



St Edward's School

Unity - Achievement - Faith

CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER

I recently invited a former senior Ofsted inspector to visit St Edward's in order to evaluate our school. It has been two years since our last inspection, and I feel that it is good from time to time to get a fresh perspective on our work as a school, so that we can be sure that we are going in the right direction. His report begins; "The school exudes a welcome and a warmth. Leaders pride themselves that this is in the school's DNA, and they are right to do so. Pupils in all year groups feel cared for and at home. They are proud of their school". I don't think that I could have hoped for a more positive impression to have been given to someone visiting us for the first time. He made various useful observations that we will reflect on in order to improve all that we offer to our students, our staff, and our families.

'Welcome and warmth' is often difficult to find in the world around us. Our daily news is full of conflicts, the plight of refugees, division and social fragmentation caused by the use of social media to distort and manipulate, and the impact of environmental damage. In the middle of such global challenges we are trying to raise the young, and to equip them to try and do better than we have done to build a more peaceful and secure future for all on our planet.

Sometimes as places of education it is tempting for schools to look merely at examination outcomes and university destinations as indicators that they are effective. However when we look more closely at the needs of society we see the deeper yearning for something simpler and more fundamental if we are to have any hope of global



prosperity. St Edward's feels impelled to offer something greater to the future than just exam outcomes, important though they are. It is the formation of the human person, as an individual of welcome and warmth, confident in their uniqueness and aware of their gifts, attentive to the spiritual, compassionate and generous, that schools need to prioritise above all else. It is truly in the St Edward's DNA. For in this way we serve the future, of individuals and of society.

As Mary and Joseph travelled in search of welcome and warmth at Christmas, the St Edward's school community wishes you also, hope, happiness, and light. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Mr M Antram
Executive Headteacher



May we be One

ST. EDWARD'S PRAYER

HOLY ST. EDWARD
AS WE GATHER EACH DAY
UNDER YOUR NAME
INSPIRE US TO SEEK THE
KINGDOM OF GOD
IN ALL THAT WE DO.

MAY OUR EYES BE OPENED
TO THE RICH POTENTIAL
WITHIN OUR WORK;
AND AS WE SERVE GOD,
AND ONE ANOTHER,
MAY WE BE ONE
AMEN.



MESSAGE FROM FRIENDS OF ST EDWARD'S

In the coming months, St Edward's students will benefit from new sports team kit, extra photography equipment, more maths whiteboards, board games for a school support group, and computers for language students. This is thanks to the Friends of St Edwards - a fundraising group dedicated to providing your child with the equipment and other essentials they need during their time at the school, in and out of the classroom. This year the group has already helped provide sports and music equipment for out-of-school activities.

But none of this is possible without your support. To find out more or to get in touch, please visit the St Edward's website.



Music stand covers provided by Friends of St Edward's

MESSAGE FROM CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

The most important news this term was the announcement that Mr Antram will be leaving St Edward's at the end of the summer term next year. There will be many opportunities before then to thank him for his outstanding contribution to the school but, in the meantime, we congratulate him on his new appointment. The Governing Body will be appointing a replacement for Mr Antram early next term.

On behalf of the governors, I wish you a very happy and blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy 2025.

Mr Wyn Jones
Chair of Governors

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of the first term, we have so much to celebrate and be thankful for. It has been a privilege to witness the energy, enthusiasm, and commitment of our pupils, staff, and families as we have worked together to achieve so much.

This term, we were pleased to learn that our Art, Geography, Modern Foreign Languages, and Maths departments have been recognised by the Princess Teaching Institute for their work in teaching and curriculum development. This is a wonderful accolade and a testament to the dedication of our staff to providing the highest quality education for our students. We continue to work hard to ensure that our young people have the best opportunities both inside and outside the classroom, and it is immensely rewarding to see this commitment acknowledged.

Among many other highlights, we were incredibly proud to celebrate the achievement of one of our Year 9 students, who was selected to speak at the House of Lords as part of the prestigious 'Speak Out' event. This remarkable opportunity reflects the confidence and talent of our students and is just one example of them representing the school so well.

This term also saw the launch of our first ever St. Edward's Fringe Festival, a celebration of creativity and talent, allowing our students to showcase their gifts in music, drama, public speaking and art. Our Careers Fair, attended by all students, was also a great success where they gained valuable insights into their future aspirations. Adding to the excitement of the term, we were also privileged to welcome Helen Sharman, the first British astronaut, to our school. Her inspiring visit captivated students and staff alike, offering a unique perspective on the importance of ambition, perseverance, and the pursuit of dreams. These experiences have left a lasting impression on our school community, highlighting the remarkable opportunities available to our young people. Alongside these events, our students have excelled in numerous extracurricular activities,

from sports fixtures to clubs and competitions, demonstrating dedication, teamwork, and passion in all they do.

Equally heartwarming has been the way our students have embraced the spirit of giving and compassion, especially through their participation in fundraising for important causes and their support for one another in their learning journeys.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the incredible efforts of our dedicated staff and the unwavering support of you, our families. Together, we have created an environment where every child can thrive, and for that, I am truly grateful.

This term we say farewell to Mrs Borda, who has been part of our science department for just over 5 years and Mr Bentley, who joined us as a cover supervisor but has more recently been part of our PE department. I would like to thank them both for their commitment and hard work and wish them all the best as they start the next part of their careers.

As we now turn our attention to the festive break, it is a time to reflect on the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love that define this special season, through the birth of Jesus. These values resonate deeply within our school community, reminding us of the importance of kindness, compassion, and unity. Whether through the hope we inspire in our students, the peace we nurture in our relationships, the joy we find in shared achievements, or the love we show to one another, this term has been a true testament to these values. As we celebrate with family and friends, may these themes guide us into the New Year, bringing warmth and light to all.

Warmest wishes,

Mr C Barnett
Acting Headteacher



FUTURE CHOICES: CAREERS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS TERM IN OUR CAREERS DEPARTMENT

Year 8 STEM Challenge - RNLI College

A group of year 8 students attended the RNLI College in September to take part in a marine boat challenge as part of National Manufacturing Day. The event was organised by the Small Piece Trust and Make UK who aim to inspire young people to pursue careers in science and engineering. The group worked in teams creating a boat that they built, tested and then prepared a presentation to the other teams and staff. They had a fantastic day, learnt more about the wide range of careers in STEM and were able to see the lifeboats on show on the dockside.



Motivational Speaker - Pete Thompson

We were delighted to welcome Pete Thompson from the SUN (Southern Universities Network) to speak about his incredible experience of running 44 marathons in 44 countries across Europe in 44 consecutive days to Years 10 & 11. He spoke about the detailed preparations and shared his life lessons which included dealing with mental health issues, resilience and overcoming challenges and setbacks.



