

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING THIS TERM?



Paris Trip



Badminton Success



Geography Fieldwork



Southwold Trip



Year 7 CSI Day



Family Challenge Evening

Principal's Introduction



Dear Parents/Carers

So we come to the end of another highly successful year for Goldington Academy!

Our exam results in 2022-3 placed us in the top 2% of schools in the country for progress and can be viewed [here](#).

One sad aspect of school life I must report on this Christmas is that Mrs Sacre will be moving to a new school, for a well deserved promotion, at the end of this term. This is the second time I have had the pleasure of working with Mrs Sacre, as earlier in our careers we worked together in Northamptonshire. I was absolutely delighted to welcome her to Goldington Academy in 2016 and she has never let our school down. She has been an incredible hardworker (in areas as diverse as science, lifeskills, student voice, careers,

ambassadors and gardening) and a successful leader. We will all miss her tremendously and wish her all the best.

I would like to say how pleased and proud I am of all our staff. We will not be resting on our laurels however, and I extend my best wishes to all our Year 11s about to undertake mock exams. Good luck.

Thank you for your tremendous support of our school. I very much hope you enjoy this bumper edition of the newsletter. We have been involved in many, many exciting activities in this first term. In these challenging times, may I wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas with loved ones. School resumes for your child(ren) on **Thursday, 4 January 2024 at 8.50 am**.

Term Dates 2024 / 2025

Autumn Term 2024	
School closed - Staff Training Day (1)	Monday, 2 September 2024
Start of term	Tuesday, 3 September 2024
School closed - Staff Training Day (2)	Friday, 25 October 2024
Half term	Monday, 28 October - Friday, 1 November 2024
Last day of term	Friday, 20 December 2024
Spring Term 2025	
School closed - Staff Training Day (3)	Monday, 6 January 2025
Start of term	Tuesday, 7 January 2025
Half term	Monday, 17 - Friday, 21 February 2025
Last day of term	Friday, 4 April 2025
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



Note from the Governors

We have welcomed three new members of the governing body this term: Vicky Stoeter joins us as a parent governor following the recent election and two new staff governors, namely Mr Hall and Mrs D'Amelio. All of the new governors will have an important role in the governing body, and I look forward to working with them.

One area that was the subject of discussion at governing body meetings this year was the admission criteria. Only a few years ago, every applicant to school was almost guaranteed a place. Now, Goldington Academy is in the privileged position of being heavily oversubscribed.

In setting the admission policy, the governors have the difficult task of deciding the criteria that will determine who is and is not successful. Nearly all the governors are or have been parents and understand the anxiety in securing a secondary school place. The governors consulted across the community and decided on the admission criteria to apply with effect from September 2025 at the governing body meeting earlier this month. Existing parents must be reassured that there is no change to the criteria that prospective students with siblings at the school will take priority. However, after much thought, the governors have decided that there will no longer be a selection criterion based on feeder schools, and the determining factor



for most places will be distance from the school. The full admission criteria will be published on the school website. We acknowledge that no matter what decision the governors make, there will still be disappointed families, but we hope the new arrangements are as fair as possible in the circumstances.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very peaceful Christmas.

Robin Francis.
Chair of Governors



School Uniform

All pupils at Goldington Academy must wear the school uniform as set out in the uniform policy, which includes proper school shoes, school tie, blazer and the full PE kit. Exceptions may be granted under certain circumstances, e.g. for medical reasons. Pupils must wear the full school uniform to school every day and should only arrive at school dressed in PE kit if they have been told they can do so. If a child is unable to wear the full uniform for any reason, then parents should communicate this to the school via either the child's Form Tutor or Head of Year.

Hair styles should not include unnatural colours, patterns or designs. 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

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.

The school recognises that areas such as uniform can be open to subjective interpretation and, on occasion, abuse. Therefore, to avoid difficulty or embarrassment, we ask parents and pupils to operate well within these guidelines rather than at their extremes.

All pupils must bring the basic equipment needed for lessons. On occasions when pupils are not properly equipped for lessons, valuable learning time is often lost, which is detrimental to pupil progress. Pupils, at the least, should be equipped with pens, pencils and a ruler.



Paris Trip

During the first week of October, the French department had the absolute pleasure of taking 24 of our Year 11 linguists for a 4-day trip to Paris. Arriving at Gare du Nord on the Eurostar, we threw ourselves straight into exploring the capital, catching the metro to Montparnasse and heading up to the observation deck at "Tour Montparnasse" for awesome panoramic views of the city's famous landmarks and monuments: the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, the Arc de Triomphe and the city's iconic rooftops.

Day two saw us enjoying the beauty of the river Seine, starting with a visit to enjoy the paintings of Monet, Renoir and Van Gogh at the stylish Musée d'Orsay. We followed this with a walk up to the "Tour Eiffel" gardens and lunch, before a river cruise which took in 17 bridges and allowed us to see Notre Dame. Late afternoon saw pupils shopping in the famous "Les Halles" mall and the vintage shops near the Centre Pompidou. The highlight for many of the group though, was our night-time visit to see the Eiffel Tower light up and sparkle; an iconic Instagram-able memory of Paris for us all. Quelle belle ville!

Our third day in Paris, started with enjoying traditional French food and produce at the Marché d'Aligre, followed by a walking tour of the beautiful Latin Quarter and the Sorbonne area, with some excellent guides. We then met up with 27 French students and their

teachers for a "pétanque" competition. Lastly, we took a few students (the ones who had some energy left) to see the Arc de Triomphe and Champs Élysées par nuit. Une journée magnifique!

Our last day was spent exploring the pretty streets of Montmartre, famously the setting for the film "Amélie" and Le Sacré Coeur Basilica, while the sun shone. An amazing time – great food, great weather, great company, great location - for students and staff alike in a stunning place, making memories to last a life-time. la prochaine fois, Paris!

"I think that the Paris trip was incredibly useful, not only giving me the opportunity to be independent in a new city and see the many amazing sites, but also because it really helped improve my French speaking, as I had to step out of my comfort zone and speak to French people, which gave me more confidence."

