snelling, House Leader

Johnson

What a rollercoaster couple of years this has been for Johnson House! After finishing sixth – that's last place to you and me – the previous academic year, Johnson were determined not to let that happen again. And we sure didn't, clawing our way right to the top of the leader board and finishing in FIRST PLACE!

It wasn't easy: after the first competition – Sports Day – we found ourselves in first place, and spent the rest of the academic year battling to keep themselves there at the top.

Johnson House didn't win every event; what kept us at the top was perseverance. We fielded the best team we had, we tried our hardest and we took what points we could.

But, as the competition continued, so the gap between us and our closest rivals closed and, with only House Dance left, it looked like second place Prothero (the House apparently made up of only semi-professional dancers) were going to win the event and pip us to the post. We didn't stand a chance.

It was crushing to think that, after a devastating last place finish, we were going to have held first place all year only to lose it at the end. But it wasn't going to happen.

Unbeknownst to us, 7JCM, our superstar Year 7 form were secretly on hand to win the final few academic and artistic competitions, tipping us over the finish line in first place!

Everyone in Johnson have been fantastic this year, but it is our outgoing House Captains who deserve so much of the credit for giving so much of their time to our students: we wish the very best to Lucy Battersby, Delina Michael, Conor Robertson, Maise Lau, Natasha Polston, Lewis Murrell and especially to Senior House Captains Beth Webster and Lauren Sweeney.

All that is left to do is to introduce this year's House Captains: George Fuller, Ben Grove, Scarlett Hynes, Lauren Jones,

Maya Kirby and Senior House Captains Atlanta Moitra and Lewis Watson. Good luck: you've got some very big shoes to fill!

Mr Husbands, Head of Johnson



Prothero

WHAT A FABULOUS YEAR!

We worked extremely hard again this year and came a very successful and prosperous second place. It was neck and neck all year round and we almost had it in the bag, with our main downfall being house photography – it just goes to show that even the little tasks, that take less planning, count.

I am very proud of all of you and especially those of you who showed a promise in your leadership roles.

Let's do it again or better. The GREEN dragon roars on, yet with a new leader

due to my temporary maternity leave. Previously (on more than one occasion) sports day has been our first great success. This is because everyone so keen to club together and get involved - one thing I love about this house. Feeling so overwhelmed by the 'OK! I'll give it a go!' attitude. A great year and a new set of great captains have been selected. I have high hopes for them.

A special thanks to:

All my captains who worked so hard this year and deserve a big mention:

Skye Willis-Barrett, Alex Bronsdon, Conor Coakley, Paddy Crowley, Abu Garba, Sanjog Gharti – Chhertri, Abi Folase and Favour Olajide.

They led us to the great success of second, and showed skills of organisation, commitment, focus, drive and maturity. I hope (and have confidence that they will) the new House Captains and temporary Head of House Mr Risdon will lead us to continue the success.

New captains for 2016-17:

Lilly Ratchford-holt – senior, Sheryce brown – senior, Vikki Hughes, Jasmine Birdee, Freya Crouch, Antonio Drake-Perello and Kelechi Chukuadinula.

For everyone's participation and general involvement this year, we couldn't have done it without you, and also to all staff that gave that extra special help in organising their forms for the events.

Mrs J S Mitten, Head of Prothero



Mabbs

Although we did not retain the top spot this year, I am extremely proud of my House Captains and the all Mabbians who have participated in the House events this year. The House Captains were led by two motivated students: Oluchi Ezech and Romilly Bobby. Their aptitude and conscientious attitude lead to the smooth running of this year's competitions. Their team of dedicated and enthusiastic House Captains helped to secure third place this year. Big congratulations to Rebecca Pellegrintti, Ahad Azad, Josh Stringer and Hindolo Tucker for their efforts throughout the year.

We excelled in an array of competitions throughout the year. A massive Mabbulous thank you to all those students who tried their hardest in the competitions. Our strongest win was in the photography competition where we were first place in both the Intermediate and Junior competition. Thank you to all those students who took a photograph and made us unbeatable for the second year. Netball was also a highlight of this year where the Senior team beat all the teams (and drew one). It was a pleasure to watch the students battle on the courts.

House Music, Dance and Drama displayed the array of talent in our house. House Music captivated the whole audience with smooth jazz tones and melodious voices. House Drama left the audience smiling at the tale of the Disney brothers. And finally, House Dance showed the talents from Years 7 to Year 13. They were all involved in every dance and worked tirelessly throughout the whole performance. The participants were dedicated, determined and energetic throughout the gruelling process of rehearsals; you could see their enjoyment as they created and performed as a team. I was extremely proud.

We look forward to a brand new House year with our new Senior House Captains- **Tilly Evans and Adam Kelly**, who are joined by **Mohammed Yongawo, Lotanna Amazu, Folabi Oladosu- Giwa, Nicole Maworera and Joanne Ryall**.

Ms Gabriel, Head of Mabbs



Kirkman

Kirkman house has had a good year, notwithstanding our final fourth place on the leader board. The very dedicated Captains have worked really hard to produce the best from the house members in all competitions, and largely succeeded!

We had some lovely first places, notably in Harvest Box (thank you Luc), Senior Cookery, Senior Basketball, Inter Girls Football, Tennis and Badminton, and Junior Badminton and Football.

Very close seconds and also excellent results were seen in the spectacular Dance offering 'The Kirkman Gallery', with some star turns which was professionally put together by a team of Captains, particularly Sajana. We also had a very fine second place with the Drama (an abridged and very funny Buggy Malone) Inter photography and Cookery also scored well.

We also awarded our in-House 'cup (The D'Sa cup) to Buvanashaangar in Y7 for his brilliant commitment this year. I also want to thank Oliver and Leyla in Year 7 who stood up in front of a large audience at the Showcase and spoke clearly and with seemingly no nerves!

I'm really proud of the fact that we not only have so many talented Kirkmanites but also that they are prepared to do their best in all these events; and I hope that this reflects the intended ethos of the House system.

Personally I have really enjoyed working with this year's Captains: Louisa, James, Chris, Alice, Rosie, Sajana, Ben and Regan. It's been a lot of fun, and you've shown brilliant team work and made my job very enjoyable: thank you! As they hand over to Tom, Emma, Jaime, Chloe, Jed, James and Cobby we wish them everything good for their futures.

Miss A Fisher, Head of Kirkman



Collins

I would like to congratulate the outgoing House captains 2015-2016... Synduja, Vicky, Monika, Ryan, Pippa, Holly and Lucy, as well as the Collins House members who tried their best and gave up their time and effort this past year. As a house we might not have achieved our main aim, which is winning the cup, but we all worked together as a team and that is what matters most.

In most of the house events we could have put in more effort to win outright, maybe that would have helped. We came 5th this year. Let's see what the next year holds. Working together all the way pays off... I hope Collins house would believe in this for the coming year.

Finally, as the old ones leave, we would all like to welcome our new House Captains 2016-2017: Senior House Captains: Skye Terblanche and Lara Sokunbi, House Captains: Ethan Bremerkamp, Favour Onwudiwe, Jay Dominy, Daniel Evenson and Anastasia Faschuk.

I am looking forward to working with you all. If Johnson can do it Collins **CAN**.

Good luck and have a lovely summer holiday.

Mrs M Lasoye, Head of Collins

Wellman

I would like to thank all the Wellman competitors and especially our House Captains on a very hard fought House year. We had some great successes this year as well as some struggles but we always showed our best as we came out to compete. There were a few highlights to our year, including when we took our rightful place as the chess champions of the school in all three age brackets in the newest House competition to be added to the House system. We also won first place in two of the big three competitions; our amazing play written by Emma Deadman and Hannah Thorpe about a tragic train crash in the UK showcased amazing transitions and multiple flashbacks to create a narrative which won in House Drama, and our fantastic harmonies created by Jemima Itang allowed our wonderful choir to clinch victory in House Music. There were, of course, also numerous other successes throughout the year, but these examples illustrate our true colours (Orange each and every one of us). Although we were not the top scoring House this year we have lots to be proud of and will be coming back to seek our victory next year!

Mr Ward, Head of Wellman

Jack Petchey Report

Upon our return to school in January, Mabbs House nominated their Award winner for this academic year, Josh Hall (Year 12). Josh was chosen for his "general contribution to his House, for always persevering, being an excellent Mentor on ECM Day, being involved in Young Minds and helping out in the music department working with the younger ones. He's always friendly and smiling." He gave his prize money to the Music department to buy new instruments. February saw the members of Prothero House awarding Alex Bronsdon (Year 13) their Jack Petchey award. Alex was chosen for being "a great Peer Mentor and House Captain, inspirational, encourages others to get involved and use their skills, has done some charity work, helpful, organised, good sense of humour, kind and caring, goes out of his way to help, funny. 'He makes me want to be like him when I am older at BGS'". Alex has chosen to spend his prize money on his Year 7 Prothero House Form. March was Wellman's chance to award the prize and their winner was James Martin (Year 13). James was chosen for his fundraising work done in aid of The Macmillan Cancer Foundation,

organising a sponsored run for staff and students through Danson Park, shaving his head to raise money and awareness. James has given his prize money to the Art department and they are going to buy some more printing ink. That was the last of the House based Jack Petchey awards. April's award was nominated by the School Council and Danny McGill (Year 9) was their winner. He was chosen for being "a very enthusiastic student who does his job in the School Council well, things such as the recycling and developing the ideas box. He is always determined to succeed. He is also very active and involved in school Drama productions." He has given his prize money to the Green Team to spend on their upcoming recycling project.

The categories for May and June are chosen by the Head Teacher and this year he chose to give them to Year 9 and Year 12, for the students to nominate winners from amongst their year group. The May Year 12 category was won by Lewis Watson. He was chosen by his peers for all that he does for the school with regards to the Drama department and his technical help for school productions and House events. Lewis gives up a lot

of his own time to the school and lots of events would not look or sound quite so good if he didn't give his expertise and time. "He has a strong sense of community spirit and makes fellow students laugh, generally brightening their day." Lewis has chosen to spend his prize money on new equipment for the sound desk.

The June Year 9 category was won by John Wyllie. John was a very popular choice from his year group, they recognised all the work he has done for the Little Hearts Charity, raising awareness and money; for taking assemblies to all age groups including the older year groups; for confidently speaking to the school about his medical condition and supporting others like himself and making a difference. John has chosen to give his prize money to the Computer Science Department for some new resources.



Jack Petchey Leader Award.



The students of the school were given the opportunity to vote for a member of staff to be nominated for an Annual Leader Award. Unlike the other nine award winners nominated throughout the year, where the students' choice is the automatic winner, the Leader award has to be approved by the Jack Petchey Foundation. We send them details of our chosen nominee and the reasons for nomination and then we have to wait to find out whether the nomination is successful. We have recently heard that Miss Brand has been awarded the 2016 Leader Award for Bexley Grammar School. Here are our reasons for nomination:

Miss Brand is passionate about helping students and she always tries to create a positive attitude around the school. She is a fantastic form tutor and mentor that students can turn to with their problems: trusted, reliable and very generous with her time. She makes cakes not just to raise money for charity but also for students and staff as an act of kindness. She recently ran the London Marathon for Beating Bowel Cancer. Miss Brand is also the World Challenge Coordinator for the school, who works with the students preparing them for expeditions, accompanying them on practice weekends and then going on the month long expeditions in the summer holidays, giving

up her own time. She has done this for several years. She goes beyond what is expected to make sure all the students are happy and confident throughout the whole experience. She organises trips and exchanges within the MFL department, which means the students get to experience far more than the basic studies and she applies for grants to enable even more students to benefit from such trips. She is a highly effective and well respected teacher of Languages in an area of SE London where there is little value placed on Modern Foreign Languages.

The school will be now able to apply for a small grant of up to £750 to put towards a project of Miss Brand's choice now that her Award has been confirmed.

Six of our prize winners will be presented with their Jack Petchey winners' medallions at the Jack Petchey Celebration Evening at the Orchard Theatre in Dartford in July. Miss Brand will have her Leader Award certificate and medallion presented to her by Mr Elphick at the Gala Evening performance of the summer Musical Production, The Sound of Music, along with three of our Award winners who are in the cast of the show.

Congratulations to all of this years' winners!

Mrs J Snelling, Jack Petchey Coordinator

Man Can Success



The Can Club Young Enterprise Team did a perfect job yesterday and last night at the London Finals at Citibank, Canary Wharf – the furthest any Bexley team has got in the memory of any of the people involved. Supported by Bexley Enterprise representatives, parents, students, Mr Morgan, Mr Joe and of course, Miss Wood

– the team presented a lively, succinct and entertaining account of their Man Can journey. They won two of the top three prestigious awards, Best Trade Stand and Interview and Best Presentation. With these two under their belts it was surprising that the judges chose PinPoint Technologies (a tracker device linked with your phone for preventing the loss of wallet/purse) as Best Company to go on to compete in the National Competition. Of course the judges' decision is fully respected but it was clear that The Can Club won the hearts of the audience (especially with the addition of the Tan Can) and featured heavily in the MC's comments during the evening.

The team could not have done anything

more yesterday to persuade the judges – in the end it is down to the judges' view of the product as a business enterprise. Please congratulate them for the impressive prizes they did win, and although second isn't officially awarded, they should think of themselves as coming second in the whole of London! (The five competing students from the wider team were: **Daniel Meechan, Amy Lee, George Fuller, Oliver Stenning and Antonio Drake-Perello.**)

Congratulations too to Miss Wood– she has invested a great deal of herself into this enterprise!

Mr Elphick, Headteacher

A Year as a Peer Mentor: An Interview with Connor Robson



ST: So, why did you want to be a peer mentor?

CR: Simply, since Year 7, I've kinda looked up to the peer mentors, walking around with their badges, and I just wanted to be one of them - in Year 7, I actually had a lot of help from the Peer Mentor Scheme and that's turned me into a fairly decent student, at least by my standards!

ST: What skills do you think you need to be a peer mentor?

CR: I think the main skill is to have an

open mind – you need to know how to listen and how to respond to certain things, but just keep an open mind and be flexible with your approach because no student is the same as another student.

ST: Do you think you've gained any skills from being a peer mentor?

CR: Through the Peer Mentor Scheme, I've learnt a lot more about being able to listen and being more flexible with my approach –there is a lot of on-the-job training experience, once you know how certain situations work then you can look at other situations and then think 'this might work' or 'this might not work'.

ST: So how did it all work? How often did you meet up with the year 7s and was it in groups or individually?

CR: I know a lot of peer mentors did different things with their forms but my

partner, Holly, and I, we worked with Miss Francis to create Powerpoints on different PSHCE topics like safety topics – things like staying safe on the internet, how to survive the winter and test season. They seemed to respond to it: a lot of the time they were the ones suggesting the Powerpoints we made!

ST: How important do you think this is for the Year 7s in particular?

CR: The first couple of weeks I'd say are the most important for Year 7s because they're settling in and it's such a big step up from Year 6 to Year 7 – you have to slightly coax them out of their shell and just make sure they're comfortable with being in a bigger school and being part of a bigger family of students.

ST: Would you recommend being a peer mentor to others?

CR: Definitely. It's been very fun, very different and very exciting to finally be a peer mentor.

Skye Terblanche, Year 12

Your New Peer Mentors



Naomi Adenis, Ella Barry, Joshua Dixon, Ugo Ejiegbu, Oliver Forde, Bradley Goodwin, Katie Harris, Rebecca Notcutt, Costanza Obeng, Daria Pienkos, Johnny Reilly, Isobel Robb, Alexander Robinson and Alfie Wheeler.

Congratulations to each of the students who managed to achieve the role of Peer Mentor. We hope to serve the school well and help out people in the lower years whenever we can. As Peer Mentors we aim to be a friendly face to anyone struggling with problems both in and outside of school. We intend to make frequent visits to each of our assigned year 7 forms, as well as doing one-to-one work as and when we are needed. We can be spotted around the school by our white and gold peer mentor badges.

In order to become Peer Mentors each of us had to go through the same multi-staged application process largely similar to that of applying for any kind of job. This first involved sending in a letter which highlighted our motives behind wanting to become a Peer Mentor, as well as any prior experience we had when it came

to working with young people. Following this, those who had been shortlisted from the original applicants were then invited to attend an interview process with the school's previous Year 13 Peer Mentors. This was in order to go into more depth as to why we wanted to become Peer Mentors. This was a very casual session where we individually sat down and spoke to two Year 13s who explained some of the things that were involved with being a Peer Mentor. We were then asked to elaborate on some of the qualities and experiences that we wrote in our application made us best suited to become Peer Mentors. After a week or two of

eager anticipation we received a letter letting the successful applicants know that they had been selected to become the school's next Peer Mentors. From there we were invited to take a day out of school to attend a training day in Sidcup. This day largely focused on us gaining a better understanding of what it meant to be a Peer Mentor and was led by Mrs Johnson, Mrs Jones, Mr Martin and Mrs Prescott. Overall it was a fantastic insight into the role and consisted of various talks as well as trust exercises and practising through different scenarios throughout the day. I personally became a Peer Mentor as I felt it would be a great way to contribute

back to the school and it was very similar to work which I had already been doing working at an after school youth club. I am excited to see what comes up in the future once we find out more about our form groups and start to work with the new Year 7s as they start their journey in BGS; helping them to deal with the transition from primary to secondary school. Once again massive congratulations to all of the new Peer Mentors and we all hope to be a credit to the school and to do our best to represent BGS.