Year 11 Careers Guidance meetings

As well as learning about their pathways after Year 11 in PSHE, Year 11 students have been invited to attend a meeting with Mrs Ruby, the Careers Manager, to discuss their future choices and pathways. An action plan is completed. If you have any questions about post-16 options, please email Mrs Ruby: nruby@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk

Year 10 Work Experience

Work Experience Week will be from 12-16 May 2025. Year 10s have been working on their CVs and applications during PSHE and tutor time. Many have secured placements. Well done to all those students who have already got placements! Once placements are confirmed we are using Unifrog for the administrative process. There is still time to secure places. If you or your company are willing to have a student for work experience please email Mrs Ruby on the email above.

Careers Fair

The St Edward's Careers Fair took place on 22nd November with over 30 organisations attending from a wide range of careers sectors, universities, colleges and training providers. It was a great success with every year group having the opportunity to attend and engage with employers and learn more about the opportunities open to them in the future.



Britain's first astronaut Helen Sharman visits St Edward's

Helen Sharman, Britain's first astronaut, visited St Edward's School in October, sharing her inspirational story with students.

The chemist and President of the Institute of Science and Technology spent the day here on Tuesday October 15th, meeting students in her capacity as UK Outreach Ambassador for Imperial College, London.

Dr Sharman made history in 1991 when she launched into space for an eight-day mission orbiting the Earth, most of it spent on the Soviet Union's Mir space station. She was selected from 13,000 applicants, after responding to a radio advertisement asking for applicants to be the first British space explorer. She was also the first Western European woman and first privately funded woman in space, as well as the first woman to visit the Mir space station.

During her visit to St Edward's, Dr Sharman gave presentations to students in Years 11, 12 and 13, talking about STEM careers and further education opportunities, as well as sharing her experiences of becoming an astronaut.

Dr Sharman ended the day being interviewed by sixth form students Magnus Hinves and Grace Legg, answering questions about her preparations and journey into space, being thrust into the media spotlight, her views on space tourism, and about the importance of STEM in informing public debate.

St Edward's Science Teacher James Hall, who arranged the visit, said:

"It was an honour to welcome Helen Sharman to St Edward's School. She is a pioneer, a role model, and a brilliant speaker. Our students were captivated by her story, from her school days in Sheffield, to becoming a chemist and a career in chemical research, to her remarkable selection from 13,000 applicants to travel into space.

"Her life and experiences offered an inspirational



lesson in the importance of seizing opportunities when they come your way, as well as showcasing the wonderful opportunities that studying STEM subjects can afford. Helen made a huge impact on our students - they will remember her visit for many years to come."

Among Helen's key messages was the important role that STEM disciplines play in the modern world and the need for young people to have a core level of understanding, whether or not they pursue a career in this field.

Added Helen Sharman:

"I have had a super experience meeting the students. This is a really friendly school, and it has been lovely to see how focused the students are, and how interested they are in their futures. That future is so exciting when you think about the changes that are happening and how technology is opening up so many opportunities for young people."

She also offered some tips for any students wishing to follow in her footsteps. *"Being fit and healthy, manually dexterous, being a team player and doing STEM subjects,"* she added: *"All of that will do you good in all sorts of different areas of life."*

Sixth former Magnus Hinves, one of the two students who interviewed Helen Sharman, said:

"To be able to meet an astronaut and to hear about Helen's experiences - how it felt to prepare for the trip and the experience of being up there in space, was really memorable."



St Edward's Sixth Form

This term, Mr Matthew Lenarduzzi, previously Head of Languages for the last 12 of his 17 years at St Edward's so far, has now taken on the role of Head of Sixth Form, leading the ongoing development of this key part of the school's provision.



St Edward's Sixth Form currently has 175 students across years 12 and 13 with the vast majority of pupils progressing up through the school's secondary offering and increasing numbers joining at sixth form from other local schools. Students can now choose from 26 A-level courses, with recent new additions including engineering, sociology and human biology, and plans to further expand the range of courses on offer. Mr Lenarduzzi said:

"St Edward's is an incredible school, and the sixth form represents the pinnacle of what we offer, so it is a huge privilege to take on this role. I am excited to help develop the school's vision to take our sixth form provision to the next level as we set a course for our future as a school."

"Our curriculum is always under review, and we will continue to expand and improve what is on offer, listening to our students, and prospective students, about the courses that they need for their futures."

"Ultimately we want to ensure students leave us not only with the qualifications they need, but

also as well-rounded, engaging, articulate young people who can go on to lead happy, fulfilling lives – that is the clearest marker of our success."

Sixth Form students are now benefitting from improvement works which took place over the summer, including the refurbishment of the sixth form area, creating a university-style study room equipped with three glassed-walled conference rooms for collaborative work, and workstations for the PCs and laptops computers available to sixth form students. The revamped common room now has café style seating, sofas and breakfast bar areas equipped with USB charging points. Executive Headteacher at St Edward's School, Mr Michael Antram, said:

"This is an incredibly exciting time here at St Edward's – for our sixth form in particular, as we look to the future, always seeking to improve school life for our students and staff."

"I am thrilled to have Matt at the helm. He has been a highly valued member of the team for almost two decades and he will be a fantastic Head of Sixth Form, taking this key part of our school forward for the benefit of our most senior students and our whole school community."

Zac, a student in Year 12, said:

"I chose St Edward's because it has a great and diverse subject offering and because the school's ethos puts the student first. The relationships with teachers are really strong. You get to know your teachers well and they are really supportive - they really want to help you. And the new facilities are beautifully designed for working and socialising."



Key Stage 3

This Autumn Term, students across KS3 have engaged with captivating novels that have encouraged critical thinking, creativity and empathy.

Year 7 have been studying the text 'Private Peaceful' by Michael Morpurgo, a novel based on World War 1. This powerful novel has allowed students to reflect on themes of family and the impact of war, while also developing their analytical and creative writing skills. Alongside this, Year 7 have engaged with a range of war poetry and have approached poetry in creative ways such as performance poetry and blackout poetry to mark Remembrance Day. Well done to all Year 7s for a fantastic first term at St Edward's in English!

In Year 8, students have been studying the novel 'Boy 87' by Ele Fountain. This explores the journey of a young refugee, Shif, as he faces difficult obstacles. His story teaches us about displacement, resilience, kindness and humanity. We have been so impressed at the mature and thoughtful responses Year 8 have had in response to this text, this novel has sparked meaningful conversations about global challenges that help to foster students as engaged citizens. If your child has enjoyed this novel, Ele Fountain often writes thought provoking children's books- 'Melt' would be a fantastic one to read next!