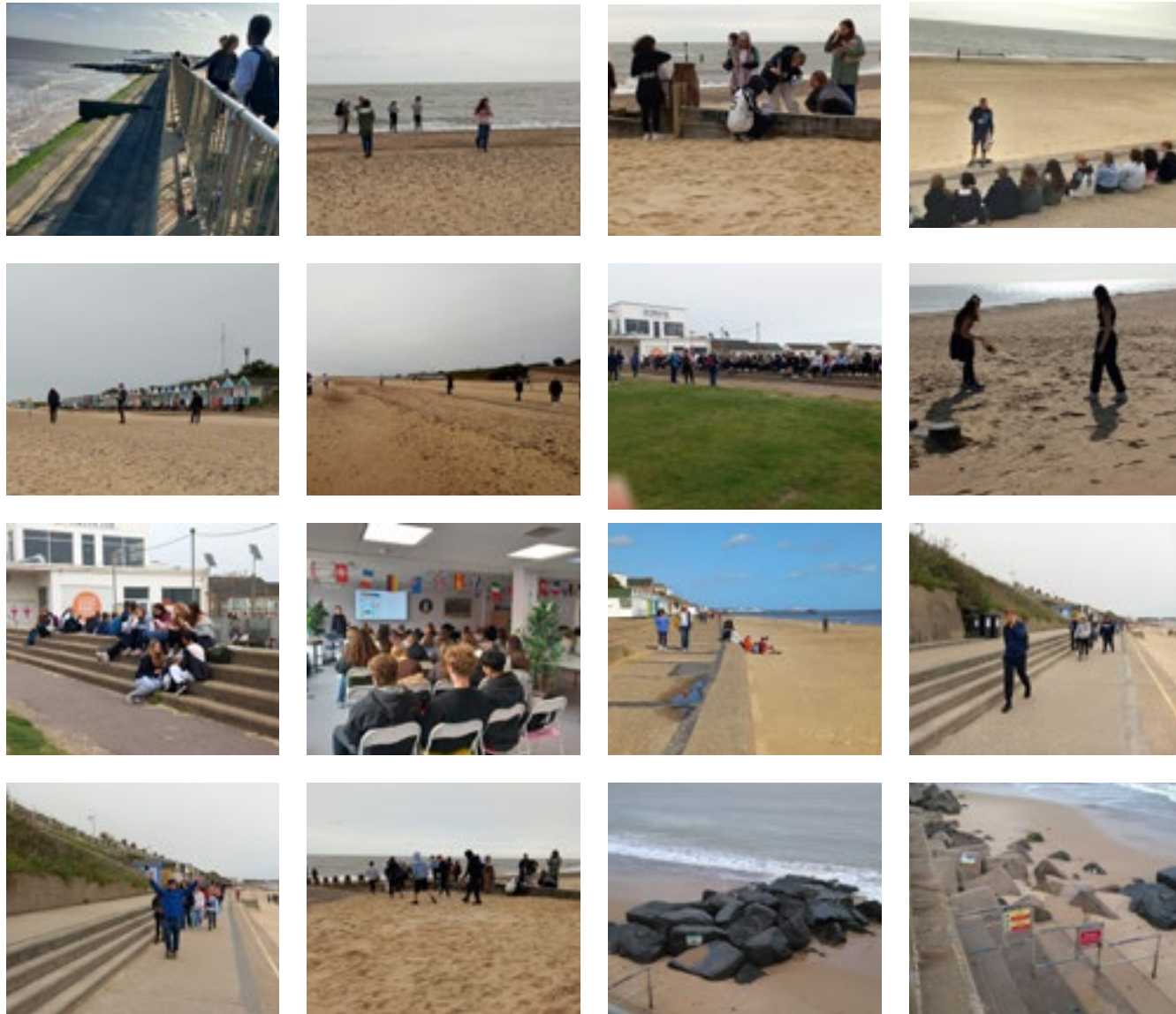
"The trip has definitely been one of my favourite parts of school life so far, as I got to soak up French and Parisian culture with the many guided tours we had, which is incredibly important whenever you visit new cities. Also, I will always associate our trip with becoming closer to a lot of people, which I will be forever grateful for."



Memories



Geography Southwold Trip



Our Year 11 Geographers went to Southwold on Thursday, 28 and Friday, 29 September to investigate the effectiveness of the sea defences on Southwold's beach. They enjoyed glorious weather to conduct their fieldwork and could see first-hand the impact of longshore drift on people and the environment. They even enjoyed some fish and chips and ice cream by the sea front. They worked hard thinking and acting like geographers and they proudly represented the school.

Some comments from our Year 11 geographers!

"I enjoyed Southwold."

"It was good, very fascinating, loved it. I also liked the chips. Super, geogrocks!"

"The Southwold trip was engaging and interesting. The trip enabled me to further broaden and develop my coastal knowledge. I also participated in team activities, collecting data and taking in the lovely weather!"

Bedford Fieldwork



Year 10 on the other hand visited Russell Park and Bedford Town Centre on Wednesday, 8 November to investigate the sustainability of each site using the Egan Wheel of sustainability. They had great fun exploring the local area and talking to the local people. They too represented the school proudly and worked hard thinking and speaking like geographers.

Some comments from our Year 10 geographers!

"It was lovely and I enjoyed being able to go outside to explore my geography."

"I really enjoyed it."

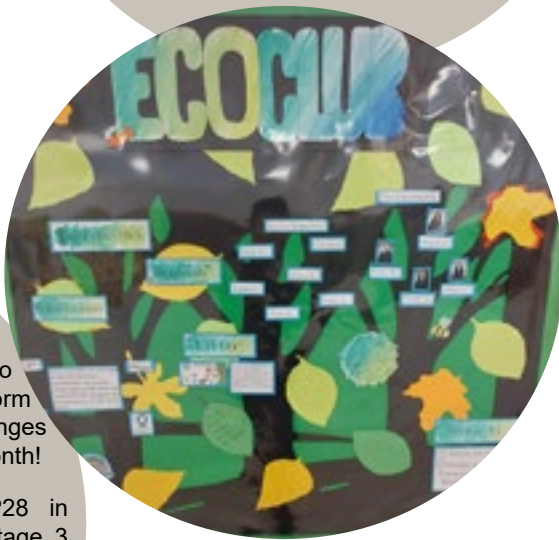
"It was enjoyable and I liked completing my questionnaire because I could talk to the local people about their opinions on sustainability."

It is fair to say that both Years 10 and 11 have had a busy, but productive start to the term!

Geography Clubs

The eco-committee have hit the ground running since September. It has been great to see new members from Year 7 join us and existing members return. We have been continuing to work on completing the key components for the Eco-Schools award application which we hope to submit before Easter 2024. Never ones to shy away from a challenge, we are hoping to achieve the distinction award! Ambassadors are currently organising their teams and are in the planning stages for their projects.

Committee members have also worked really hard to update their display board outside room 32 which looks fantastic. This will be regularly updated with exciting projects. An assembly is being scheduled to promote Eco-Club further to Year 7 within the next few weeks and assemblies to update Years 8 - 10 will look to take place after Christmas.



A whole school initiative linked to the Eco-Schools "Cut Your Carbon Month" (November) was presented to all students in Year 7-9 during their form bulletin. It will be great to see the changes students have made at the end of the month!

We will also be drawing from COP28 in December and incorporating our Key Stage 3 lessons with key focus points with the aim of further developing Eco-Club projects based on global scale issues.