Joshua Dixon, Year 12

The Green Team



The Green Team, in league with the Student Council, have been revamping recycling in school.

This has included reorganising the waste paper collection system, making collection more efficient and in doing so saving money, by cutting back on waste collection (recycled materials are collected for free). A meeting between Bexley Council, the Student Waste Action Council, Mr Elphick and members from the School Council and the Green Team raised the issues with recycling in school and discussed how they could be addressed.

Recycling in the school canteen has also been reviewed; new recycling bins will be bought with money generously donated by Danny Mc Gill. Students will be asked to be extra vigilant when disposing of their waste cutlery, plates and drinks cans. Recycling will again save the school money as recycled goods are collected from the school for free.

It is hoped that a recycling ethos will be embedded in BGS life, equipping students for a full and responsible adult life.

As part of recycling in the canteen, the Green Team has put together a Recycling centre poster, which will direct students to the recycling bins. Power point presentations, posters and assemblies will promote further recycling in the canteen.

**So don't forget: Don't Bin it
Recycle it!**

Mr Roberts, DT Department

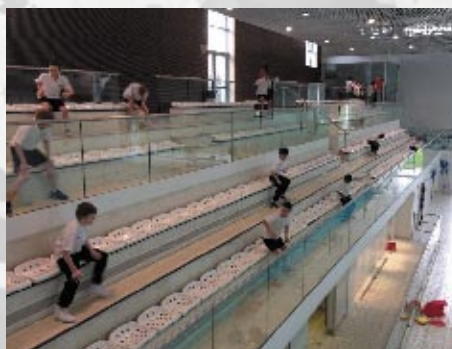


Sports Events

Crook Log Fitness Experience

In March a selection of year 7 and 8 pupils were rewarded for their attainment and effort in PE by being invited to attend a gym experience session at Crook Log Sports Centre. They were split into 4 groups of 10 and led through a series of activities by personal trainers. The experience was the first time many pupils had been to a gym and it is hoped that it will encourage them to maintain a healthy lifestyle in the future. The pupils were put through their paces taking part in a spin class to finish off the introductory session. The pupils were also given the chance to take part in the stadium challenge where they were timed to sit on every chair in the stand surrounding the swimming pool in order to raise money for charity.

Mr Mackle, PE Department



SKY Living for Sport - Boxing

BGS were fortunate enough to be granted an additional bonus visit from Hannah Beharry at the end of April.

Hannah Beharry is a boxer who has been an English champion, British champion and a European bronze medallist. She has acted as our sports mentor this year.

Hannah has been quoted as saying:

"Sport has helped me to turn my life around, helping me to gain confidence in myself, grow as a person, meet new people and become the person I am today."

Hannah's latest visit to BGS saw her run boxing workshops with a number of key stage 3 classes. She also spent time discussing her background and how she became motivated to succeed as a boxer.

Hannah is also a successful business woman and mentors a large number of children through different charity projects and initiatives. We are grateful that Hannah was able to come and see us again and we are sure that the BGS pupils will be left with plenty to consider with regards to their own futures and what motivates them to succeed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hannah Beharry for supporting and inspiring our pupils to be confident and have high expectations of themselves.

Mr Mackle, PE Department



Sports Leaders Level 1 Award

The Year 10 Sports Leaders Level 1 Award continues to run on an annual basis. The summer weeks are hectic for the Leaders with very little chance to rest between primary festivals and events. BGS were responsible for hosting the Bexley Primary School Football Trials on 5 different occasions in May. Each time a number of Year 10 pupils enabled the trials to happen by giving up their time after school to manage teams and officiate. Bexley District pass on their gratitude and thanks to all pupils involved.

On 8th June the Leaders also successfully hosted a Bexley Kwik Cricket Tournament in which 8 primary school squads participated. The afternoon was a great success due to the maturity and dedication shown by the 54 Sports Leaders who made sure the event ran effectively. Primary School staff were very complimentary about the way the Sports Leaders carried themselves and worked with the younger pupils. Congratulations to all the Sports Leaders! Still to come on the Sports Leaders Calendar are 2 festivals where we expect to host and deliver fun activities to a total of 500 primary pupils over the course of 2 days. You should be proud of your achievements and for the opportunities you are providing for local Primary School children. Keep up the good work!

Mr Mackle, PE Department



Girls Football

After early exit from the Kent Cup competitions the girls focused on the Erith 7 A-side league. With a huge squad to choose from, the teams always played to their best and were always totally committed. Gaining 6 points in total and scoring 12 goals in total they came joint 4th in the league.

Well done girls.

Mrs Haslam

Rounders

Rounders season starts with a bang!

Year 7 have Bexleyheath Academy, Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School and Harris Academy so far this year and have shown some fantastic potential for future games. The Year 8 team have also demonstrated some strong batting and

fielding skills throughout the team. The Year 9 team have gone from strength to strength, winning all games against Townley, Haberdasher's Crayford and Bexleyheath Academy. Again, we have seen some excellent skills and tactics within fielding. The Year 10 team, like the Year 9's, have shown superb skills. The girls have won all of their games winning with a large margin. The batting from many members of the team left most fielders looking confused.

Once again Rounders have been popular through the year groups this year. With huge numbers attending Rounders practice on a Thursday night, the squads were rotated for games. It has been overwhelmingly successful with a regular attendance of over 50 students every week. It has been lovely to see so many participants ready for the eagerly awaited house event in July. Well done to all girls that have attended Rounders this year- what a great season!

Girls PE Department

Ski Trip

Last year, we went on a ski trip to Sestriere, Italy. We had so much fun! We had three hours of lessons in the morning and two in the afternoon, which sounds tiring - it was! After a few days our legs got better and it was so exhilarating.

We were put into groups appropriate for our level of ability, which gave us the opportunity to learn at our own pace, rather than being rushed through. Whilst skiing the views were incredible, it was hard to concentrate on where you were going. The top of the scary black run near the top of the mountain was the best, we could see right across into France. It gave us an opportunity to make new friends and we are very glad we went on the trip. Both of us enjoyed it so much that we will be attending the Canada ski trip in February 2017.

Millie Beech and Amber Skivens, Year 9



Tennis

A few weeks ago, the tennis team and I participated in several tennis matches against three other schools: Colfe's, Bromley High and Newstead Woods. To be honest, at first, I wasn't too keen on playing due to the fact that my tennis wasn't up to scratch. However, after practising we were all ready to play. Before our matches against Colfe's we were all very nervous as they had been rumoured to have been very good. However, after very tough play I managed to win my first match 6-1 and an astronomical 6-0 victory with my doubles partner Temi. Despite the competitiveness on the tennis court, we managed to talk and socialise with our opponents from the other schools.

Next, the girl's teams went to Bromley High to compete. Although we were all hoping the rain would continue so the match would have to be postponed, we ended up having a great time cheering our team mates on, having a laugh if we missed a ball and competing.

Of course we weren't bound to win everything so I ended up losing to

Newstead Woods, but I still think I played my best and we enjoyed it.

Even though we didn't all win all our matches (sometimes losing by quite a bit!) we still had a great time putting our tennis skills into play with other schools. Hopefully there will be more in the future.

Iarantsoa Ramanoelina, Year 9



Year 9 Boys Football Team

The Year 9 football team have had a successful year this year. In the North Kent Cup, some harsh words (and the promise of pizza if a cup was won!) following a disappointing 1-1 at Haberdasher's (what a goal by James Turner though!) inspired the boys to a crushing 4-0 victory over St Columba's. However, the North Kent Cup came to an end with a hugely frustrating 3-4 defeat after extra time. The boys were hugely disappointed by this result and knew that they could have played better. Thankfully, this proved to be the only defeat of the season!

The weeks before that defeat saw the Year 9's win two battling games against St Paul's Academy (3-1 in the Kent Cup Quarter Final) and 1-0 against The Howard School (Semi Final). This meant that they had to travel down to Maidstone to play at the Gallagher Stadium in a Kent.

Cup Final against Harvey Grammar School. In a tense and hard fought match, the boys battled valiantly under the stewardship of Mr Mackle and Mr Skinner. Some heroic defending and top saves from Arbest Sadiku kept the Harvey attack out, whilst the midfield trio of David Adeyeye, Rob Hughes (captain) and Mac Hoyle dealt with a strong Harvey side. Chances were few and far between, but Bexley could have nicked it late on, but it wasn't to be. In the end, Bexley secured a 0-0 draw, which means that they and Harvey are joint winners of the U14 Wilf Amory Cup.

The lads have performed fantastically all year (only one defeat and two draws in 15 games!) and I look forward to replicating that success again next year. The entire

squad has contributed in all competitions and they should be hugely proud of their efforts. Many thanks to all staff, parents, friends and family who have provided excellent support this year.

Tom Martin, U14 Football Coach



Water sports trip to L'Estartit

During the half term, the P.E department organised a water sports trip to L'Estartit in Spain. This trip included Sailing, Kayaking, Synchronized swimming, Hiking, Cycling and my personal favourite - snorkelling. For most of these activities, we paired up with a company called 'MedAqua' which supplied all our equipment such as bikes, snorkels, goggles, wet suits and flippers. They were extremely nice and helpful with any questions and concerns the teachers and pupils had. My favourite was snorkelling as we saw loads of sea life including sunfish and jellyfish!

The hotel we were staying at had a swimming pool. Due to the hot weather, we went in every day, even the teachers did which was so fun! We even got to push Mr Skinner in! As we were staying extremely close to the local town centre and the beach, we went there in some of our free time. In the town centre we bought souvenirs for our friends and family and on the beach we played football with the teachers (whilst Miss Leffen and Mrs Haslam sun bathed!). Along with relaxing, we did cycle for 20 kilometres and go hiking and kayaking. The whole trip was so much fun and I would recommend it to anyone who enjoys an adventure.

Niamh O'Toole-Mackridge, Year 8



The London Marathon: An Interview with Mr Skinner



On the 24th of April 2016, the London Marathon took place: 26.2 miles through the streets which stretch from Greenwich to Westminster. In celebration of the incredible achievement of the BGS staff who took part, an interview was held with Mr Skinner to find out what the experience was like.

Interviewer: *Why did you decide to do the Marathon?*

Mr Skinner: It's something that I've always wanted to do and an opportunity arose through the school's PA – I applied for it, I was successful in my application and it meant that we could raise money for the school, in terms of having new facilities built for the kids. It's a bit of a win-win for everyone, really.

Interviewer: *That's really lovely. In terms of the application, what kind of things did you have to put down?*

Mr Skinner: I had to say why I wanted to do it; what experience I had previously; what sort of amount of money I wanted to raise. Also, some ideas as to how we could do some fundraising. I sent that off to the PA and I think they read through it – I don't know how many applications there were, I imagine there weren't [laughs] too many to run a marathon – but there were a couple and I'm very pleased that they asked me to do it.

Interviewer: *Could you describe – in however much detail you want – what the training process was like? How long was it for, how much did you do, how much did you progress...?*

Mr Skinner: I found out probably about Christmas-time – some time in December – that I'd been successful. Then I found a 16-week training programme, one which was to start straight after New Year. I decided that I probably wasn't a beginner, because a lot of that involved

walking during the training – I wanted to get running – so I did that and progressed quite swiftly: lots of lengthy runs, half-marathon, 13 miles or more. That was interceded: I went skiing with the school and tried to do some cycling, some swimming, as it's quite heavy on the legs, until the last 2-3 weeks, as then it started to taper down. The runs get a bit easier, in that sense, but I didn't run anything more than 20 miles. In training, they suggest that you don't run the actual full amount. The adrenaline takes over on the day, I suppose, but I was alright – I didn't have too much problem with it. I got a foot injury at about Week 12: I tried to sort it out but I couldn't run for about 10 days, which I felt set me back a bit. But other than that, training was fine; training was good.

Interviewer: *Why do they recommend that you don't run the full amount? Surely, if you run the full amount, then you're used to running that kind of distance and you'll be even more comfortable with running it?*

Mr Skinner: Yeah, I mean, I didn't do too much research into it. Some people say you shouldn't run the full amount because you've only got a certain amount of mileage in your legs. They also don't want you to be injured or hurt for the actual day. Obviously, lots of people get various stress-fractures, soft-tissue injuries, and that puts people out of the Marathon every year. I think 20 miles is probably an upper limit for a fairly novice runner like myself, anyway, and quite often they say that the people and the actual ambience of the day – just the sheer fact of the adrenaline – can get you through that. I do know lots of people who ran 22 or 23 miles, but I don't know anyone who actually ran a full 26 (miles) in training.

Interviewer: *You were saying that you were sponsored? How did you raise the money and what sort of things did it go towards?*

Mr Skinner: We've done lots of mini futsal tournaments for the lower years, especially my Year 8s – they quite enjoyed that, in the Sports Hall. We've had a basketball tournament for the kids. We've had a quiz night with the PA: I think we raised about £500 on that, which was really good and it was a really nice night. We're playing the Year 13 Football Team as our annual event: we're asking them to donate by playing and we'll have a little BBQ afterwards, that's tomorrow (6th May). There is, I believe, a Non-Uniform Day where proceeds are going to go to me, as well. As for the money being spent, I don't know yet [laughs], it's not been decided. I think, probably, the powers-that-be will decide that, more than myself. They have kindly said that I'll likely have a say in it, but it's open to all suggestions. I know that they are talking about refurbishing and moving the library, as well, so it might go towards that – I don't know, they might make it the Skinner Library [laughs], get some sort of mention in it. Nothing has been decided yet, but hopefully with the football and the Non-Uniform Day, we'll

have raised about £4000 or so and that'll go some ways towards helping.

Interviewer: *So, on the day, what was the build-up towards the race like?*

Mr Skinner: We got there quite early. I met Mr Mackle, Ms Griffiths, a couple of other people. We got the train down to Greenwich; we got there quite early, so we were hanging around and were quite nervous, before the race, but it was a really nice day, so the morning was quite good. Lots of pre-race nerves with people, I think, with lots of stretching and trying to keep warm. We didn't go through the gate until about 10:20 AM – we probably got there at about 8:30 AM [laughs], something quite early, so there were a good couple of hours of waiting around. But, you know, just trying to keep calm and planning the route in your head, really.

Interviewer: *Throughout the journey, it can't have been an easy thing to run 6 extra miles from what you'd been trained to do. What were your methods to motivate yourself, and during training as well?*

Mr Skinner: Yeah, so, in my training-runs, I deliberately ran on my own, just with my earphones in and a bit of music. I figured that if I can sustain those distances on my own then, when I'm surrounded by 40,000 people, I should be okay with that. On the day, I didn't actually run with my music, because I tried to take in the crowds. It was the first time that I've ever done it and I think that the best bit of advice that I was given – which I did do – was to put my surname on my shirt, because everyone just shouts your name, whether they know you or not. I was wearing bright pink – like a luminous-pink – t-shirt so you do stand out quite a bit. Within that body of people, I did try to keep at my own pace, for the vast majority of it. I think I got to about 17 miles and my leg exploded with cramp: it was pretty painful. Between 17 and 20 (miles), I think that was the most painful part for me, around the Docklands. But I got my second wind at about 20 miles and I managed to jog on through that. It sort of went to plan: I hoped to do it in about 5 hours or under and I did it in 4 (hours) 56 (minutes), so just under [laughs].

Interviewer: *It takes place in London, but where did you start off? What was the route? Were there any key moments that stood out for you?*

Mr Skinner: So it starts in Greenwich: you run down to the Woolwich ferry, cut back on yourself along the lower roads to the Cutty Sark, then you go through Rotherhithe, out to Camberwell, and then over Tower Bridge – that was a real highlight, as Tower Bridge was just absolutely packed. It's very nice that I just got absolutely screamed at by someone: as I turned around, it was Mr Auckland, leaning over the barrier [laughs], shouting at me, which was a real boost. I saw lots of people on the way, as well, as I saw kids, other staff, my family. As I said to

you, the Docklands was a bit of a low-point – it's a very tough run through there, between mile 16 and mile 20 or 21, it's quite tough – and I saw all my family at mile 23, which was nice, to get that boost at the end. When you get to about Westminster – the last 2 kilometres – it's absolutely packed all along the railings, all along the roads, to the finish. Everyone is just cheering you, whoever you are, so there were some really nice points from the route. But it's the whole route, really, with the people supporting you, which gets you through it.