Year 9 have engaged with the gothic text, 'The Woman in Black' by Susan Hill. This eerie and atmospheric book has enabled students to analyse the impact of tension, suspense and language on the reader. Students have also engaged with writing skills and have been crafting their own gothic stories using the devices and methods of gothic literature.

Well done to KS3 students who are excelling in terms of Sparx Reader. We have more Gold Readers than ever before! Congratulations to all who have received their Gold Reader badges this term. Thank you also to parents and carers who

have supported our students throughout this term! Your engagement and encouragement is so important in fostering our positive and nurturing learning environment at St Edward's.

Key Stage 4

This term has seen Year 11 complete their mock exams in English; students have had valuable insight into the requirements of their English exams and had the opportunity to reflect on their successes and areas for development in these exams in their ensuing lessons. So many students have shown an admirable commitment to their success in English, attending our after-school revision sessions and showing the evidence of their independent work in the calibre of their answers. We will progress towards Christmas by completing the Literature course content on poetry, looking forward to honing their exam practice as we proceed into next term.

Year 10 have, befittingly for the time of year, begun their work on 'A Christmas Carol'. Their reading of the text has enabled productive and thoughtful conversations on the characters, themes and context of the text, facilitating considered discussions on poverty, the virtues of charity and generosity, the ability for people to address their shortcomings and grow positively into the best versions of themselves and the meaningfulness of the upcoming festive season.

Those students from both year groups who are attending are also looking forward to the performance of 'An Inspector Calls' in January. An exciting opportunity to experience live theatre, the show will also further develop their familiarity with and understanding of a core GCSE text.

Thank you for all you do to support our students in their enthusiasm and engagement in English.



Oracy

We are delighted to celebrate the achievements of our students in developing their oracy and public speaking skills. This term has been filled with moments of eloquence, confidence and creativity as our young speakers have demonstrated their ability to engage audiences, articulate ideas and express themselves with passion.

One of our sixth form students, Lucy, competed in the national final of the Catenian Association public speaking competition that took place in Manchester this September. This was after her superb performance in the regional final last year. Competing against some of the best young speakers in the country, Lucy engaged the judges with her compelling delivery and thoughtful arguments. Lucy shared this experience as part of a speech delivered at our Sixth Form Opening Evening: “I never thought I could speak at a national public speaking final, especially as someone who grew up having to have sessions with a speech therapist. This achievement has made me feel proud as an individual, I now believe in my talents and feel more confident in everything I do”. We are so proud of Lucy for this amazing achievement.



We also had a showcase of speeches at the 'St Edward's Fringe Festival' in September where our students captivated their audience with engaging and powerful topics. Well done to Theo, Teddie, Alfie, Alice E, Andrii and Lucy for taking part. Alice and Andrii went on to deliver their speeches on 'the importance of kindness' and 'building a world without war' to all staff at our staff meetings. Well



done to these students for their bravery in presenting their speeches to staff!

A group of Year 10 students benefitted from a day of public speaking skills delivered by The Speakers Trust. This session was focused on building confidence, developing speaking skills and mastering the power of delivery. It was inspiring to witness their creativity, bravery and growing skills as confident communicators! Congratulations to Alice W who won the 1st place prize for her speech on this day and to Leon M whose speech came 2nd. Courtney, Dom and Harry C also received highly commended awards for their speeches. Well done to all that participated in this day of speaking skills and we are excited to see how they will build on these newfound skills.



Thank you to all parents and carers for their continued support of our oracy programme, whether through encouragement, attendance at events or helping students prepare for their performances. Your support plays a vital role in these successes.

Next term, we will have our annual 'Festival of Speech' event where students can develop and showcase their public speaking skills. This opportunity will aim to engage and encourage even more students to access our oracy programme and help them discover the confidence and joy that comes with expressing their ideas and passions. Please see Mrs Bridges if you would like to take part!



St Edward's at the House of Lords

We are incredibly proud of Andrii who was invited by the newspaper 'First News' to the House of Lords to deliver a speech after placing 2nd in a national speech writing competition. His speech on building a world without war captivated the room of esteemed guests, including Rt Hon Lord Jack McConnell, Dame Rachel de Souza and Nicky Cox MBE.

The day was filled with thought provoking speeches that have really inspired Andrii... in his words, "It won't be my last time speaking in this place!". Dame Rachel de Souza, who works for the government as the Children's Commissioner for England, has invited Andrii to contribute to a national campaign on how to make England the best place to be a child in 2025 and beyond. Andrii's speech and the day will also be featured on Sky Kids' news show FYI. Congratulations to Andrii for this phenomenal achievement!



As we wrap up another bustling and productive term, we take a moment to reflect on the successes of the past months and eagerly anticipate the opportunities the new year will bring.

First and foremost, we celebrate the hard work and determination of our Year 11 and Year 13 students, who have successfully completed their Winter Mock Exams. Their dedication has been inspiring, and their achievements set a fantastic example for others. Meanwhile, our KS3 students are in the midst of their end-of-term assessments. We wish them the very best and are confident that their efforts this term will shine through in their results.

This term, our department has focused on providing tailored support for our students. A Level support sessions, held every Tuesday after school, have offered an excellent opportunity for consolidation and deeper understanding of advanced topics. In preparation for mocks, we also ran four weeks of Year 11 after-school revision sessions, which were met with outstanding attendance and enthusiasm. We are excited to resume these sessions in the new year as students gear up for their final exams.

For Year 11 students exploring their next steps, we hosted Core Maths and A Level Maths taster sessions. These interactive experiences allowed students to gain valuable insights into post-GCSE pathways, sparking interest in how Mathematics can shape their future studies and careers.

The term has also been marked by outstanding individual achievements. Our Year 12 Mathematics and Year 13 Further Mathematics students excelled in the Senior Mathematical Challenge, earning several Silver and Bronze Awards. Special recognition goes to Kieran Bachmann, who was awarded Best in School—a remarkable accomplishment that he should be very proud of. Looking ahead, we are delighted that a number of Year 11 students will participate in the Intermediate Maths Challenge on 29th January

2025, and we eagerly anticipate their results.



Another standout moment was the AMSP Maths Enrichment Morning, where a select group of Year 10 girls joined 140 peers from across the region for an inspiring event. Highlights included an engaging talk by Ben Sparks on The Creation of Number, insights into post-16 Maths pathways, and an exciting team quiz. It was a day filled with inspiration and enjoyment, showcasing the richness of Mathematics beyond the classroom.

This term also saw a new addition to our team, as we warmly welcomed Mr. Williams. An experienced Maths teacher, he has already made a positive impact on our department, and we are excited about the expertise and enthusiasm he brings.

