

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING THIS TERM?



Year 7 Family Challenge



Remembrance Day



Madrid Trip



Southwold



Gardening Club



Key Stage Three Artwork

Principal's Introduction



Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to the bumper edition of our Christmas newsletter. Even I was shocked at how much we have managed to squeeze into it this year and yet it still represents only a small selection of what our students have been involved with. We hope you enjoy!

Last week the national data for all secondary schools in England was published. You can view this data at the following link:

<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/school/136552/goldington-academy/secondary>

Once again, Goldington has comfortably come in the top 5% of schools in the country with regard to the Progress 8 measure. This is the most important measure of all, and a figure of +0.85 shows that (on average) all students made almost a grade higher in every subject than predicted at the age of eleven. This places us in the top quarter of the "well above average" category (the top one!) and really represents the consistency of teaching and performance in almost all areas. We have been in the top 5% of schools in every year since Covid and I am sure you will agree this is a wonderful performance. I would like to pay tribute, once again, to the whole of my team and that includes not

only the teachers, but all support staff as well. Great job!

One area where I am anticipating enhanced performance in 2025 is in our delivery of food, particularly lunches, from our canteen. From January, we will be taking all catering "in-house" and I am very excited to announce that Jasmine Keen will be joining the school as Catering Manager. Jasmine has extensive experience in the hospitality and catering sector and should allow us to fulfil the food standards requirements in this area that state:

"Eating in school should be a pleasurable experience: time spent sharing good food with peers and teachers."

Reflecting on 2024, I am proud that we were able to self fund the building of two new classrooms at the front of school and the refurbishment of two of our science laboratories. These are already proving themselves to be invaluable additions to our school site. Nonetheless, despite these additions and improvements, we reach the end of the year with a very healthy reserve and we will undoubtedly be full of a new year group of eleven-year-olds in September.

As you read this our Year Elevens are currently in the middle of mock exams. We all wish them well and at this time of year, more than any other, may I take the opportunity to wish you, and your family, a happy and restful Christmas period.

We have a school training day on Monday, 6 January 2025 and your child should return to us for 8.50 am on Tuesday, 7 January 2025. Enjoy!

Azma Ahmad-Pearce

Note from the Chair of Governors

I hope you enjoy the newsletter. There are so many positive stories within these pages. I am thoroughly looking forward to the year ahead as Chair of Governors. May I take this opportunity to wish everybody a very Happy Christmas.

Goldington Academy goes from strength to strength, and this was seen in the Open Evening in October 2024, where

many children from the surrounding schools came to the academy. Goldington Academy has maintained its popularity due to its wide range of courses, activities inside and outside of school time, new buildings and equipment and of course a very strong cohort of staff. Many thanks to all involved.
Azma Ahmad-Pearce, Chair of Governors



English Poetry Competition

The English department ran a poetry competition on the theme of 'Change' this half term and are proud to

announce the winner: well done to Sienna (Year Eight) for her thought-provoking and moving poem 'Time'.

Time

You fell asleep in the car and got carried to bed for the last time,
You shout 'Daddy' once he walked in the door and picked you up and
spun you around for the last time,
You say good bye to your childhood not knowing it may be the last,
You believed in the Easter bunny, Santa and mermaids,
You stayed up all night to catch Santa for the last time,
You left the ball put and put your shoes on for the last time,
You fought with your sibling about something stupid for the last time,
You hung up the plastic play phones and never opened it again,
You didn't care about messing up your hair or makeup,
You say goodbye to your grandparents not knowing it may be the last,
You didn't care about getting muddy when it rained,
You didn't notice your parents' growing up too,
You go onto the field to play tag for the last time,
You put your barbies away to never be played with again,
You didn't notice – did you?
You didn't notice when you grew up,
But looking now you mourn your innocent past,
You now look in the mirror not recognising the face you once knew,
You look tired, and your imagination is trapped,
You wished to be older but that dream is no more,
You wish to be young again, to be without stress
Time goes on whether you are ready or not.

Second prize goes to Evan T (Year Seven)
Third prize goes to Radu (Year Seven)

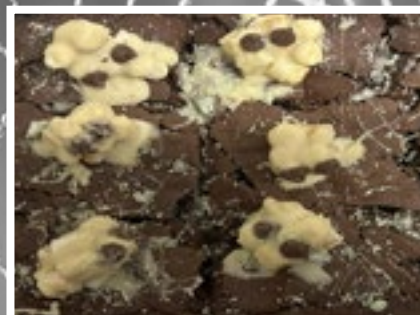
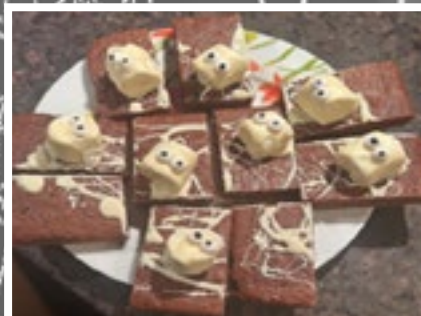
A special mention also to all the other wonderful entries – there were some excellent contributions – we found it very hard to judge! All entries won achievement points and further prizes to the top three.

Les recettes d'Halloween

For the October half-term, the French department challenged Year Seven & Year Eight pupils to make one of two Halloween recipe and then send in pictures of their bakes.

Sound easy? The challenge was that all the ingredients and the instructions were in French!

Below you will see examples of their amazing "Brownies Fantômes" (ghost brownies) and tasty "Cookies Araignées" (spider cookies).



A very special mention to Emanuele and Natasha who baked both receipes!



Et les gagnants ...
and the winners are ...



Nina 8G &
Eleanor
7S
for the
brownies



Dylan 7D
& Ella 7C
for the
cookies



Remembrance



On Monday, 11 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

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

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, at the base of the tree to mark the occasion.