Interviewer: *What would you say is your next milestone? You've done 26 miles – what's next?*

Mr Skinner: [laughs] Um, I did go in with the idea of saying that I'd never do it again: it was something on my bucket-list that I wanted to do. I can see why people get bitten by the bug and they want to do it again and again. I'm not sure I will because I feel like I've done it now. But my bucket-list is quite extensive: I think my next big thing, which I'd like to do, will be something like a sky-dive or a bungee-jump or something extreme like that. But I'm not sure if I'm going to go running again [laughs], but if I do, then not for that distance, maybe.

Interviewer: *What would your advice be to someone who is considering running a marathon, or any other race, for that matter?*

Mr Skinner: I would say definitely do it. You'll really enjoy it. The Marathon, in particular, gives you such a sense of achievement when you finish it. Again, the advice that I was given – it was true. If you're going to run it, get your name on your shirt, even if you're not running for a charity, because it does really cheer you up when you're in a lot of pain and people are cheering you on.

Train thoroughly for it. I'm sure I could have done more than what I did, but obviously work and home life always gets in the way. But train thoroughly for it and just enjoy it, at the end of the day. You're not there to prove anything, you're there to show you can do it. Go for it.

Interviewer: *Thank you.*

Congratulations to those who completed the Marathon: Mr Skinner, Miss Brand, Mr Mackle and Ms Griffiths!

Holly Morris and Ashita Chawla, Year 12



Music & Drama

Much Ado About Something



The Drama Department were delighted to present the Junior Production of “Much Ado About Nothing” to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death. It has been described as the nation’s favourite Shakespearian comedy as it is a story of love, betrayal, trickery and heartbreak; a superb cast of Years 7- 9 performed a modern twist on the tale.

There is a reason why Shakespeare’s plays have been performed for centuries and will remain a constant presence on the curriculum- “Much Ado About Nothing” demonstrates this well. Our production embraced social media with projections of Snap chats, Facebook walls and text messages to assist the telling of the story. Its lingering message made the audience think about the way social media helps to nurture relationships and destroy them.

There were many talented Year 7-9s who auditioned for the show and as a result we had a fantastic ensemble. The cast rose to the challenge of learning and understanding Shakespeare’s humorous text and developed their own believable characters. It was a pleasure to see the audience laughing at the comical moments, gasping at the shocking scenes and smiling at the happy ending.

The students were dedicated, enthusiastic and passionate about presenting Shakespeare’s work. We urge every student from Year 7- 9 to audition again next academic year.

Miss K Gabriel, Drama Department

After several months of intense rehearsals, we were finally ready to bring our modern take of Shakespeare’s “Much Ado About Nothing” to the stage to our friends, families and even three local primary school audiences. On the morning

of the 28th of April, we all headed off to Hook Lane to perform the first of three school tour shows. Although we had few technical difficulties such as lost masks and missing music from traipsing our equipment through the streets of Welling, the overall school tour was very exciting and, hopefully, very entertaining for our audience.

Later that day, we performed to Danson Primary School and then Foster’s Primary School before finally heading back to school for the last show. We all had such a great time performing the show to all the young children and meeting so many new people from all lower years in the play. Despite backstage drama, this was an experience that was so thrilling and one I’ll never forget- I’ll definitely audition for more in the future.

Iarantsoa Ramanoelina, Year 9

At the end of last April, I was lucky enough to be involved with the lower school’s unique performance of Shakespeare’s comedy, ‘Much Ado about Nothing’. With a modern twist, it follows the young couple Hero and Claudio as they navigate the difficult world of love, bringing together Beatrice and Benedick in the process through a series of texts and snapchats. Hounded by bitter Don Jon and his crew, the young lovers juggle being jilted at the altar, Beatrice and Benedick’s perpetual stubbornness and a masked masquerade.

One astounding quality of the performance was the acting, which was the highest I’ve seen yet of a lower school production. The actors seemed to instinctively grasp what the play demanded of them; they successfully transferred 16th century comedy into a modern day setting. The audience laughed as Benedick and Beatrice quarrelled and cheered

as Don Jon fled the stage, leaving our protagonists in peace. The touching innocence of Hero coupled with the outrageous humour of Don Pedro was masterfully done, which created an engaging show.

Another characteristic which deserves a mention is how the play was adapted to a modern setting to appeal to a wider audience today. The use of contemporary quirks, such as starting the night with Justin Bieber’s ‘Love Yourself’, and utilising popular social media sites via a PowerPoint helped to set the light-hearted tone and effectively moved the story along. I was thoroughly impressed by this daring decision and I feel it successfully added a new dimension to this old classic.

It was a real pleasure to work with the young cast as they developed their acting skills week after week and grew in confidence for this intimidating project. Even though the play isn’t showing anymore, I predict great things for the cast and I urge you to go and see the next performance, which I’m sure will be just as fantastic as this one.

Skye Terblanche and Stella Gowans, Year 12

Music

If there’s one word you can use to describe the music students in Bexley Grammar School its “dedicated”. On 21st March, students from Year Seven all the way to Sixth Form gave an outstanding performance in the school’s Spring Concert, ranging from smooth jazz solos to orchestral pieces. Each ensemble performed to an exceptionally high standard and the concert proved a great success for both the department and the school in showing the range of talents all our students hold. By no means is this the end for the department for the year, not even a week later and the ensembles were back together rehearsing for the upcoming school events, each striving to provide the highest quality performance possible. These include the Big Band’s preparations for the Jazz Evening on the 13th July as well as musical appearances during Sports day and Speech Day in the near future.

Congratulations and good luck wishes should go to the members of the BGS Improv Group (Luke Montgomery, Matt Ward, Josh Masters, Matt Talbot, Tom Barton, Sonny Mitchell, Aaron Harrex, Emma Abbate) who have been selected from thousands of performers to perform at the National Festival of Music for Youth in Birmingham on 8th July. We wish them the best of luck for their performance.

However, at this point in time most students’ focus is on the school’s yearly musical production – this year being ‘The Sound of Music’. Performing for 4 nights

from the 5th July, this gives 65 students from across the Drama and Music departments the opportunity to showcase their skills in both acting and performing in front of an audience over the period of four days (plus a band of 25, and backstage and technical crew, there are nearly 100 students involved). From what I've seen so far from rehearsals and from talking to some of the actors this show is shaping up to be one of the best in recent memory and is a wonderful way to end the year.

Matt Hamilton, Year 12



Science News

The Salters Chemistry Festival



On 11th May, Laween Dler, Fathia Alade, Ifeanyi Ifeji and myself (Ella Warren) went to compete in a Salters Chemistry Festival hosted at Queen Mary University of London. The event was a big chemistry competition against 18 other schools and was sponsored by The Salters Institute and the Royal Society of Chemistry. We travelled to the university on the train with all the commuters which was relatively easy and when we arrived we said goodbye to Miss McCarron and were directed to our lab bench to start the first practical challenge. This involved chromatography, solving codes using the Periodic Table and comparing reactions.

We worked in pairs and were pretty confident with our answers. After lunch in the university restaurant, we were back in the lab for the university challenge. This involved identifying 5 different solutions using only those solutions and distilled water. However, we did know that the solutions were water, a strong acid, a weak acid, a strong alkali and phenolphthalein (a type of indicator). We made a few mistakes in this challenge like knocking over a solution- luckily we had figured out that it was water! – and accidentally mixing the phenolphthalein and the alkali in the bottle causing it to turn deep purple. Fortunately, we finished

in enough time to write up our results. After that we attended a demonstration lecture about oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen. Lastly there was the prize ceremony. We all got a certificate and stationery for participating and much to our surprise, it was revealed that we had won the university challenge! Our prize was some boxes of Molymods (chemical models) for the school. We had a great day and experienced what it is like to do chemistry in a university. A big thank you to Miss McCarron for organising it!

Ella Warren, Year 8

My Reflection on the Science Leader Project



At the start of Year 12, the scientists among us were given the opportunity to apply for the role of science prefect – but this year there was a difference. Instead of just the normal science prefect roles we were also applying to become Science Leaders, a new role that entailed going into primary schools in pairs and teaching science to some of the older students in local primary schools. I myself have experience going into primary schools to teach as a football coach, but I was especially excited about the prospect of teaching about some of the science that I have a real passion for.

A group of us who applied for the science leader roles were successful and preparation began almost immediately. Once we'd grouped ourselves into pairs, I was with Chemistry and fellow Biology student Lisa Clinch, we began to learn the key skills needed to make sure the science we taught was as interesting and well-presented as possible. Over the course of several weeks, we learnt different experiments and practiced our presentation skills in training sessions. We were shown several experiments from across a broad range of scientific topics, and shown how to present them in the most engaging way for the children that we'd be teaching. One session that particular sticks in my mind was a Chemistry experiment presented to us by the Science Department's answer to Helena Bonham Carter – Mrs Coleman. With a similar level of enthusiasm as Year 7s have for getting merits, Mrs Coleman taught us the wonders of Chemistry with a wonderfully constructed, interactive and enthralling experiment that involved the mixing of two elements and ended with an exciting spark of fire. Afterwards, a few of us, myself included, were given the opportunity to try and recreate the fun by presenting the same experiment to the rest of the Science Leader group. Despite nerves by some, the sessions

were a great success and our training was going very well. We were then given the freedom in our pairs to pick and prepare a few experiments in anticipation for the real things. With such good training, we were mostly confident and prepared to go into our designated primary schools. With more Science Leaders than schools taking part, two or three pairs of Science Leaders were assigned to each school so we could alternate week by week.

My partner, Lisa, and I were organised to go in on the second week to Hook Lane, a school I know rather well from coaching, to finish off a volcano project started the week before by Rebecca Ruse and Rob Grogan. Having visited Mrs Sutton (if you don't know her, Mrs Sutton is the heartbeat of the Science Department, especially for Chemistry, and is, along with the other Science technicians, the reason we all get to do practicals in our Science lessons) to get the final bits of equipment we needed- we were ready to go. We were greeted by some exuberant teaching staff at Hook Lane primary school, and were introduced to the young scientists we would be teaching. As we were going to be doing an experiment where the papier-mâché volcanoes that they had made the previous week were going to erupt, we thought we would tell them about the science behind volcanoes, their eruptions and the affects they have on the world around them. In our preparation, we had made a short PowerPoint with some of the key information for them to look at, an unlabelled drawing of a volcano for the students to label and an additional experiment for us to demonstrate how pressure works inside a volcano. With our passion for Science apparent, we explained to them what volcanoes are, how they form, why they erupt and the effects that they have on their environments – by showing them on our PowerPoint and getting them actively involved by having them guess

the answers before we revealed the science. We then played a game with them by asking them to try and memorize the different names of structures of the volcano so that they could try and work together to label the whole diagram. I then demonstrated to them a small experiment using a sealable plastic food bag and a few chemicals. I mixed the two different chemicals in the bag and sealed it. The students watched in amazement as the bag miraculously began to expand before the seal of the bag eventually popped undone. It was really rewarding to see a group of children so enthralled by science! We finished off the lesson by doing their volcano eruption experiments. They'd been in groups the week before and in these groups, looking like scientists with their safety goggles on, they followed our instructions to make their volcanoes erupt using vinegar, a powder and some food colouring (for additional dramatic effect). They all seemed to really enjoy their eruptions and it was so satisfying to see a group of young people so happy to be learning about science!

The Science Leader programme has been brilliant in teaching primary school students the wonders of science and in getting them engaged in something they may otherwise have not been able to. It wasn't only the primary school students who gained from it, the whole experience was amazing for us science leaders too as we got to pass our passion on to another generation and got to learn about how to teach effectively! Many thanks from all the Science Leaders to the entire Science Department and primary schools that were involved!

Ryan Harwood, Year 12

Our Field Trip to Wildwood

On Thursday 21 April, my class (7JCM) and another class (7ACR) went on a Science field trip to Wildwood, a science nature reserve in Kent. We started the day with a run around in the adventure playground to let off steam after a dreary coach trip. Having a run around in the playground in the woods was a good way to get accustomed to the forest air and all the chickens running around.

After that, our tour of all the animals commenced. We saw - well, tried to see - an adder. Next up was a personal favourite of mine, the raven. We learnt about how ravens are clever animals and have a sense of humour as they copy the cries of other animals. Then we moved on to the insanely cute otter, which was diving to get fish and seemingly having fun showing off to us humans. After that we saw an elk, some deer, a bear and a wolf. Throughout the tour, we learnt various interesting facts.

Time just seemed to be flying by; it was already lunch when we got back. After topping up our fuel levels and having another enjoyable hour in the playground, we went on to the forensics activity. In this we investigated the crime scene of Mr Bunny, analysing various clues to deduce

the murderer. Some of the activities were interesting (examining the tracks at the scene worked surprisingly well) and some were slightly disgusting (I never knew that I would one day examine the stomach contents of a dead bunny). But overall, it was an interesting activity that encouraged us to use the power of deduction and logic.

However, all good things must come to an end eventually. After the forensics activity, we had to endure another dull coach journey back to school. Looking back, the trip to Wildwood was fun and informative (no, I'm not being paid to write a positive review). I would recommend going to see the animals there, and, if you have children, taking them to play in the adventure park.

Rhys Belsham, Year 7

Medical Lecture Programme

Over a series of sessions led by Ms Beasley and myself in May 2016, the Medical Society hosted other members of the school community in an opportunity for students to ensure they have sufficient knowledge in an area which is agreeably of great importance: First Aid.

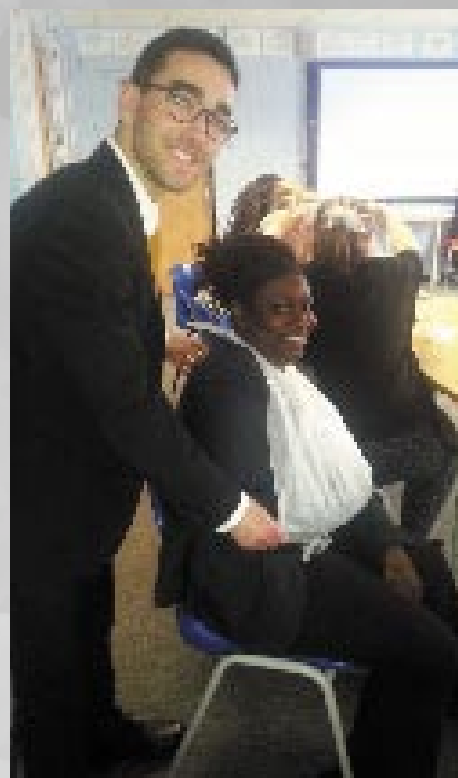
The First Aid course, which saw a gathering of around 25 students, trained attendees in areas of First Aid including: Primary Survey (how we first approach and assess a casualty); recovery positions; CPR (resuscitation) and AED (defibrillator). I am sure students would join me in saying a huge thank you to Ms Beasley, our resident expert First Aider, who made the sessions engaging and enjoyable for us.

In addition to this short First Aid course, wider programmes of events are arranged by the Medical Society at Bexley Grammar, which is comprised of around 20 aspiring medics and dentists. The programme works by a timetable compiled by myself at the beginning of each term, which allows all students to give presentations about topics of interests.

Such topics have included: BMA junior doctor strikes; HIV and STDs; ethical discussions and information about the different learning styles at medical school. Ms Stoddard gives great support to the group by providing resources to us and giving sessions of her own about critical thinking and ethics; she also manages to bring in ex-BGS students who are now studying Medicine at King's and QMUL, to name a couple. Additionally, Ms Stoddard organises lecturers, for example from Brighton and Sussex Medical School, to come and give sessions on various aspects of our NHS.

I would like to thank all the committed members of the society, without whom the group would not be so useful and student led. Thanks are also given to Ms Stoddard for supporting, and dedicating so much time to us all in our aspirations for a medical career.

Robert Grogan, Year 12



English News

World Book Day



Thursday 3rd March 2016 delivered another World Book Day at Bexley Grammar School, carrying a comet-tail of chapters and costumes in its wake. Festivities were underway early as the school was visited by Sarah Mussi and treated to some performances of Shakespeare's plays.

On Thursday BGS celebrated literature in a variety of ways throughout the day, with

participation from teachers and students alike. We had fictional characters of all genres parade through the corridors and in the English Department, with personalities ranging from the Tin-man to Hermione to Gatsby.