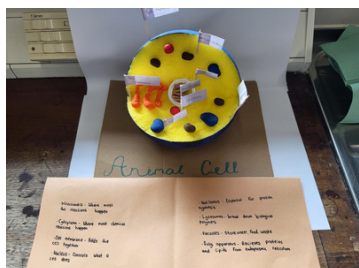
As we approach the festive season, we extend our warmest wishes for a Merry Christmas and a restful winter break to all our students, families, and staff. Thank you for your continued support throughout this term. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year, ready to embrace further learning, growth, and success in Mathematics.



In Science this term our new Year 7 students have been acquiring the skills for safe and effective practical work and learning how to conduct a scientific investigation.

This involves learning the basics such as the common hazards and risks in a lab, using Bunsen burners safely, as well as what variables are, how to control them, the best way to collect scientific data and analyse it to draw reliable conclusions. They will now be putting their new-found skills into practice by working towards their Science Proficiency, where they use these techniques in their lessons to earn their Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards throughout Key Stage 3. To assist in this process, we have our newly recruited Science Mentors; a group of Sixth Form science role models who have offered to lend their skills and expertise to enhance the science capital of the youngest students new to the school.

Mrs Power's Year 7 classes have explored the fascinating world of cell biology by creating 3D models of plant and animal cells using recyclable and craft materials. They used items like cardboard, paper, plastic bottles, glitter, pom-poms, and toothpicks to represent the organelles, showcasing their resourcefulness and understanding of cell structures. This hands-on activity not only reinforced their knowledge of cell components but also emphasized the importance of sustainability. The exciting, colourful models were a testament to the students' imagination and creativity.



Many Year 8 classes have been getting stuck into some hands-on chemistry in the acids and alkalis topic. They have learned how to make their own indicator at home using red cabbage, which can then be used to test the pH of various household liquids. Others have been making their own beautiful blue copper sulphate crystals by heating sulphuric acid, adding copper oxide and then filtering out the excess. They then gently heated the mixture using a water bath to evaporate any water to leave the crystals behind. One of my personal favourite practicals!



Since the beginning of October, some of our Year 9 students have been working collaboratively with Kate Salter of SusTrans, a charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle. They aim to connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. The students involved are working towards an accredited Crest Award research project assessing the air quality around the school site. This involved the positioning of some diffusion tubes to measure particulates that have now been sent to a laboratory for analysis and conducted a pollution indicator species study on lichens. Combined with the data from a new data logger positioned on Dale Valley Road to support their cause, they hope to provide some evidence and recommendations to students and their families about how to improve the pollution levels and hopefully reduce the risk of some of the associated health concerns.





Our GCSE and A-Level students have been heavily involved in enquiry-based learning, through the required practical activities that feature frequently throughout their courses. They also have worked tirelessly to achieve highly in their recent mock exams for which all students deserve praise for such diligence in preparing so well for these.

Back in October, Mr. Hall and Mrs. Horman arranged a visit from Dr. Helen Sharman, the first British astronaut who took part in Project Juno on the Russian Space Station Mir in 1991. She delivered some very sound advice on futures to Year 11 and the 6th Form. She was also interviewed by two of our A Level science students Grace Legg and Magnus Hinves about her adventure into space. The full interview can be found on our YouTube and social media channels.

My thanks go to all science staff and students for all their hard work this term. They have certainly earned their Christmas Holidays this year! Well done to all and have a very merry and restful Christmas!



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The second part of the Autumn term has been full of activity and excitement in the RE department. For Year 7, 8 and 9 our units of study have been centred on an exploration of various aspects of 'identity' and 'tradition' as students have explored the origins and development of the Abrahamic faiths and their place in society today. Students have also been encouraged to reflect on their own spiritual and moral development and the various influences that act upon them.

During the first half term, Year 7 studied the story of St. Edward and the history and development of our school, particularly the values that underpinned its transformation into a joint church school. All Year 7 students enjoyed an RE lesson spent in our school chapel with Father James where he spoke about the main features of a Christian place of worship and reminded students that the school chaplaincy team there to support them if they ever need it. Year 7 students also got to explore the theme of 'Walking Together' on the Year 7 Retreat Day. Led by our chaplaincy team, students spent the day at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church reflecting on their first experiences of secondary school and the journey ahead of them.

Year 8 students began the year exploring the concept of 'Vocation'. They engaged brilliantly in a Q&A session with Father James about his own calling and the priesthood. Year 8 students have now moved on to learn about the key beliefs and practices within the Jewish tradition, with a particular emphasis being placed on the concept of 'covenant' and how the relationship between God and humans has developed over time.

Year 9 found the study of a range of both religious and secular ethical theories particularly engaging and have since been reflecting on how best to solve moral dilemmas in their own lives. They have now started an in-depth study of Islamic beliefs and practices.

Our Year 10 students have begun their GCSE studies by exploring key beliefs and practices

within Christianity and Judaism. We would like to thank Mr Farrow for his talk about the historical complexities of the Israel-Gaza conflict so that students are able to understand the events that have recently taken place in that region. We are looking forward to begin discussing 'Issues of Life and Death' after Christmas, asking questions ranging from 'Where do we come from?' to 'What happens when we die?',

Once again we have been privileged to benefit from visits from the PACE (Programme for Applied Christian Education) team in a variety of RE lessons. A particular highlight was a series of Year 11 lessons that debated the compatibility of Christianity and Humanism and featured a guest speaker from Humanists UK. Our Year 11 students are currently engaging wonderfully with our 'Issues of Good and Evil' unit, exploring the different aims of punishment and debating the death penalty.

In the Sixth Form, a very large class of Year 12 students have made an enthusiastic start to their study of A-Level RE and have already started to evaluate a number of high-level concepts. In Philosophy they are questioning the existence of a soul, in Ethics they are analysing the works of Immanuel Kant and in Theology they have been exploring Augustinian theories concerning human nature.



As the festive season approaches, it's time to reflect on what our students have accomplished this term in Geography and what lies ahead in the New Year. Here's a snapshot of what each year group has been working on and how you can support their learning during the holidays.

Year 7: From Ghana to UK Weather

Year 7 students have had a fantastic start to their Geography journey, recently completing a unit on Ghana as a developing country. They explored themes such as economic development, trade, and cultural diversity. Now, they are turning their attention to the UK's weather and climate, learning about patterns, seasons, and extreme weather events.

Over the holidays, you might discuss weather changes you observe or watch weather forecasts together to deepen their understanding of this new topic. It's a great way to make learning relatable and fun!

Year 8: Conservation Matters

As Year 8 moves into their new topic on conservation, they'll be exploring how we can protect our planet's precious resources and biodiversity. This is an engaging and hopeful topic that highlights the importance of individual and collective action in preserving our environment. Consider planning a visit to a local nature reserve or wildlife centre over the break to inspire their learning and show real-world examples of conservation efforts in action.