Maths Summer School

At the end of last year one of our Year Eleven pupils was offered the chance to attend the UK Mathematics Trust Summer School after achieving a high score in the Intermediate Maths Challenge. This is the first time Goldington Academy has had a pupil offered this opportunity and we hope that more of our talented mathematicians will be selected in the future.

He enjoyed the experience and has written about it below:



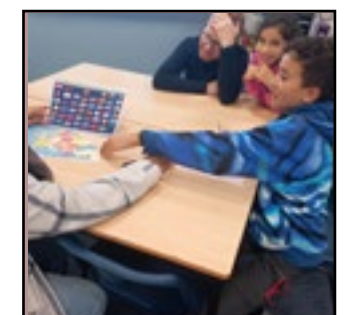
"Attending the UKMT's National Mathematics Summer School was an incredibly enriching experience. Surrounded by like-minded peers, who were also top scorers in the IMC, I had the opportunity to explore mathematical concepts in new ways that I had not considered previously, under the direction of passionate volunteers and teachers. I was also given the opportunity to explore a wide range of new topics, including modular arithmetic, propositional logic, graph theory and more. I look forward to revisiting and building upon some of these concepts as I further my studies at Cambridge Maths School."



Year Seven Family Challenge



All photographs used with permission



In November, many of our Year Seven students took part in the Goldington Academy Family Challenge, in which they tackled a range of cleverly-designed, difficult tasks.

Working as a team, each family spent a frenetic evening accumulating 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 giant killed by David using a sling and stones
- The second heaviest land animal on Earth
- The narrator on the original Thomas the Tank Engine cartoon series
- The name for a male deer

GCSE Geography Fieldwork

Our wonderful Year Eleven geographers went to Southwold on Thursday, 10 and Friday, 11 October to investigate the effectiveness of the sea defences on Southwold's beach. They worked hard thinking and acting like geographers and they proudly represented the school. They even enjoyed some fish and chips! It was an enjoyable trip all round. Well done Year Eleven.



Bedford

Our super Year Ten geographers visited Russell Park and Bedford Town Centre on Tuesday, 24 September to investigate the sustainability of each site using the Egan Wheel of sustainability. Despite the rain, they still managed to have fun exploring the local area and talking to some local people about sustainability. We were really proud of them and their work. Well done, Year Ten.



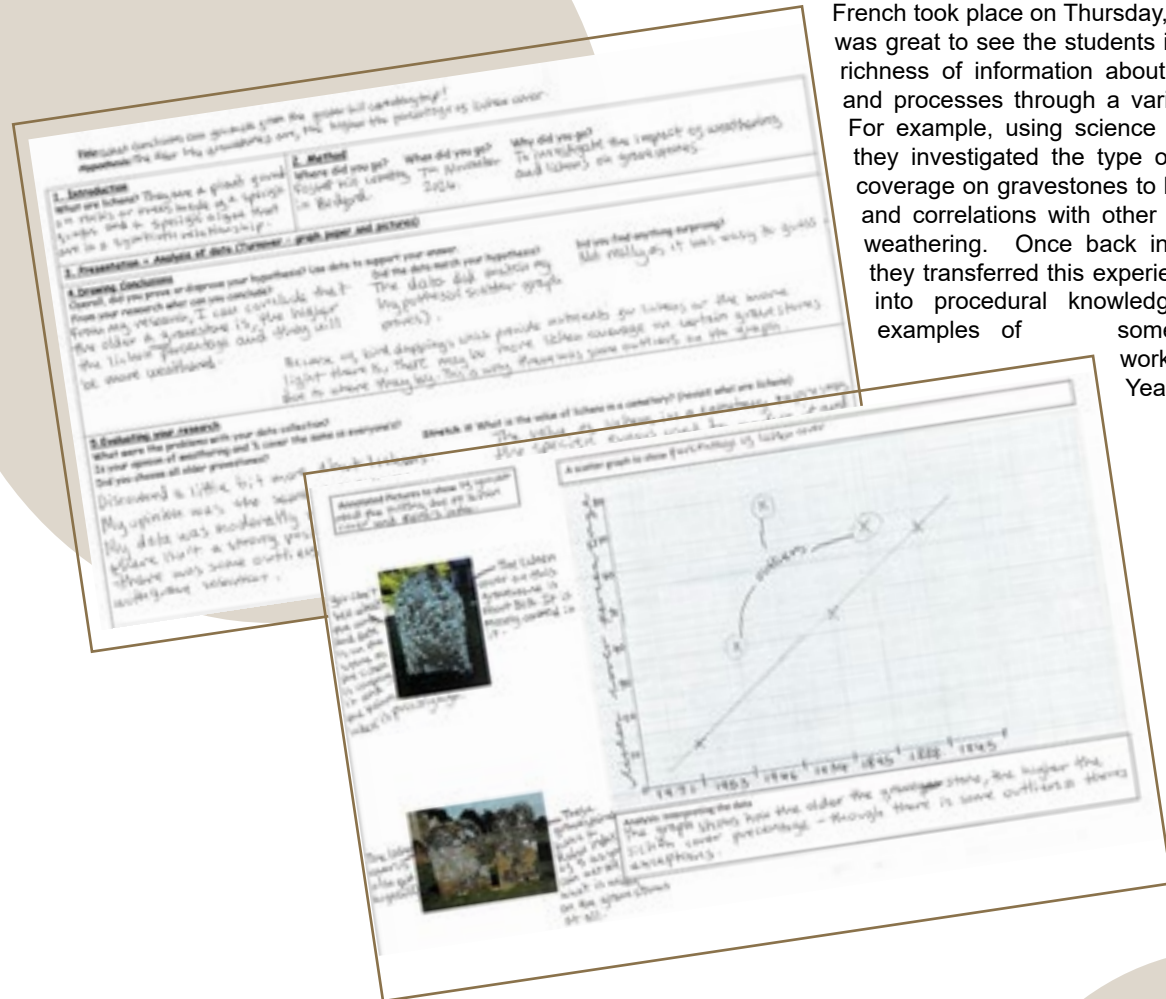
Eco Club

Eco-club has made a great impact already in this first term with aspirations to be awarded the Eco Schools award for the second year running. So far, members of the eco-committee have made an action plan for how they would like to improve the environmental impact of Goldington Academy such as designing and planning