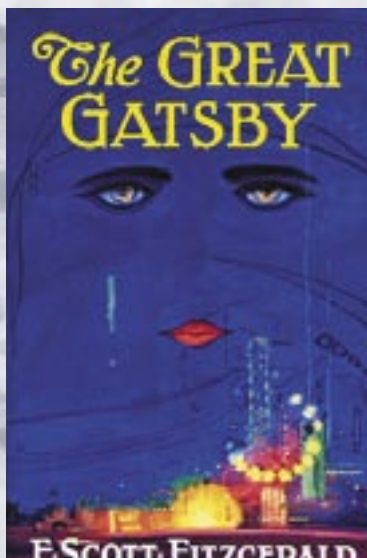
At 2:45pm, the bell rang cueing the 'Drop everything and read' segment of the day, where usual lessons made way for a mass 20 minute reading session across

classrooms; many thanks to the prefects who ensured that all students had a book to read by distributing library stock to classes! At the end of the school day lecturer, Dr Grant, kindly came in from the New College of the Humanities to give an interesting talk on the novel and its purpose and history. All in all, a successful day at BGS to celebrate books and their impact on us!

Daniya Baiguzhayeva, Year 12

Lecture on *The Great Gatsby*

WARNING SPOILERS!



On the 26th May, BGS Sixth Formers were treated to a lecture by Dr Will Norman from the University of Kent on *The Great Gatsby*. Dr Norman's talk encompassed a wide range of topics, theories, and ideas regarding Fitzgerald's bestselling book and the Great American novel in general. One of the key notions explored was that of American 'greatness': seemingly the common denominator underlying a) the American Dream b) the Great American novel, and c) *Gatsby*, the old sport himself. To illustrate his ideas on this, Dr Norman unexpectedly played us the rally speeches of presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. Both political figures referenced American greatness in their attempts to connect with the US masses. The subtext and emotional scaffolding underpinning the message of 'making America great

again' seems to be one of hope, and marketing a prosperous future that is absolutely accessible to every American, regardless of background, by its nature. *Gatsby* manifests this possibility-rich ethos through both his upward social mobility and his hope in winning Daisy over – he labours under the notion of converting dream into reality through sheer will, just like those upholding the American Dream. The various failures and abortions of hope in the book, therefore, convey Fitzgerald's verdict on this dream as cautionary at best, and, at worst, wholly condemning.

Dr Norman also discussed the class and racial inequality exhibited in *The Great Gatsby* – Tom's white supremacy readings, the Valley of the Ashes, Wilson and Myrtle's less glitzy backgrounds which deny them the same privileges and opportunities to become 'extraordinary'

that other characters had. We also considered the question of Gatsby's ethnicity and the possibility that he is Jewish (and the implications this has on the claims of Fitzgerald's anti-Semitism), as well as Nick's potential homosexuality. Dr Norman talked about the distinction between past and future in the novel: the trope of reviving the past (see: Trump's 'Make America great again' slogan) does not seem too uncommon within US narratives – it appears to be one point of intersection in the Venn diagram of Donald Trump vs Gatsby. The question of repeating the past is a significant one in the novel, in that it challenges the pursuit of an elusive future – and perhaps this hope is not just indigenous to America, but part of the human condition as a whole. Another idea concerned Nick almost continuing to address Gatsby in his head, even after his death; it suggests that the idea of Gatsby, as the self-made man, is transcendent, whereas Gatsby the person is more ephemeral. Similarly, it may be



said that Gatsby was lusting after the idea of Daisy rather than Daisy herself. Both interpretations foster a divide between the real and the imagined, and perhaps this inability to calibrate the two can be attributed, again, to the hollowness of the American Dream.

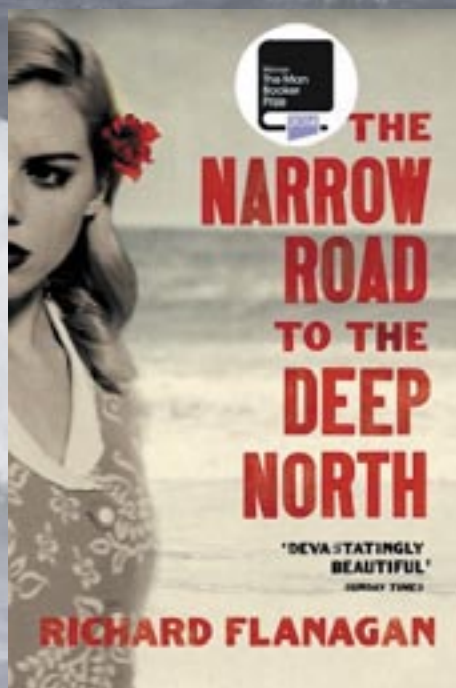
I was particularly impressed by the quality of the questions at the end of Dr Norman's lecture. When the students were first asked if we had any questions, there

was no immediate clamour to wedge an idea or opinion in. However, once one person put their hand up, more and more perspectives were proposed, resulting in a lot of time dedicated to active engagement from the listeners. It was interesting not only to consider other students' musings (for example, is the premise of the Great American novel to praise the US and, by extension, the American Dream, or to critique it?), but to hear the reasoning for opposing opinions on certain topics.

All in all, the lecture was both engaging on a personal level and helpful in that it addressed a novel that many of us are studying. We would like to thank both Dr Norman from the University of Kent for taking the time to visit BGS, and Mr Griffin for arranging such events for the benefit of the Sixth Form students.

Daniya Baiguzhayeva, Year 12

The English Department's Books for the Beach



Ms Hanington: *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, by Richard Flanagan

This Man Booker prize winning novel was recommended to me last summer and has remained with me ever since as it is so beautifully told by Richard Flanagan. The story shifts between the past and present lives of Australian military surgeon, Dorrigo Evans, who struggles with his memories of life as a prisoner of war and the hardships and horrors he endured. A novel as much about the lasting impact of the dehumanising effects of war, as the deep friendships that are forged in such circumstances. Brilliant storytelling!

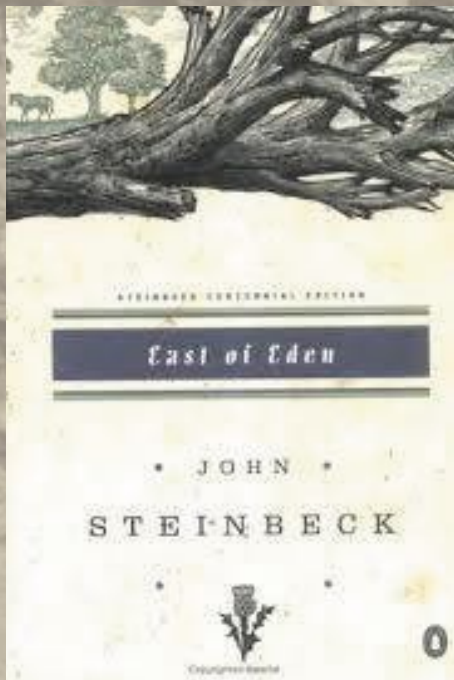
Mr Morris: *A Manual for Cleaning Women*, by Lucia Berlin

Lucia Berlin was, until recently, completely unknown to me, and her collection of short stories, *A Manual for Cleaning Women*, was probably my book of the last twelve months. Semi-autobiographical, the stories reflect the author's own, deeply troubled life. Addictions, abusive relationships and the violence and deprivation of the USA's underbelly make up the world of these dazzling stories – yet there is enormous courage, beauty and humour too; Lucia was, herself, for a time, a cleaning lady, and she conveys the hardships – and the hard-won victories – of her life. She ended up being recognised and widely praised for the brilliance of her writing: a great riches-to-rags-to- (relative) riches trajectory. Try it!

Ms Golding: *The Girl on the Train*, by Paula Hawkins

For older readers I would recommend 'The Girl on the Train' by Paula Hawkins. It is a thriller and a page-turner, where, for much of the narrative the reader is kept in the dark. The narrative is delivered by three different female characters who are subjectively immersed in their own perspective on events so that you don't know who to trust or who to believe. This is not helped by the main character being an alcoholic. I could not put it down.

I've also been reading brilliant short story collections recently and I think often students overlook how wonderful stories can be. I would recommend anything by Shirley Jackson and a great collection by Richard Yates called 'Eleven Kinds of Loneliness'.



Mrs Dawson: *East of Eden*, by John Steinbeck

This epic masterpiece, widely considered Steinbeck's most ambitious novel, charts three generations of his family, the Hamiltons and the Trasks and their interwoven stories. This novel was originally written for Steinbeck's two sons Thom and John so that they understood their family's legacy and the place they had come from: the sights, sounds, smells and colours of the Californian countryside. This is as much a story about California as it is about the families.

I could wax lyrical about all the beautifully and honestly observed characters: brave and honest Abra; complex and conflicted Cal; goodhearted and trusting, if pious, Aron but my favourite character is Samuel Hamilton the wise if unlucky patriarch of the Hamilton family. His way of accepting both difficulty and good luck with grace and humour is a lesson to us all. However, I can't let a recommended reading review go by without mentioning Cathy Ames, possibly the most evil female character to have ever been created in literature: her character is not for the fainthearted!

Steinbeck explores the importance and difficulty of family; the love between men and women and the importance of redemption.

This is a fantastic book; one you will never forget!

Mr Griffin: *Number 11*, by Jonathan Coe

This is both a novel of big, conflicting political ideas and simply a good, entertaining read. Written in the form of five inter-connecting stories, it centres on the life of Rachel, a woman who grew up during the New Labour years and enters her professional life just as the effects of the Tory Government's austerity policies really begin to take hold. It is at times scary, at other times very funny satire of modern British life, tackling issues as diverse as celebrity culture, wealth inequality, sexuality and mortality. I would recommend this to History and Politics students as much as Literature ones... and maybe Biologists would be intrigued by the hideous, giant, man-eating spiders that feature as the novel's most surprising characters!

Mr Husbands: *The Martian*, by Andy Weir

I'm stranded on Mars. I have no way to communicate with Earth. I'm in a Habitat designed to last 31 days. If the Oxygenator breaks down, I'll suffocate. If the Water Reclaimer breaks down, I'll die of thirst. If the Hab breaches, I'll just kind of explode. If none of those things happen, I'll eventually run out of food and starve to death. So yeah. I'm screwed.

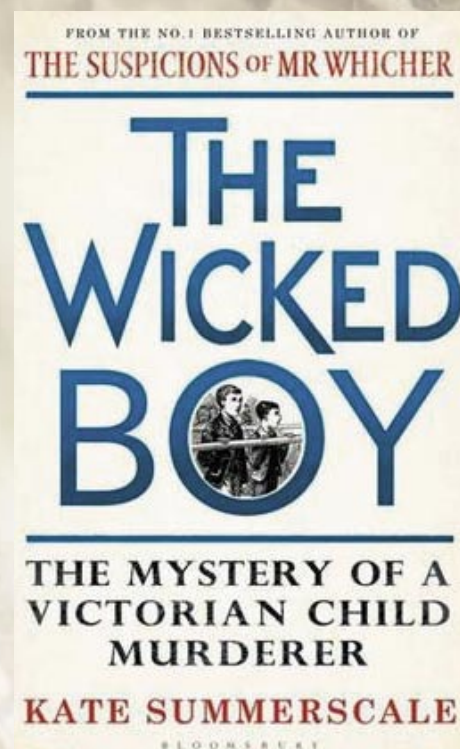
In the not too distant future, Astronaut Mark Watney finds himself stranded on Mars after his crew are forced to evacuate their landing site due to a mission-endangering dust storm. As far as his fellow crew members, NASA and the rest of planet Earth, are concerned, Mark Watney died on Mars, impaled by a communications antenna during the evacuation. Only Watney is not dead – and, with no way to contact Earth, he is forced to rely on his own ingenuity to survive on Mars as long as he can in hope of rescue.

It is not just Watney's tale of survival when faced with insurmountable odds which makes *The Martian* such a great read, however, but also the story behind the novel.

Author Andy Weir spent three years researching his novel, taking no artistic liberties: almost everything in the novel is based upon technology currently available to NASA, making the most implausible of scenarios Watney survives in actual fact plausible.

Plus, *The Martian* is a novel which almost never was: rebuffed by publishers Weir decided to self-publish the novel himself as an eBook which he put onto Amazon himself, eventually rising to the top of Amazon's Sci-Fi best sellers list. Two years later it was picked up by a publisher, and two years after that released as a major motion picture directed by Ridley Scott starring Matt Damon.

The Martian is a great read for anyone with an interest in science or not necessarily a big fan of fiction and is a novel with a great sense of humour throughout.



Ms Stoddard: *The Wicked Boy*, by Kate Summerscale

In the sweltering July of 1895, the inhabitants of Cave Road, Plaistow, began to notice a most unpleasant smell. When the neighbours finally broke into no. 35, they found Mrs Emily Coombs lying stabbed to death on her bed. She had been murdered ten days ago – by her 12-year-old son, Robert. The “Plaistow horror”, as the newspapers called it, had begun. The lives of respectable working-class people, like the Coombs family, often disappear without trace: there is usually almost nothing left to research. Robert's fate, however, was different; Kate Summerscale (author of *The Suspicions of Mr Whicher*) has brought the past of this tragic family back to life remarkably, and challenges our ideas of Victorian justice and how much someone can change as she does so.

Languages

Year 12 Spanish Exchange



In the second week of the Easter holidays, thirteen Year Twelve students travelled to northern Spain to take part in the exchange that we had all been waiting for. After having a very early start (5am to be precise!), we boarded the plane and landed in Bilbao – where we were welcomed with sunshine. We spent a few hours exploring the beautiful city of Bilbao (including the world-renowned Guggenheim Museum), and then took a minibus south to a small town called Corella – located in the province of Navarre – where our exchange partners and their families were waiting for us. Saturday evening and Sunday were spent settling in and getting to know our families, which meant there was plenty of opportunity to practice our Spanish!

Before we knew it, it was 7am on a Monday morning and time to go to school. Experiencing school in Spain was both strange and extremely interesting. The school week kicked off with a tour of the building before heading off to lessons with our partners. The school day finishes at 2:30 and there are only two twenty-minute breaks throughout the day – which was different to what us BGS students were used to. Lunch is the main meal of the day in Spain and so most days we went home at 2:30 and ate a meal with our families. All the school staff and students ensured we felt welcome and sometimes we even had the chance

to get involved in our partners' lessons and classwork. Wednesday was one of my favourite days. BGS students, Miss Roberts, Mr Stewart and Ignacio (our tour guide) travelled to Pamplona, a nearby city that is world famous for 'El encierro' (the running of the bulls) during the San Fermín festival. We had a tour around the main sights in Pamplona, as well as visiting the Parliament of Navarra – where we had a very amusing tour guide. He was so amusing, in fact, that he made Miss Roberts laugh until she cried and she had to bury her head in her hands! During the week we also took part in a cooking class, a dance class (of the traditional dance of Navarra) and visited Las Bardenas – a nature, desert-like park where many TV shows, films and adverts have been filmed (including season 6 of Game of Thrones).

The night before we left, Corella held its very own annual bull run, which we watched together. Afterwards, BGS students and teachers ate dinner together and it was the perfect way to end such an amazing week. Then, it was time to experience a real Spanish fiesta and soak up the incredible atmosphere on the streets of Corella with our partners and friends. After a very long night, we woke up the next morning all feeling quite emotional that we would have to leave the place that we had been so welcomed into and become so accustomed to over the last week. Some of us went out to watch

another bull run, before returning home and eating a final lunch with our families. It was then time to say goodbye. When we all got back onto the minibus, there was a very different atmosphere to that of when we had arrived. Despite some tears, we left content with the thought that we would see our partners again in July, when they visit London and BGS.

Thank you so much to all the staff, students and families in Corella who welcomed us into their town and homes for a week. All of us who took part in the exchange would especially like to thank Miss Roberts and Mr Stewart (and Mrs Meyer too!) for organizing the trip, and giving us such a wonderful opportunity – one that we will never forget.
Sophie Taylor, Year 12

Saint Malo 2016

On the 21st June the majority of Year 9-French students gathered at school ready to get on the coach and travel to Saint Malo in Brittany. After a long coach journey and a few rest stops we finally got to meet our host families. Then we were taken to their homes and had a well-earned night's sleep.

The next day we took a tour of the town of Saint Malo, learning about its impressive history and visiting the old military defences. After having some free time to explore the town, we ate our lunch on the beach before travelling to the Chateau Bourbansais. Here we had the opportunity to watch a bird show and look around the small zoo in the grounds. There was a wide range of animals such as giraffes, lemurs, zebras and meerkats. It was a lot of fun!

The next morning we assembled for a fish themed day beginning with a visit to Mont Saint Michel. This town was built on a mountain surrounded by water with an old abbey at the top. After a tiring walk up we arrived for a tour of the abbey. There were some spectacular views but, unfortunately, most of them were clouded by the dense fog that surrounded the town. We later had the chance to go in shops around the town and some people tried the local speciality 'Kouign Aman' - a super sweet donut / pastry type thing. We then went to a cinema where we watched 'Finding Dory' in French. We were very lucky as the cinema was opened just for us - we had the entire cinema, let alone screen to ourselves. Everybody noticed that the seats were far more comfortable

than those in England. Whilst the film was difficult, lots of us were surprised at how much we could follow and understand - our French definitely improved whilst on the trip. Finally, we went to the aquarium where we saw some amazing marine life and went on a ride which gave us the experience of being in a submarine.