Year 9: Climate Change in Focus

Climate change has been the central theme for Year 9 students this term. They've been examining the causes, impacts, and solutions to one of the most pressing global issues of our time. Discussions about renewable energy, carbon footprints, and international agreements have sparked critical thinking and awareness.

To extend these conversations at home, you could watch documentaries together, such as *Our Planet* or *Before the Flood*, and discuss ways to adopt environmentally friendly practices as a family.

Year 10: Exploring London's Geography

Year 10 students have been exploring the wonders of London, delving into topics such as urbanisation, transport systems, and the city's diverse cultural landscape. Over the holidays, why not plan a trip to London? Visiting iconic sites like the River Thames, Canary Wharf, or the Natural History Museum can bring their classroom learning to life. A stroll through the city's vibrant neighbourhoods could provide invaluable insights into the geographical topics they've been studying.

Year 11: Preparing for Fieldwork and the Future

Year 11 students have been focused on their mock exams, showing impressive dedication and resilience as they prepare for their GCSEs. We're proud of their hard work and determination.

Looking ahead, students will be embarking on exciting fieldwork in Boscombe and Swanage. This hands-on experience will provide them with the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world environments, exploring coastal processes and human interaction with landscapes. Please ensure students are prepared with appropriate clothing and enthusiasm for this invaluable experience!

Sixth Form: Independent Investigators

Our Year 13 students have been diving deep into their Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) individual investigations. From urban regeneration to environmental sustainability, they're tackling fascinating topics that showcase their analytical skills and passion for Geography.

Parents, your support is key during this intensive phase. Encourage students to manage their time effectively over the holidays and to stay focused on finalising their projects.

Extracurricular: Geography Club

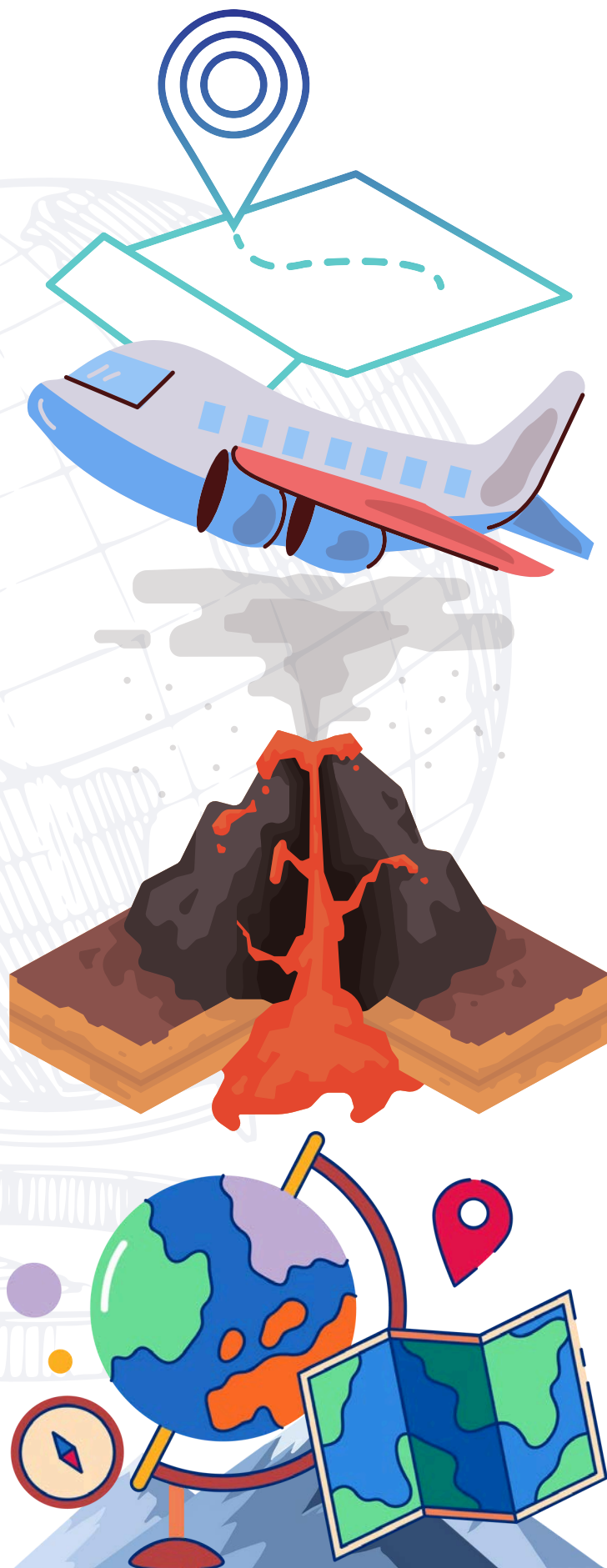
This September our Geography club started up again for the new academic year. It is a chance for students to explore geographical themes in a more creative ways than lessons sometime allow for. So far this year we have raced across the world through playing geography themed board games, improved our knowledge of countries and flags though online quizzing and explored the wonder of the natural world through watching the new BBC series 'Asia'. We have sculpted and painted geographically themed models (from Durdle Door to Antarctica), investigated the EarthShot prize winners for 2024 and created our own ideas for a more sustainable planet. As we move towards the holidays we will be researching and presenting different Christmas traditions from countries across the world (complete with food from each location).

Geography club has been great fun and a chance to get to explore more about the world we live in. After Christmas, we hope to get outside (weather permitting) to use some geographical equipment, create our own towns and run through simulations of geographical hazards to see if we can protect the community without running out of money!

If this sounds interesting, we meet every Wednesday in G2 from 3:15-4:15. We would love to see you.

We're incredibly proud of all our students and their achievements this term. The Geography Department wishes you a joyous and restful Christmas break. We look forward to seeing everyone refreshed and ready for another term of discovery and learning in January!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



HISTORY

During the Autumn term, we have had the privilege of welcoming Laura Wright into the department. Miss Wright is teaching KS3, KS4, as well as teaching our A level politics students. We look forward to all of the new ideas she will bring to the department.

This term, we have been focusing on planning our extra-curricular provision, which will be launching at the end of the Autumn term. We have been planning our highly successful battlefields trip, which will be taking place during October 2025. Thirty five year 10 students will be travelling to Ypres and the Somme, to enrich their studies of history, as well as support their understanding of the lasting impacts of the Great War. This is, as ever, a moving trip where students really grasp the human impact of war.

We have also welcomed our 2026 cohorts of year 10 and year 12 students, including record breaking numbers of politics students! In year 10, students have been studying World War One, and have been focusing on the battles that shaped the conflict. Year 12 historians have been studying Russian history until 1891, examining the role of the Tsar and some of the challenges he faces as an autocrat. In Making of Modern Britain, students have been studying the 1950s and 1960s, which has sparked some fascinating discussions at home! During the Autumn term, we have been particularly proud of our year 11 and year 13 students who have sat mock papers. We have seen excellent progress in these, and we look forward to the continuation of their hard work.