The Geography Club have had a great start to the year and it has been wonderful to see lots of our new Year 7s joining us. They have been busy making complex origami shapes from recycled paper and card. They are now making Christmas decorations using recycled materials and using play dough to create some beautiful leaves. Some comments from our members:

"I find the projects satisfying and fun to start and finish." *"I think geography club is fun and creative."*



The Geography Film Club takes place every Friday, in room 33 and is run by some of our Year 9 geographers. Here is what they have to say: *"Geography film club is absolutely one the best clubs in the school. We watch*

documentaries ranging from life at the bottom of ocean to life at the highest peaks. David Attenborough is a really great narrator and we love watching it, #geogrocks."

Year 9 Geography

Year 9 have had a busy term exploring if the Earth is running out of natural resources. This topic has seen them tackling some of the big issues facing the world with regards to water and energy security. They have also explored the importance of soils and rocks from a local and national perspective. They also investigated lichens and the impact of weathering in Foster Hill Road Cemetery. This was a collaborative fieldtrip with history, art, French

and science departments. Here are a few comments from some Year 9 students about this trip:

"Very informative about Bedford's history."
"It was great."
"I enjoyed the trip and I explored new things."
"I learned a lot about the lichens and it was enjoyable but it was quite emotive."

Year 8 Geography

Following last year's success of Year 8 designing a flag in support of Antarctica Day, which is celebrated on 1 December, we took part again this year and sent a flag to Antarctica with UK Polar Network. We sent our flag

on 6 November and we are now patiently waiting for the scientists to send us a picture of our flag in Antarctica and a certificate for taking part. Here is the flag design we sent. Well done Year 8.



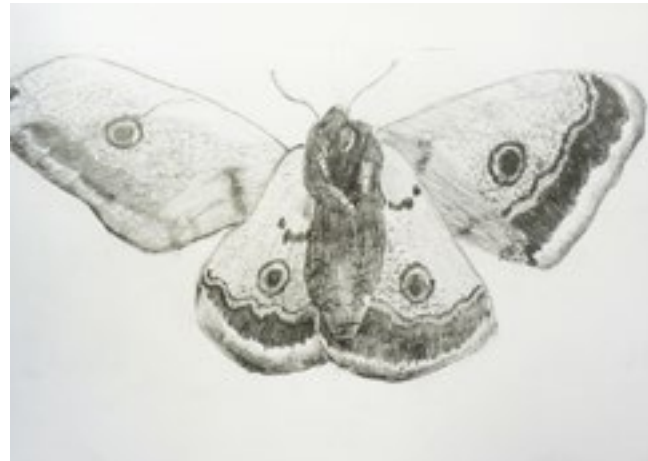
Year 7 Geography

Year 7 have been following the tectonic and seismic activity in Iceland as part of their current topic on volcanoes and earthquakes.

Art

Key Stage 3 work

Year 7 have made a great start to their skills-based project, 'Entomological'. We have seen skills and confidence improve this term and they should all feel really proud of their work.



Year 8 students have been working hard on their architectural drawings, including perspective and mixed media pieces inspired by John Piper.



Year 9 students have been working hard on their landscape projects and have produced some excellent lino prints inspired by Edward Bawden. It has also been

great to see Year 9 students going to see Bawden's work at The Higgins gallery as a homework challenge!



Christmas Tree Festival

As part of St Paul's, Bedford, Christmas Tree Festival, students from Mindful Art Club have been having lots of fun making Christmas tree decorations based on the theme 'Kings and Queens'. After many creative ideas, they settled on the theme of the 'Kings and Queens' of Christmas dinner - Kevin the carrot was our inspiration! Students chose this theme after discussing the importance of dinner time as special time to sit down with family and friends. Students have been crafting these decorations since September and have really enjoyed making them during Mindful Art Club.



Creative Arts

Year 7 Creative Arts Day

At the start of the year, Year 7s were immersed in the arts through a full day of music, art, drama and dance. The day focused on the theme of diversity and in art, students were looking at artwork from different culture. Students used a poly printing technique to develop a repeated pattern print inspired by Islamic tiles. A great start to the Arts this year!



Coming up...

We are really excited to be working in collaboration with local artist, Katie Allen on a Creative Arts project for our community. Students will be working with Katie to design a Bedford Arts Trail map suggesting local venues to visit to experience the Arts in Bedford. With the support of Bedford Creative Arts and the Bedford Town priority fund, we will be giving physical copies of the map to students and the local community to encourage people to visit venues on the map. Students have started working on this project which will be launching for the Easter Holidays. Keep an eye out for it!

DT

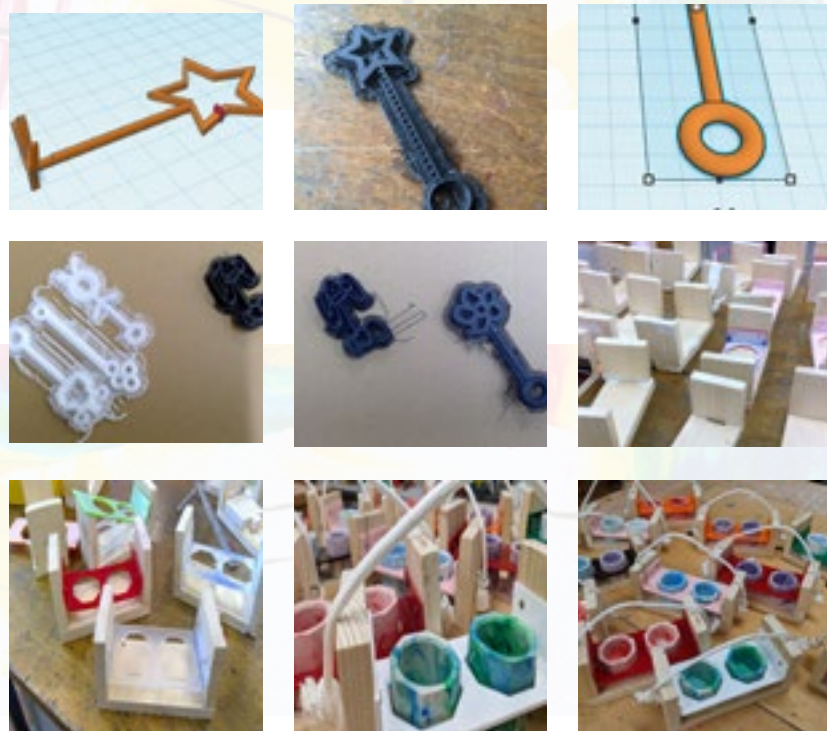
Perfect polymers! This term **Year 7 students** have been exploring the use of polymers and their impact on society and the environment. Within the unit, pupils have considered the 6R's and their responsibility in terms of energy use, material use and consumer consumption. The

unit has included 4x4 design work, hand tools, workshop safety and some absolutely outstanding upcycling homework and classwork! What could you make from melted down milk bottles and their tops? #designmatters



