

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

13 December 2019

The countdown to Christmas is certainly in full swing and there definitely is a very festive and jolly feel around school as we head into the final few days of the term. An absolute winner for me, in terms of getting into the spirit of things, is always the wonderful Pre-Prep and Junior School Show which once again is, if you will pardon the pun, an absolute cracker. All the girls performed beautifully at last night's opener and those parents who haven't already seen it are certainly in for a real treat this afternoon!

It's also wonderful to see such an array of (recycled!) Christmas jumpers around school today and, not to be outdone by the girls, the staff room has been particularly resplendent. There are definitely no shrinking violets amongst this lot!

The end of this term is always extraordinarily busy and these last few days are packed full of events and fun-filled things. We had the pleasure earlier today of the Upper 4 Christmas Cake display which always brings the crowds flocking. As ever, the Food & Nutrition room was crammed with staff and students, all 'oohing' and 'aahing' over the imaginative and, quite simply, exquisite decorations so huge congratulations to all of the girls for a fabulous display. Your families are very lucky to have these winging their way home for all to enjoy!

We have our annual Senior Prize Giving ceremony at the Belmont Chapel on Monday evening and I am very much looking forward to welcoming back our Class of 2019 and finding out all about their latest adventures and exploits. Equally, I am excited about meeting Old Maynardian, Dr Amy Dickman, who will be our guest speaker for the evening. She is one extraordinary lady with over 20 years' experience working on large carnivores in Africa, specialising in human-carnivore conflict. In 2009, she founded the Ruaha Carnivore Project based in a remote part of Southern Tanzania which focuses upon reducing



carnivore attacks and providing local communities with real benefits from carnivore presence, particularly working on improving local schools, clinics and access to veterinary medicine. It's fair to say that Amy has had more than her fair share of near death experiences (from local tribes as well as wild cats) and I am looking forward to hearing more about all of this and the impact her project is having on alleviating poverty in this part of the world.

We are very fortunate that she has also kindly offered to talk with the Upper 3 and Lower 4 girls all about her work and I hope they are looking forward to this special session during their last lesson on Monday afternoon. By all accounts she is one very strong, determined and inspirational lady!

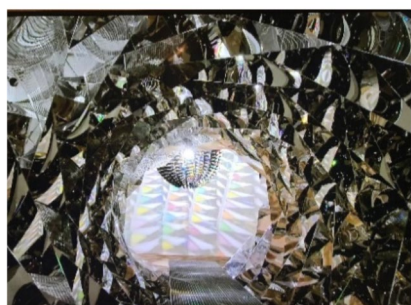
There are also two further events that always cap off this term so beautifully; the first, on Tuesday evening, is the Christmas Carol Service being held in the Southernhay United Reformed Church and I very much look forward to seeing you there. Please note the change of venue while St Matthew's has a refurb. And last, but by no means least, Wednesday heralds the Sixth Form entertainment (aka a good ribbing of all the staff) which I say I am looking forward to but this is always mixed with an awful lot of trepidation!

So a busy few days ahead! On to the week's news ...



Enjoyable trip to Tate Modern

At the crack of dawn last Saturday an excited group of Lower 5 Art students set off for the lights of London and specifically the delights of the Tate Modern. We walked along the embankment, pausing to enjoy the entertainment - a fire-throwing juggler- and then we entered the cavernous depths of the gallery. Our sights were first assaulted by the enormous dramatic 4-tiered fountain Fons Americanus sculpture by Kara Walker in the Turbine hall.



We spent time exploring the different gallery spaces until it was time to enter the Olafur Eliasson exhibition. What an immersive, all-consuming experience! We were all blown away! Eliasson puts experience at the centre of his art. As you encounter it, you become more aware of your senses. For Eliasson, this heightened awareness of yourself and other people creates a new sense of responsibility.



Afterwards, we looked at Yinka Shonibare's work which contrasted radically with what we had just seen but was colourful and very thought-provoking. After a walk back along the river, stopping to savour the Christmas lights, the crowds, and the flavours of the Churros stand and the Noodle bar, we arrived at Paddington in time to take a selfie with Paddington Bear and stock up on more supplies before our journey home.

News from the Art Room

Not only have the Upper 4 been making gorgeous cakes, they have also created some beautiful Christmas cards this week and we love these stunning designs!



