

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING THIS TERM?



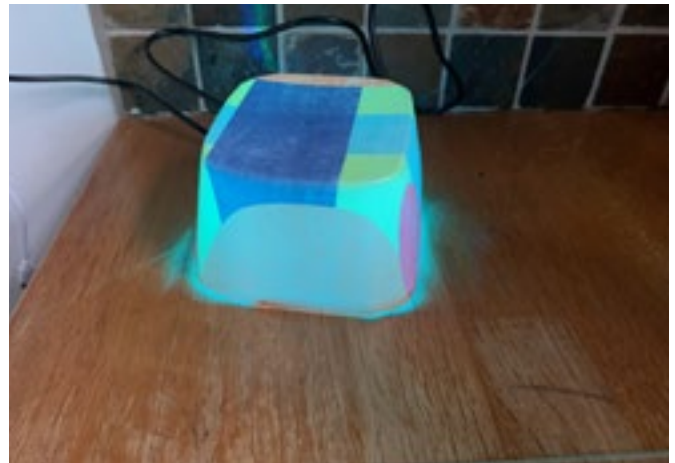
Ski Trip



Trip to Houses of Parliament



History Quality Mark



Year Seven "Light me up" Design & Technology



Royal Academy Competition



Girls' Years Seven & Eight football success

Principal's Introduction



Dear Parents/Carers

Two weeks ago saw our incredible production of "Beauty and the Beast" at The Place theatre. It really was a fabulous four nights. Thank you to Mrs Millington, and the large team involved, for this wonderful experience for our students.

Good luck to the Year Elevens with their revision this Easter. Remember the balance. Rest and relaxation is key, but so is a timetable of when your child will do some studying.

Have a wonderful Easter break and we look forward to seeing your child back on **Wednesday, 23 April 2025**.

ExGulite

I am going to let this newsletter speak for itself. It covers a huge amount of sport, science, art and culture within its pages, and I am really looking forward to the summer term.



Note from the Chair of Governors

The Goldington calendar has been full of achievements. Well done to all of them. From the dramatization of "Beauty and the Beast", and with the inception of the Eatery, I would like to commend the staff, students and parents for these achievements. Operationally, we have migrated to a new IT system called BromCom. More information to follow.

I want to also reflect on the current Year Eleven. I met a few doing the careers interview who were fully engaged, enthusiastic and ambitious. This will be their final full term before they head off to do their GCSEs, and I hope they

continue working hard and achieve the results they need for the next stage in life, and take away good memories of Goldington Academy. They will be missed.

I would like to wish everyone a well-earned break.

Mrs Ahmad-Pearce



Les Infos Françaises

January 2025 saw our Year Eight students writing and performing role plays around ordering food in a French restaurant. Playing either waiting staff or customers, they practised their French speaking skills to make menu choices, highlight any problems and pay for their meals. The photos show one group in a restaurant using props and costumes, and you can also see some of the fabulously designed menus that our Year Eight cohort created for the task... some earning Headteacher's Awards for their originality.



Meanwhile, our Year Seven students have been getting creative, working on the topic of schools, where they have been learning about school subjects and giving opinions on them and how to describe their school uniform. Here are some beautiful examples from our Year Seven linguists of their timetables "emploi du temps" in French, and also, cartoonstrip-style depictions of their school days, using French verbs and time phrases.



Debate Club

Another busy term for debate club, with competitions and trips throughout. We were able to visit the Houses of Parliament again, where the students were able to observe a live debate from the public gallery and take part in a workshop on the power of petitions, before having a Q & A with our MP, Mohammad Yasin.

The Rotary Club held a public speaking competition, which took place at The Quarry Theatre. We entered two teams, and it was a night of very interesting, thought-provoking talks covering topics from capital punishment to the return of stolen artefacts.



Most of the term has been spent preparing for a Mock Trial at Milton Keynes Magistrate's Court. Students played roles including lawyers, witnesses and magistrates. Ten schools competed and all our students worked very hard on their roles. It was a great introduction to the court system and allowed students to work on their questioning skills, public speaking and critical analysis of evidence presented. Earlier in the month, we had the opportunity to visit Bedford Magistrate's Court and have a tour of the building, including courtrooms, the library and the holding cells!

Houses of Parliament



Milton Keynes Magistrates Court



Bedford Magistrates Court



Ely Cathedral and Cambridge Mosque visit

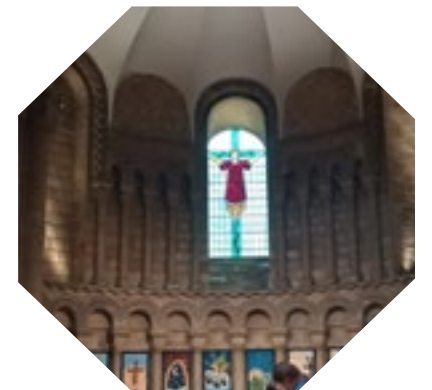
We have had a busy half term in the RPE department. Our Year Eight trip to Ely Cathedral and Cambridge Central Mosque was a great success. Pupils showed amazing engagement, getting hands on with some different learning activities and asking really intriguing questions, linking their classroom learning to what they were experiencing on the day. A highlight was seeing the students (and teachers') faces drop in awe at the high-vaulted ceilings and amazing artwork and stain glass windows in the cathedral. This seemed to be an eye-opening trip for many of our pupils who were able to learn about the lived experiences of the worldviews we have been studying. Overheard amongst the boys at the back of the coach: 'what would you rate the trip?' '10/10'.

Our philosophy club is also back up and running, with much improvement. Delia, Aleeza and Jessica (three of our amazing GCSE RS pupils) have put some amazing work into producing resources and running the club every Tuesday lunchtime. So far we have had really great turn outs with students getting fired up debating some heated topics.

Here are some of the questions that have been debated so far (all chosen by students):

- Should the British Museum return artefacts back to their country of origin?
- Does love really exist or is it just an illusion? (a jaded Valentine's special)
- Should wealthy countries be obligated to help poorer nations?
- Should governments have the right to control and filter media content?
- Does the concept of fate exist?
- What happens when we die?

The club is open to all students and runs on a Tuesday, second half of lunch in Room 19. It would be lovely to see students from all year groups getting involved.