new light switch posters for all classrooms and identifying how we can encourage more birds on to the school site. Eco-club takes place every Friday, at 1.00 pm and it would be great to see more new faces who would like to make a positive contribution to improving the school's environmental footprint.

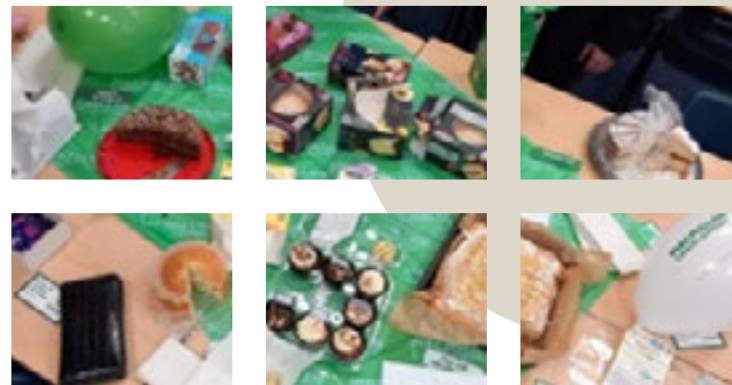
Foster Hill Road Cemetery

The annual cross-curricular trip for Year Nine to Foster Hill Road Cemetery with history, science, art and French took place on Thursday, 7 November. It was great to see the students investigating the richness of information about people, places and processes through a variety of subjects. For example, using science and geography, they investigated the type of lichen and its coverage on gravestones to look for patterns and correlations with other factors such as weathering. Once back in the classroom they transferred this experiential knowledge into procedural knowledge. Here are examples of some of their great work. Well done, Year Nine.



Macmillan Coffee Afternoon

What another great success the Macmillan Coffee Afternoon was this year! We raised £260 in support of this amazing charity during lunchtime on Friday, 27 September. A big thanks to the all bakers and cake makers who donated some wonderful cakes to make this possible and all the staff and students who made donations.

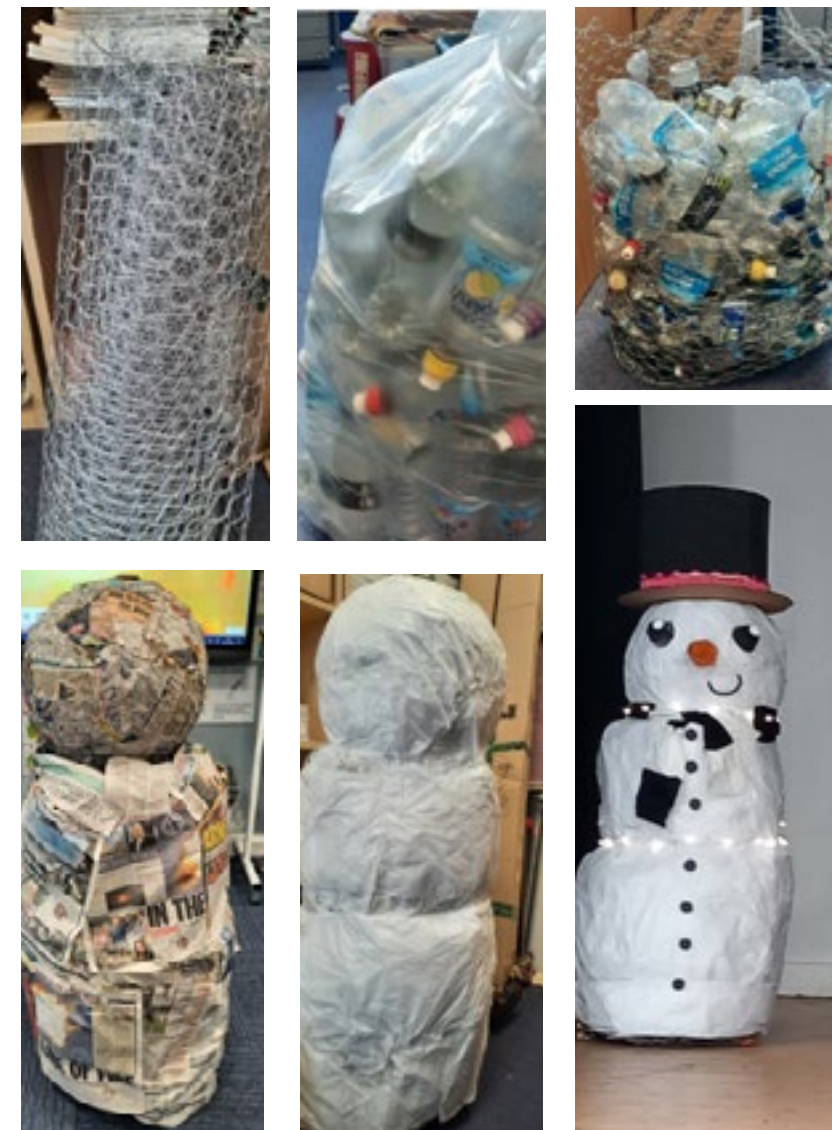


Clubs

Geography Club have had a busy and productive start to the term. They remain committed to focusing on creative projects that aim to raise the profile about important global issues such as climate change. They are currently working on constructing a giant snowman which they hope to complete by the end of term. Its design is underpinned by environmentalism, and they are aiming to present it to the

wider school community through assemblies and a KS3 lesson. With that being said, a KS3 lesson has been designed in collaboration with two of our geography ambassadors, Vanshi and Aleeza, with a focus on climate change linked to Years Seven to Nines' current work.