Gingerbread Pompeian house-making



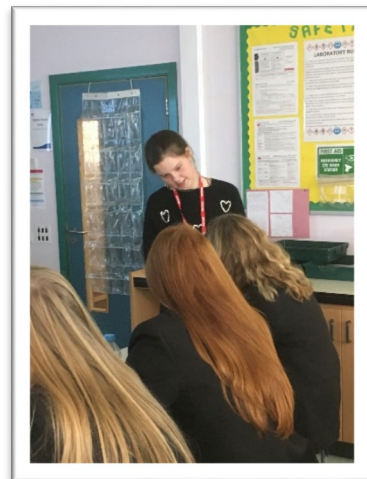
The GCSE Classical Civilisation groups enjoyed some cunningly festive classes earlier in the week where they were tasked by Dr Keen to make replicas of Pompeian houses out of gingerbread. Each house was based on one of their GCSE case studies and included:

- The Insula of Diana (in Ostia)
- The House of the Wooden Partition (Herculaneum)
- The House of Menander (Pompeii)
- The House of Octavius Quartio (Pompeii)

It was a really fun revision exercise and all of the structures were completed with great accuracy, right down to an indoor pool, people asleep in their beds and even an edible water fountain!

Youth STEMM Award news

Two of our Silver Youth STEMM Award girls enjoyed a fantastic experience, becoming teachers for a morning at nearby St. James School. Kitty and Miri, in the Lower Sixth, thoroughly enjoyed taking a Year 9 Biology class where they discussed stem cell research, the ethics behind it and the perceived advantages. "The class that we were teaching were very receptive and really took to the topic, especially the debate about whether or not stem cells should be used in research. There were some great discussions and we would love to thank the school for inviting us and the class for being so welcoming. We hope they enjoyed the lesson!"



Henry Hoover makes Drama debut



This week the Drama Department have been carrying out major assessments for both the first year GCSE and A-level groups as well as the Upper 4. The Lower 6 have been working on a mock devised project inspired by the tale 'The Emperor's New Clothes' and using their studied practitioner to shape their work. The piece involved the promotion of a Henry Hoover as an antidote to climate change by a distant ruler cloistered in his ivory tower, delivering speeches from his remote balcony. The piece had resonances with the political landscape today and was full of modern references and great comedic moments; highly entertaining and thought provoking!

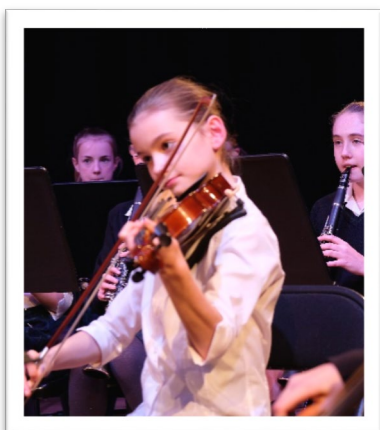
Merits and distinctions in Music exams

Congratulations to all the girls that took ABRSM and Trinity music exams during the Autumn Term. We received a very high number of merits and distinctions across the board but particularly well done to Lizzie (Grade 8 voice, merit), Thalia (Grade 8 flute, merit) and Kristina who, at only just 13 years old, achieved an extremely high distinction in her Grade 8 saxophone. Well done girls!



(Multi-talented Kristina on her violin)

Music success for Zoe



We were delighted to hear that Zoe in Year 6 was successful in her audition for the National Children's Orchestra (NCO) and has been awarded a place playing the viola in the Under 11 section.

The NCO provides a world class foundation in orchestral performance and musicianship to amazing young musicians living in the UK. Every autumn, it auditions over a thousand 7-14 year olds and identifies 600 young musicians to form 11 orchestras: five age-banded national symphony orchestras and six symphonic mixed-age regional orchestras. For Zoe to be a part of one of the national ensembles is a terrific achievement. Well done, Zoe!

Sports Performance of the Month nominees

Congratulations to our 'Sports Performance of the Month' nominees who, for December, are:

Under 12 Netball Team

For their fantastic approach to their opening three netball games of the season, managing the challenges of a convincing cup win versus Churston Grammar School, a closely competitive win against

St. Peter's High School, and then experiencing a much higher level game in the ISNC Netball Cup away at Redmaids' High School Bristol, where they put everything into it and didn't give up.

1* X1 Hockey Team

For their brilliant performance at Exeter School, coming away with a 1-0 victory in their last game of the season to cap off a competitive term for this team.

Gymnastics: Flo

Following a break from competitive training and competition, Flo in Upper 5 has returned to elite level Gymnastics training in 2019 and has had to work incredibly hard to achieve new skill elements in all of the apparatus disciplines. Her hard work and dedication has been rewarded as she has achieved the scores necessary for the Devon team selection, and will now train as a member of the Devon Women's Artistic Gymnastics Squad.

Upper 5 Sports Leaders Group

An excellent start to their leadership sessions at St. Leonard's Primary School, planning and delivering multi-skills sports sessions to Key Stage 2 pupils. The girls have already faced head-on the challenges of the differentiated needs of their pupils, and having to adapt to available facilities and weather conditions.