Geography - KS3 Climate Change Conference

On the 15 of January, a group of Year Eight and Nine students were invited to the University of Bedfordshire to take part in a Climate Change summit. Firstly, we experienced a talk from Dr Phil Porter, a glacier scientist, who had been to the Arctic to research the behaviour of glaciers. The talk was interactive allowing us to use useful websites to answer questions, view diagrams and give opinions on the topic of climate change.

After the talk, there was an exhibition about different businesses that play a major role in the conversation about climate change. Bedford Borough Council were there discussing how they are improving the sustainability of the borough and there was also information on how to reduce the amount of energy and water wasted in schools.

Following the exhibition, we attended a workshop which was very interactive and fun with some experiments. We gained insight about the company Airlander's plans to build a new type of hybrid air ship, as well as doing experiments about the reaction between raisins and sprite and how many grains of rice it took to make a balloon float!

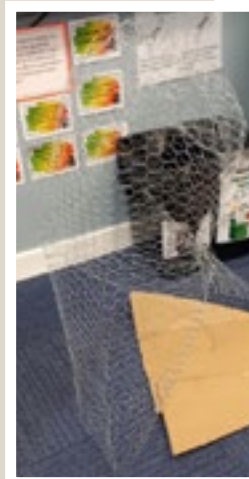
Overall, it was a great day which developed our understanding for climate change and made us more passionate to improve our understanding of sustainability and the planet.



Eco-club update – thanks to everyone who supported the clothes drive; we are currently processing these in support of the 'Just one Tree' charity. More information to follow in the next newsletter. Eco-clubbers remain committed to improving the sustainability of our school. Well done everyone.

Geography clubbers have been really busy this term working on an under the ocean themed project. They are thinking big with their designs and creativity and

we cannot wait to reveal their work in the summer term. Well done geography clubbers! Their energy and enthusiasm is always inspirational. Here are a few pictures of them in action! #geogrocks.



History

The history department is delighted to share that this term we were granted a renewal of our Silver Award Quality Mark from the Historical Association. This renewal shows that we have continued to maintain the same high standard of our previous assessment, and that we are continuing to develop our curriculum according to best historical practice.

We very much enjoyed our recent trip to the Imperial War Museum at Duxford with Year Nine students. They had the opportunity to take part in the Documentary Challenge where they



made mini documentaries on people and objects that they thought the world should know about. Students also had the chance to explore this historic airbase, discovering iconic aircraft and historic objects along the way.



ASIT Lectures

In order to challenge and inspire our most inquisitive Year Nine and Year Ten students, Goldington Academy teachers have delivered a series of lectures giving a short introduction to a variety of fascinating and complex subjects. These lectures aim to broaden students' academic horizons and encourage a deeper curiosity about the world around them.

So far, the students have explored topics ranging from the explosive science of supernovae to the mind-bending concepts of quantum mechanics. They have also discovered the catastrophic potential of super volcanoes and delved into the world of network algorithms, gaining an understanding of how technology shapes our daily lives.

Looking ahead, the lecture series will continue to offer unique insights into cutting-edge fields of study. Future topics include an introduction to artificial intelligence, where students will learn about the rapid advancements in AI and its impact on society. They will also be introduced to linguistics, the study of language and its evolution, and the exciting world of modern language use, which explores how language is adapting in the digital age.

These lectures are not only designed to spark curiosity but also to inspire our students to think critically and creatively about the subjects they might pursue in the future. We are incredibly proud of the students' enthusiasm and engagement, and we look forward to seeing how these experiences will shape their academic journeys.

Year Seven Mrs Doubtfire Review by Ella

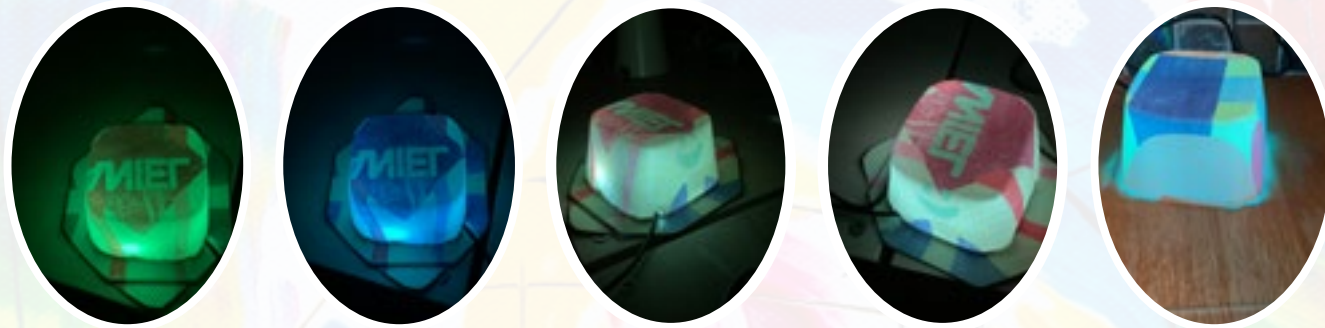
In January, selected students were taken on a trip to Shaftesbury theatre to see the famous show: Mrs Doubtfire. It was an extremely captivating and absolutely hilarious performance. The actors interacted with the crowd, sang a number of songs, had several interesting set changes and had many, many different costumes. The trip there and back was enjoyable as we were allowed to bring books, card games and anything else to entertain ourselves on the coach with us. I will forever fondly remember the trip as it was one of the memorable and fun moments I've ever had on a school outing.



Light me up

Yinka Ilori inspired mood lights produced by our latest Year Sevens! Some proud images of just some of the wonderful outcomes with lots of learning along the way such as how the vacuum former works, computer-aided design, soldering

and circuitry and simple hand tools skills. Looking at the work of Yinka Ilori was inspirational and pupils were able to encapsulate his style with great confidence. Well done all! Fantastic independent work!



Yummy Chocolate

Our Year Eight pupils enjoyed this unit of work very much! We predominately explored the idea of branding in terms of graphics and logo impact and developed packaging on 2D design. Pupils overcame the challenges of particular

aspects of the software and developed some interesting ideas. Pupils adapted their designs to produce a MDF mould suitable for vacuum forming a mould ready to be used with warm chocolate! See for yourself some delicious outcomes.



Picture This

Back to traditional skills with our Year Nine picture frame unit. Perfectly measured mitre joints cut and refined to create the flush edges that we needed. Developing some

bespoke features, pupils created an individual outcomes with the use of both hand cut painted features in addition to laser cut elements. Great work!