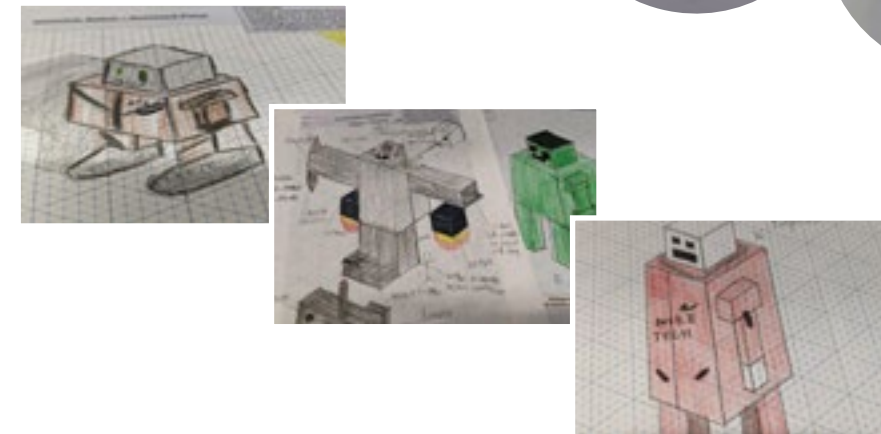
Year 8s have explored the world of Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture through using Tinkercad and 3D printers. Students learnt the process of additive manufacturing and the advantages of using this technique when prototyping ideas including the challenges of learning new software! We had some unique ideas created and printed. #awesomebubbles

Year 8 pupils have been learning about timbers, different joints, classifications of plastics and casting. We have some lovely mini planters on the way home this term. Well done for using a range of materials and techniques!

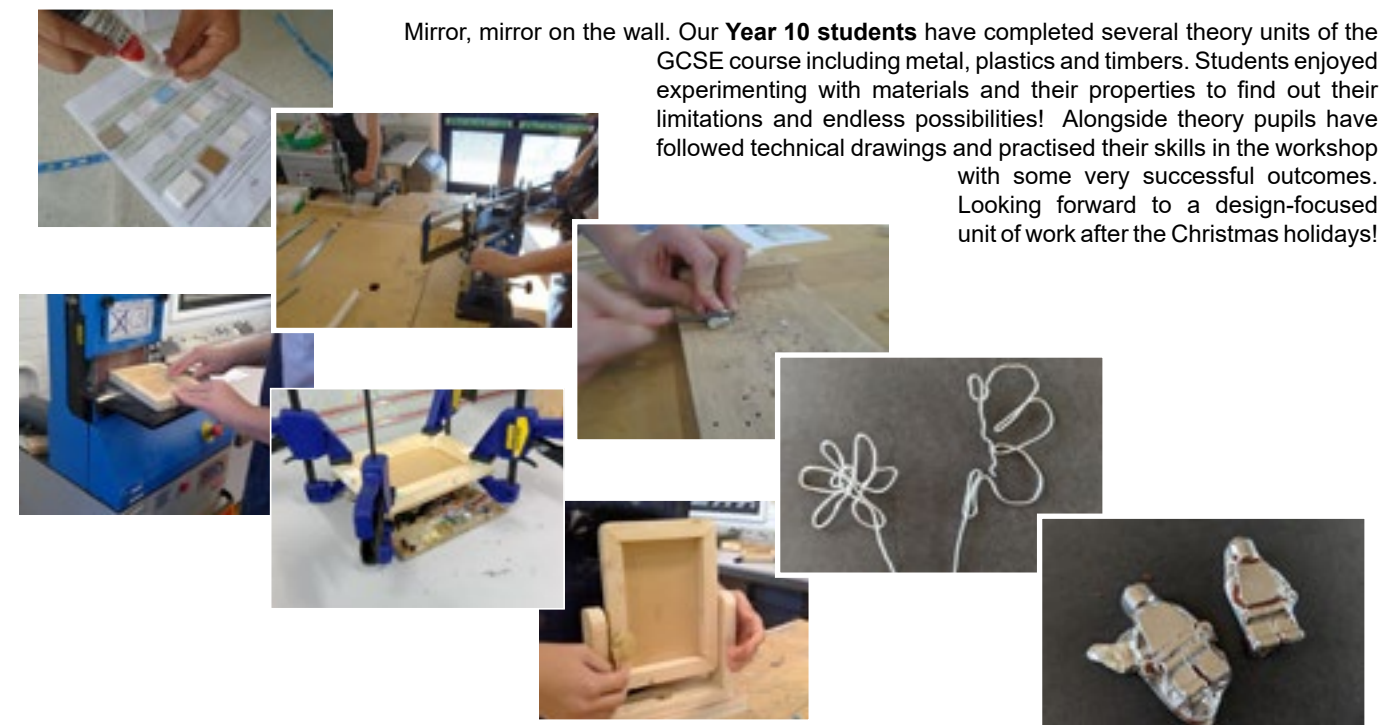


Polished pewter! **Year 9 students** have created some fantastic original designs inspired by a range of art and design movements such as Art Deco, Art Nouveau and Memphis. Can you guess which ones? The pupils were able to show perseverance in the process as there is a lot of repetition to produce a high-quality product!

Technical drawing is a vital skill for all successful designers and our **Year 7s** made a great start this year. Look at these isometric robots! What theme would you have?