The winner will be announced in the final end of term assembly.

Martial Arts Club belt grading

Congratulations to our Years 3-6 Junior School Martial Arts Club girls who all recently took part in their Jiu Jitsu belt grading. The formal grading saw them perform skills on command to their Sensei (instructor) in order to receive their Red and White Jiu Jitsu belts in recognition of the progress they have made in their training with the Exeter Martial Arts Club this term. Well done to them all!



Competitive games for the Under 12 and 13 Hockey teams

The Under 12s and Under 13s enjoyed some great games against Exeter Cathedral School last week with the U12s winning 6-0 and the U13s losing 5-0. This was the U12s final hockey game of the year, so it was great to come out with such a strong win. The U13s were unlucky, with the opposition having two particularly strong players dominating the game. Meanwhile, they are busy playing their final game against Exeter School this afternoon.

Under 12 Netball v Redmaids' High School

Our super excited Under 12 Netball squad travelled on their first big away trip up to Redmaids' High School in Bristol for Round Four of the Sisters in Sport Netball Cup this week. Off the back of their convincing win versus Churston last month in Round Three we anticipated much tougher competition at Redmaids. We were right and there was a great standard of netball being played by both teams. Our girls played exceptionally well, kept going and fought really hard for all of their goals; the final score of 35-8 to Redmaids didn't reflect how well the girls played, or how hard they tried – the whole squad gave everything and learned lots from this competitive experience. Exciting times ahead for this team in the Spring Term ... it will give us time to work on our selfies too!



(Almost) Everyone's a winner in the Senior House Hockey

The House Hockey this week was an incredibly close affair and ended in surprise with three houses finishing in equal first position. It was touch and go across the Upper 3 to Sixth Form year groups and, after everyone had played their turn, it was impossible to split the top teams. So congratulations to Haberdashers, Merchants and Goldsmiths for their historic victory and our thanks to all the girls for making it such an exciting, close-fought event.

House games shirts now on sale

The brand new house games shirts are now on sale and we think they look amazing! To buy yours please go to our uniform suppliers, www.stevensons.co.uk



Good luck to Hockey Lioness

We wish Erin in Upper 4 the best of luck as she travels to Spain this weekend for her upcoming tournament as part of the UK Lions Under 13 Hockey Squad.

Erin was spotted by the selectors whilst playing in a tournament during the summer in Nottingham and there was none more pleased than herself to receive the surprise phone call.

“We will be playing in three overseas tournaments based in Spain, Holland and Ireland between now and August next year. The UK Lions is a unique team as it is only accessible for players who are U13; this will be the only year that I can play in it so I hope to try my best and enjoy wearing my new kit!” she said.

We wish her lots of luck and look forward to hearing how the team fares.

Clutch of clear rounds brings sponsorship interest for Polly

Congratulations to Polly in Year 6 who put in some incredible performances on her pony, Rosie, in the Junior Show Jumping class during the Westcountry Equine Fair last weekend. They both finished clear at 70cm, 80cm, 90cm, 1m and then in the final round at 1.10m. At only 10-years old (in a class open to all riders under 14) this is an incredible achievement and certainly drew the attention of Charles Darrow Commercial Property Agents who has subsequently approached Polly with a potential sponsorship deal. A bright future beckons as she looks to launch her BS affiliated career in the New Year.



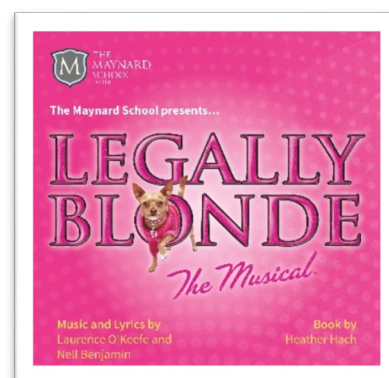
Please support the Young Enterprise team!

On Saturday, from 9am to 2:30pm we will be selling our handmade, eco-friendly “Bee Bothered” greetings cards at the Young Enterprise Christmas fair in Princesshay. We have a lovely range of cards just in time for Christmas! There will also be a station for having a go at making your own lino printed gift tag - perfect for those presents that will be under the tree very soon! Please come along to support us!

Legally Blonde Ticket Update

We are pleased to announce that tickets for the much anticipated whole school musical, ‘Legally Blonde’, will be on sale from Tuesday 17 December from www.barnfieldtheatre.org.uk

Don’t delay – these always sell out very quickly!



And finally

Word’s gotten out and we are attracting all sorts to the Christmas Show Keen not to miss it, he arrived several hours early for the purrformance!



Have a good weekend!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Dunn'.

Sarah Dunn
Headmistress