Visit to Colpac

Year Ten D&T pupils were extremely lucky to visit the local design and manufacturing centre of Colpac packaging - a forward thinking business who are continually developing their sustainable efforts within the packaging industry. We were fortunate enough to speak to the lead designers, manufacturers, procurements and sales department to really witness how a thriving international business is run

in every department. The pupils enjoyed viewing the mechanisms of the die cutting process and how a very well-known takeaway salad bowl is designed and created. All the while, we practised top health and safety protocols and learnt all about some fantastic apprenticeships. Thank you to Colpac for allowing us in for the day.

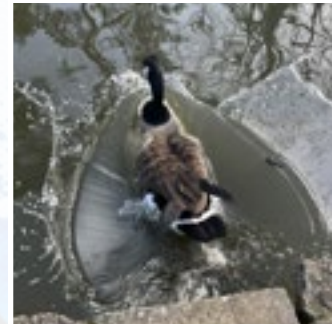


Photos used with permission

Art

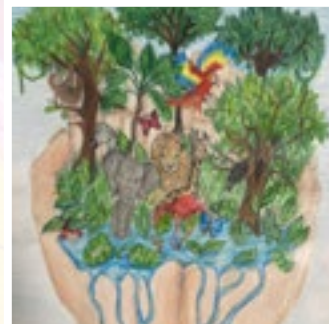
Photography competition

We have really enjoyed receiving entries into this year's Young Photographer competition run by the Rotary Foundation. Students across all year groups had the chance to enter their photography based on this year's theme 'Wonderful Water'. Their work has been entered into the Bedfordshire heats, and we will keep you updated on any pieces that make it through to the district finals. Well done to all our keen photographers!



Global canvas competition

Run by the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, this competition gave students a chance to show off their creativity following the theme 'Co-existence'. We had some very thoughtful entries showing their ideas about humans and animals existing alongside each other.



Royal Academy competition

Once again, students have had the opportunity to enter artwork in to the Royal Academy Young Artists' Summer Show. This is a great opportunity for students to create artwork with no brief or limitations, giving them full control over being creative. We are really pleased with the work submitted and we will send updates on any winning entries!



Set design for Beauty and The Beast

Students worked hard to contribute their artistic skills towards the Goldington performance of Beauty and The Beast. Students worked with Miss Taylor to produce the beautiful rose-stained glass window. It looked wonderful on set as a backdrop to the amazing performance!



Art

January saw Laura, Lavinia and Fernanda being awarded with artists of the month. Beautiful coloured pencil, pencil and painted pieces! In February we saw

some wonderful printmaking and expressive work from Eleanor, Dotty and Sienna. Well done!



Attendance Figures

We have been really proud of the efforts made by our pupils to be in school as much as possible this term. Whilst our attendance figures are significantly above national figures, we would like to take this opportunity to encourage good attendance amongst our pupils. Our current percentage is 94.1% and our school target is 96%. Please ensure that your child comes to school on time as regularly as possible. We appreciate that illnesses present themselves throughout the

year, but minor illnesses can be managed in school. If you are unsure, please contact Student Services.

Please remember that the day starts at 8.50 am and ends at 3.40 pm. Students need to be onsite by 8.50 am.

Please be aware that we are unable to authorise absences for family holidays.

Condition	Absent for
Chicken Pox	Until all vesicles are crusted over
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted/healed or 48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment
Measles	4 days
Scarlet Fever	Child can return 24 hours after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment
Sickness and/or Diarrhoea	48 hours after symptoms stop
Conjunctivitis	None
Head Lice	None
Mumps	5 days
Tonsillitis	None

This term's high achievers

Year	Winner	Runner Up
Seven	Nafeesa	Ethan
Eight	Johnny	Otis
Nine	Michal	Eli
Ten	Delia	Luke R
Eleven	Brandon	Hannar

Need help?

The numbers below are for services which could help you should you have any worries or concerns at any time:

- **Bedfordshire Police HQ** (non emergency) - 01234 841212
- **NSPCC** - 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline)
- **Integrated Front Door** team (safeguarding) - 01234 718700 (office hours) or ring 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)
- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** – 0808 2000 247
- **Report abuse in education** call 0800136663 - help@nspcc.org.uk
- **In an immediate emergency always dial 999**
- **Bedford Borough Early Help** call - 01234 718700 - EarlyHelpHub@Bedford.gov.uk

Anti-bullying & Restorative Justice

Well done to this year's anti-bullying ambassadors and restorative justice ambassadors. These ambassadors play a vital role in our anti-bullying ethos through this peer-led initiative.

Year	Anti-Bullying	Restorative Justice
Seven	Bella, Lacey-Mai, Corey, Lyra, Jack	Olivia, Livvy, Giorgia, Kataleja, Macie, Zak
Eight	Hayleigh, Millie, JJ, Harry, Jack, Lucas	Nina, Mahi, Emilie, Isaac, Jethro
Nine	Elodie, Austin, Emma, Matthew, Lexi	Ella, Jacob, Charlotte, Gabriella, Ethan
Ten	Dearan, Delia, Eva, Aleeza, Ruby	Vanshi, Divjot, Jessica, Andrew
Eleven	Brishna, Freddie, Max, Dansh, Miah	Haddiyah, Jay, Emily, Joel, Mohammed



Second-hand Uniform Shop



Second-hand school uniform can be purchased at a discounted rate via email request. Please contact Mrs Catrambone (catrambonej@goldington.beds.sch.uk) with your requests, including size requirements, to find out what we have in stock.

We are still gratefully receiving any donations of school uniform/PE kit that are clean and in good condition. Items can be dropped off at reception or brought to Student Services by your child.

Brand new school ties are available to purchase via Student Services for £7.25. Please email Mrs Catrambone on the above email address.

School Uniform Expectations

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of our uniform policy - please see below:

Pupil non-compliance

Teachers can discipline pupils for breaching the school's rules on appearance or uniform. This should be carried out in accordance with the school's published behaviour policy. A Principal, or a person authorised by the Principal, may ask a pupil to go home briefly to remedy a breach of the school's rules on appearance or uniform. When making this decision, schools need to consider the child's age and vulnerability, the ease and time it will take, and the availability of the child's parents.

This is not an exclusion but an authorised absence. However, if the pupil continues to breach uniform rules in such a way as to be sent home to avoid school, or takes longer than is strictly necessary to effect the change, the pupil's absence may be counted as an unauthorised absence. In either case, the pupil's parents must be notified and the absence should be recorded. If a school is considering excluding a pupil in response to breaches of uniform policy, then this must be in line with the legal requirements for exclusion.