Here are a few pictures showcasing the snowman's stages of construction. Well done geography clubbers.



Ambassadors

We are very grateful to the students who give up their time to support the geography department through the ambassador programme. Spotlighting two of our wonderful geography ambassadors Vanshi and Aleeza for their undeniable commitment to raising the profile of geographical issues through news bulletins and geography club projects. Here are a few words from them about their role as a geography ambassador:

"As geography ambassadors, we have participated in a variety of activities, ranging from making PowerPoint slides for UN international days to creating a life-sized snowman. We love to involve ourselves in these geographical pursuits and we find that our teamwork, time management and communication skills have drastically improved since taking this role. Recently, we have made a lesson for KS3 to raise awareness about climate change in cold environments. Overall, we are grateful for this opportunity and we are looking forward to gaining more experience on this valuable and meaningful journey!"

Geography Quality Mark

We are delighted to have received the Secondary Geography Quality Mark from the Geographical Association (GA) this year. It is testament to the department's ambition and our wonderful students who are so willing to embrace the geography they are studying. Below is a snapshot of some of the GA moderator's feedback:

"We are delighted to award Goldington Academy with the Secondary Geography Quality Mark. It was clear from the submission that as a team you are passionate about geography... There are positive student-teacher relationships and opportunities are provided for students to engage in learning outside of the classroom..."

Well done everyone - #geogrocks



Antarctica Day

Following last two year's successes of Year Eight designing a flag in support of Antarctica Day, which was 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 19 November and we are now patiently waiting for the scientists to send us a picture of our flag in Antarctica. Here is the flag design we sent. Well done, Year Eight.



Gardening Club

It has been a busy term in the school garden.

In September we planted out our Christmas dinner vegetables, these included potatoes, carrots, beans, peas and brussels sprouts.

We then made scarecrows and ran our pumpkin competition. We had an amazing 110 entries and one of our Year seven students won, correctly guessing the weight of 4.2 kg. We were very proud of this pumpkin as we grew it from seed. As the days have got shorter and colder we moved into the greenhouse and have taken lots of cuttings from our plants ready for next year. We have decorated our apple tree for christmas and as we begin to see some spring bulbs begin to shoot we look forward to planning for spring.

Mrs Spavins and the gardening team



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.

ART

Bedford Christmas Tree Festival

Students from Mindful Art Club have been working hard all term to produce decorations for our tree at the Christmas Tree Festival, St Paul's, Bedford, which this year had the theme of 'The Magic Of Christmas'. Students have created decorations

inspired by Harry Potter and two of our art ambassadors had lots of fun decorating the tree!



Mindful Art Club

Students from Mindful Art Club have collaborated with D&T and have taken part in resin workshops, creating hair clips, paper weights and bookmarks. They have learnt a lot about the process and they have been able to make their own products in time to give as Christmas gifts!



Key Stage 3 Artwork

We have been really impressed with the high standard of work produced this term. Well done to all young artists

who have been working very hard to practice skills and techniques. Here are some of our favourite pieces so far.



Year Seven Creative Arts Day



At the start of the year, Year Seven students had a day immersed in the arts, creating artwork and performances based on the theme of Diversity. They had a brilliant day and we were really impressed with the overall quality of their creations. Many have continued to impress us in lessons and through their involvement in extra curricular activities. Well done, Year Seven - a great start!

Design & Technology

Year Sevens have been exploring the classifications of plastics: thermoforming and thermosetting. Using repurposed HDPE plastic (milk bottles, shampoo bottles etc) they have hand crafted some superb keyrings. A fantastic topic to explore the importance of sustainability and all of our Year Sevens who have studied design and technology now have knowledge as to what they can do to help reduce their own carbon footprint. Well done!



Perfectly Polished Pewter

Perfectly Polished pewter!
Some lovely pieces have been produced in our Year Nine pewter unit. Pupils have explored how computer aided design can enhance a traditional casting process. Independently designed and developed. Well done!



Timbers and plastics



Year Eight pupils have been working alongside a range of materials including timbers and plastics. Accuracy and patience has been the key to success this term. Lots of wonderful learning in terms of tolerances, comb joints, line bending and casting! Well done and we are looking forward to seeing the final outcomes just in time for the Christmas holidays!