Our KS3 students have continued to develop key skills; year 7 have completed an introduction unit, as well as a study of the Islamic Golden Age. Year 8 have been studying the Renaissance, and looking at the developments in art, science, technology and travel that shaped our world. Year 9 have shown immense maturity as they have tackled the challenging topics of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the growth of Empire.

The next term is an exciting one; we look forward to watching our year 11 and 13 transition into the challenge of the examination period, as well as the restarting of the history revision sessions afterschool. We also have a number of exciting projects in the planning stages, which we know our students will find enriching and allow us to increase their understanding of both local, national and international history.



A Level Government & Politics

In Politics, this has been an incredibly exciting half term, with our year 12 and year 13 students closely following the US election. It was during a year 12 lesson that it was announced that Donald Trump had won the presidency, which was absolutely an experience that will stay in the memories of our students! In year 12, our new Politics students have been learning the principles of the UK constitution, and the process of devolution. With Miss Elms, students have been studying elections, where students have presented on the reasons for the 2024 Labour Party victory, compared to the reasons for electoral success in 1979, 1983, 1997 and 2019. The presentations were extremely thoughtful and illustrate the engagement the students have had with current British Politics. In year 13, students have been studying US elections (at times, studying the election live!) as well as the role of the US president.

We also look forward to launching our Parliament trip in 2025, which we hope will continue to build an understanding of how the Parliamentary system works in the UK!



Year 12 have settled very well into the demands of studying a new subject at A Level. Having grasped the key principles behind carrying out psychological investigations, students have designed and carried out a range of practical assignments, their first in the topic of Parapsychology, specifically investigating mind-reading ability using the Zener Test. Although many of the student's research findings indicate no significant differences in mind-reading ability between age and gender of participants, the effect of different types of music had a very surprising result with more participants being able to read minds when listening to heavy rock music compared to classical music!

Meanwhile, Year 13 have been enjoying their Biopsychology topic which has enabled students to feed their curiosity about the complex workings of the human brain. Students have been exploring the extent to which specific areas of the brain are responsible for specific functions and marvelling at case studies of individuals who live perfectly normal lives following damage or removal of areas of the brain, thanks to the concept of plasticity and functional recovery.



DID YOU KNOW?

St Edward's students get access to the full suite of **Microsoft Office** apps for **FREE**. They can use them at school or at home by following these steps:

- Go to **Office.com**
- **Log in** using your student login
- On the homepage, click **Install apps**

Get instant access to the following programmes:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| • Word | • Teams |
| • Excel | • OneDrive |
| • PowerPoint | • OneNote |
| • Outlook | • ...and more! |

It's been a busy term as the large Y12 group have settled into their study of Sociology. They are a keen bunch and it was lovely to have a good number of volunteers for the Sixth Form Open Evening at the start of November. They sold the subject very well!

At the end of November, we welcomed Rachel Small JP to run her annual session with the Y13 students. She guided them through a fictional case study based on cases she has been involved in over the year. Students then used real sentencing guidelines to make a decision about how the offender should be treated. They engaged really well and asked lots of perceptive questions.

On 12th December we took the Year 13 students to Poole Magistrates court to find out more about how this important part of the Criminal Justice System works.

Throughout the morning, we were accompanied by two serving magistrates with over 20 years of experience between them. Their wisdom and experience helped us to understand the various procedures we experienced. Having planned to spend the morning in one court, we ended up having to be moved out as there was a closed session. In the court we ended up in we saw one brief case and the setting up of a trial. We were also lucky enough to be addressed directly by the legal advisor and the duty defence solicitor.

The change of plan meant we saw less than we hoped, but it nevertheless gave a valuable insight into the system and enriched students understanding of the Crime and Deviance module of the A Level.

In January students from across Y12 and 13 have the opportunity to take part in a Sociology Insights day at Bournemouth University. For those who are considering studying Sociology or Criminology at university it should be a really valuable day.

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MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Joyeux Noël! Frohe Weihnachten!

The autumn term kicked off with our annual celebration of European Day of Languages in September. This year, we marked the occasion with a variety of fun activities, including tongue twisters, a treasure hunt for pebbles featuring European greetings hidden around the school, and a baking challenge where students were invited to prepare a dish from any European country. We received a remarkable number of fantastic entries, showcasing dishes from Italy, Poland, France, and many other countries.



October saw the launch of the Language Lounge, where we explore languages and cultures every Friday lunchtime. It's a great opportunity for students to dive into different languages and broaden their cultural understanding in a fun and relaxed setting.

This year we also celebrate the 25th anniversary of our partnership with our exchange school, Gymnasium am Kaiserdom school in Speyer in Rheinland-Pfalz. Not many schools offer exchanges anymore, so we are immensely proud of this long-standing partnership. The German students visited St Edward's in October and 20 of our students accompanied by Mrs North and Mrs Navarra have just returned from Speyer. The students were accommodated by their exchange

partners, giving them a real taste of life within a German family. They experienced lessons with their exchange partners, and as well as getting to know the beautiful town of Speyer, we visited the fantastic cities of Heidelberg, Mainz and Mannheim. December is an ideal time to visit Germany with the Christmas markets in full swing. Our students got to try some of the delicious foods at the markets as well as do some of their Christmas shopping! Our exchanges to Germany and France are launched every year, so our younger students may wish to join us another time.



In our MFL classrooms, our students have been making fantastic progress across various levels. Year 7 students have learned how to introduce themselves, their family, and friends in both French and German, and have been engaging in short conversations in their target languages. Year

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

8 French students have discussed topics related to holidays and free time, while Year 8 German students have focused on describing their town and even transformed their classroom into a German restaurant to practice ordering food.



Year 9 French students have explored the themes of health and fitness, and Year 9 German students have delved into describing their local area. Our new GCSE students in Year 10 have adapted incredibly well to the demands of GCSE study and will soon begin exploring the world of French and German popular culture.



Meanwhile, our impressive A-level students have been engaging in thought-provoking debates on the complex issues of multiculturalism, crime, and punishment. They have also completed their study of German and French literature and are now able to conduct detailed critical analyses of the books they've read in both spoken and written French and German.