Form Tutors and Heads of Year will routinely check the uniform and equipment of students in their year group/form group and will follow the procedure outlined below when challenging non-compliance with the academy uniform and equipment policy.

Unacceptable items of uniform/dress:

Trousers with decorative items, such as buttons or embroidery are **NOT** permitted. Trousers should be tailored and **NOT** be made of stretch, lycra, skinny or highly fashionable in style, nor should they have cargo or jeans style pockets. Dark grey shorts do not form part of the school uniform and therefore they should not be worn.

- Jewellery other than that listed below is **NOT** allowed:
 - ◊ One small plain stud in each ear
 - ◊ One ring permitted on each hand
 - ◊ Bracelets on the grounds of religious or medical needs
- Please note - piercing retainers are not allowed to be used as a substitute for piercings. Any student attending school with piercings that are not permitted will be asked to remove them, once they have healed. No other visible body piercing is acceptable. A watch may be worn provided it is marked with the owner's name.
- The wearing of wrist bands and bracelets is not permitted, unless for religious purposes.
- Only badges provided by the school are to be worn.
- Hair styles should **NOT** include unnatural colours, patterns or designs. Any student wearing unnatural colour in their hair will be asked to remove it immediately.
- No tramlines or patterns should be shaved into hair or the eyebrows.
- Hair bands should be discreet and plain in colour e.g. black, blue etc. Fashion type hair bands should not be worn in school.
- Trainers should not be worn during classroom-based lessons, unless otherwise agreed by the Academy Principal. If trainers are to be worn for an agreed reason, they should be black and discreet.
- Light make-up may be worn e.g. concealer, mascara. However, students may be asked to remove make-up if it is deemed to be inappropriate or too heavy e.g. foundation.
- Nail varnish should **NOT** be worn. Any students who are found to be wearing nail varnish will be asked to remove it. Continued wearing of jewellery, nail varnish will result in a referral to the Head of Year and may result in a consequence such as loss of break/lunch time.

Andorra Ski Trip 2025

It was a pleasure to take 41 students away on the ski trip over February half term. This year, we stayed in Encamp, located near the Valira D'Orient river. We had smooth journeys there and back and couldn't fault the overall experience.

The snow coverage throughout the ski resort was fantastic; the Pyrenees is a special mountain range with magical views, made even more magical by the arrival of 41 eager Goldington Academy pupils kitted out in a wide array of ski attire, ranging from the traditional to more eye catching, and rarely seen before, 'reggae' style ski jacket!

Needless to say, the skiing was excellent! We were all able to improve our skiing technique throughout the week, regardless of prior experience or ability. The advanced skiers tackled some challenging (and hair raising) red runs, coupled with some very difficult black runs designed for those who are technically excellent skiers, but perhaps also slightly mad! The intermediate groups began on the wider and more gentle blue slopes, but pushed on in the latter half of the week to tackle some very challenging red slopes, on which to perfect their parallel turns and stopping technique. The beginners, most of whom had never put skis or boots on before, were skiing competently down lengthy blue runs and starting to attempt some parts of some red runs by the end of the week – a real achievement in five days. The staff... trundled on behind and tried to keep up!



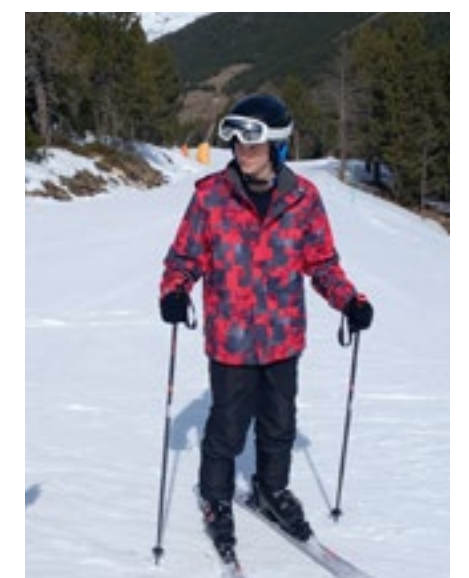
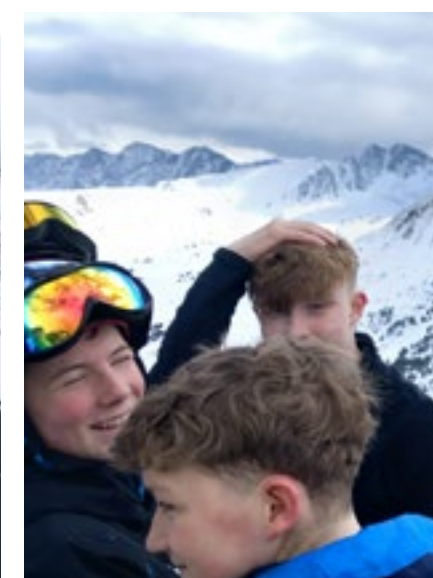
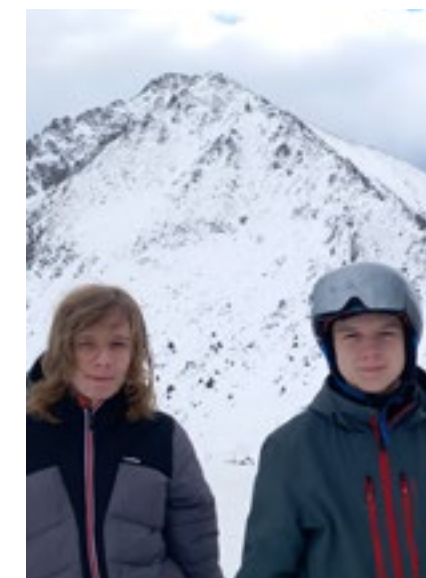
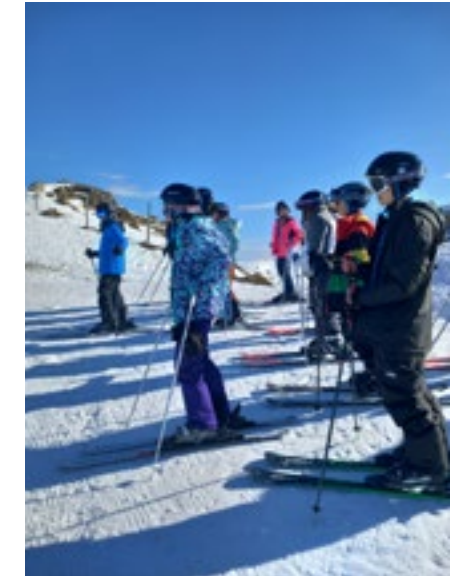
We also had some après ski fun at bowling and pizza night, but we all agreed that our favourite was the two hours we spent in the Caldea Spa! The spa has some special features. For example, the outdoor warm pool which hangs over the river on stilts, the cold plunge pool, the ice bath and the outdoor whirlpool. Just what we needed after the first three days of hard skiing!