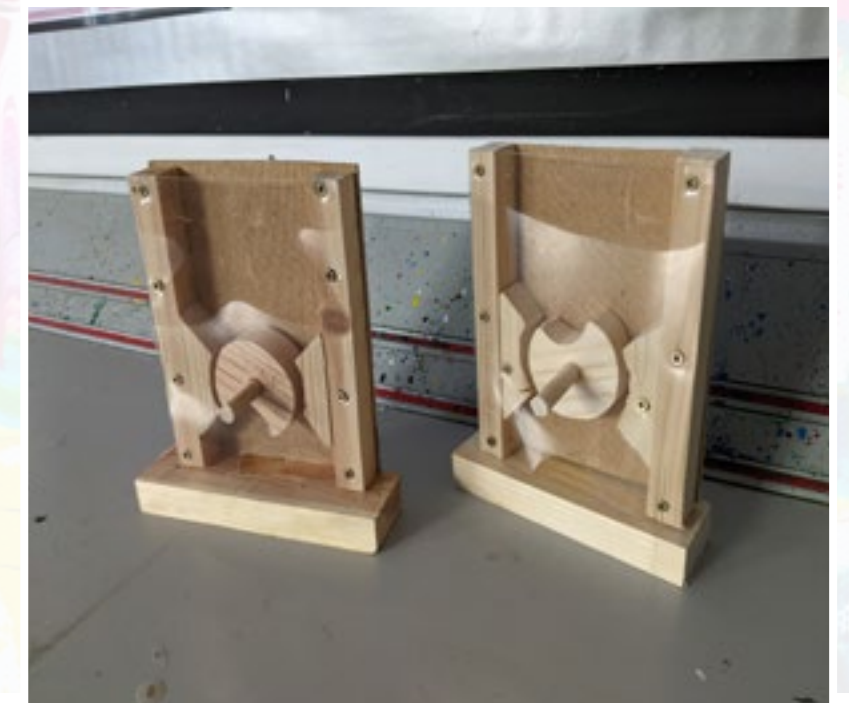
Modelling Skills

Year tens have been tackling different challenges this term looking at timbers, metals, plastics, Styrofoam modelling skills for Alessi inspired pizza cutters. Pupils have pushed themselves and hoping to see lots of completed skills frame this Christmas! Just need to add the sublimation printing!



Key Stage 3

The design and technology key stage 3 pupils have been working hard during their lunch times to complete what turned out to be far more complicated than initially expected. A mechanical sweet dispenser! The perfect Christmas gift. Lots of tremendous work completed by everyone who attended! Looking forward to next term's project!



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 94.6% 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	Maryla	Nylah-Rae/Giorgia
Eight	Eryn	Otis
Nine	Emma H/Alfie S	Alicia
Ten	Aleeza	Delia
Eleven	Brishna	Amari/Mahveen

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.

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.



Spain



Student thoughts on the trip

"In October, forty Year Ten and Eleven students travelled to Madrid and spent four days exploring the city, learning about Spanish culture and being immersed in the Spanish language. During our stay, students took part in a guided walking tour of Madrid and visited the historic heart of the city including the Plaza de España, Puerta del Sol, San Miguel Market and Retiro Park. They also had the opportunity to take part in cultural activities including a visit to the Royal Palace of Madrid, a visit to the Reina Sofia Museum and churros with hot chocolate at Madrid's most famous chocolate shop, Chocolatería San Ginés. Finally, students took part in a tour of the Bernabéu stadium, the home of Real Madrid football club. The following comment from a student of Spanish who participated in the trip sums up the visit:

"Our school trip to Madrid was an amazing experience and my favourite school trip so far. We saw some fantastic places like the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium (home to Real Madrid), the Royal Palace of Madrid, the Retiro Park (a massive park with a nice lake and lots of nature), and more. On the first day, we had a three-

"Madrid is the vibrant capital of Spain and is a city that captivates visitors with its blend of history, culture and modern charm. The city has such beautiful weather and popular places to go to so you can never get bored. For students who picked Spanish as a GCSE subject, it was the perfect chance to practise our speaking and listening skills in everyday situations. Some of the activities we engaged in, included exploring the Reina Sofia National Art Gallery, visiting the Retiro Park (a green park with a lake and stalls), seeing the Champions League trophy at the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium, walking around the city with a local tour guide, shopping at Gran Vía, taking the



hour guided tour of the city where we learnt lots about the history of Madrid and some of its most important buildings. We then visited the San Miguel Market and explored the Puerta del Sol area in the city centre. Later that day, we went to the Temple of Debod; an Egyptian temple donated to Spain in the 1960s. We saw the temple at sunset along with some lovely views of the city at night-time. Those of us studying GCSE Spanish had the opportunity to practise our Spanish when buying food from local shops and cafes, and also in shops when we were allowed some free time to explore the local area in groups. Overall, my favourite part of the trip was definitely the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium tour. Every football fan's dream is to visit this site as it's one of the most famous stadiums in the world. We saw some of the trophies that Real Madrid has won over the years as well as Ballon d'Ors, and even the Super Ballon d'Or (a trophy that only one person in the world has ever won; Di Stefano). I really enjoyed the trip and I would highly recommend that you go if given the chance."



metro around the city (which was crowded but we managed). In the evenings, the teachers gave us an opportunity to try out local Spanish foods including paella, calamari and tapas (there are very famous tapas restaurants in Madrid). Although the teachers were responsible for keeping our money safe, we were accountable for the spending of our money especially when needed which was a good skill for the future. Moreover, Madrid was my personal favourite trip I have been on, and I really wish I could go back. It was such a wonderful time so if you ever have the opportunity to go, I advise you to take it."



Colworth STEM Careers Fair

As a reward for all the Goldington Academy students that had worked hard to earn their STEM badge or Ultimate Scientist badge, they were taken to the STEM Careers Fair at the local Unilever research and development site. The event aimed to inspire and educate students in STEM subjects and find out about the diversity of career opportunities available via apprenticeships, graduate programmes and direct entry roles through stalls, displays and demos.

From digital promotion, product & fragrance testing, the science behind the taste test, measuring penguin poo from space, next level chromatography topped off with a delicious Unilever ice-cream and a goodie bag of freebies, we were all suitably inspired. Emma even managed to get herself some work experience with the brilliant digital company Toucan. Nice work Emma!



STEM Club Witches & Wizards



Charms week. Students magically changed each flower two different colours.

Following on from spooky Halloween, this term our Thursday lunchtime STEM club have been finding out, is there witchcraft and wizardry in the real world?

You may think that magic and spells only exist in your favourite books and movies. But can we make magic in the real world? Our CREST Discovery programme investigates how we can use science to make things change colour, state, appear or even disappear.