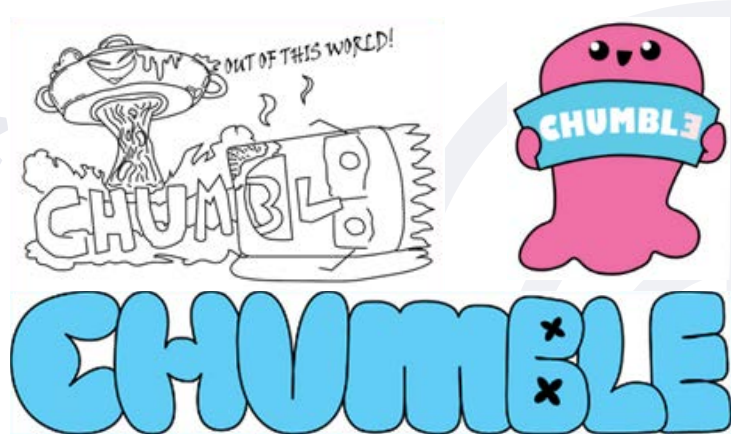
We wish all of our students and their families a very...

Joyeux Noël et bonne année!

**Frohe Weihnachten und ein
glückliches neues Jahr.!**



September saw the relaunch of the NCFE Graphic Design course at KS4. 20 Year 10 students enrolled on the course and started the term learning how to use the professional vector-based design and drawing program Adobe Illustrator. The students have then used their new skills to respond to a design brief which asked them to design a logo and magazine advertisement for a chewing gum brand called "Chumble". Next term the students will be working to a real-life brief to understand how to work with a client.



In October Year 12 Engineering and Product Design students visited Lush Manufacturing in Poole. The visit was part of a national manufacturing initiative where local companies opened their doors to showcase potential careers and jobs on offer within the manufacturing sector.

Students were able to observe how Lush products are made and participated in various activities across the company.



This term has also seen the Year 11 Food Preparation & Nutrition students complete their NEA 1 assignment. This element of their course examines their knowledge of food science and the

and the function and properties of ingredients. It makes up 15% of their GCSE grade. The exam board brief this year was to investigate the properties and functions of ingredients and raising agents in sweet or savoury scones. The students researched the ingredients and then planned and subsequently carried out three practical experiments. The students then analysed the results collected and drew conclusions as to how and why the samples reacted as they did. They then drew conclusion as to which would be the best ingredients to use in the future when baking. The students worked well in groups for the practical elements and then independently to write up their assignment.



As mentioned in last year's newsletter, Technology have produced an award to celebrate excellence in the subject. The award is named; the 'Robin Greenwood Award for Excellence', in honour of the man who made it. Robin has supported the department in his role as technician for many years and continues to work within the school as part of the site team. The award is given to celebrate a student in KS3, KS4 and KS5 each term who has demonstrated excellence in their effort or quality of work in Technology. The first recipients of the award were:

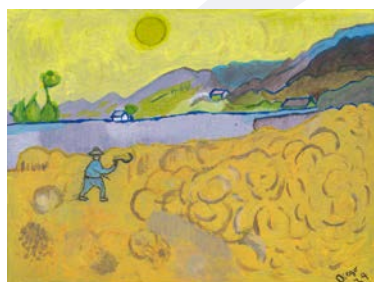


KS3: Leanne DC

KS4: Rose P

KS5: Charlie B

It has been a pleasure welcoming our new **Year 7** students into the art department, we have been impressed with their engagement and enthusiasm as they have experimented with mark making on paper, with paint and into clay. We have been particularly impressed with the standard and creativity of their home learning tasks on the work of the artist Van Gogh. Here are just a few. Well done Year 7!



Year 8 have been responding to the theme of Nature as Inspiration and have designed and created their own clay sculpture after looking at the sculptor Peter Randall Page. Year 8 have responded very creatively to this task and they will be able to take their work home once it has been fired.

Year 9 have been exploring the theme of African Art and after learning about the meaning of Adinkra symbols from Ghana students have created their own designs and printed these onto fabric.

Our **Year 10** artists have made an excellent start to their GCSE course and are producing exciting work in a range of different media, they have been

developing their own ideas and responding to a wide range of artists such as Japanese woodblock printmakers, Leonardo Da Vinci and William De Morgan.



Year 11 students are working hard to complete their Portfolio work before the January deadline and are busy preparing lots of exciting outcomes for their mock pieces that will be completed in the week before Christmas. We would like to congratulate Charlotte Moyes, one of our Year 11 art students as her Rainforest Hourglass illustration was published in the Green Christian magazine alongside one of their articles and she was paid as one of their illustrators. Well done!

Year 12 students have had a very busy first term of A Level study, they worked as a team to design and paint the set for the school production of Peter Pan and are currently producing work for a live photography brief for The Dorset Chamber, their photographs will be used across Dorset by the Dorset Chamber and The Dorset Careers Hub. They have also been experimenting with figure drawing and exploring themes such as Natural Form in clay and Vanitas through photography, drawing and painting.

The **Year 13 & Year 12** Art students spent a day at The Arts University Bournemouth on the 6th November. Students took part in either a model making workshop or a Set design and Costume workshop working with University staff and students. They also had the opportunity to tour the campus and find out about the courses on offer at AUB.

PERFORMING ARTS

The Performing Arts Department at St. Edward's School has had an exciting and dynamic term, with plenty of opportunities for students to immerse themselves in the arts and showcase their talents. We as a new team have thoroughly enjoyed being able to facilitate such a talented community of students.

In October, we hosted our inaugural St. Edward's Fringe Festival, a celebration of creativity across Art, Dance, Drama, Music, and Public Speaking. The event was a resounding success, offering students a platform to demonstrate their skills while parents, staff, and peers enjoyed the eclectic atmosphere. The addition of a pizza van, refreshments and lights helped to create a buzzing, festival-like vibe, making it a day to remember.



Our GCSE Drama students were captivated by the National Theatre's stunning production of War Horse at Mayflower Theatre, Southampton. This trip provided invaluable inspiration for their live theatre review section of the GCSE exam. From the heart-wrenching storyline to the incredible puppetry, the production offered a masterclass in performance and technical design.

Our GCSE Drama students also had the incredible opportunity to explore the workings of a professional theatre at Poole Lighthouse. They participated in a backstage tour and met the Company Manager of 'Pride and Prejudice (sort of)', gaining insights into the logistics and challenges of staging a production. The day also included a careers talk, where professionals from various roles within the arts industry shared their

experiences, inspiring students to consider the diverse career paths available in the performing arts.



GCSE Drama students took to the stage this term to present their examined devised pieces, addressing challenging and thought-provoking themes such as social media safety, the importance of community, and the dangers of patriarchy. Each performance was a testament to their hard work, creativity, and courage, showcasing their ability to tackle complex ideas with sensitivity and skill. The students received well-deserved praise for their talent and dedication.



GCSE Music students visited Absolute Music for an engaging day focused on careers in the music industry. The highlight of the trip was an interactive session where they collaborated with professional musicians to learn and perform a song. This hands-on experience offered valuable insights into both the creative and professional

aspects of music-making, leaving students inspired and motivated.



