

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

14 December 2018

As we ramp up for the big finale next week with a very busy schedule, this week has been relatively quiet apart from, of course, the Christmas Show in the Junior School. This incorporated a wonderfully international feel with each year group from Years 3-6 representing a country with their lovely themed shirts and flags. The Pre-Prep gave the story line of the angels visiting these countries and they really did look fabulous in their different costumes. The whole show had an underlying, but poignant, strapline on how we can all be so different but at the same time so similar. It was a very uplifting and enchanting couple of performances and I hope lots of you managed to witness it for yourselves!

Next week, I truly hope that we will see you at our lovely celebratory Carol Service which also always has a fundraising cause for a local charity, this year being for 'Challenge Ahead', an activity group for children and young people who have sustained an acquired brain injury. As ever, we have a super line-up of music to set us all in the festive mood for the holidays ahead.

Likewise, all parents of Upper 5 and Upper 6 are still very welcome to join us at Tuesday's Prize Giving in the Belmont Chapel - this is always a very glamorous celebration of the girls' amazing achievements with superb entertainment thrown in. It is also a wonderful opportunity to welcome back the class of 2018 and hear all of their stories from their journeys since leaving us.

Today the staff and Sixth Formers are wearing their Christmas jumpers - some, it must be said, are particularly resplendent! Just to remind you also that next Friday, the whole school is invited to wear something Christmassy, as is the tradition on the last day of term.



In the meantime, on to the week's news!

'Top of the Bench' Chemistry Day at the university



On Wednesday, a group of our Senior Students travelled to the University to attend the Royal Society of Chemists 'Top of the Bench' competition. As Mr MacDonald reports:

"It was broken down into three sections; two practical challenges and a multiple choice quiz, all carried out in the science teaching laboratories. The practical challenges required the girls to work together as a team to carry out a series of titrations designed to assess the acidity and alkalinity of various materials. The second practical came

without any instructions and the girls had to work out how to approach the challenge, based on their earlier work. I thought it was a very well designed day with a great deal of teamwork and problem solving required. Whilst we did not win any prizes on this occasion the girls had a great time and we will certainly be returning."

Mr Bowler and Mrs Dersley invited to mark at the British Mathematical Olympiad

A report from Mr Bowler

Every year, in December, around 1000 of the UK's most talented school-aged mathematicians take part in the prestigious British Mathematical Olympiad. This competition acts as a precursor to the International Mathematical Olympiad and aids the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust in identifying future UK team members. For the vast majority of students who take part it will likely be the most demanding examination paper they will ever encounter, consisting of six questions requiring full mathematical proof to be written up in three and a half hours. To claim even a single full solution is an achievement, something which is vastly at odds with the GCSE style of assessment school students are used to.



Last weekend, Mrs Dersley and I were invited to Wolfson College Cambridge, along with around 50 others, to take part in the British Mathematical Olympiad marking weekend. This involves a busy schedule of writing and debating mark schemes on the Friday evening, marking student scripts throughout Saturday and a mixture of marking and moderating scripts all day on Sunday. The marking is vastly different from that of GCSE questions because of the subtleties involved in mathematical proof; it can be a very fine line between a student achieving full marks and no marks. The weekend gave us both a great chance to develop our own analytical abilities, figuring out what a young untrained mathematician has done in a given problem can be rather taxing. It is also often very insightful and can really help inform future teaching, especially of the most able students. A highlight of the weekend was engaging with many other mathematicians over the three days; there were university students, professors and teachers all of whom were keen to discuss the teaching and learning of mathematics.

In spite of the fact that the weekend is at a very busy period during the term, it is a pleasure to be involved in an event that promotes mathematics at the very highest level and to know we are helping to encourage and inspire the next generation of mathematicians.

Totally heart-warming and fabulous Christmas Show



Following weeks of dedicated singing and acting practise, the Junior School girls delivered sparkling performances of their multi-cultural Christmas Show "Children of the World" to packed audiences on yesterday evening and this afternoon. The Pre-Prep girls taught us about Christmas customs from countries around the world, while all the girls across the Junior School from Reception to Year 6 sang their hearts out under the direction of our fantastic Head of Music, Mrs Smith. The combined effort of all the girls to learn their lines, song words, actions, instrumental pieces, and the poise they show in performing in front

of full audiences, is a feat which never fails to amaze us. Happy Christmas everyone and, girls, we could not be more proud of you!

Rosie wins National Story Explorers competition

Huge congratulations to Rosie Thomson in Year 6 who has scooped one of the top prizes in the National Literacy Trust's Story Explorers competition. Rosie was one of only 25 pupils from the entire UK to have been selected and part of her prize includes an upcoming visit to school from an acclaimed children's author.

Several girls from our Year 6 entered the competition which involved creating a map or a visitor's guide for one of their favourite books, exploring ideas about why they might want to go there, who they would meet and what they could do when there. Rosie's winning entry was for 'Alice in Wonderland'; huge congratulations on such fine work and, equally, our many thanks for reaping the rewards for the benefit of your entire year group!