Microscale mouse toothpaste



PH Challenge week



Microscale potion making



Apparition week: creating a hologram using plastic, a phone and physics



Invisibility week: Students made materials disappear by suspending them in liquids of a similar refractive index



Head to @Goldington_sci to guess how many items Polly has hidden in the beaker?



Special Education Needs & Disability Update



Miss C. Johnstone has joined the SEND team in the capacity of Deputy SENDCo and she has oversight of the provision as related to Year Seven SEND.

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 took place over the course of the half term and progress, provision and Pupil Passports were discussed. If you have not yet had a chance to meet with the SENDCo, then please feel free to contact us to arrange a meeting. In the spring term, 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-and-or-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."

Gold Distinction Award



This half-term, Year Eight students have had the opportunity to join the Goldington Distinction Award, 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.

For the Teacher Interview, Emilie asked about dream jobs and was surprised to hear that Mrs Percival once wanted to be a voice actor on the radio!

A funny Blurb for a Book, was produced by Gabriella: *"You could go for some old scrappy book that might teach you some important stuff, like; how you should address the Pope when you meet him or what kind of uniform upstairs servants wear. But if you need practical information – like what to do when you sneeze in your hand, then this is the correct book and you should buy it."*

In her Review of a Foreign Film, Lois wrote: *"Skater Girl is a beautiful film. It is simple and absolutely realistic. It gives an insight into the lives of others and makes us appreciate the most precious things in life more."*

Emilie produced a creative piece of artwork to represent Goldington Academy.



The Scholars Programme

Fourteen Year Nine students recently embarked on the Scholars Programme in order to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to progress to the most competitive universities.

Over a period of eight weeks, they have attended a series of university-style seminars delivered by PhD student, Siobhán Ní Chonaill, who is an expert in her field of research. The scholars have explored a range of evidence and theories which examine The Problem of Immortality in the Long Eighteenth Century, including looking at how feelings towards death were reflected in art, literature, philosophy and science through the 1700s.

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 ideas such as Visions of Utopia, Moral Responsibility, Human Perfectibility and Social Evolution.



A life in the courtroom

Goldington Academy had the privilege of welcoming His Honour Judge Patrick Peruško, a distinguished Family Court Judge, who visited to share insights into his career and the justice system. The event, held in the Exhibition Space, was an engaging and enlightening experience for students, especially those considering careers in law, public service or social work.

Judge Peruško explained the role of a Family Court Judge, emphasizing that his primary responsibility is to ensure the welfare of children and families. He shared how his court handles cases involving custody disputes, child protection, and family disagreements, often requiring him to make challenging decisions that balance legal principles with compassion and fairness. He also spoke about his journey to the bench, describing his education and experiences in law school, as well as the years of legal practice that prepared him for his current



role. His advice about the need for meticulous preparation and building a rapport with the jury was eagerly taken on board by one particular group of students who later represented our school in a mock trial competition.

One highlight of the visit was the interactive Q&A session. Students asked thoughtful questions about the legal system, the ethical dilemmas judges face, and what a typical day in court looks like. Judge Peruško provided candid responses, sharing anecdotes that brought his experiences to life and inspired students to think about the impact of the legal profession on society.

We thank Judge Peruško for his time and wisdom. His visit was a reminder of the important work done in our communities and how education can pave the way to meaningful and impactful careers.

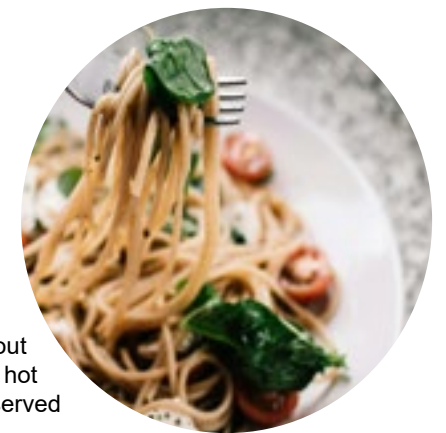
Food Service

Goldington Academy's food service is changing!

When school returns in January, pupils should notice a number of changes in the food service at Goldington Academy. We will be bringing school meals back under our control and are committed to providing nutritious, tasty food that offers value for money. As a result the school has invested £30,000 to upgrade equipment alongside employing additional staff.

After a period of consultation with staff and pupils, we have been working hard to implement the following changes in order to improve the service for all that use it:

- Improving the layout of service with hot and cold food served separately
- Redeveloping the menus at break and lunch services
- Increasing portion sizes
- Lowering the cost of items sold
- Removal of single use plastic



Debate Club



logo designed by Vanshi Mehta

It has been a busy term for debate club, with lots of new members joining. The students have enjoyed attending several events, and have competed in a number of competitions already.

So far this year, we have competed in a public speaking competition at The Quarry Theatre where we also took part in workshops to improve presentation skills.

Open Evening was an opportunity to engage with potential new students, and introduce them to the concept of "speed-debating", fast-paced quick-fire rounds on topics close to student's hearts, such as whether homework should be abolished!

We then visited the Houses of Parliament, where the students were able to observe a live debate from the public gallery, "from where we sat, we could look down and see the action live, then look up and see it on TV," and then took part in a workshop on the power of petitions. We were also joined by our MP, Mohammad Yasin, who gave an interesting talk about his career and answered many student questions.

Back to London to compete in a Bar Mock Trial when we were invited to the prestigious Inner Temple for our heat. Feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive, with many highlights including having the opportunity to improve critical and analytical skills, seeing how teamwork, collaboration and preparation paid off, receiving feedback from practicing judges on their performance, and gaining insights into the justice system.