After a week of physically challenging activities, we had a very quiet journey home! I want to express my gratitude to the pupils who came and made the trip such an enjoyable experience – they are a credit to the school and to their parents. We hope you felt a real sense of pride in your achievements over the week. I would also like to thank the parents for all their efforts in ensuring pupils were properly organised and prepared for the week. Finally, a big thank you to the staff who attended and made the trip a great success for all involved: Mr Atkinson, Mrs Chapman, Mr Lincoln, Mr Lattimer and Miss Barker.

We are already in the process of planning the next ski trip, due to take place in February half term 2027. We plan on taking 45 pupils and will be sending out details to pupil and parents in the Summer Term.

Reflections from a Year 10 student:

"After a tiresome coach journey we arrived in Grandvalira, Andorra. We checked into our hotel in the resort with lots of pretty valley views and then headed up to the ski rental to get fitted for boots, skis and helmets. On day two it was an early start and strait to the gondola to ride up to the ski resort. We were in groups of different ability with instructors to teach us throughout the week. My group started off on intermediate runs and progressed as we got more confident, we learnt new skiing skills, even trying out jumps in the ski park and learning to backwards ski. The views in Andorra were gorgeous, since the ski resort was so big with so many runs for all different abilities, there was so much to see and try out throughout the week. After a long day of skiing, we had different activities every night from bowling to pizza night, and a spa, so there was never a dull moment from when we arrived, to the exciting days on the slopes and the evening activities."



UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge

On Wednesday, 29 January some of our most talented mathematicians in Year Nine, Ten and Eleven completed the Intermediate Maths Challenge. This is a national competition for pupils in Year Nine to Year Eleven with the top 40% of entries across the country gaining certificates.

We had another excellent set of results this year.

In Year Nine, 2 pupils achieved Gold awards, 9 Silver and 15 Bronze.

In Year Ten, 5 pupils achieved Gold awards, 7 Silver and 17 Bronze.

In Year Eleven, 3 pupils achieved Gold awards, 12 Silver and 19 Bronze.

A huge well done to all the students who won awards and to all the students who were selected to enter the competition.

Special mentions go to the 7 pupils who performed very highly and qualified for a follow on competition in addition to their gold certificates. These were Gianluca and Jeshurun (Year Eleven), Aleeza, Vanshi and Frank (Year Ten), and Mustafa and Henry (Year Nine). We look forward to seeing how they get on.

The questions are challenging and designed to make even the best mathematicians think.

Here is a sample question to try.

13. The mean of p and q is 13; the mean of q and r is 16; the mean of r and p is 7.
What is the mean of p , q and r ?

A 12 B 13 C 14 D 15 E 16

We look forward to some of our Year 7 and 8s taking part in the Junior competition later in the year. We hope they do just as well!

Maths Feast

In March, some of our strongest Year Ten mathematicians took part in the 'Maths Feast' at Shenley Brook End School in Milton Keynes. The Maths Feast is a competition in which teams of four students from different schools across the local area compete against each other, solving challenging maths problems in a limited time frame and showing great teamwork in the process. The students competed in four different rounds all requiring different skills, including one where they had to trace a line around a cube in an irregular fashion, and another where they had to go back to older calculators and figure out what was broken on each calculator.

All the students worked really well together as a team, and they came first overall out of all 16 teams! It was a great afternoon and the students really enjoyed working through problems which were often quite different to those they see in the classroom.



Special Education Needs & Disability Update



The following from the SEND Code of Practice (2015) underpins our provision for students who have Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND).

SEND identification:

According to the Code of Practice, "a pupil has SEND where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age."

Teachers are responsible for every pupil including those with SEND.

Teachers are responsible for the progress and development of every pupil in their class, including those who get extra support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

The first step in supporting all pupils, including those with SEND, is high-quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils.

Some pupils may need additional help to access the curriculum or make expected progress. These pupils may have SEND.

Not every pupil making slower progress has SEND.

Some pupils may make slower progress for a reason unrelated to SEND, such as a gap in their learning.

Teachers regularly assess the progress of all pupils and work with the SENDCo to identify whether a pupil has SEND. Some factors to consider are the following:

- Significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Failing to match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress
- Failing to close the attainment gap between the pupil and their classmates
- Widening the attainment gap

Pupil Passports:

Strategies and bespoke approaches for SEND students

are shared with teaching staff via Pupil Passports. This document is co-produced with students, parents and the SEND team. Passports are sent home with the interim reports, and you have a chance to feedback if you want to review any strategies that you feel warrant changing. Feel free to contact Mr Roopnarain (roopnarains@goldington.beds.sch.uk) to arrange an appointment if this is the case.

SEND consultation meetings:

A series of productive SEND meetings with parents and students will take place over the course of the summer term to discuss progress, provision and Pupil Passports. If you have not yet had a chance to meet with the SENDCo, then please feel free to contact us to arrange a meeting. Correspondence about the next round of SEND consultation meetings will be sent out via Parentmail. Please make your appointment times via the booking system.

Important SEND information and documents:

Local offer: we subscribe to the Bedford Borough Local Offer which offers a variety of services for young people that include behaviour support, parental support, etc. See link for the services offered: <https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/kb5/bedford/directory/home.page>

SEND information report: information published on the school website about how the school's SEND policy will be implemented. The latest report is available here: <https://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/learning/special-educational-needs-andor-disabilities>. We invite feedback for review and feedback of the current document and consequent update of these for September 2025.

Would you like to join us?

We are always on the lookout for Learning Support Assistants or volunteers to support effective learning in the classroom and beyond.

Contact us

With any issues regarding pupils and their SEND, Mr Roopnarain, can be contacted either by phone, in person or by email roopnarains@goldington.beds.sch.uk. A drop-in session is available to parents on Thursdays between 2.45 pm — 4.30 pm each week during term time.