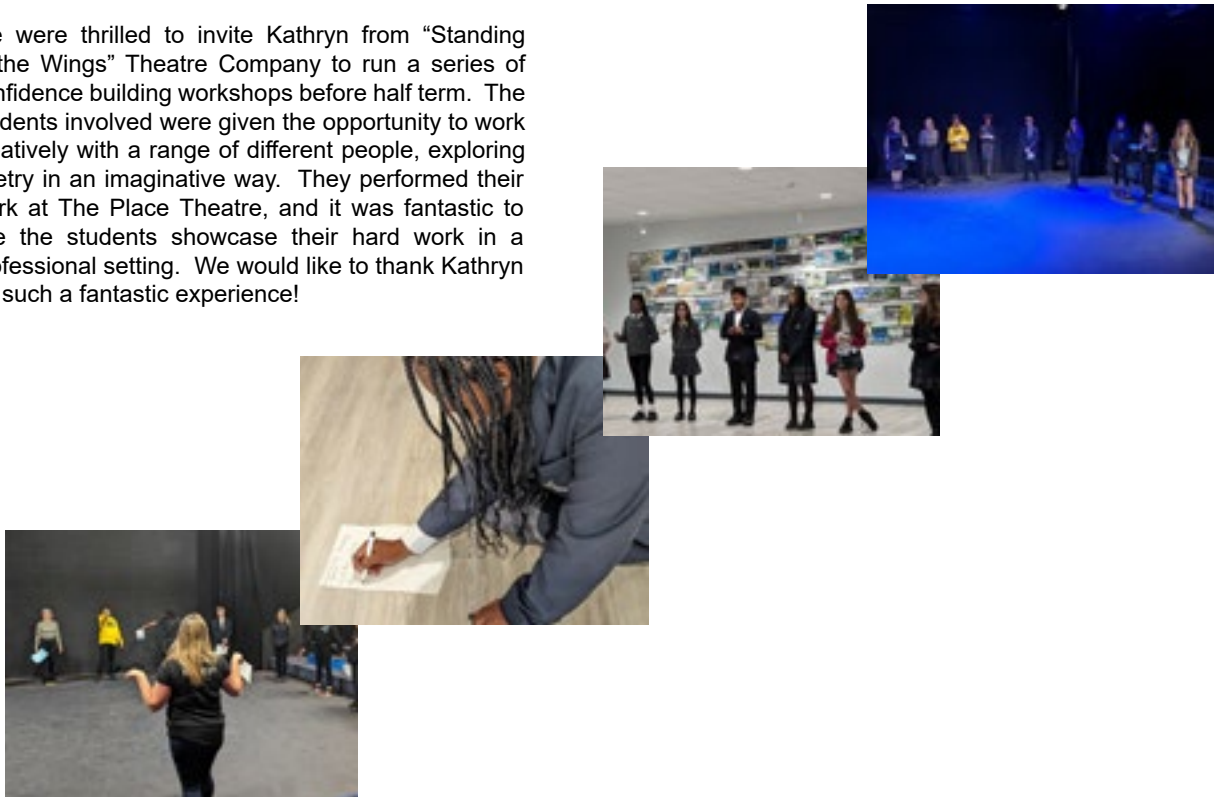


Mirror, mirror on the wall. Our **Year 10 students** have completed several theory units of the GCSE course including metal, plastics and timbers. Students enjoyed experimenting with materials and their properties to find out their limitations and endless possibilities! Alongside theory pupils have followed technical drawings and practised their skills in the workshop with some very successful outcomes. Looking forward to a design-focused unit of work after the Christmas holidays!



Year Nine Drama Workshop

We were thrilled to invite Kathryn from "Standing in the Wings" Theatre Company to run a series of confidence building workshops before half term. The students involved were given the opportunity to work creatively with a range of different people, exploring poetry in an imaginative way. They performed their work at The Place Theatre, and it was fantastic to see the students showcase their hard work in a professional setting. We would like to thank Kathryn for such a fantastic experience!



Music

On 16 November, Year 10 GCSE musicians had the privilege of going to Bedford Girls' School to listen to professional musicians from the Philharmonia Orchestra play and talk about their instruments, as well as imparting knowledge around music as a career. When we arrived, we were treated to a virtuosic performance by members of the orchestra, namely on flute, violin, piano, bassoon and cello.

After that, students were divided into groups to participate in composing workshops for the aforementioned instruments and many members of the orchestra showed off some difficult, uncommon, but nonetheless important techniques that students could use for their exam compositions to give them the edge over other candidates. Finally, students were reunited for a question and answer session, which gave us all the opportunity to raise questions and enable the professionals a chance to go into further detail on the orchestra as a whole.

In summary, we all really enjoyed the opportunity to experience virtuosic playing firsthand, along with learning lots more about the processes of composition.



PE Department Success

We are thrilled to report that Goldington Academy's sporting success has continued to shine brightly this half term. Our dedicated athletes have once again demonstrated their exceptional talent and unwavering commitment to their respective sports. From exhilarating victories on the field to remarkable performances on the courts, our students have showcased their passion and determination in numerous competitions. Whether it is the outstanding teamwork displayed by our football squads or

the individual excellence seen in rowing club, the Goldington Academy community is immensely proud of the remarkable achievements of our sporting stars. Their hard work, perseverance and the guidance of our fantastic teaching staff have all contributed to the continued success of our sports program. As we celebrate the achievements below, we eagerly look forward to even greater accomplishments in the upcoming months, as our athletes continue to inspire us all.

These are just some of our achievements thus far:

- Year 7 boys' football team league champions
- Year 7/8 girls' football team progress to the next round of the National Cup
- KS4 basketball team remain undefeated
- Year 9 girls' badminton won their tournaments
- Year 10 table tennis finished 2nd out of 10 in their tournament
- Year 9 girls' netball team are still undefeated
- Year 8 girls' table tennis team won their tournament
- Year 9/10 girls' rugby team made it to the final of their tournament
- Year 7/8 girls' rugby team were undefeated at their tournament



The Year 7 boys' football team have done incredibly well in their fixtures winning all of their matches to win the league. They should also be incredibly proud of how they played as a team, consistently passing the ball to one another. They have also been very supportive of each other. We look forward to playing a different league winner in the semi-final. I also want to mention the commitment of a number of pupils in Year 7 to the club; they should have an opportunity to represent the school in upcoming B team tournaments.

The Year 8 and 10 teams were both entered into the National Cup. The standard of the games were both very high, and unfortunately both teams were on the wrong side of narrow defeats.

Congratulations to the Year 7 dodgeball team who won the Year 8 District competition on earlier this month! Both the A and B Goldington teams can be very proud of their performances and their conduct throughout the competition.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH - POETRY COMPETITION WINNERS

Rosa Parks sat on the bus,
Then was imprisoned - what a fuss
Black and white couldn't mix,
And that is what she tried to fix.
She sat at the front - the part for the white,
which caused a commotion and a fight.

Harriet Tubman - born a slave,
Kept being told she had to behave
Eventually, she managed to escape,
And tried to help other slaves to be safe.
Hundreds of slaves were rescued and free,
Tubman answered the prisoners' plea.

Mary Church Terrell got a college degree,
Because she was allowed to study freely.
Despite her African-American descent,
She got to celebrate this educational event.
'A coloured woman in a white world' was the name of her book,
And when it was released the entire world was shook.

By Skye Gandy

World is a colourful canvas

You said "A picture is better
When there are a lot of colours."
But why it is also colour
That separates us from others?

"Is it that your religion
That told us '*****' are demon?"
"Or it's what you're like in common,
Hates and lies are what you summon?"

Thousand years they simply fought for
Equality between each door.
Like Clementine's arts and more,
The coloured culture galore.

What's worse with a black skin colour?
What's greater in your 'fine' colour?
The world's shattered with labours,
The world's filled up with angers.

You see, we are all just feathers,
But only together
We could fly much higher and further,
To where we're all eager.

(One single colour is boring,
But lots of colours are dazzling.
So why'd you aim for one colour?
Won't many colours be better?)

World's a wonderful family
Only when black and white could be
Together holding hands closely,
Laughing by each other gracely.

When their sisters aren't raped by thee,
Every child is free and happy-
Only then the real world could be
A colourful canvas- you'll see.