Across to Bedford Girls' School next for a MACE debate, led by the English-Speaking Union. It was a great experience to see how older students presented their arguments, demonstrating quick thinking and agility, and finally for this year, an inter-school debate with Bedford Girls' School on Christmas-themed topics.



Careers

Goldington Academy students have spent this term engaging in a range of career focused activities, from engaging conferences to trips & experiences.

Green Careers Week

During Green Careers Week, students explored new and exciting career possibilities in the green field of sustainability. We held discussions and assemblies about jobs in renewable energy, environmental science, and sustainable business.

Year Eleven Mock Interviews

Our Year Eleven students recently completed mock interviews in preparation for college, apprenticeship and job interviews. These interviews, conducted in our school's exhibition space, gave students an opportunity

to practise resolving both broad and narrow questions about interests, strengths and career plans. We were very impressed by their punctuality, organisation and professionalism of all our students.

Exploring Pathways and Inspiring Futures

Year Eleven pupils have also been visited by the large majority of post-16 providers in Bedford, finding out about different further education and apprenticeships opportunities. In addition to this, students have also completed various STEM trips, such as a trip to Unilever, where they were introduced to innovation and science careers. We also had engaging guest speakers into school – including a civil servant who presented a fascinating presentation on public service and government.

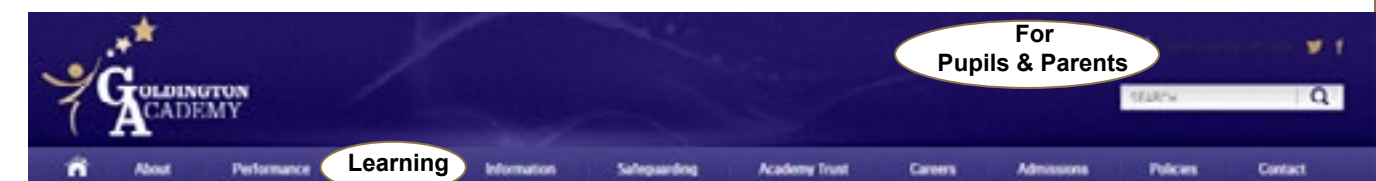
Teaching & Learning - Did you know?

- 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 and that every subject has their own page that includes a variety of information and resources.
- That each year group has their own page on our school website with information relevant to that particular year.

For example, the Year Eleven 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/learning/curriculum-overview

- 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



Term Dates

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

Physical Education

Rowing Club: Our weekly rowing sessions are in full swing, with pupils working hard on the ergometers each morning to build strength and endurance. Thanks to the support of Bedford Rowing Club, we are aiming to get back on the water soon and put our skills to the test!

Girls' Football: Our girls' football teams are having an outstanding season, remaining undefeated across all league and county cup fixtures so far. With high participation and most teams still competing in the National Cup, team spirit and excitement are at an all-time high!

Boys' Football: The Year Eleven football team have had a successful league campaign in their last year of school. They opened their league fixtures with a 2-2 draw away to Samuel Whitbread but were disappointed to not take the win. Their second game was a hard fought 2-1 win over Castle Newnham with the winning goal being scored by Fazil 5 minutes from time. Their third game was at home to St Thomas Moore and a 6-3 win at home after being 3-0 up in 10 minutes and the strongest performance off the year with a highlight being Arun's first goal for the school team. Their final game was a 4-3 win at home to Sharnbrook, coming from behind on two occasions and a man of the match performance from Sam.

Netball: The Year Tens have shown incredible skill and determination, finishing 4th in the entire county and progressing to the cup competition after a successful group stage. Meanwhile, our Year Nine teams, both A and B, remain unbeaten in their league, showcasing outstanding teamwork and resilience. Well done to all the players for their hard work and dedication! Keep up the great work!

Year Seven Festivals: Our new Year Seven pupils have been diving into sports festivals, where they've had the chance to try a variety of sports and build new skills. These festivals offer a fantastic opportunity for them to experience the excitement of competing with other local schools and making new friends along the way!

Girls' Basketball: Our Year Eight and Year Nine girls' basketball teams have been outstanding this season, both securing spots in the county finals! Their hard work and determination have been truly inspiring, good luck in the finals, girls!

KS3 Boys' Basketball: Mr Hall would like to extend a massive thank you to the Year Seven and the Eight and Nine boys' basketball teams for their outstanding efforts this season. They played some excellent basketball, showing fantastic team spirit and demonstrating great sportsmanship throughout every game. It has been a pleasure to watch them grow and compete with such determination and unity. We are already looking forward to next year's fixtures and seeing what you can achieve!

Sports Hall Athletics: We are thrilled to announce that all seven of our Sports Hall Athletics teams have made it through to the county finals! Special congratulations go to the Year Eight girls' and Year Eight boys', as well as the Year Nine and Ten boys' A team, who all came out on top in their respective events. Their impressive performances and team spirit have set a high standard, and we wish them the best of luck in the upcoming finals!

Congratulations to the Year Elevens who have now qualified for a district semi final around Easter time. Their next fixture is round 2 of the county cup to be played in January.



Physical Education

Boys' table tennis: Our Year Nine and Ten table tennis team showed great skill and determination, finishing 3rd at the District competition. Congratulations to the team for their fantastic performance and strong teamwork throughout the tournament!

Sports Awards: The highly anticipated Sports Awards will take place on Monday, 9 December, celebrating the incredible achievements of our students and teams throughout the year. We are proud to announce that Goldington Academy has been nominated for 'Secondary Sports School of the Year', thanks to our commitment to extra-curricular activities and the development of our pupils within lessons. With many strong nominees in the running, the competition will be tough, but we are excited to see our hard work recognised!