Young Enterprise achieve successful sales



The Lower 6 Young Enterprise team, EverOcean, were in Princesshay last weekend selling their re-useable bottles for £6.99 each. The team worked together extremely well to organise a great trade stand and sell to the public. They were thrilled to win the Sustainability Award for their product, although the biggest achievement of all was getting the stock there on time! Mr Richards and Mrs Woulfe, centre leads for the Maynard Young Enterprise team, were bowled over by their level of perseverance in this regard.

When the supplier told them the stock would not arrive until Monday, they just would not take "no" for an answer, making numerous phone calls and even going to the sorting office to collect it when they were told this would not be possible! The whole experience has been an eye-opener for the girls and there is still much more to come this year.

Please look out for ways to buy a bottle from school next week. They make a super stocking filler!



Making leather in Fashion & Textiles

As ever, the Fashion & Textiles room is a complete hive of creativity but never before has anyone attempted to make, yes make, their own leather! Bella Pallett (Upper 6), who will be one of the first to complete our new Fashion & Textiles A-level in the summer, has taken the coursework theme of 'sustainability' to a whole new level and, over the past three weeks, she has been growing her own piece of vegan leather to feature as either a pocket, collar or cuff on the jacket she is designing and will be making next term. It has been the most incredibly exciting process and the outcome is superb with two beautiful squares of perfect leather that she plans to further embellish using red cabbage or blueberry dye (again made by her own fair hand).

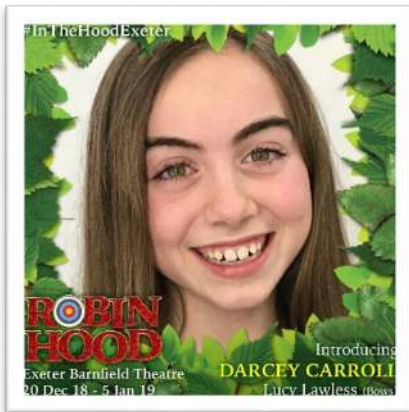
Likewise, Mimi Dudman (also Upper 6) has been practicing her fabric manipulation with a pleating board, using the very same couture methods that are more renown in high-end fashion houses such as Chanel or Dior. The results are stunning and she will be using these skills in the design of a bespoke and made-to-measure dress that she will be creating out of either Peace Silk (Ahimsa) or bamboo. The only problem being that she has mocked up such a huge variety of truly elegant ideas that it is going to be very difficult to decide on the final one, let alone make it!

'A Christmas Carol' Experience by Natalie Conboy

On Tuesday 11 December, a lot of Upper Four stayed in town until 7pm to watch Simon Callow's one-man take on Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" at the Vue Cinema. This is the book we have been studying in our English lessons this half term, so when Mrs Spelman found out it was on live at the Vue Cinema we all wanted to go!

When we found out that it was a one-man show, we were a bit apprehensive, but excited to see how it would work. As it turned out, Callow mainly narrated the story, but acted out the different characters, almost like he was recounting it to us. He also had some sound effects like a crowded street or carol singers in the background. He used about four rooms in what must have been an abandoned warehouse as his scene, and with different lighting he managed to make each room look completely different each time we saw it again! Overall, I really enjoyed it although that might not have been the opinion of everyone. Even though it was not the most visually appealing film in the world, it was very relaxing to hear the story being almost read out. Also, as I said before, Callow made it seem like he was recounting the story from memory, and he made it interesting through the way he spoke it. You could almost close your eyes and just have the whole story read to you! I really liked the effect of all of it put together, and it made me feel very content as I walked out of the cinema. I think it was a good experience; a good interpretation of 'A Christmas Carol' and also my first one-man show!

Darcey and Becky appearing in 'Robin Hood'



Don't miss the opportunity to support two of our students, Darcey Carroll (Year 6) and Becky Kerwin (Upper 4), who will be starring in 'Robin Hood' at the Barnfield Theatre over the Christmas season. Darcey successfully landed one of principle the roles as Lucy Lawless whilst Becky will be an important member of the choir. It will be well worth a visit, particularly as the storyline has a 'girl power' twist to it - quite befitting for a couple of Maynardians!

Both Darcey and Becky can be seen in action on the following performances:

Thursday 20 December (7pm - opening night), Saturday 22 December (11am), Sunday 23 Dec (4pm), Friday 28 Dec (7pm), Saturday 29 December (11am), Sunday 30 December (2pm), Thursday 3 January (7pm), Saturday 5 January (2pm).

We wish them lots of luck!

Zoe Cole invited to join the National Children's Orchestra

We were thrilled to learn that Zoe Cole (Year 5) will be joining the National Children's Orchestra (NCO), the highlight of which will be a week-long residential held in Port Regis next August.

She will also be joining the NCO's Regional Orchestras Programme for 2019 made up from all their main players in the South West, including those from other age-branded orchestras. As such, Zoe will have to commit to a training programme that involves meeting once a month in Bristol from January through to September.

This is an amazing achievement as NCO no longer run a training orchestra, so in effect there are 100 less places this year for musicians in the younger age bands and all prospective players must now apply for a place in this under 10 category...so it has been a very competitive round! We wish Zoe all the very best of luck for these exciting months ahead!