On our last day in France, we took a Gourmet tour of Rennes - a large town in Brittany. We walked around the town tasting galettes, which are a classic dish in Brittany, cheeses and delicious artisan chocolates. Then we went to the Enigmaparc where we worked in groups completing a series of challenges, a bit like an escape room or the Crystal Maze. While they were difficult, the challenges were a lot of fun.

Finally, after saying thank you and goodbye to our families we gathered again at 6:00 in the morning to return to England. This trip was a great way to practise and improve our French. It was an experience we will never forget - thank you Miss Orchard for organising it and to all the teachers who accompanied us.

Erin McDermott Y9

On the 21st of June, half of Year Nine went on a residential MFL trip to St Malo to improve our French speaking. After multiple, very long coach journeys, we arrived at the beach town. Then we were greeted by our friendly French families who had offered up their homes for the week. The first nights were quite intimidating as the majority of families didn't speak English, but by the final night we had become accustomed to the quick speaking locals.

The first day started with us having a tour of the town, learning all about the rich history that the town has accumulated over many years. A fun fact we learnt is that St Malo is the only place in France with permission to put their flag above the national flag, as they fought for their independence.

Some other trip highlights were; going to the beach and relaxing in the sun, travelling to an Abbey pilgrimage site, taste-testing different chocolates and gallettes (a type of crêpe), going to the aquarium and the zoo, and even watching Le Monde De Dory (Finding Dory)!

Overall, the trip was a really great experience and it improved both our knowledge of French culture and of the language itself, along with our confidence in speaking it. It was truly an unbaguettable trip and we would recommend it to younger years.

-Abbi Stone and Charlotte Wilson, 9RPP



Exchange trip to Hamburg

We'd been in touch with our exchange partners for a couple of months already, but everyone was nervous when the great day finally arrived. When we arrived at Hamburg airport, the German group were waiting with a big flag and a poster welcoming us. We paired up with our partners and everyone went off to their host family's house. The English and German students have written an account of the week together!

Montag:

It was fantastic! We went on a boat on the River Elbe and the weather really hot and sunny. So we had to use a lot of sun cream. Then we went to the beach and it was really nice and relaxing and we got to hang out and get to know each other. I was a bit over-dressed because I thought it would be a bit cold but overall I had so much fun!

Dienstag:

On Tuesday we went to school with our partners. It was not always easy to understand what the teachers were saying! School lasted 5 hours and afterwards we went to the Museum of Hamburg, where we split up into groups. We were given a topic to research and we had to make a presentation the next day.

Mittwoch:

On Wednesday the English people went to a park called Planten und Blomen while the Germans were in school. We went shopping before meeting up with the Germans at an amazing chocolate museum.

Donnerstag:

This was one of the hottest days so far this year, and we really made use of the amazing weather! In the morning we visited the Hamburg Rathaus which is the Town Hall of Hamburg. In teams of 4 we did a quiz all about the Rathaus. My team didn't win, but we had a lot of fun playing. Then, because the weather was so good, most of us visited a local swimming pool. It was so much fun!

Freitag:

The day started off raining, and didn't look very promising... but we arrived at the Hansa Park, went on a couple of rides and the sun finally came out. Then we went to Lübeck and went shopping for an hour, had an ice cream then got the train back home.

When we got to the airport on Saturday, there was lots of hugging, a few tears, and Ms Symons and Mr Frost had a hard time persuading everyone to get on the plane back to England!

Y9 and Y10 students



Stop press language news

Other Y9 students have also just returned from the popular annual trip to the Rhineland and Y10 have had a wonderful visit to Sardinia.

Rhineland Trip Report

All Bags packed, food set for the day and ready for a new world of the Rheinland. All your expectations have been built up and your nerves have started to give in. What will my host family be like? Do I have everything I need? And most importantly, Will I have Wi-Fi? A "good" house was defined by whether you had Wi-Fi. One of few negatives of going on trips abroad is the hours taken to getting to your destination and this trip was no different. Kent to Dover to Calais to Brussels to Cologne. More or less the entire Tuesday was purely travelling. France blended into Belgium then into Germany. You can tell what country you're in by looking at the cars' number plates and one car has a little B and then the next a little D. You then know you're getting close.

Surprisingly, one of the largest differences I noticed between the UK and the rest of Europe was the service stations. In England we have a toilet if you're lucky and some food and drink. In a station around Belgium you had to pay to go to the toilet, there was a large canteen of waffles and ice-cream, and a few questionable products. When you stop the feeling of actually being able to stand up after so long is incomparable. You finally get to meet your host and you're whisked off to your host house. Very frequently you will be placed reasonably near to

another group's. Your house can be that of PlayStations, XBOXs and Pool tables or grandmas in the basement, moving false teeth and strange noises in the night. As you wake up from your first sleep you eat your first German breakfast and you may be expected to make your own lunch from ingredients set out on the table.

The first day a short 22km to Köln and you will be instantly taken back by the city's talisman, the tallest twin spired church in the world, the Cathedral of Saint Peter or more commonly known as Cologne cathedral. It stands at 515ft tall and the gothic cathedral is 768 years old. It is a city of amazing architecture and masses upon masses of shops, making it very popular and the financial centre of Germany. We experienced the luxurious chocolate at the Lindt Chocolate museum and the vibrant Cologne Zoo and we got there on a bus train contraption. In the city and throughout the trip you are given bags of free time to go and make decisions for yourself and buy from shops that you wouldn't find anywhere else but Germany. When you get back to your host expect a wonderful welcome. I felt very appreciative of our Muslim hosts cooking us food that they wouldn't be able to eat themselves.

Day two. A longer travel to a more relaxed area around the Rhine River. We went up a large hill, the Drachenfels, by cable car and got an amazing view of the river and the surrounding town. After this, on the same day, we travelled to Bonn and under the 34 C heat travelled to Beethoven's house and more shopping and then the largest Haribo store I have ever seen.

The day finally came for Phantasialand and it was everything and more. The park was full of thrilling rides such as the Black Mamba and the Talocan and delicious food with great variety as you moved from area to area. We were there from 9:00 AM to around 6:00 PM and the experience was thorough and invigorating. On the final day it was much the same as the first, of waking up early and just travelling. I would highly recommend this trip as it includes some unforgettable experiences and truly improves your German speaking and how you interact with those of a different language.

Dexter Woolley 9MPL

Classics Club

We have had a great time this year, attending since the fun began in September, with the Classics Prefects: Katie, Connie, Skye and Gemma (Year 12). We have done a range of activities including quizzes, role playing, presentation giving, games and making a volcano!

We have learnt a lot of fun facts and extended our Classics knowledge: such as Saturnalia (Roman Christmas); myths such as Osiris; practising with hieroglyphics and Roman numerals; the eruption of Vesuvius; putting ourselves in the shoes of citizens of Pompeii and making decisions as if we were really there!

We've really enjoyed our time at Classics Club and we look forward to continuing next year with some new faces and new prefects!

Alex Ramsey and Harvey Duke, Year 8



Belgian chocolate is by far the best tasting and best quality chocolate we have ever eaten, and there's also the fact that we



got awesome deals on them – when something's free or cheap, when doesn't it seem to taste better?

Year 9 History Trip to Ypres



One could say that it's quite poignant that we had to wake up at an alarmingly early hour, ranging from 4 to 5 AM – I don't even think the sun was up; dangerous and irresponsible if we may say – to visit the graves of dead predecessors. The only consolation we had was that the teachers had to wake up just as early, if not earlier than us.

It was 6:45 AM on a crisp March morning; the cold sunlight filtered through the translucent windows, setting the scene for the most juxtaposed beginning of a brilliant – sunny – day.

The coach journey was probably the most

unremarkable event of the day, (if you can even call it an event), perhaps due to the fact that we fell asleep, even through the screeches, which our peers dared to call singing.

We boarded the ferry like pirates setting sail for some distant land and the P&Q glided through waves and mysterious fog, at an excruciating pace.

We had finally arrived and re-boarded the automobile to our first stop: the Menin Gate. A scenic Reginald Blomfield masterpiece, equally as touching as it is beautiful. An honorary monument full to the brim with the memories of a great sacrifice, which one cannot even begin to repay but definitely will not forget and will be forever grateful.

We then went to explore the town, which looked like something out of a storybook town. It incorporated historic and modern in a great blend. Although, the chocolate shops and magnificent St Martin's Cathedral were the second best excursion of the day: a great looming spire with a revered countenance.

Afterwards, we ventured into Tyne Cot memorial grave. It was quite a sombre experience and, every time we remember it, a feeling of empathy and heaviness seems to come; the inscriptions on the graves, that seemed to woefully stretch on, were so heartfelt and ... sad. For all those thousands of men to give up their valuable lives, it seems like a heavy burden to make something meaningful of ours – after all, they died for us to have the chance to do so.

Saving the best for last, we delved into Hill 62, where in the trenches we trooped on, screaming and laughing our lungs out: we got soooo muddy! The trench conditions were horrendous with high water levels and deceptive shell holes that just popped out of nowhere! It was by far the most fun activity of the day: dark tunnels; invisible, lurking insects; unknown species of bacteria – all in a day's work!

By Temi Abodunrin and Hannah Adedeji, Year 9



Geography

Year 12 Geography Trip to Iceland

The trip started with most of us waking up at 6am and hauling a case full of luggage down to the school. And then, a mere five hours later, we were in Iceland, which was more than living up to its name, with a raging blizzard threatening to take people's hats from them. After we grabbed our luggage our next stop was the Blue Lagoon, a man-made lagoon, rich in minerals and heated by water from the nearby geothermal power plant. The lagoon was a great place to relax after the stressful three-hour flight. In the evening, we went to the hotel, which had a deceptively modern lobby, yet when you get to the rooms, they look like they're from three decades ago. Still, there was a TV that played footage of Microsoft PowerPoint 2003 and the beds were surprisingly comfy, so I'm not complaining.

"We should've just gone to Dorset" -Joe Cast, whilst sat in the Blue Lagoon.

On the second day, we saw waterfalls. Lots and lots of waterfalls, namely the ones at Seljalandsfoss and Skogafoss, which were really cool to see, especially up close. Later that day we went to Reynishverfi, a black sand beach, which would have been more relaxing had it not been freezing cold, and had the waves not been threatening to drag us under and drown us. We also went to the coastal town of Vik, where we had the opportunity to purchase some traditional Icelandic fish products. I did not try any, but if the smell was any indication, then I probably would have been throwing up for weeks. I'm pretty sure a slab of that fish ended up in one of the hotel mini-fridges. In the evening I had eight slices of pizza and then fell asleep watching television like the horrible human being I am.

Throughout the third day, we went to all sorts of places: the Hellisheloi power station, the town of Hverageroi and the Geysir site. But, in my opinion, the best thing we saw on that day was the double waterfall at Gullfoss, which is one of the most photographed areas in Iceland, and with good reason! The view of the falls was outstanding, and fellow student Mikolai loved it so much, he decided to stay! Or he got lost. Either way, he was greeted back onto the coach with a hearty round of applause from the entire coach after fifteen minutes. We then arrived at the second hotel, a Viking-themed one. Getting set up here was a bit less organised, since the hotel decided to change all the rooms around - twice, I might add. When we got to the room, the five-person room was fit for about two people - three at most- which is still better than the two person rooms, which were no bigger than a dog cage.

During day four, we had the chance to go to Snaefellisjokull National Park, Arnarstapi, Djupalonssandur and many other hard-to-pronounce places - with Djupalonssandur being my highlight, thanks to the awe-inspiring views, and interesting rock formations. In the evening we tried to go to the Domino's near the hotel, but it was shut! What kind of well-respected establishment keeps ALL its lights on when it's shut?! That's just false advertising or something. On the bright side, at least we all got to see the northern lights! All of us except Joe Cast that is, who insisted that, "we're not going to see them anyway". They weren't as colourful or as vivid as in photos you see online, but they were still really cool, and if it was the only thing we did in Iceland, it would still have made the trip worthwhile.

"They're just some lights in the sky" -Joe Cast, regarding the northern lights.

On the fifth and final day, we were trapped in a pitch black cave with a random guy. In hindsight, not the safest activity, but we had a great time navigating the caves and checking out the different rock formations. Afterwards, we got a chance to wander around the town, grab some overly expensive souvenirs and get some snacks for the plane. On our travels home, we had a solid three hours to think back on what a wonderful trip we had all had.

Alfie Cromarty, Year 12 (Photography by Connor Townsend, Year 12)



Trip to the Making of Harry Potter at the Warner Bros. Studios

On Thursday 19th May, the year 10 DT GCSE and the year 12 DT IB students travelled to Hertfordshire to visit the Warner Bros. Studios and take 'The Making of Harry Potter' tour to see some of the original sets, props and costumes used throughout the production of the films. The aim of the trip was to discover the many interesting jobs that can be taken on from studying DT and the exciting lines of work a career in design can take you in. It also makes you appreciate how much effort goes into the Harry Potter films, or any film for that matter.

We started the tour by watching a short film about the studios that were used for the sets of the Harry Potter films, before entering through the gates of Hogwarts and into the world of witchcraft and wizardry. We walked through the Great Hall, which we were told was a 'hot set', meaning it was ready to be filmed on and had been more or less been untouched since filming. We continued through into a large warehouse consisting of many small and large scale sets, some of which

were life size buildings that towered above us. We even got the chance to board the Hogwarts Express at Platform 9 3/4 and travel to Hogwarts ourselves! Seeing places like Hagrid's Hut released the inner child in all of us and made us feel even closer to the world of Harry Potter. A personal favourite of mine was the colossal model of Hogwarts, which was right at the end of the tour, with a whole room dedicated to a marvellous grand finale to such a brilliant tour.

I think every single one of us who came along would definitely recommend The Making of Harry Potter at the Warner Bros. Studios to any Harry Potter fan and anyone who would like to find a career in DT or film. It was brilliant to gain an insight to the many jobs that take place behind the scenes of a film: set design, cinematography, special effects, costume, hair and makeup are all the amazing directions you can go in with a DT career. It's hard to understand the time and effort that is spent on making sure a picture is of the prestigious standard of the Harry Potter films and the experience really

makes you appreciate how it all comes together.

Michael Knight, Year 12



Chatham's Historical Dockyard

Myself and about 11 other people went on a trip on ECM day to the dockyards. It was a fun time! Mrs Haslam and Mr Lines were also there.

At around 9:00, we went on the minibus and travelled through until about 10:00.

Then our guide came and toured us through the ships. The ships were really tight for space and that was where the sailors had to live in during World War 2. We toured around to see their rooms and they had some space. The sailors would have to talk to the captain underneath to steer the ship using a tube and the stairs were really small.

After that period, the ship's guns weren't fast enough for the planes, so they added rocket missiles! We went to another part of the dockyards, where we each had a turn to see which rocket hit the target. Unfortunately, mine span around to the left. The joint winners were Mr Lines and Kar Wai.

At 12:00, we ate lunch until about 12:35. That was a great part too, but for once, it wasn't the best.

The best times happened when we went in the "Secret lab". There we did some experiments like ice-stacking. We even got to make some ice-cream from fairly pristine ice cubes (it was chocolate).

Afterwards, we went to visit the submarine. We got to see what it was like - it was crammed with not much space, but it had lots of technical wires and holes for communication. Luckily, I am really skinny so I managed to get past it.

At around 14:15, we said "Bye" to our guide. Once again we travelled on the minibus to get back to school, and I got to my locker at 15.02 just before the bell went.

Daniel Ngenegbo, Year 8



Leaving Teachers

An Interview with Mr Ward



I have been at Bexley Grammar 20 years, seven as a student, and thirteen as a teacher, so nearly twice as long as a teacher than as a student, and I think I'm possibly one of the few people that's actually talked to every Head that's been at the school. School's been open since 1955, which is the year I was born, which is quite coincidental.

Do you have a favourite memory from your time at BGS?

Favourite memories from Bexley Grammar... There's lots of them, obviously... I've been a DoS for the last four years, and that's been a really good

time, so getting that job is a good memory. Another one that stands out, particularly, is, one year, I had an environmental systems IB class, four boys in it, and they all got level 7, which is the highest level you can get, so that was a really good memory... I don't think that I could do that again or that could happen again.

Has the school changed a great deal whilst you've been here?

School has changed a lot while I've been here, doubled in size, pupils and buildings: there were only six-hundred students when I came as a kid, there were only four houses, not six, and in fact the first lesson I ever had in year seven, Miss Mabbs taught me, the very first lesson, she taught R.E., and one of the last lessons that I was taught, Mr Wellman taught me, which are the two Heads of the new Houses, so I know those two members of staff. Mr Collins also taught me (there were two of them, two brothers) they both taught me, but the others had left by the time I started. And as a Sixth Former, I had to wear a uniform, whereas Sixth Formers today just have to look smart, but our uniform was exactly the same as lower down in the school, apart from the tie:

Sixth Formers had two stripes on their tie, whereas lower school had one... a blue tie with a white stripe. Also in Year Twelve and Thirteen, we still had to wear caps, until we finally got them abolished, but when I went into Year Twelve, I had to wear a cap as well.