Boys' Rugby: The Year Ten and Eleven boys' rugby team has showcased exceptional talent and teamwork this season, going undefeated in all their matches! Their dominance was further highlighted when they triumphed at the local Bedford Schools Tournament, securing a well-deserved championship title. With a blend of skill, determination, and strategic play, the team has demonstrated their commitment to excellence and sportsmanship on and off the pitch. Well done to all pupils involved and a big thanks to Mr Lattimer for coaching his team to success!

SEND Festival: Fourteen pupils took part in the SEND Sports Festival at the Bunyan Centre, enjoying a fantastic day of inclusive and engaging activities. The event featured a variety of sports, including sitting volleyball and curling, providing a fun and supportive environment for all participants. It was a great opportunity for students to showcase their skills and enjoy the spirit of teamwork.

Girls' Rugby: The girls' rugby team have had a fantastic start to their season. The Year Seven and Eight team went unbeaten at the District tournament, winning all but one game, which they drew 1-1 and the Year Eight and Nine team also had a great start to their season, winning five games and finishing in second place! Well done to all pupils involved and for Mrs Ferguson for her time and effort she has put into the team!

Badminton: The Year Nine girls' badminton team delivered an exceptional performance, earning their place in the county finals. Their hard work, dedication, and teamwork have been truly commendable throughout the competition.

KS4 Basketball: The KS4 basketball team had a successful season, winning two out of their three games. They are looking forward to building on this success in the future.

Running Club: A number of students from varying year groups have come along to running club this term. For some, next term leads into the cross country racing season. We wish them all the best for those races.

Finally, the P.E Department would like to thank the site team for always making sure our pitches look fantastic and ready to play on! Thank you also to Mr Stevenson for his dedication to refing our football matches!



Drama



Photo used with permission

Macbeth

On Wednesday, 2 October we watched Flaggergast Theatre Company's production of 'Macbeth' at The Quarry Theatre. It was a highly creative production that really inspired our students.



Photo used with permission

A Curious Incident About the Dog

On Tuesday, 12 November our GCSE students watched 'A Curious Incident about the Dog in the Night Time' at The Place Theatre. The production was performed by A Level students from Bedford Modern School, and it was a fantastic evening.



Les Misérables

On Wednesday, 27 November, we went to the Quarry Theatre to see a production of Les Misérables performed by Bedford Boys and Bedford Girls students. The production was a musical and excellently performed - the male lead had an incredible singing voice. Overall, it had brilliant staging, design and delivery and was a very well-performed musical.



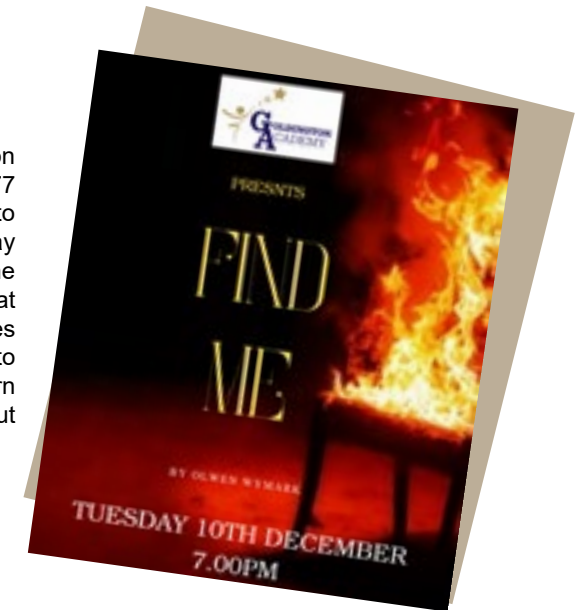
Year Seven & Eight Drama Club

This year Scarlett and Bea have been doing a fantastic job running our Year Seven and Eight Drama Club. Here is what one of our Year Seven students had to say; *"I really enjoy coming to drama club, as it is really fun. Bea and Scarlett always play some really fun games and we can also put together short roleplays to perform to each other. I am really looking forward to the summer term, as we will be putting on a play!"*



Find Me

Our Year Nine and Ten students have been working on their production of Olwen Wymark's 'Find Me' this term. The play was written in 1977 and tells the real story of Verity Taylor and her family's struggle to get help and support for her behaviour and mental health. The play studies the effects that her condition has on her family, questions the treatment she receives by the healthcare system and highlights that there was not sufficient support for children with mental health issues 50 years ago. Whilst Wymark's play is set in the 1970s it brings to light the stigma and lack of support that families still face in modern day society. This was a challenging script for the students to tackle, but they have done so maturely. They have all worked incredibly hard.



Student Voice

This term some of our Student Voice representatives and JLT collaborated with the school's Mental Health Support Team, Vanessa and Janine on the development of the services' new logo. Being part of this exciting project has

been a fantastic opportunity for our students and I feel very proud of all of them, they were amazing. We look forward to future collaborations.



History

History club - It's been an exciting first term for history club. We have been doing lots of fun activities, such as playing First World War board games, Greek god Top Trumps, and watching Horrible Histories. We also celebrated Black History Month by watching David Olusoga's BBC series 'Black and British' which explores the history of Black people in Britain. Next term, we will be working together with the art department to create some fun historical projects through art! Pay close attention to the bulletin next term to find out more...

Black History Month - Goldington Academy really enjoyed celebrating Black History Month 2024. There were many different activities going on, including a schoolwide competition researching prominent Black individuals linked to this year's theme of 'Reclaiming Narratives', departmental competitions and lessons, an assembly delivered to Year 9 by a representative from the University of Bedfordshire, a reading list promoting books by Black authors and more! Competition winners will be announced in the last week of term, so if you sent in a submission, keep an eye out for the announcement in the bulletin. We are already looking forward to celebrating again in 2025.