Evie successfully auditions for the National Children's Choir



Congratulations to Evie McCormack (Upper 3) who has successfully auditioned for the National Children's Choir of Great Britain. The choir has recently completed its annual auditions around the country and is looking forward to welcoming a number of young singers from Devon to its two residential courses at Shrewsbury School, Shropshire in the Easter and summer holidays. Evie is following in the footsteps of a number of current and former members of the choir including Molly Batchelor (Upper 6 leaver in 2018) and Olivia

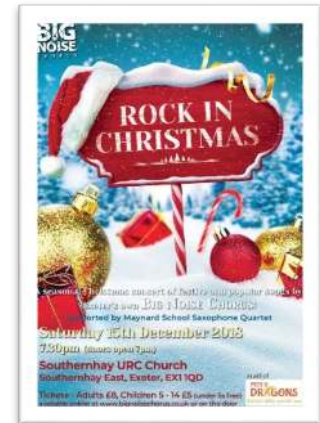
Middleton (Upper 4). Come and hear her start our Carol Service on Thursday 20 December, singing the solo in 'Once in Royal'.

Amelia Moody (Lower 6) was as superb as ever, finishing third in the Senior Girls section after a very tough run, made all the worse by the underfoot conditions. Our congratulations to them all!

Wishing luck to the Saxophone Quartet

Good luck to the Saxophone Quartet who are performing in a seasonal concert alongside the Big Noise Choir (who rehearse in school) at Southernhay URC Church at 7.30pm tomorrow.

It should be a toe-tapping, festive evening and tickets are still available with all proceeds are going towards the charity, Pete's Dragons.



Hockey team finish the year on a high

Our Under 19 hockey team finished the term, and 2018, in fine style with an excellent victory over King's Ottery on Tuesday evening.

It was an excellent game with great play and superb shows of sportsmanship from both sides. In the words of Mrs Wood, "Hockey was the real winner!"

Jiu Jitsu grading - belts awarded!

Congratulations to our martial arts girls who completed their Jiu Jitsu grading this week. The junior girls (comprising of Years 4 to 6) successfully finished the syllabus to be awarded their Red White Jiu Jitsu belts, a step up from their red belts that they had already gained previously. Equally, our cadets group (Lower 4 to Upper 4) have been working towards their red or red yellow belts under a different syllabus and they, too, were successful in gaining the different grades.

Both groups train weekly with their Jiu jitsu instructors from Exeter Martial Arts Club learning this traditional Japanese art. Jiu Jitsu relies upon technique rather than strength to defend against one or multiple opponents of any size, weight and gender, making it an effective form of modern day self-defence.

Well done to all the girls on a successful grading!



Humanities essay competition

Just to give you advance warning that the Geography, History and Religious Studies departments are launching an essay competition (open to all students in Upper 3 to Upper 4) entitled “Immigration to the UK has created more opportunities than challenges”. How far do you agree?

Further details are included on the pdf attached but please do encourage your daughter to enter, especially if she would like the chance to win one of the wonderful prizes! There’s plenty of time to complete the challenge with entries not having to be submitted until Monday 11 February.

Another sewing session for Friends of Buburi charity



Mrs Sowden, mother of Miren who left in the summer, has confirmed that she will be coming in to school on Wednesday 23 January to help run another reusable sanitary pad-making session during the lunch break. The last time that she did one of these, the Textiles room was overrun with volunteers ‘doing their bit’ for this wonderful charity and we would love to have yet another packed and industrious session. The pads will be given to schoolgirls in Buburi, Kenya (a very poor and rural community) meaning that they will be able to go to school every day and not miss any lessons because they don’t have sanitary protection for when they have their period.

Mrs Sowden will be visiting Buburi again in February so will be taking the pads with her then. Each girl will receive 4 pads and (hopefully) a pair of pants in a waterproof bag (that she also makes). “So I’d be really grateful if girls would donate pants - a pack of 3 to 4 pairs from Primark or other stores cost only a few pounds. They’re for teenagers but they need to be quite plain and in sizes 8, 10 or 12. And thank you so much for all of your support.”

And finally, from our roving correspondent, Lilly Mazer:

It is Christmas season, which means, for most of us, being-incredibly-busy-and-rushing-around-all-the-time season. It has been hard enough just to find some time to sit down and write this! Between buying presents and organising a busy calendar full of nativities, carol services and Christmas parties, it seems as though there is never a dull moment around this time of year. Doing things like buying presents or visiting family and friends is such a lovely way to spread kindness and Christmas spirit; but doing so much all the time makes it very difficult to be kind to yourself.



Sometimes, you have so many things going on that it seems impossible to stop and think about your own personal happiness. But how can you make others happy if you aren’t feeling contentment yourself? In order to be good to others you need to be good to yourself, whether that involves scheduling a day to relax, organising time for a lie in or just having a chilled night in.



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I want to spend this Christmas taking some of the time from such a busy schedule to spread kindness not only to others but to myself, and I urge you to do the same. Kindness spreads like a ripple in the pond, but a ripple needs a starting point. Make that point you. Christmas is for giving, and that includes giving to yourself.

Have a fabulous weekend!

Sarah Dunn
Headmistress



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