What are your plans after leaving?

What are my plans after leaving? A lot of people know that I fish, and I'm after a world record, so my plan is to get that world record fish, and fish the world. I've got plans- I'm going to Panama next year with some friends to fish, but I'm also going to go to the Foothills of the Himalayas, Australia, the Fraser River in Canada to catch the white sturgeon, so I've got lots of places I'm going to go to and lots of traveling to do... My flat needs a bit of care, and now that I'm retired I can start to do it up properly and make it look better, and also see more of my grandkids... I've got three grandkids and it'll be nice to see more of them.

What do you think you'll miss most after leaving?

What will I miss? I'll miss the people - pupils and staff - it's the interactions with people here that's always been the nicest thing, and I will miss that, particularly my Year Elevens, that I've taken through the school- I'll miss them a lot.

Alfie Cromarty, Year 12

An Interview with Mr Goodman



How has your time at BGS been, so far?

I absolutely loved it! I've been here for 10 years and, I know this sounds a little bit clichéd, but I can't remember a time when I didn't want to come to school, you know, and you get

that with some jobs, you just think 'I don't particularly fancy today'. I've always really enjoyed it here, and all the staff have been really friendly; the students have been great to me- really, really nice.

What would you say has been your favourite memory – or maybe a funny story?

My favourite memory has to be making flower pots dance outside someone's window while they were being observed by Mr Shackleton. It was a teacher called Claire Scott, and she was having an observation by Mr Shackleton. Three different teachers went to the greenhouse, got some flowerpots and made them dance at the window, while Mr Shackleton was watching her lesson to try and make her laugh.

Another favourite memory? Oh- playing for the football team! I really loved that, yeah, the staff football team. Those were good times, although we never ever beat the Sixth Formers, so that was a nuisance.

Oh and one really embarrassing thing, Mr Shackleton, my Head of Department, has never said anything about it, but another teacher and I were having an elastic band war – and that's very childish, I know – but he pinged me and it got me right on the face, so I looked like Harry Potter, and in retaliation, I burst into his room, while he was teaching, with a pocket full of elastic bands, ready to pin him in the corner, and as I kicked the door open, Mr Shackleton had swapped rooms with him (laughs), and was teaching on the board. So, I jumped in with my elastic bands, and said "Sorry, wrong room", and just walked out, and he's never said anything about it since. So that was quite fun.

But the Maths Department, more than anything, just all the different people that have worked there, I have made some good friendships as well.

Any advice to new teachers?

Remain good humoured. Don't take your

job too seriously – of course it's incredibly important, the students' education, but it's also important to be light-hearted. Ensure that you create an atmosphere where you want to come to work, and your colleagues want to interact with you and have fun. So, I think also to be relaxed, because this is a great school and you don't have to get uptight about what you're doing. The students are there; they help you most of the time with conflict with other students.

How would you say your teaching style differs from other teachers, and how would you possibly develop it further?

I don't think there's that much of a difference from other teachers, but I tend to think that one of my strengths is that I react to what students want. I don't go in there, necessarily, with a complete and formal lesson plan, and know what I want to deliver; I'm happy to be flexible when students ask questions, and want to know and have a little bit more inquiring about mathematics, so I think that's one of the things I really had to change coming to this school. When I was teaching at other schools, I was much more prescriptive about what I was going to do; I think, here, I've been quite flexible, and one of the things that I try to do in lessons, as I said a moment ago, is to remain good-humoured, I think that really helps.

So what do you plan on doing after this?

I'm going to a new school, Darrick Wood, I know I look old but I'm not retiring just yet. So it's a school in Orpington that I've worked at before, a long time ago, 15 years ago, and I was there for two years, and I really liked it there, but I'd switched schools to become a Head of Department, that's why I moved in the first place, but I've always had a soft spot for it. So, yeah, that's my next venture, going back to teaching in a comprehensive school, where the students will be a little bit more challenging (chuckles), so I'm going to have to vary my style a little bit, I think.

Is it better than here?

No (laughs) there's nothing better than here- this is a fantastic place to work. There's a part of me that feels really sad about leaving, of course, but 10 years is a long time to stay in one place, and I know this sounds silly, but I kind of feel I need a different challenge- I've become a bit stale. This sounds arrogant and complacent, but I kind of feel like I can walk into a lesson and just start teaching anything that anyone asks, now, I need something different.

Why do you whistle in the corridors?

I don't know, it keeps me happy. It's a stupid thing, I know, and sometimes I sing as well, which is even worse. I just think it lets people know that I'm happy to be here and I hope that's infectious – that's not why I do it, I whistle because I'm happy. Sorry if it's annoyed you (laughs).

Enjoy your new school! We hope it's not too hard leaving us!

Ashita Chawla, Year 12

Happy Pickle Pages

Current Affairs



The three 'Brexiters' on leaving the EU

As the majority of you shall know, on June 23rd the UK will hold a referendum to decide whether to stay or leave the European Union. Despite not being able to vote in such referendum, over the past few months this issue has inundated my screens and ears and in doing so has caught my curiosity, given the way Europe has affected our past and how this referendum may affect our future. I myself feel no inclination to sway to a certain side of the argument, but do feel that 'Brexit' supporters tend to be put under much scrutiny for their divergent viewpoint whose rationality ought to be reflected upon instead of oppressed by most mainstream media.

One could argue that, in leaving Europe, it would grant the UK a reinvention, as we rekindle our status of independence and in doing so satisfy a demand for a sovereign state. The EU has become centralised and over-regulated, with such rules in Brussels that stipulate the shape of bananas and cucumbers! The economic bloc we bought into in 1973 has expanded beyond its limits, one might say, with 27 countries no longer being able to account for the

interests of 1/28th. Our national pride is being diluted with the political interests of not-very interesting countries. As actress Liz Hurley put it: 'I yearn for the days when my passport got stamped when I went anywhere in Europe' - Nostalgia seems to be playing a large part in the pitch for Brexit, and, while slogans such as 'make Britain great again' are becoming somewhat of a banal nationalist cliché, there is an element of fear regarding the future of Britain's place in Europe should we vote to stay.

Another feature of the Brexit campaign is the potential for lower prices that we could see should we leave the Union. This economic benefit may surprise you given the recent claims of your income being reduced by £4,300 on leaving Europe. However, the EU aims to 'protect' industry by giving handouts to farmers and restricting trawl of fishing-boats and so on. These strict regulations would make Britain less competitive in food pricing as Europe could become isolated in its costly commodities. This would contradict any claim that staying in Europe keeps the UK at the forefront of economic affairs, as how

can we stay ahead whilst our prices lag behind?

As a final point, I must discuss the root of malaise in all supporters of the 'Brexit' front, that being immigration. A touchy subject to address, only, how could one ignore the subject given the threats raised by the recent 'migrant crisis' in Europe? This influx, descending from the Middle-East and African nations, has raised many questions and created an atmosphere of fear around Europe, as demand for strong borders remains a priority for the majority of voters. Voters of Leave argue that these migrants take jobs and places in schools, but this strain breaches economic borders too as Michael Gove claims 'public services such as the NHS will face an unquantifiable strain', ultimately costing the taxpayers in funding for this expansion. Fear regarding immigration can be xenophobic and inappropriate no doubt, however, evidence regarding the EU and its place in the migrant crisis deserve consideration regarding our place in Europe.

Emrys Luker-Brown, Year 12

Why Britain Should Stay in the EU

The EU itself, and the way it works

One of the key complaints and reasons why some think Britain should leave the EU is the lack of influence British people have in how the EU is run, and this is a fair complaint, to a certain extent. However, although it's true that the EU is not the most democratic of governing bodies – its only democratically elected institution is the European Parliament – its democratic deficit is steadily decreasing. Out of the five institutions that make up the EU, its Parliament remains the only institution with members elected by the British people,

but its powers are growing. Originally, its role was primarily advisory with little influence, but after European treaties such as the Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice treaties, its role has expanded. It has been granted power of veto in several policy areas, and has the ability to dismiss the entire Commission (the arguably most powerful, executive institution of the EU) in extreme circumstances. These may not seem like major changes but they allow elected MEPs from Britain to now have much more control over the direction the EU is taken and the way it is run; thus discounting the argument that the British

people have no control over the actions of the EU.

Trade

If Britain were to leave the EU, its trade would be massively affected and would take many uncertain years to recover. Membership of the EU offers good trade links with the rest of Europe – 44% of British exports are bought by EU countries. Members significantly increase trade with other members, and this has no negative effects on trade with non-members. However, if the country were to

leave, new trade agreements would have to be agreed, and that is not simple; especially when by leaving, Britain will most certainly be angering EU member countries. An example of this: Canada's trade deal with the EU gives them fewer benefits than the one we currently have, and it isn't even decided yet – it's been made over 7 years and still is not in force. How can we expect any potential trade deals Britain tries to make after leaving will be any better?

Sovereignty

Many British people worry about the loss of British sovereignty caused by EU membership, and the removal of power from Westminster to Brussels. However, the situation is not as dire as some believe. Although no one can deny that Britain has lost power, it has not lost that much, and the advantages of EU membership make the loss excusable. It's true that Britain has no influence in agriculture or fishing policy, but those are not major industries in Britain as they

are in other EU countries. In terms of economics, Britain's influence is great; the country has an economic veto, which was used successfully to keep Britain out of the euro currency. As well as this, many other areas of policy are influenced very little or not at all by the EU, including Education, Health, Housing and Welfare. And further reforms have been bargained for, such as an end to UK-European political integration, and restrictions on access to the British welfare system for new EU migrants.

Stella Gowans, Year 12

In search of safety: The refugee crisis is humanity's crisis

When Syrian refugees make the long and dangerous journey to and across Europe, they are faced with two types of walls. One is made of metal and armed by guards, and forces them to make a home out of a muddy field in which they are left for days and weeks on end. The other is a wall of silence, built by the rest of the world, as we turn a blind eye to the horrific atrocities that are happening on our doorsteps. Both walls are trapping thousands and thousands of displaced Syrians – now scattered in overcrowded informal settlements in very poor living conditions – from obtaining something so simple, something that we so brutally take for granted: safety. The most vulnerable are the young, who face risk from sickness, abuse, exploitation, violence, rape and so much more. They are far from safe.

Our response has been simply to label them a problem, find ways of deterring them or turning them back and evidently dehumanise them. When talking about the matter of refugees, we use dehumanising language, which ultimately reduces human lives down to mere numbers and statistics. We have to step back and notice that behind the obscure news reports and staggering statistics on our screens, there are real people, who – just like us - have families, loved ones, friends; their own stories, dreams and goals. These human

lives have also been torn apart by death and bloodshed and, because of this, now is a time in which they need empathy and compassion more than ever.

Refugees are often lumped together with migrants - people who have left their homes in search of work and a better life. But they are different. Refugees do not travel in search of economic opportunity but to escape war, persecution, death, torture and rape, and because they do not have a home to go to. This is what the world so often forgets.

It took just one image of a young boy – 3 year-old Alan Kurdi – lying face down on a Turkish beach to wake us up from a dark slumber of ignorance and contempt. The photograph of his lifeless body – splashed across hundreds of international newspapers – became the defining image of the refugee crisis. Following this, there seemed to be a shift in our views, a surge of support and compassion. Even The Daily Mail seemed to change their previously unsympathetic views. But 10 months down the line, we seem to have forgotten all about the millions of refugees still desperately in search of safety. They've been pushed to the back of the queue of pressing news stories. When we allow the refugee crisis to drop off the front pages, we (once again) remove the humanity of those fleeing unimaginable

horror. Their homelands have been utterly decimated – often by our own governments. What I find most disturbing, though, is that whilst refusing 3000 children the right to a decent standard of living and quality of life in Britain, David Cameron's government is tearing Syria apart even more. It makes no sense to me. It's also a travesty when a country like Denmark are seizing goods from refugees to allegedly make ends meet, yet have enough wealth to join the parade of countries bombing Syria.

The Syrian refugee crisis is arguably one of the most disastrous, shameful humanitarian crises since the Holocaust, the South African Apartheid and the Rwandan Genocide. Among all these atrocities, there is a common denominator: indifference. We are all guilty of it. Perhaps the immensity of such a tragedy makes it almost too difficult to comprehend. Or we simply think these people are just too far away for us to care. But this is selfish and, although some disagree, the refugee crisis is humanity's crisis. It cannot and should not be ignored. Refugees are not like you and me. They are you and me. That terrible river of the wretched and the damned flowing through Europe is my family, and I refuse to turn my back on them.

Sophie Taylor, Year 12

Gay Pride (and Prejudice)



The year is 1969, in Greenwich Village, New York City. Despite having a substantial LGBTQ+ population, there are few places that welcome them due to legislation against 'public' homosexuality and general social prejudice. The establishments that do are often bars, selling liquor without a licence and run by the Mafia. In one bar such as this, the Stonewall Inn, during the early hours of the 28th June, the NYPD aim to carry out a raid – not only because it is selling alcohol illegally, but because it is frequented by the most marginalised

groups within the LGBTQ+ community: transwomen and men, drag queens, and queer people of colour. Raids are commonplace because of this very fact, and so the raid on the Stonewall Inn is expected to play out as usual, with little opposition.

It does not. Those dressed in feminine clothing refuse to have their 'sex verified' by officers, and others will not produce identification. The turning-point of the raid – sparking the 'riot' – is the abuse of Stormé DeLarverie, a mixed-race lesbian,

by police, who strike her with batons because she complains that her handcuffs are too tight. This incites the crowd to violence, and they begin to throw various missiles at the police ranging from coins to bricks. Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, both transwomen of colour, are key instigators of this rebellion against the police, which is only further radicalised as more people arrive to demonstrate. These demonstrations last for another 5 days, and include clashes with New York Riot Police. By the end of the riots, the Stonewall Inn is smashed up and burned out, and several participants and officers are injured, but the LGBTQ+ community of Greenwich Village and Manhattan is inspired to unite intersectionally.

This union culminates in the establishment of the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Activists Alliance, and the publication of multiple queer newsletters and magazines to push LGBTQ+ politics to the forefront of the public consciousness. It is a year later, on the anniversary of the first riot, that the first Pride Marches take place in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago to celebrate the events at the Stonewall Inn. Since then, Pride Marches have taken place in cities across the world, and are enjoyed by queer people and heterosexuals alike.

It is here that the issue lies: startlingly few people are aware of Pride's beginnings, and yet are prepared to ignorantly indulge in it. Pride is not just a feel-good

celebration of the LGBTQ+ community and all its achievements, it is also a political demonstration and opportunity to induce change. The way that it has been made mainstream and 'cis-het-friendly' over the years makes it difficult for the true beginnings of the marches to be understood – ignoring the key participation of trans-people and people of colour in the social and political liberation of the LGBTQ+ community is a stab in the metaphorical back, a spit in the face of those who risked the most to resist and rebel. That's not to say, however, that all straight white cisgender people should be barred from Pride Marches and events; the participation of people from all different backgrounds is essential to furthering the cause of all rights movements and for advocating institutional change.

What I call for is sincerity – why should Pride and the LGBTQ+ community have to censor and 'sanitise' itself for the sake of making outsiders comfortable? Why should Pride be depoliticised and whitewashed just to include those who don't need its advocacy? Why, if you are willing to celebrate Pride, are you unwilling to accept and champion the efforts of the most marginalised – the most ignored – in the movement?

Because if Pride has to misrepresent itself, then who's it even for?

Miles Stevenson, Year 12



Make the Most of Summer

Cut the grass and de-web the Barbie; stash your socks and find your flip-flops; say "Arrivederci!" hot chocolate by the fire and "Aloha!" ice tea by the pool! It might be a little bit soggy outside, but it's (very nearly) holiday time. To mark the occasion, here's my guide to getting the most from your summer.

1. Missed out on tickets to Reading? Or do you just not have enough will-power (or baby wipes) to face a muddy weekend in the North? There's no need to commit to a summer of solitary Spotify; locations a little closer to home are hosting a series of great music festivals this summer. So whether you're looking for an enchanted woodland, mouth-watering feasts or music that's edgier than a dodecahedron, you're guaranteed to find something to suit your tastes. Hop Farm's Chilled in a Field Festival and The Secret Garden Party in Cambridgeshire are both taking place at the end of July. Dartford Park's Festival, in a couple of days, is also a fantastic opportunity to enjoy some free music and soak up the sun.

2. In June, the world's highest and longest tunnel slide was wrapped around the iconic loops and curves of Anish Kapoor's Orbit sculpture at London's Olympic Park. Join the queue this summer for 40 seconds of joy!