Ofsted – February 2022: "The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Leaders ensure that teachers understand the best strategies for every pupil with SEND. This helps these pupils to thrive and flourish studying the same curriculum as their peers."

Bright Ideas for Bright Minds

In March, fourteen of our highest-attaining Year Ten students visited Oxford for the Big Ideas for Bright Minds conference, to stimulate thought beyond the constraints of the school curriculum.

They attended a series of in-depth and fascinating lectures covering topics such as the psychology of unconscious biases and the intricate world of quantum physics.

For many students, the highlight was Mike Grenier, a House Master at Eton, who delved into the complexities of human psychology and emotional well-being through the prism of Shakespearean characters. For example, Hamlet's melancholia leads to profound introspection and tragedy, reflecting



modern understandings of depression. In contrast, Sir John Falstaff embodies a hedonistic approach to life, celebrating joy and indulgence, which highlights the importance of laughter and pleasure as coping mechanisms in the modern world.

The day finished with a debate on veganism. Is it truly about the status and well-being of animals, or simply a trendy lifestyle choice endorsed by celebrities and influencers? Is its popularity driven by genuine health concerns, or merely a desire to follow the crowd on Instagram and TikTok? Students examined the ethical, societal and economic implications of veganism and were given the opportunity to think critically about the global perspective and how to navigate the intricate landscape of dietary choices in an age of social media.



Chess Success

A Year Seven student from our lunchtime Chess Club represented Goldington Academy at the Northamptonshire Schools Chess Association tournament. Despite being up against tough opposition, he showed great resilience, losing his first games before finding his rhythm and finishing in overall 3rd place for the Under 12s.

Wadham Project



Five high-achieving Year Ten students visited Biddenham International School as part of the Wadham Project, an outreach programme run by the University of Oxford, designed to increase the proportion of state-educated students in the UK's most prestigious universities. The students took part in four seminars with the aim of developing their critical thinking skills, increasing their cultural knowledge and giving them the confidence to speak in front of an unfamiliar group of peers.

In the History of Art workshop, our students examined a series of influential artworks, searching for clues about what hidden messages their creators may have been trying to convey. The Economics lecture explored how resource scarcity can lead to unsustainable growth and a rise in inequality as things become less affordable for those who are least well-off.

The Wadham Project continues throughout the year, with further lectures, a STEM day and a visit to Wadham College, Oxford.



Scholars Programme Graduation Event



In February, fourteen Year Nine students visited Girton College, University of Cambridge in order to formally graduate from the Scholars Programme. The scheme had involved a series of university-style seminars delivered by an expert PhD student, and required students to complete an extended essay related to eighteenth century ideas about the nature of immortality. The students' essays were assessed against an undergraduate grading system with rigorous criteria. Particular congratulations should go to Jacob, who achieved exceptionally high marks. Here are two extracts from his final essay:

"The French aristocrat, philosopher and mathematician, Marquis de Condorcet, was a fellow advocate for the possibility of human perfectibility, believing it might be achieved through continuous human progress. Condorcet's optimism was driven by the advancements already witnessed in science, medicine, and education, imagining that as society evolved the human mind would continue to improve."

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"Malthus had argued that there would be an inevitable crisis, the Malthusian Catastrophe, and that would lead to the breakdown of society and human suffering, as the population fought over limited resources. However, Godwin argued that it was the institutions, governments and religious structures and the uneven distribution of wealth that was responsible for the societal collapse and that with these removed, humankind would be able to address the core issues and develop moral and rational reform without inevitable suffering."

The Cambridge visit allowed our scholars to question current undergraduates about their route to university, the setbacks they have had, and about life more generally when studying for a degree. It also included a tour of the college, which, as the first UK establishment to allow women to complete undergraduate degrees, was adorned with portraits of noteworthy female alumni. The Scholars Programme has certainly inspired many of these Year 9s to be highly ambitious about their future studies and they should all be very proud of completing such a demanding course.



Year Seven Distinction Award

Some of our highest-attaining Year Seven students have enjoyed participating in the Goldington Distinction Award - an initiative in which students work towards a Bronze, Silver or Gold badge by completing a series of challenges and displaying the personal qualities which reflect Goldington Academy's core values: Engaging Minds, Nurturing Success and Inspiring Futures. Doing so has given them opportunities to develop their leadership, responsibility, verbal confidence, creativity and encourage them to make contributions to the wider school community.

Here are some extracts of the tasks they have completed:

For the teacher Interview, Charlie asked Mr King about his favourite memory from school: "Talking to my friends during lunch, or walking home and reflecting on the events of that day. It's good to find 'your squad' at school; those people who lift you up when you're down, laugh with you, look out for you and make days fun."

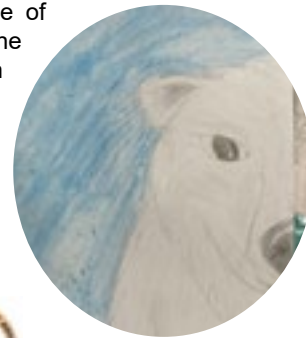
In her fictional newspaper story, Polly wrote about a squirrel invasion of Goldington Academy: *Unfortunately, after the police searched the*

building for some missing pupils, 3 were found seriously injured. The headmaster says, "The worst luck has come to a great school. These children don't deserve such events to happen to them."

Our GCSE students are not pleased, but continue to revise and make do. We are all shocked and mourning for our 3 injured pupils. We hope to regain our school soon."

Lyra created an original piece of artwork on a subject which she feels strongly about - human threats to the natural world.

In Year Eight, students will have the opportunity to re-visit the programme and upgrade their badge to a Silver or Gold.



Year Eleven Prom Request

As our second-hand uniform shop has been so successful, we wondered if a pre-loved Prom shop would be something our parents/carers would be interested in supporting us with.

We are looking for donations of prom dresses, suits and accessories in a clean condition ready for our Prom in July. Our suggestion is that these items are donated to the school, provided to students and returned to the school for other families to use them in the future.

If this is something you think you would like to assist us with you are welcome to drop donations to Reception from today. If you would like to discuss any aspect of this, you are welcome to email catrambonej@goldington.beds.sch.uk



Careers

Goldington Academy students have been actively engaging in careers-focused events and activities this term, helping them explore future pathways, develop key skills and connect with industry professionals.