The annual Careers Fair saw a representative from Poole Lighthouse join us to discuss the wide range of opportunities available in the arts industry. Students explored careers not just in performance but also in design, technical roles, and arts administration, gaining a deeper understanding of the many ways to contribute to this vibrant sector.

A highlight of the term was the school production of *Peter Pan*, expertly produced and directed by Ms. Brown and Mr. Christopher. Featuring over 50 talented students from across the school, the production delivered two fantastic performances: one to the entire Year 7 cohort and another to a paying audience. The show received glowing feedback for its high-energy performances, imaginative staging, and the incredible teamwork that brought the story to life. Congratulations to all the cast and crew for their hard work and outstanding achievement!



A group of our musicians attended a concert by the renowned Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. This was a fantastic opportunity to witness a world-class ensemble perform Holst's 'The Planets', sparking inspiration and deepening their understanding of orchestral performance. At £5 a ticket, we hope to carry out further trips for interested students of all ages in the Spring term. Music students have been rehearsing tirelessly with the Poole Schools' Music Association in preparation for the highly anticipated PSMA Christmas Concert at Poole Lighthouse on Thursday, 12th December. This event promises to be a magical evening, highlighting the exceptional talent and dedication of young musicians from across the area.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to announce that St. Edward's will host its annual Christmas Concert on Thursday, 19th December at St. Mary's Church, Longfleet, Poole. This marks the first time we will perform at this stunning venue, and we cannot wait to showcase the talents of our musicians and vocalists. The evening will feature a wonderful mix of music, readings, and carols, promising to be a festive highlight for the school community.

In the curriculum, the Performing Arts team work hard to ignite a passion for the arts in students, and the tireless hours put into delivering an exciting curriculum is what helps build a real buzz within the department.

Key Stage 3 Drama

Year 7 students have been delving into the imaginative world of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. They explored characterisation techniques, analysing Roald Dahl's iconic characters before creating their own unique additions to the factory—a brilliant display of creativity and storytelling.

Year 8 have been discovering the theatrical traditions of melodrama and pantomime, exploring exaggerated characterisation, comedic timing, and audience interaction. These skills will form a strong

foundation for their devising unit in the new year.

Year 9 have tackled contemporary issues in Performing Arts Ethics, focusing on the role of technology, particularly AI and VR, in modern society. Through discussions and practical exploration, students have considered the impact of these advancements on creativity, authenticity, and the future of performance.

Key Stage 3 Music

Year 7 students have been developing their piano skills, learning to play melodies with both hands while focusing on proper technique, note-reading, and rhythm. They also explored basic chord structures, enabling them to perform simple accompaniments. These sessions laid a strong musical foundation while sparking enthusiasm for instrumental practice.

Year 8 have delved into the world of *Musical Theatre*. Through studying iconic works like *Les Misérables*, *The Lion King*, and *Hamilton*, they examined how music enhances storytelling and emotional expression.

Year 9 have embraced the vibrant rhythms of *Reggae*. By studying its roots in Jamaican culture and its global influence, students learned to identify key characteristics such as syncopation, offbeat rhythms, and bass-driven grooves. They performed / used DAWs to recreate *Three Little Birds* by Bob Marley, developing ensemble skills and an appreciation for this influential genre.

Our GCSE Drama students have been immersing themselves in the techniques of various influential theatre practitioners, including Stanislavski, Brecht, and Artaud. By applying these methods to their performances, they have developed a deeper understanding of how to create compelling characters and innovative staging. This work supports both their devised and scripted performance assessments.

GCSE Music students have been preparing for

Component 1, deepening their understanding of various musical genres, from film music, Britpop, Reggae and Blues, honing their skills in analysing key features. Meanwhile, Component 2 has seen them working on mastering their individual instrumental or vocal skills, focusing on technical accuracy, expression, and confidence as performers. Their hard work is setting a solid foundation for their coursework and performance assessments.

We are looking forward to developing our Dance programme and provision within the curriculum and will hopefully be building on this so all students can access dance lessons throughout the school year and access specialised courses in both Key Stage 4 and 5.

We are proud of our students' enthusiasm and commitment to the arts. Whether it's performing on stage, exploring new skills, or simply enjoying the richness of live performance, the Performing Arts Department is buzzing with creativity and energy.

This term has been a celebration of talent, effort, and opportunity, and we look forward to building on this momentum in the new year.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A warm welcome to all our Year 7 students as they begin their PE journey at St. Edward's School. They have made a fantastic start, showing enthusiasm and effort in lessons while embracing new challenges. It's wonderful to see so many Year 7s already getting involved in after-school clubs, demonstrating sportsmanship, encouragement and resilience. We have had many students across all year groups attend our range of clubs. This has included badminton, football, volleyball, basketball, rugby and netball. With numbers at Year 7 football being so high it has been a juggling act to say the least. However, a challenge that we welcome.



We are currently hosting the netball leagues for Year 10, where we have both an A&B team along with a male team. With all teams having won and a particular highlight was the boys winning 10-0, which was pleasing for them.

The Year 7 football team made it through to the first round of the county cup, beating Twynham 4-2. With torrential rain and high winds, it was a hard-fought match which could have gone either way. With this being the first time seeing the Year 7 play it was a balancing act to give everyone some game time.

Girl's football has hit the ground running with year 7-11 playing in multiple matches. This included a 6 a side tournament, where both the Year 8 and 9's came second. With excellent performances from

Molly (Year 8) and Lily (Year 9) attacking well and getting goals for the team.



We have many more fixtures and events up and coming. Including: Basketball leagues; football leagues; Netball leagues and sports leadership all starting just before and after Christmas.

Our sixth form have enjoyed playing in football and netball tournaments, showing great determination and success in both sports. Coming second competing again a host of schools at Burgate School. With Burgate, Ferndown and Salisbury College among some of the schools competing.



We have our annual Key stage 3 inter-team competition up and coming where students will be put into 4 teams across each year group. This internal competition to gain whole school points for their team. Which will span the whole of school. All students will get a chance to do some competitive sport and this is an excellent way for students to show us the sports values which we want all students to display. Respect, inclusion, determination and sportsmanship.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This Term's Highlights:

- Year 10 Football beat Leaf 4-3
- Year 10 Netball league Top 3 out of 9 teams
- Maisie H (Year 11) won under 18s cross country
- Year 9 Netballers came 4th out of 10 teams at the PEDSSA tournament
- Year 9 and 10 basketballers beat Ferndown
- Loads of football matches

As we approach the end of term, we would like to thank all students that have attended our clubs and fixtures. We have lots of other fixtures and events running in the new year. We also want to thank our staff that volunteer their time to allow our students extra-curricular opportunities.



Have a blessed Christmas!



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