3. Make sure you keep an eye on Team GB at this summer's Olympic Games. Although 2012's medal tally will be tough to beat, there is plenty of potential for success. When the 21-year-old breaststroker, Adam Peaty, won four golds at the European Championships in May, my mum could not contain her tears of joy; she reckons he will be one to watch in Rio.

4. For the books to read on the beach this summer, take a look at the recommendations from the English Department. Don't worry, you can trust them! And if the weather is dismal and pouring with rain, the magazine team has got you covered for films, TV shows and video games. Personally, I think my highlight will be Baz Luhrmann's first foray onto the small-screen with *The Get Down*. If you love his glittering adaptations of *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Moulin Rouge*, then don't miss this exploration of the birth of Hip-Hop in the Bronx when it comes to Netflix on the 13th of August.

5. This summer is the perfect time to take advantage of the world-renowned (and completely free) museums and galleries on our doorstep: a brand-new, ten-storey extension, with all new displays and 360-degree views of London's skyline is opening at the Tate Modern, and a

new exhibition at the British Museum, is showcasing two lost cities of ancient Egypt recently discovered submerged under the sea.

6. The heated 50m outdoor pool at Charlton Lido in Greenwich is an undiscovered gem. Images of the Artic Sea do tend to spring to mind as you take your first plunge, but if the sun's out, and with a suitable amount of peer pressure, going for a swim with a few friends and slurping on an ice-cream by the pool is a great way to cool off. For those inevitable days when the English weather remembers itself, a new Better Extreme Centre with wall-to-wall trampolines is open in Barking.

7. The summer holidays are an ideal time to fulfil that fantasy of a picnic in the park. A mix of friends, dappled sun, and a spread including cocktail sausages-makes the perfect recipe. If you're not inspired by sitting on the floor for lunch, then migrate to your back garden, add a few chairs and a table, maybe some fairy lights, and you've got yourself a more civilised garden party.

However you choose to spend these gloriously golden six weeks, I recommend trying something new. You never know, you might enjoy it so much that you stick with it, and if not- it's another memory for the bank.

Eve Lynch, Year 12

Shows to Binge this Summer

Alfie Jack Cromarty: It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia

Always Sunny is soon to be the longest running live-action comedy series, and with good reason, as it is one of the most consistently funny shows out there. With hilarious writing and an all-star cast, including the wonderfully erratic Charlie Day and the troll-like legend Danny DeVito, Always Sunny is definitely worth a watch, and there's enough there to keep you entertained for a while.

Gemma Laws: Orphan Black

Do you love drama and sci-fi with a hint of comedy? Are you interested in a well-developed female-dominated range of

characters offering LGBT representation? Do you enjoy awe-inspiring, highly flexible acting and great cinematography? Well, if you said yes to any one of those questions, then Orphan Black is the right show for you (and if you said no to all three, then we can't be friends).

Matthew Hamilton: Re:Zero kara Hajimeru Isekai Seikatsu

This show has pulled me in since the first episode, thanks to its approach to completely screwing over the main character every couple of episodes. I legitimately feel sorry for the guy, as his life gets wrecked on a daily basis. Also, the animation is beautiful and it's really entertaining.

its era, tight platforming and loads to do, with 120 different 'Shrine Sprites' to collect across eight different worlds.

Gemma Laws: Animal Crossing: New Leaf (Nintendo 3DS)

Sure, games like Call of Duty, Fallout and GTA may be entertaining, but sometimes you need a break from action and violence. For those times where you prefer something a bit more relaxing, the Animal Crossing games are an excellent way of wasting hours on end. In New Leaf, you are the mayor of a town filled with lovable talking animals. Calm, endearing and strangely addictive, you won't be able to put this one down!

Matthew Hamilton: DOOM (PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One)

Taking the shooter genre back to its roots, DOOM showcases how sometimes you don't need fancy perk decks and quick scopes to make a good shooter. It's brutal, looks amazing and shooting endless hordes of demons to metal music has never been so fun.



Deepesh Marwaha: Daredevil

With the second season of Daredevil having just come out, now is the perfect time to give the heavily accredited show a chance. A comic-book based show with realistic and believable characters is rare, yet Daredevil manages to capture the depth and intensity of characters with such consequential responsibilities. Moreover, the introduction of the Punisher in the second season is one of the excelling features. Frank Castle plays the character extremely well, and definitely warrants watching the show.

Miles Stevenson: Preacher

Based on the hit 90s comic of the same name, Preacher follows small-town Texas preacher, Jesse Custer (Dominic Cooper), after he is possessed by an abomination named Genesis. Questioning both his faith and new-found powers, Jesse decides to go on a mission to find God, accompanied by vampire, Proinsias Cassidy (Joseph Gilgun), and hit-woman, Tulip O'Hare (Ruth Negga). The excellent casting and well-executed interplay between graphic violence and dark comedy make this show the ideal watch this summer. Season 1 is available to watch on Amazon, with a new episode every Monday.

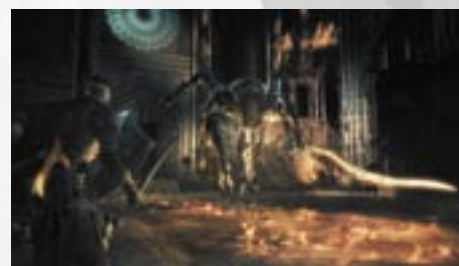
Malcolm Tidmarsh: Hai to Gensou no Grimgar (Grimgar of Fantasy and Ash)

This animé is relatively new and despite being perhaps a bit too short and maybe taking an overused style of animé (psychological based), it is still a nice breath of fresh air with all the good animé series coming to an end. With an old fashioned take on the scenery mixed in with modern animations, it's always a pleasure to watch and enjoy. The animé starts off slowly but quickly builds up towards the end, with plenty of action and food for thought it's worth giving a shot if you enjoy animé.

Films to Watch this Summer

Alfie Jack Cromarty: Super Mario Sunshine (Nintendo GameCube)

Swapping out the typical Mushroom Kingdom for a sunny island resort, Mario Sunshine is like summer on a disc. Mario finds himself framed for creating a massive goopy mess across the island and sets out to clear his name. The classic game has some of the best graphics of



Deepesh Marwaha: Dark Souls 3 (PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One)

The third instalment by Miyazaki's team at Bandai Namco, Dark Souls 3, brings a variety of new mechanics to the game's format, whilst still retaining the series' staple aspects - the consistent failing again and again and again as you struggle with the game's iconic difficulty. People often exaggerate when they say something isn't for the faint-hearted, yet I feel like the term undersells the difficulty when applied to Dark Souls. Newcomers to the franchise are often greeted by constant feelings of failure and a sense of being which enhances the challenge of the game. The feeling when you do finally take down the boss with a weapon larger than you is the defining feature of the game's challenge, and is absolutely worth a go. Just note that everything will be bigger, stronger and more durable than you.

Malcolm Tidmarsh: Hearthstone (PC, Tablet, Phone)

Although Hearthstone isn't a particularly new game, with a new expansion out, it is a perfect opportunity to start playing or come back to it. With new cards to play with, you can be even more innovative with your decks, as well as the new and creative game modes "tavern brawls" coming out every week.

Books to Read this Summer

Gemma Laws: *Never Let Me Go*, by Kazuo Ishiguro

The simplest way to describe *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro would be as a coming of age novel, though it dips into multiple genres. The main character, Kathy, is a carer looking back on her time in a mysterious boarding school. Although it seems a simple enough premise, the excitement is in the slow reveal of various secrets. It addresses complex subjects such as mortality and what it means to be human. If you want a book that's gripping and makes you think, then this is an excellent book to try!

Matthew Hamilton: *Hellsing*, by Kouta Hirano

Despite having a completely nonsensical storyline and relying on heaps of ultra-violence, *Hellsing* is still one of (if not my favourite) series to read. If Nazi vampires invading London sounds like a fun time, then this is for you.



Deepesh Marwaha: *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, by Luo Guanzhong

Set during the conflict-filled time at the end of one of China's biggest Dynasty, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* follows three main kingdoms over 100 years as they each strive to unify the country. Widely regarded as an incredibly impactful piece of literature, the book heavily dwells on the idea of ambition. Characters with varying levels of morality all strive to take control. Feudal states all engage with assorted battle strategies and diplomacy.

The book is a great insight into such a battle-ravaged period of history.

Lisa Clinch: *Watership Down*, by Richard Adams

My favourite novel, *Watership Down* by Richard Adams, follows the adventures of Hazel and his group of rabbits, who escape their warren from approaching death, sensed by Fiver. On their perilous journey, they face the sorrowful rabbits of 'the warren of the shining wire' and the savage General Woundwort of Efrafa to find their new home. The novel is charming in the way it uses vocabulary from the rabbit's own language, called Lapine, but also confronts man's careless cruelty towards nature through the bloodshed humans cause amongst rabbits.

Malcolm Tidmarsh: *Boku Dake ga Inai Machi (Erased)*, by Kei Sanbe

With a unique storyline, it's a great psychological, mystery, visual novel which delves deeply into the minds of the characters, as well as giving an unusual take on problems within society. Although the story can at times be very complex, this is what makes it brilliant, adding to the engagement and thrill as well being a relatively quick read.

Melanie Martinez *Crybaby* review

I am one of those people who will listen to a new song repeatedly until it is a tasteless lifeless shadow of its former self - in the words of Depeche Mode, I just can't get enough. You can imagine my gluttonous delight, then, when I plopped into the proverbial lap of a certain Melanie Martinez, falling in love with both her and her debut album, *Crybaby*.

I had seen Martinez's name peppered around the Internet a handful of times, on one or two social media platforms, recommendations, what have you been listening to lately - but only a few months ago did I click her name on Spotify and take a gander into her (relatively) recently released album. Martinez initially rose to public recognition in her participation in *The Voice USA* (2012). Eliminated in the fifth week, she started working on her own music and her debut single *Dollhouse* came out in 2014. The subsequent year saw Melanie stagger the release of several more songs, such as *Pity Party* and *Soap*, before dropping her first (and only, so far) album in August. She is currently on the *Cry Baby* tour.

How does one describe Melanie Martinez's music? Well, the running theme throughout each song seems to be this sinister take on infancy and childhood, some sort of vanilla milkshake quietly laced with poison and vodka. The album weaves through a lyrical hotel

accommodating such guests as parental adultery, alcoholism, unsuccessful birthday parties, and dysfunctional, albeit outwardly 'perfect', families, and, in doing so, seems to nurture Martinez's social commentaries on current society. The marriage of babyish paraphernalia (carousels! birthday parties! sippy cups!) and starkly adult problems is admittedly a rather warped amalgamation. It seems that there's a lot more than originally meets the eye (or rather, ear) when it comes to Martinez's songs and their true messages, and so, repeatedly listening to the album becomes a kind of puzzle-solving activity: is this actually more sinister than it seems? What I particularly like about her music is the skill with which Martinez imbues mundane childhood memorabilia with darker double meanings when displaced into the twisted intricate mess that is *Adult Life*. Thus, *Mrs Potato Head* is not just an archetypal toy of US mass consumerism, but a metaphor for the pressures to be conventionally attractive and plastic surgery in today's society. Similarly, there is this stealthy snatching and rebranding of typical childhood notions at play; the comfort received from stuffed toys, for example, is completely subverted in *Teddy Bear*. Ultimately, when Martinez disfigures the same objects we cherished in our single digit years, plating them up with a generous dash of melancholia, it really is the nail in the coffin of our childhoods - in a good way.

The actual music is also pretty darn catchy - and fatally so. The sound, as with the actual album concept and lyrics, often fosters the melodies of blurred childish nostalgia albeit polished, hung out to dry, and spruced up with drum and bass scaffolding. A few songs, most notably *Alphabet Boy*, overtly adopt the sound effects associated with infancy, boasting the same innocent tinny tinkering and babyish echolalia. In any case, when such kittenish cradle talk meets the conventions of the pop music genre, it breeds an unorthodoxy that has been welcomed with hungry arms by the public.

Aside from that, Melanie Martinez's music videos are equally as gorgeous. They are, of course, all different, but nevertheless pad out along the formula of childhood-meets-adulthood-meets-Sinister Stuff. *Pity Party* quite literally illustrates an unpopular birthday party, with Martinez playing a progressively more and more angsty girl realizing that no one is coming. The pastel colour palette and 'perfect' appearances in conjunction with the persona's volatile emotional state, again, serve to dish up the sweet vs dark dichotomy that Martinez is becoming renowned for. Another video that particularly stands out to me is that of *Soap*. Martinez is featured in a bath with hair in wet rat-tailed ends and pink just-been-crying make up singing, film shots juddering with psychedelic colours. Martinez, in playing *Crybaby*, fosters

the wide-eyed, erratic demeanour of an upset child, as exercised in other videos, but something about her lone angst and the scatty filming soaks (ha, sorry) the scenes with an undeniable sense that something is very very wrong. Ultimately, the aesthetic value here is top notch - it seems clear that Martinez's uniqueness, both in material and as an individual (she has a cheese tattoo!), has to have been catalytic to her success as a 21-year-old talent. [She's only 4 years older than me and she's touring the world. I struggle to find matching socks in the morning.]

I suppose a good argument, however, also involves a counter argument. Although Crybaby seems to have proven successful, given its enthusiastic reception, I would say that a few songs seem a little samey - at least, at first listen. Another contention may be that, in adhering to the conceptual mold of her album, some songs perhaps would have waxed stronger in terms of sound if Martinez had been a little more flexible with her overarching concept.

In spite of these criticisms, it is evident that the pop music industry has been greatly endowed, and if not now, with Martinez at 21, then let's dub it a high interest investment. Potential is currency here, and I look forward to seeing what Martinez comes to churn out next - to miss out would be a Felony Martinez. (I'll let myself out.)

Daniya Baiguzhayeva, Year 12

Undertale



Stay determined! You're going to be alright! You cannot give up just yet...

Undertale exploded into existence in September 2015 and yet — nine months later — the words 'stay determined' are still popping up in every crack of the internet. From just a quick, outside glance, it's difficult to understand why this game has had such a profound impact on people: what makes it so different from any other PC game? Well, for a trip to Steam and £6.99, Undertale changes the very nature of story-telling, completely erases what you thought you knew about games, and mercilessly challenges your view of what's right and what's wrong.

Created by the incredible Toby Fox, Undertale is listed as an "Indie RPG", but don't be fooled into expecting those typical gaming tropes. From my experience, RPGs tend to fall into two categories: "Turn-based" which focuses on game-play, rather than story, and involves a lot of slogging and levelling up, but is extremely satisfying (Pokemon, Final Fantasy etc) and "Story-tellers", where the game-play is either puzzles or just finding the right objects, but the plot will grip your heart and squeeze until you shatter with a flood of emotions (Ib, Mad Father, To the Moon, Corpse Party etc). Both of these types are brilliant, in their own way, but I was yet to find one which capitalized on both of their good qualities and put them together.

Then Undertale came along.

The game starts off with some exposition: there has been a war between Humans and Monsters, and the Humans have won, banishing the Monsters to the Underground beneath the surface. You are an innocent human — a physical mix of Dora the Explorer and the (-_-) face, with a bad case of mute-protagonist-itis — and you have fallen into the Underground. Upon exploring, you come across a yellow flower and it begins to talk to you...

And, from then on, Undertale proceeds to take you on a heart-wrenching journey of twists and turns. In order to experience it in its entirety, it is of paramount importance that you go into Undertale blind, which is why I have described the plot to the bare minimum, as there are spoilers everywhere (I'm not kidding! Google 'Undertale' and you'll find spoilers within the first three links). The game tailors itself entirely to you — it reacts to however you choose to play it — and it remembers everything you do, even if you reset. If, however, you're like me and are concerned that your play-through might not show you everything that Undertale has to offer, then I'll give you a hint: there is a Pacifist run-through and a Genocide run-through. Bear that in mind.

But the pure heart and soul of the game comes from the characters. Whilst there is a gang of 'major' characters (who are astoundingly easy to fall in love with, especially two in particular, nyeh heh heh), every single character is unique, with their own hilarious personality: you could write a story for any character in this game, with no trouble at all. It's no surprise that there is so much fan-appreciation for this game, in fan-art, fanfiction and forums — you can tell that Toby Fox poured every ounce of imagination into Undertale's creation.

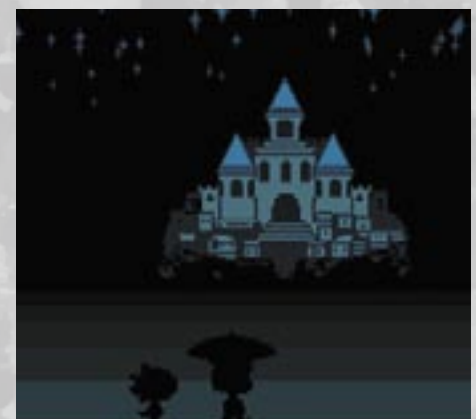
And the soundtrack, oh, the soundtrack! It's indescribably beautiful! Each setting has its own score, along with every 'major' character having their own theme, and every single one is innovative, gorgeous and inspiring! (Especially that one, for those who have played Undertale before. You know which theme I'm talking about.) I

could listen to the music for hours, without growing tired of it. It's that good.