National Apprenticeship Week

During National Apprenticeship Week, students had the opportunity to learn about alternative post-16 routes and the benefits of earning while learning. Activities included:

- Bedford College visits to discuss apprenticeships and technical courses.
- National Rail workshops, introducing students to careers in engineering, transport and infrastructure.
- University of Bedfordshire talks on degree apprenticeships and university pathways.
- Online webinars with employers and training providers.
- ShowMyHomework quizzes to test students' knowledge of apprenticeships.

This week provided valuable insights into the growing opportunities in apprenticeships, helping students make informed choices about their future.

National Careers Week

National Careers Week 2025 was a fantastic opportunity for students to engage with employers, universities and professionals across different industries. Highlights included:

- University of Hertfordshire delivering talks on the benefits of higher education.
- SSG presenting to all Year 10 students and running a specialist session for Sport students.
- Enterprise Volunteer mentoring our Young Enterprise Careers Company students, offering insights into business and entrepreneurship.
- The Army visiting to discuss career opportunities in the armed forces.
- Bedford Schools Careers Webinars, with two evenings of expert-led discussions on various industries.
- Week-long form time activities, including career discussions and reflection tasks.
- Online quizzes and achievement points for students engaging in career-related learning.

These events ensured that students had access to a variety of career pathways, helping them to make informed decisions about their next steps.

Term Dates

Summer Term 2025	
School closed - Staff Training Day (4)	Tuesday, 22 April 2025
Start of term	Wednesday, 23 April 2025
School closed - Bank Holiday	Monday, 5 May 2025
Half term	Monday, 26 May - Friday, 30 May 2025
Last day of term	Friday, 18 July 2025
Autumn Term 2025	
School closed - Staff Training Day (1)	Monday, 1 September 2025
Start of term	Tuesday, 2 September 2025
School closed - Staff Training Day (2)	Friday, 24 October 2025
Half term	Monday, 27 October - Friday, 31 October 2025
Last day of term	Friday, 19 December 2025
Spring Term 2026	
School closed - Staff Training Day (3)	Monday, 5 January 2026
Start of term	Tuesday, 6 January 2026
Half term	Monday, 16 - Friday, 20 February 2026
Last day of term	Friday, 27 March 2026

Physical Education

On Tuesday, 30 January, fifteen brave cross country competitors represented the school at the North Bedfordshire District Championships at Sharnbrook Upper School on a very challenging course! This event was a trial to progress to the North Bedfordshire district team. Those who finished in the top 16 places qualified for the district event the following week. For many of our team, this was their first experience at a cross country event. Our results were fantastic: five of our team qualified to represent the North Bedfordshire team at Ampthill Park on Wednesday, 5 February.

The county event was a wonderful experience for our students to demonstrate their competitive spirit, racing hard over a very hilly course.

Congratulations to one of our runners who made it through represent Bedfordshire at the English Schools Championships which took place on Saturday, 15 March. A fantastic achievement! His account of the day is given below. Well done to all our students who competed in any of the races. They were a credit to the school with the way they conducted themselves on, and off, the course.



Cross Country

English schools my experience ...

"Competing in the English Schools Cross Country Championships was a great experience. The atmosphere was electric. Athletes such as Mo Farah won here when they were at school. Each county had a starting pen with eight runners, made up of the best athletes from Year 8 and 9, making the race incredibly competitive. My English School qualifier race at Ampthill Park meant I was placed 8th in the pen. With so many runners packed in tightly, it was difficult to move through the field. The dry ground meant everyone was going fast, lots of them fell over in the sprint at the start and I had to dodge past them. The course was dry but very hilly with lots of tight turns. I managed to move my way up through some of the other fast competitors. I was the 6th scorer for the Bedfordshire junior boys team. We finished 32nd out of 45 teams which is very good as we are a small county. Overall, it was an amazing experience that day, and I would like to get the opportunity to race it again in the future."



Rugby

On Thursday, 13 March, the Year Seven rugby team put on a spectacular display of skill, teamwork, and determination, dominating the Year Seven rugby tournament. Competing against seven other local schools, they secured a well-earned tournament victory going undefeated. Led by captain Harry Trewby, the team exemplified the RFU rugby values, making their school proud.



Physical Education

The Year Seven and Eight girls' football team were crowned District Champions yesterday after a tournament where they were undefeated all day! Well done to all involved!

Indoor Athletics (Year Nine/Ten girls & boys) – Both teams put in a fantastic performance, securing 2nd place in the county. Their hard work and dedication paid off, making them one of the top teams in the region.

Futsal (Year Seven/Eight) – The team showcased impressive skills to win the district championship. They then went on to compete at county level, finishing in a strong 4th place.

Netball (Year Seven/Eight Girls) – The girls played with determination and teamwork to win the Plate at the County tournament. Their resilience throughout the competition earned them a well-deserved victory.

Basketball (Year Nine girls) – The team dominated the district competition to be crowned District Champions. They then put up a strong fight at the county level, finishing as runners-up.

Basketball (Year Seven girls) – With great teamwork and effort, the girls secured 3rd place at the County Finals. Their strong performance throughout the tournament showed great promise for the future.

Badminton (Year Ten/Eleven boys) – The team demonstrated outstanding skill and determination to win the County Championship. Their success earned them the honour of representing the school at the regional competition.

Primary School Festival – The event was a huge success, with Year Ten Sports Leaders playing a key role in organising and running activities. Their leadership and enthusiasm made the day enjoyable for all the primary school participants.