By Dao Vo

Aretha Franklin

In the heart of soul's sweet melody, there's a voice that forever will be free,
Aretha Franklin, a legend's name, her music sets our souls aflame.

From Detroit's streets, she rose so high, a queen of soul, she touched the sky,
With a voice that could move mountains and seas, she sang of love, pain, and life's mysteries.

Her songs, like a river, flowed so deep, a piece in peoples heart they'll forever keep,
A treasure trove of emotions, secrets to keep, respect she deserved and we gladly gave,
For Aretha Franklin, the queen so brave.

In gospel choirs, she found her start, a gift from heaven, a work of art,
Her soulful hymns, a spiritual balm, a soothing touch, a healing calm.

Through trials and tribulations, she endured, her voice, a beacon, forever secured,
In the annals of music, her name will shine, a timeless legacy, so divine.

Aretha, your spirit will never fade, in the songs you sang, your legacy's laid,
You'll forever be the queen of our hearts, in the world of music, where your light imparts.

She always put a smile on people's faces the impactful Aretha Franklin who sang with faith.

By Evie Thomas

Saluting our Sisters

October isn't just a month when we celebrate for 31 days as a tradition,
October is a month when we celebrate black history for its recognition,
October is a month, where in a world of racism, we celebrate its resisters,
And for that very fact, we must salute our sisters,
Rosa Parks - began black civil rights which impacted many generations,
Serena Williams - influenced female black tennis players despite their limitations,
Michelle Obama - the First Lady of the United States who inspired nations,
Beyoncé - an American singer who has stunned others with her music creations,
These are just a few of the many inspirational black females, thousands on a list to last,

But there are so many more, so salute our sisters, from the present and past.

By Ethan Wright

CSI

This term, all of our Year 7 students have taken part in a fantastic enrichment day at Goldington Academy. The students, working in groups undertook a range of forensic activities including carrying out DNA analysis using gel electrophoresis, blood sampling and data analysis to try and solve the crime. The day was fully interactive and the students were completely emersed in the activities and competed to be the group with the most points and solve the crime. Not only was the day a lot of fun and gave students the opportunity to work with other students from other classes, it also helped to develop their listening and communication skills working towards a common outcome.

Congratulations to five of our groups that scored so highly, with a score of over 80 000, they were ranked in the top 10% of all Year 7 teams in the UK participating schools. A fantastic achievement!



'I loved how exciting this was. I also loved how this made me feel like an actual detective, figuring out an actual murder.'

'I loved this. It was really fun especially the blood testing and fingerprints.'

'I think it was very fun and educational. I would definitely recommend it to all Year 7 next year.'

Macmillan coffee afternoon

What another great success the Macmillan Coffee Afternoon was this year! We raised £201.10 in support of this amazing charity during lunchtime on Friday, 22 September. A big thanks to the all bakers and cake makers who donated some wonderful cakes to make this possible and all the staff who made donations.

Bats

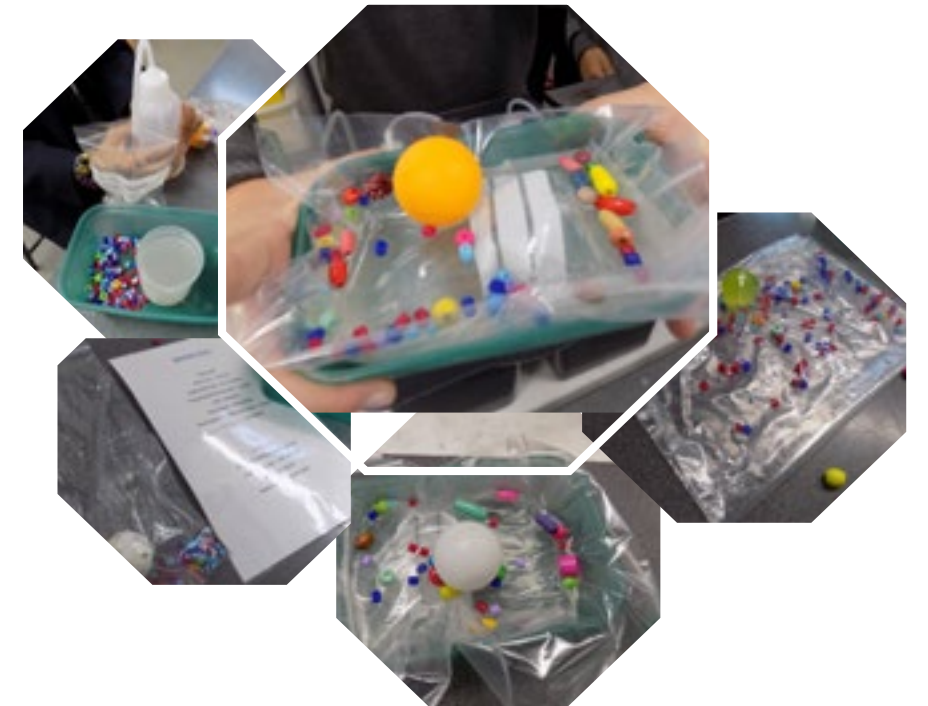


This term in STEM club, Bedford Bat Society delivered a fantastic talk teaching our pupils all about bat behaviour and habitats. Pupils were also very fortunate to see a live Soprano Pipistrelle up close! After Christmas, we will continue our bat theme and c o m m e n c e building our bat boxes.

Cells

In Year 7 science lessons this term students have been learning all about cells: the 'building blocks of life'.

To help understand and visualise them the students made model animal and plant cells featuring all of the different organelles (parts of the cells).



Remembrance Day



On Friday, 10 November, students across all year groups were invited to come in their service uniforms (cadets, guides, scouts etc) as a mark of respect and to commemorate men and women who lost their lives in service to their country during the wars. Mr Galbraith and the participating students, along with all Year Seven form groups, assembled around our memorial tree for a few

moments to remember the fallen. After a short introduction by the Principal, the well-known poem "In Flanders Fields" was read. The Last Post was played followed by the two minutes silence at 11.00 am alongside the remainder of the school who also marked the two minutes silence in their classrooms. A wreath was placed by our youngest member of the school, Kyray at the base of the tree to mark the occasion.

Are you following us?