If you want to be reminded of how deeply you can fall in love with something, then play Undertale. It will honestly change you.

Oh, also, there are skeleton puns. You're welcome.

Holly Morris, Year 12



Book review – The Opposite of Loneliness

At the age of just 22, Marina Keegan was already a prodigious author, playwright, poet and journalist. She was destined for literary success. Five days after her graduation from Yale University, Marina died in a car crash.

'The Opposite of Loneliness' is a collection of nine short stories and nine essays, written by Keegan in the short life that she had and captures her sheer talent already in full bloom. It takes its name from Keegan's last essay for the Yale Daily News, which went viral after she died. In it she writes, "What we have to remember is that we can still do anything. We can change our minds. We can start over [...] We're so young."

Although there is now an underlying sense of poignancy in her writing, her short stories are full of humour, sensitivity

and deep moral meaning. She didn't even solely rely on her young, college-girl perspective to tell her stories. Some of her strongest stories take place in Baghdad or 36,000 feet under the ocean or from the perspective of a hypochondriac and former ballerina. Her own personal narrative is brilliant, but her fiction is just as eloquent and insightful. The variety is also why this book is a must-read. If you don't particularly enjoy reading novels, 'The Opposite of Loneliness' is a little bit of everything. Fiction and non-fiction, essays and short stories and even a small sample of Keegan's poetry too – you cannot get bored. Her work is as diverse and unique as it is vividly observational on human life.

At its best, Keegan's writing vibrates – literally. Her words are so memorable that they ring out through your head and you can never quite forget them. (Well,

at least I can't). What I love about her writing is the ease at which we can read it. It is conversational in tone, yet it also radiates an air of truly deep intelligence and wisdom. Keegan may have only been 22 years old but she certainly did not write like she was. Her words hold such an emotional intensity that you cannot help but wonder what she would have achieved.

While this book is all the more remarkable because of its author's devastatingly early death, at its heart it's a reminder that life is too short. Every time I pick it up, it offers another little piece of hope and optimism and I know that it will be living on my bookshelf and read and re-read until it's completely dog-eared and worn out.

Sophie Taylor, Year 12

MCM Comic Con London



MCM London Comic Con. A Mecca for nerds, cosplayers and hip young lads like ourselves to gather and soak in culture from all over the world. Six of us united at the O2 end of the cable car, our route across the treacherous waters of the Thames awaited. However, it dawned on us that one of us was missing. After waiting countless years for our chicken masked friend, we decided that, as punishment, we should abandon him and force him to find his own way to the Excel Centre. After being charged nearly 4 whole pounds for one miniscule trip across the Thames, we finally made it to the Excel Centre. It was filled to the brim with people desperate to get inside as quickly as possible. We all bought priority tickets so we naturally assumed getting in would be easy. Unfortunately everyone else had the exact same idea. After walking what seemed like a marathon of a queue, we finally made it.

Once we got there, we linked up with our friend, and began to soak in Comic Con's unique atmosphere. It was a place filled with enthusiasm and zeal, with the majority of people dressing up as fictional characters (cosplayers) it had a wonderful sense of unity. Our group also cosplayed, well... most of us did, as shown in the photo. The effort put into some of the cosplays was amazing, some may have just lightly dressed to at least look like they tried, whereas others would come in awe-inspiring carbon-copy costumes of the original character, drawing huge attention and amazement from the people. The people who attend Comic Con are all extremely friendly as well, they will always say yes to taking photos and be happy to have light conversation, knowing they are in an area where everyone shares the same common interests. Admittedly, there were some people who were a bit different, but we prefer to ignore those exceptions.

The stalls were also amazing; with plenty of relatively new games available to play such as Overwatch it was a great opportunity to try out new things. There were also the odd stalls selling things which I wouldn't be allowed to explain in this article, but I will just assume you are clever people and understand what I mean. The food was somewhat disappointing; as well as being very expensive, it was pretty much a subpar attempt at recreating Japanese cuisine, which is saddening, considering we either had that option or to wait in an overcrowded queue for a sloppy and rushed Subway (yes we could have brought in food but none of us were smart enough to think of this genius idea).

After eating our amazing, passion-filled, loving meal we moved on to look at the other areas such as the autograph area, where many famous guests were, including film star Jesse Eisenberg and Elementary alum, John Noble. Not that we got to see them that is: signatures are expensive, as well as queues so long for some people you couldn't even see who you were getting an autograph from. Despite a lack of signatures, we didn't go home empty handed. Thanks to the insane amount of things on sale in Comic Con, we managed to pick up some extra goodies along the way before making our early exit home. Overall, the atmosphere was very good and the cosplays were amazing, however we did feel underwhelmed by the whole experience and expected a bit more punch; so unless you really have certain bits of merchandise you want to purchase I cannot say we can recommend going next year.

Alfie Cromarty, Matt Hamilton and Malcolm Tidmarsh, Year 12

Creative Writing

Fear is near, fear is here!

Throbbing heart and ragged breaths.
Fearing the future, fleeing in fright.
Goose-bumps appear and sweating will follow.
Smoke in your soul, clouding your mind.

Silence is sinister and shadows slip stealthily.
Draining your energy, driving you mad.
Peril peaks as the brutes, they bawl.
Smoke in your soul, clouding your mind.

Hollering horrors, horrendous and hidden.
Floundering ferally, fighting for freedom.
Suffocating slowly, scared and solitary.
Smoke in your soul, clouding your mind.

All around and approaching always.
Wailing weakly, praying for help.
Merciless immortals in their millions.
Smoke in your soul, clouding your mind.

Grabbing and grasping, gripping powerfully.
Inescapable, irrational to try.
Clomping, stomping, marching, backs arching.
Smoke is your soul, your mind in meltdown.

Sam Wilson, Year 7

Deliverance

Cloud's colossus; sea brine.

Tangerine sun silkily moults to reveal a
sour spangled soul.

An iridescent bird that craves deliverance
leaves its cage when her captor is
unaware.

New dawn fades.

Nerves scattered like birdseed. Find me.

Sonny Mitchell, Year 13

It's Much Simpler Than You Think

Tom

"What happened?" Tom Carter cried,
barely able to disguise his pain.

"It's much simpler than you think,"
answered a man, holding the corpse of
Tom's beloved sister, now nothing but an
abandoned, dull shipwreck, shrouded in
blood.

Trickles became a waterfall as the young
man fell to his shuddering knees.

"Who are you? You're a monst-"

"It's much simpler than you think,"
interjected the mysterious man, without a
hint of sorrow.

"Aaahhh!" Screeched Tom as his opponent
brought his doom (a jet black firearm).

Before he could blink, the ruthless figure
shot a bullet into Tom's chest. Pain
devoured his brain. He stared down to
see a pool of blood engulfing his school
clothes ...

School. Tom had had a horrific day. This
particular night he was going to admit to
his sister (who went to the same school)
that he was still being bullied. His parents
were having a weekend away for their
anniversary, however, their flight was
delayed. Though there was a terrific
advantage, he was being looked after by
his best friend, his only friend, his sister ...

The Man

Jack, 48, met Sarah Carter online. She
was 18. After getting a divorce from his
wife, he was extremely forlorn, to the point
of depression, and he joked with Sarah
online. Although he lied about his age
a miniscule bit (give or take 20 years),
it wasn't his fault – he 'loved' her too
much. Then, on a Monday, he was invited
round. He was ecstatic to say the least
and rushed to her address as swiftly as a
cheetah – but there was one problem, he
forgot about the age difference ...

He arrived, eager to see his 'eternal
partner'. Within moments of telling her
his true identity, he was slapped, insulted
by a serious accusation and told to get
out. Jack did NOT enjoy this. Tugging a
gun out of his coat (from his 'past life'), he
shot. Determined not to give up, Sarah
crawled her way to the kitchen, attempting
to grasp a fork in her now crimson hand.
Soon after, the man clenched his fist
around a knife...

"Just our first argument. Just our first
argument," he muttered to himself.

O Harrison, Year 7

Captain America and I Are One...

My name is Daniel Baker, I am in 7EKR.
Today, using Bertrand Russell's theory, I
will prove Captain America and I are one. I
am a huge Marvel geek and would love to
be Captain America – well, to be honest, I
AM CAPTAIN AMERICA!

Given a contradictory starting point one
could deduce anything. In that case if $1 = 0$,
I can prove I am the Captain. If $1 = 0$,
then if you add 1 to each side you get $2 = 1$.
Captain and I are 2 men, given that $2 = 1$,
Captain America and I are 1 man. I am
Captain America.

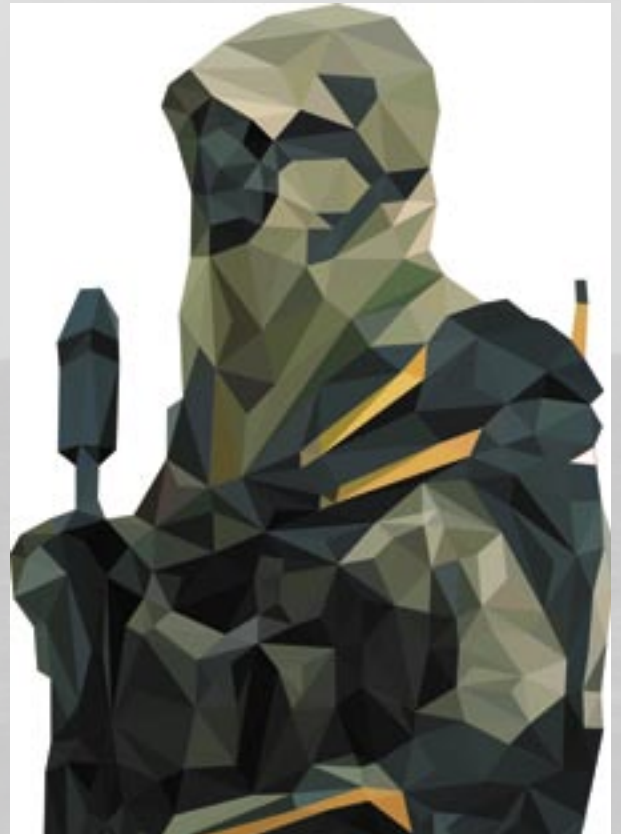
I am not actually Captain America, as
you probably guessed, but I think this is
an awesome trick to confuse family and
friends! This can be used in any way, the
way Bertrand Russell used it was to prove
he was the Pope. I hope you enjoyed
reading! Just quickly, shout out to Bertrand
Russell and Marvel for inspiring me to do
this!

Daniel Baker, Year 7

Vector Art



Oliver Stenning Y12



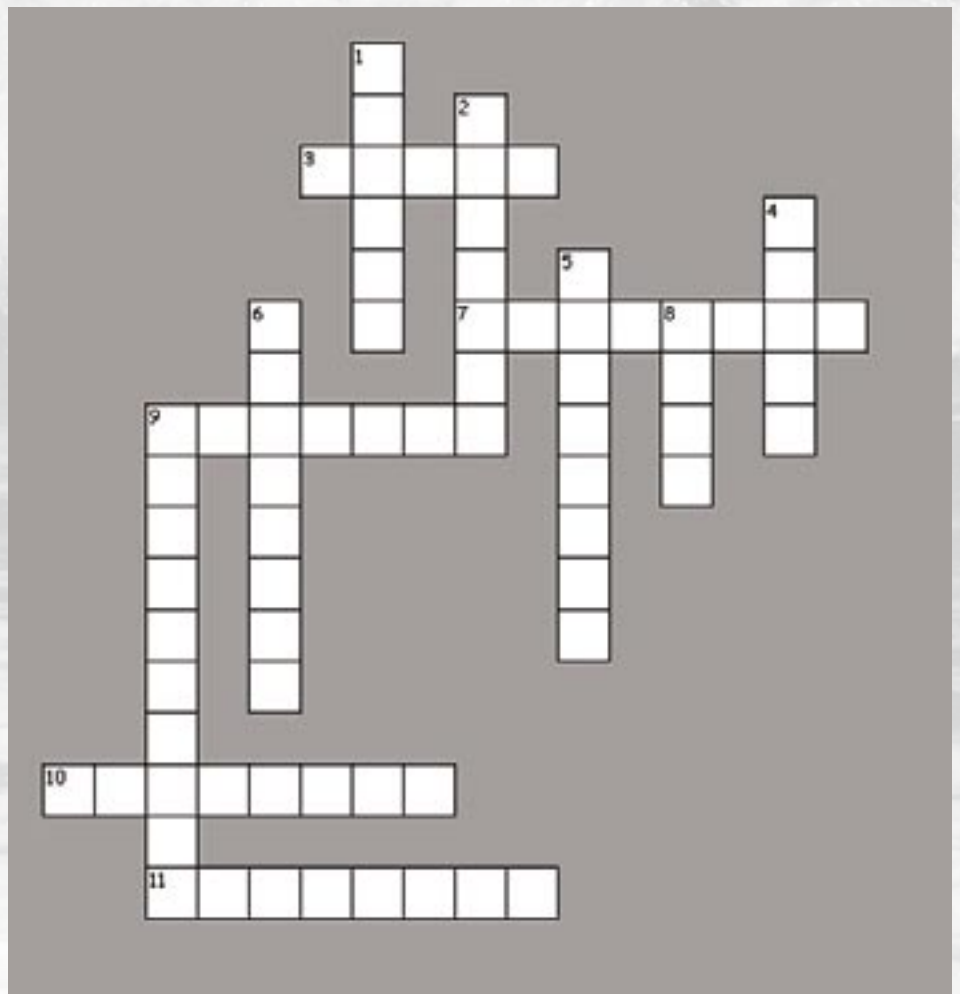
Summer Crossword

Across

- 3. body of water
- 7. delicious frozen treat e.g. vanilla
- 9. Catch those waves! (maybe in Hawaii)
- 10. cultural appropriation central
- 11. not british weather

Down

- 1. yum at the park
- 2. trying not to burn to a crisp
- 4. sandy nightmare
- 5. beyonce drink
- 6. delicious burnt treats
- 8. british weather
- 9. for the blinding light!



BGS Summer Fayre/ Sports Day

As ever the annual Bexley Grammar School Summer Fayre returns, bringing with it an array of stalls and events for parents and students alike to enjoy. With each rendition there is always plenty of new stalls to check out with returning favorites from the years prior. This year was no exception and was a thoroughly enjoyable day from start to finish. Each year leaves me wondering how the next will top it.

Despite the ever-looming presence of clouds throughout the day, we were lucky to not have to end the day early, as has happened previously. The morning's weather predictions listed rain chances of over 55%. However, luckily, the worst we got was the odd drop here and there. The clouds did help keep up the impression of what we should expect from a British 'Summer' Fair. The lack of rain did help events go through unhindered, which has definitely been an issue in the past.

The events itself were exciting the entire day. People cheered for every participant and House Captains, despite their small numbers, ran alongside their house in the running competitions. Friendly vibes could be felt all over the whole day. It was clear that every person involved enjoyed themselves, regardless of the outcome. Wellman even alluded to this with their "Wel Good" inscribed T-shirts, despite the fact that there are two Ls in Wellman, embodying this yearly event very well.

Being in Year 12, I had to help with stalls throughout the day alongside trying them. Students from all years were seen passionately trying to grab potential customers and explain their stalls to them. Whatever was necessary to prolong the time people spent there. I was actually quite disappointed that our year wasn't able to have a stall by the end of it, after seeing how happy people were running stalls.

Food was certainly an area which had been improved upon from before. There was the usual barbecue, spicy wings for the daring (with mild for the light-hearted), a Japanese Curry stall, tea and cakes for when the day's events got a little tiring and plenty more.

With another year of events we, of course, had many new records that were broken:

1500m intermediate - Temi Olushola in 6.12mins
Shot Put Junior - Christine Enechi with 7.45m and J Odetola with 6.45m
High Jump (Year 9 boys) - Aaron Billings with 1.44m
800m (Year 9 girls) - J.Sulley in 3.03mins
300m (Year 10 girls) - G.Mullins
200m (Year 8 boys) - P.Jackson in 26.6 secs
100m (Year 8 boys) - M.Reid in 12.58 secs
Relay (Year 9 boys) - Wellman in 54.9secs
Relay (Year 10 girls) - Kirkman in 1.00.54secs
Long Jump Junior - Oliver Tapponier with 4.21m
Shot Put Junior - God's Favour Oluwanusin with 8.05m
Congratulations to everyone who broke a record and well done to all who competed.

Deepesh Marwaha Y12



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