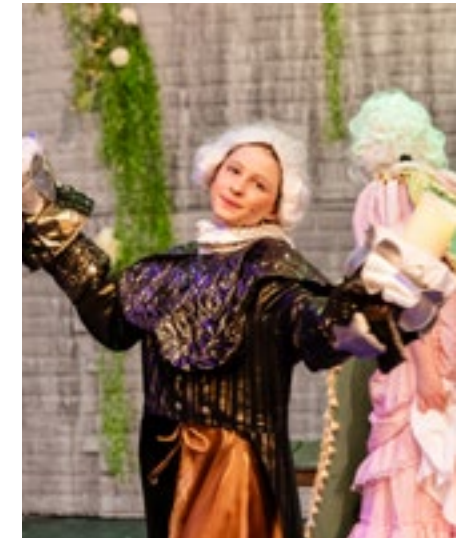
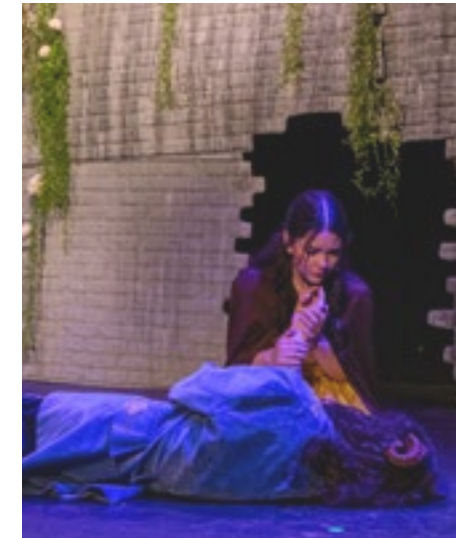
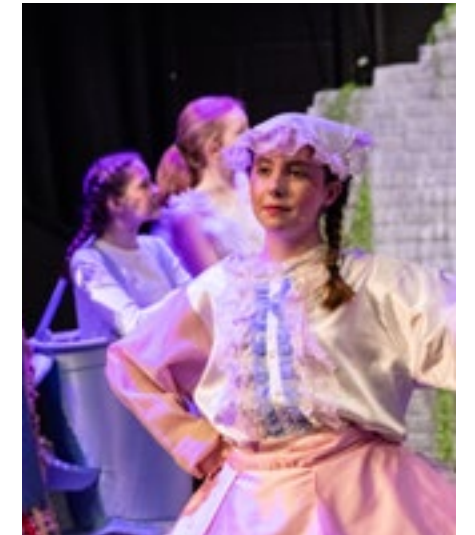
Rowing (Capsize Drill) – Students took part in a Capsize Drill, gaining vital water safety skills. This hands-on experience helped them build confidence and knowledge in handling emergency situations on the water.



Beauty and the Beast. A picture paints a thousand words



Beauty and the Beast. A picture paints a thousand words



Science

Goldington Academy Science Department celebrated British Science Week 10 -14 March.

Here is what went on:

Students had a chance to win an iPad by designing a future food that is healthy and does not harm the environment. Hosted by TV's Stefan Gates, this competition challenges students to uncover innovative ideas, from edible insects to lab-grown meat, all while discovering the future of food.

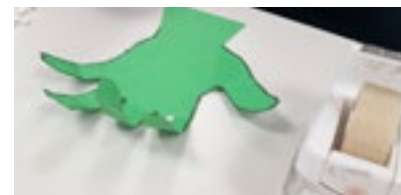
STEM badge challenge & Ultimate Scientist challenge were available on Satchel One.

KS3 lessons included science energisers and were linked to this year's theme of 'Change and Adapt,' which helped students explore innovations, develop key skills, and discover real-world STEM careers. They made new discoveries into genetics and evolution and became marine biologists, then headed out to Mars as space pioneers to see if we could change and adapt to live on the red rock planet.

Year Tens experienced a live webinar held by the Met Police, talking about the biometric identification methods they have used through time!

STEM Club Special was held in Lab 7 every lunchtime from 1.00 pm.

Lab 7 1pm	British Science Week Activities
MONDAY	Change your bath bomb
TUESDAY	Darwin's bird beak challenge
WEDNESDAY	Augment and adapt your hand
THURSDAY	Save the bees seed bombs
FRIDAY	Tardigrades under microscope



Gardening Club

Spring has arrived and the Goldington Gardeners have been busy preparing the soil in readiness to plant all the veg, fruit and flower seeds that have germinated.

On 14 February, gardening club organised a Show someone you care day for the whole school. We sold 150 roses to pupils to take home or to give to someone in the school.



World Book Day

This year we celebrated World Book Day with a range of fabulous book-related activities. As part of the celebrations, we welcomed thriller writer Sue Wallman to the school. Sue kicked off a wonderful day with a whole year talk to Year 7. Sue spoke about how she got started in her writing career, and how the publication of her books is managed. Pupils found the talk inspiring and loved hearing about the reality of being an author.

After the talk, Sue held creative writing workshops with pupils from all year groups. During the workshops, pupils went through the process of creating their own characters for a thriller book, and started putting together the outlines of

a plot. Everyone finished by writing the first few lines of their own thrillers.

In what turned out to be a very busy day, Sue also had time to chat to pupils and sign books. It was great to see so many pupils inspired by Sue's talk and workshops!

On World Book Day itself, we once again held a very successful Book Swap. On the lead up to the day over 200 books were brought to the library for the swap, the most we have ever collected! It was fantastic to see so many pupils enthusiastically swapping their old books for something different to take home and enjoy.



Teaching & Learning - Did you know?

That all school dates are on our school website and can be found by clicking on the 'Information' tab and looking at term and diary dates.

www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/information/diary-dates

That each year group has their own page on the website full of useful information and websites.

www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/for-pupils-and-parents

Homework

The aim of our homework policy is to encourage the continuation of learning at home as an essential part of a student's education. Homework not only reinforces classroom learning, it also helps students to develop the skills, attitudes and understanding that they need to realise their full potential and to develop independent learning skills for the future, including the habits of enquiry and investigation.

The advantages of homework has been extensively researched. There is a relatively consistent picture that students in schools which give homework perform better. According to the Education Endowment Foundation, the impact of completing homework, is on average, five months additional progress.

Homework expectations per key stage:

- Year Seven – 1 hour per day
- Years Eight and Nine – 1 hour to 1 hour 30 minutes per day
- Years Ten and Eleven - 1 hour 30 minutes to 2 hours per day

(The above relates to Monday to Thursday inclusive and it is the expectation that students will do one session at the weekend at some point).

As a guide:

- Always assume homework is set and that there is always something to study.
- Rather than asking 'have you got any homework?' ask about the details of what students have to do.
- Help your child plan when to do their homework.
- If homework HAS been done – then reading/further work can be accessed. e.g. reading lists or research material to view through the school website.

Show My Homework/Satchel One

All homework will be set via Show My Homework/Satchel One even if students are then directed to another website/app.

Show My Homework/Satchel One can be accessed through the "Useful links" page on our website – www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/information/useful-links

Every parent can have their own login to their child's Show My Homework account to be able to support their child. This can be set up by emailing Mr Chisnall – chisnallm@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Are you thinking about a career in teaching? Our Initial Teacher Training programme (accredited and delivered in partnership with the University of Bedfordshire) is for high quality graduates wishing to train in the secondary phase. We have a strong record in regards to the

employment of our trainees as teachers on completion of the course. For more information, go to our school website <https://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/about/initial-teacher-training> and search for Initial Teacher Training or go to <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-teacher-training> to apply now!