We currently have the following "X" accounts that we would invite to you follow:

- [@GoldingtonAcad](#)
- [@GoldingtonArts](#)
- [@DesignTech_GA](#)
- [@Goldington_sci](#)
- [@LibGoldingtonAc](#)

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% 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	Jonah	Cameron
Eight	Lily	Ella
Nine	Vanshi	Josh
Ten	Liam	Brandon E/ Brandon S
Eleven	Giuliano	Emi Lauren Olivers

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	Skye JJ Muhaimin Tasnim Johnny	Caitlin Gabriella Arlie Layomi Theo
Eight	Tobias Rama Belle Antoni Ella	Inayah Marcel Erin Ethan Bella
Nine	Ololade Aliya Charlie Liam Delia	Aman Charlie Lewis Jessica Ines
Ten	Joel Arun Savannah Andrei Thomas	Rossetta Freddie Eniola Emily Liam
Eleven	Zara Djeneba Amelie Robert Harry Sharman Dom	Ola Margot Ellie Mary Laila Daniel

Family Challenge



In early November, our highest-attaining Year 7 students were invited to take part in the Goldington Academy Family Challenge, in which they battled through a series of deviously difficult tasks and activities.

Working as a team, each family spent a frantic two hours trying to accumulate points by demonstrating their knowledge and problem-solving skills across a broad mix of challenges, ranging from European Geography to Spatial Awareness, and from Recognising Celebrities to Mathematical Reasoning.

One of the most demanding rounds proved to be finding the hidden link between a series of quiz answers. Would you be able to work out what links these four things?

- ◇ The American word for a cockerel
- ◇ The largest of the Channel Islands
- ◇ A word that can follow Bomber, Smoking and Dust
- ◇ The monarch who abdicated the throne in 1936

The eventual winner was Jonah C and family, who took home a rather handsome trophy, but more importantly thoroughly enjoyed the chance to tackle unfamiliar problems as a team. Here are Jonah's reflections on the event:

"I enjoyed the whole thing, as it provided more of a challenge than usual learning. I enjoyed the map activity the most because I love looking at countries and maps. The hardest challenge was 'guessing the range' general knowledge, as it had some of the most random questions. Generally, the family strategy was to go off and all do different questions each (my mum did the easiest ones!)."



Photos and names used with permission



"I really loved the Family Challenge. It was a bit hard and confusing at first, but then it quietened down and was really fun. My family said they liked how it was a variety of things, so everybody got the chance to shine."

"The logic and puzzles was my favourite activity. I would say my family were not total chaos, but weren't perfect either. I really enjoyed the evening overall and so did my family."

"My family's favourite round was the range one, because it was fun and random. The hardest one was maths, although we think we worked really well together. We loved the evening because we had some nice family time, the teachers were awesome and we had a laugh (mainly at each other)!"

Many thanks to the staff who helped design the tasks and oversee the various sessions. We already look forward to hosting the Goldington Academy Family Challenge, 2024!

The Scholars Programme

Following an intensely competitive selection process, fourteen Year 9 students recently embarked on the Scholars Programme in order to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to progress to the most competitive universities.

Over the next few months, they will attend a series of university-style seminars delivered by PhD student, Michelle Michel, who is a world expert in her field of research. The scholars will explore a range of evidence and theories which could explain how, and why, our modern version of "Romeo & Juliet" differs from Shakespeare's intended text.

The first session examined how a combination of factors may have led to Shakespeare's original manuscript being accidentally (or perhaps deliberately) altered by the printing process. Is it possible that sections were omitted by the printers in order to save paper, time and money? Or perhaps human error was inevitable when operating printing presses in confined, candlelit conditions?

The programme culminates in students writing a dissertation (including formally referencing their sources) before 'graduating' on a trip to a prestigious university. In the meantime, they are thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to critically evaluate historical sources and reflect on the extent to which we can trust what is written down.



Further mathematics

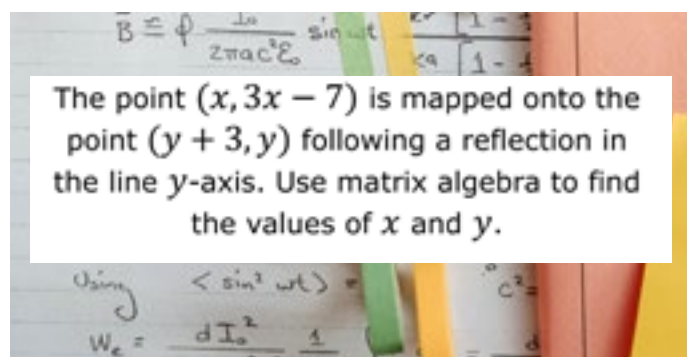
This term has seen the introduction of a new course at Goldington Academy, in which our highest-performing Year 11 mathematicians are working towards the Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics. The qualification, taught by Mr Marston, is aimed at students who are expected to achieve grade 7 or above in GCSE mathematics and are likely to progress to study A-Level Mathematics and possibly Further Mathematics in Year 12/13. The course offers the opportunity for stretch and challenge (particularly in algebraic reasoning) by building on the Key Stage 4 curriculum whilst focusing on higher-order mathematical skills. There is an emphasis on technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem-solving, alongside an introduction to calculus, matrices and advanced trigonometry.

Here are the views of some of the cohort:

"I have chosen to take Further Maths as an introduction to and as a taster of A-Level Maths which I am intending to study next year. The calculations are no harder than normal maths, but the extra difficulty lies in knowing what techniques to apply when. The course requires great independence, as we learn a skill in the lesson and are expected to practise it in our own time." (Charlie F)

"For me further maths isn't that different from normal maths, it is just in most occasions applying your maths knowledge to a different, more challenging question. As I am hoping to go on to do A-level maths, it is a great insight into what's coming up and the level needed." (Amelie M)

"Being both adept at and passionate about mathematics, taking Further Maths was a natural choice — not least because I intend to take Maths and Further Maths at A-Level: complemented by Physics and Computer Science, both subjects which are inherently intertwined with mathematics." (Rayyan A)



Goldington Distinction Award

This half-term, Year 8 students have had the opportunity to join the Goldington Distinction Award - a new 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**, Joel asked Mr Galbraith about his early jobs and was surprised by this response: "When I was 24, I spent two years working on the oil rigs in the North Sea and would have to go there via a helicopter."

Julia's **Goldington Academy Artwork** was an incredible



piece, conveying her idea that what might be perfect to me might not be perfect to you.

A tense **Blurb for a Book**, was produced by Finn: A British agent has disappeared in North Korea and sending in fully grown British spies would be too obvious. The cadets are the only option. Disguised as a tour group they are sent into North Korea... into certain death.

In her **Review of a Foreign Film**, Gabriella wrote: In one particular scene, it goes from the pain and sorrow of the grandad, to the soft and INSPIRED voice of Paikea, the main character. She was praying to the gods and the mysterious, yet hopeful music began to play. It was very thought-provoking and made me wonder what would happen next.

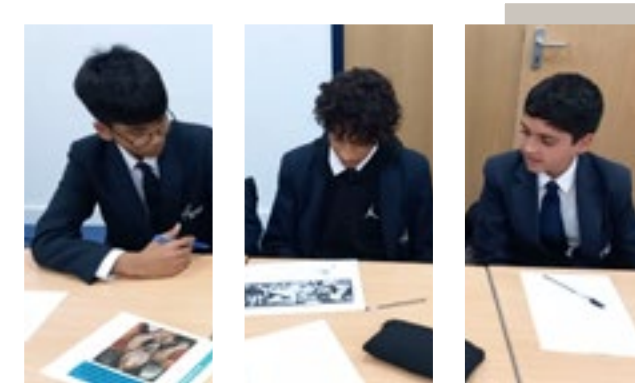
Congratulations to Joel and Lazzaro, who were the first recipients of the Silver Award. In the summer term, students will have the opportunity to re-visit the programme and upgrade their badge. Which student will have the honour of being the first to ever attain a Goldington Distinction Gold Award?

The Wadham Project

Five high-achieving Year 10 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 two 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 Genetics lecture explored how scientists can alter the shape of biological molecules in order to reduce the risk of cancer in humans.

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



DHL Foundation - bicycles and skateboards



In July 2023, the DHL Foundation donated some bicycles and skateboards. We decided that these wonderful items would be a great way to raise money for charity (Children in Need) and to help purchase resources for the playground so that all students could benefit from the generosity of the DHL Foundation.

Raffle tickets were available to purchase for £3 a strip in the lead-up to the draw on 15 December.

At the time of writing, the tickets are still being sold, so an update on the funds raised and the winners will be published in the next newsletter.

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).

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 SEN.

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 SENCO 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 took place over the course of the half term and progress, provision and Pupil Passports were discussed. Parents were invited via ParentMail to attend a meeting. If you have not yet had a chance to meet with the SENDCo, then please feel free to contact us to arrange a meeting.

Important SEN 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>. We invite feedback for review and feedback of the current document and consequent update of these.

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. In addition, we also have a Learning Apprenticeship partnership with Bedford College where apprentices (subject to an interview process) can work four days a week as an LSA and a day release at college to attend study sessions.

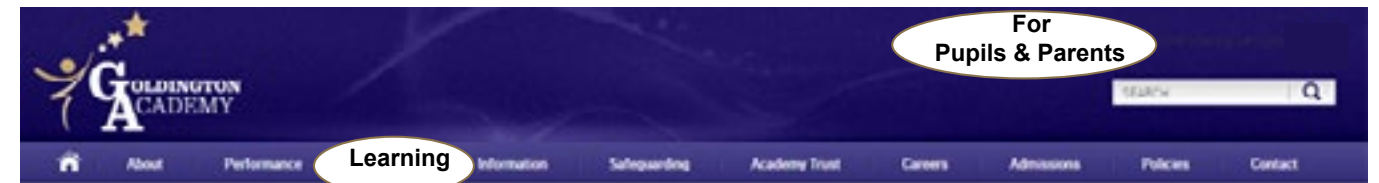
Contact us

With any issues regarding pupils and their SEND, the SENDCO, 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 1.40 pm — 4.15 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."

Teaching & Learning - Did you know

- That you can find out what your child is learning on our school website by clicking on the 'Learning' tab and then on the relevant year group.
www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/learning/curriculum-overview
- That every subject has their own page on our school website that includes a variety of information and resources. You can find this information by clicking on the 'Learning' tab.
www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/learning/curriculum-subjects
- That each year group has their own page on our school website with information relevant to that particular year. For example, the year 11 page includes revision hints, tips and resources. You can find this information by clicking on the 'FOR PUPILS AND PARENTS' tab.
www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/for-pupils-and-parents
- That 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 Gordon – gordonc@goldington.beds.sch.uk



Library

It has been a fantastic term in Goldington Academy library. We were very lucky to welcome author Matt Oldfield to speak to our Year Seven and Year 8 about his career as an author, how we can learn vital life lessons from sport such as tenacity and resilience and how it is important that we learn from our failures and remain motivated. Matt also ran a workshop for selected pupils on how to craft an effective story and spent a long time signing books and chatting to the children.



In our library lessons, we have been enjoying a range of activities to encourage a love of reading for pleasure. The children particularly enjoyed a Halloween inspired session where we discussed spooky books, and they had the opportunity to draw their own interpretation of Frankenstein's monster. Some of these fantastic illustrations can be found on our Goldington Academy Twitter/X account.

We were also very excited to work with our business contacts to improve the depth and breadth of our language resources in the Library. One of our partner businesses, DHL, very generously gifted a significant donation to the school for the development of our English as an Additional Language section. Using this money, we now have a wide range of dictionaries in a variety of languages and language guides which will allow children whose first language is not English to access the curriculum. Some of the resources purchased include Polish, Romanian and Ukrainian dictionaries and two excellent books on learning English as a foreign language which include vocabulary builders. These resources have already proved very popular with our pupils! We are very grateful to DHL and look forward to working with them further in the future.

Reminder - parents please check and amend accordingly your child's data collection sheets found in the SIMs ParentApp. In addition, if you make any changes in ParentMail you must also update details in the SIMs Parent App too. This will ensure you continue to receive all school correspondence.

Careers

I would like to signpost you to the careers section of our website, where you will find a wealth of resources about

apprenticeships, post-16 options and destinations, and much more. The parent section is here: <https://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/careers/parents>

STEM

Girls into STEM Colworth Science Park trip



In October, as part of the Ada Lovelace Day celebrations of girls in STEM, we took a small group of girls to Colworth Science Park.

The girls explored various career pathways within the science park, looked around the laboratories and even got to sample ice cream and tea!

It was a great adventure and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day, made all the more brilliant by the goodie bag they were given to take away.

Year 11 Mock Interviews

On Friday, 1 and Monday, 4 of December, we were joined by volunteers from the world of work who gave up their mornings to lead mock interviews for our Year 11 students. The interviews were a practice for post-16/job interviews and were a good opportunity to experience what it's like to speak to someone they don't know, about their future aspirations and interests.

A big thank you to Mr Bergman (DHL), Mr Cushion (DHL), Mr Cauchi (STEM Ambassador), Mr Mehmi (GA Governor), Mrs Fisher (Rise UK, STEM Ambassador), Mrs Ahmed-Pearce (GA Governor), Mr Furber (House of Commons), Mrs Mahon (SEMLEP Give an Hour), Dr Hughes (retired), Mrs Dwyer (Computacenter), Mrs Gadsby

(SEMLEP Careers Hub) and several of our wonderful support staff at Goldington – Ms Fearon, Mrs Spinelli, Mrs Chisnall, Mr Smith, Mr Yiannaki, Mrs Catrambone and Mrs Henderson.

Feedback from our interviewers was overwhelmingly positive, with many students being given a special mention for their manners, communication skills and organisation. Well done everyone!

A special mention must be given to our Futures Ambassadors – Jacob, Chloe and Inayah – who ably ran the reception desk, escorted the year 11s to their interviewer, and kept our visitors well looked-after with plenty of tea, coffee, biscuits and mince pies!