

**WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING THIS TERM?**



**Battle of the Bands Winners**



**GCSE Drama performances**



**Scholars Programme**



**Fabulous art work**



**Restless Earth**



**Sporting success**



Principal's Introduction



Dear Parents/Carers

Last week saw our incredible production of "Sister Act" at The Place theatre. It really was a fabulous four nights. Thank you to Mrs Millington, and the large team involved, for this wonderful experience for our students.

That is not the only activity we have taken part in this term though! The newsletter ahead will transport you to Antarctica, celebrate a huge amount of sporting success and inform you of our recent author visit. There really is something for everyone in this term's edition. U:Dance, Eco-

*Ax Gullote*

club, cross country, netball, Scholars programme, science week, Restless Earth and rock music are just some of the activities that await you in this term's edition. So settle down in your chair, and catch up on what our students have been up to, in a very busy term!

Oh, and one final thought: why not have a go at the Bedford Creative Trail designed by our incredible Creative Arts Ambassadors on page 7? You even get a badge if you successfully complete it!

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

Have a wonderful Easter break and we look forward to seeing your child back on **Tuesday, 16 April 2024**.



See more photographs from the show on page 24



Key Stage Three Debate Society

This term, the key stage three Debate Society continued to present students with an exciting variety of opportunities.

Firstly, a team of 15 students from across Years Seven, Eight and Nine had a fantastic day participating in a Mock Trial Competition on Saturday, 16 March. The event was run by Young Citizens, a citizenship education charity and featured 9 different schools from across the county.

The team worked tirelessly to plan a criminal case which they presented at Milton Keynes Magistrates court, with pupils taking on a variety of legal roles, including lawyers, witnesses, legal advisors, ushers and magistrates. We learnt lots about the legal process and additionally went on a visit to Bedford Court in order to give us a better understanding of the inner



working of court life as part of our preparation.

All involved had a brilliant day out and performed their parts excellently and professionally. A special mention to one of our Year Seven students, who won best Court Usher of the day.

As well as this, Debate Society also participated in an inter-school debate with Bedford Girls School in the first half of the spring term. Two smaller teams of 5-6 students prepared arguments on a given topic, aiming to be the most convincing. Goldington Academy were declared victorious in both rounds!



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.



Drama Department

On Friday, 8 March our Year Eleven GCSE Drama students completed their Component 3 Scripted Exam. This involved performing two extracts from a play to a visiting examiner. The students performed a range of challenging and interesting extracts, from traditional plays like 'Frankenstein' and 'Macbeth' to more edgy pieces such as 'Monster' and 'Girls Like That'. The standard of performance was very high, and the students should feel incredibly proud of their achievements.



Battle of the Bands



The Bedfordshire Bands Factory is a Key Stage 3 Battle of the Bands competition, which is held annually, at The Connolly Hall, Redborne Upper School.

This year, one of our hugely talented Year Nine bands, SWLL, were chosen to represent Goldington in the event. The four-piece rehearsed almost every single day in the weeks leading up to the event and we were all very hopeful that this meticulous preparation would pay off.

On the night, unfazed by the other ten schools taking part, SWLL took to the stage to finish the first half with a bang, debuting an original song, which segued perfectly into Paranoid, by Black Sabbath.

After an enjoyable second half, we waited for the judges to return their verdict. We were all delighted when SWLL were announced as the winners! The winning prize was £400 worth of music equipment for the Goldington music department which will be used by the many bands we currently have in our school community. Thank you and congratulations to a brilliant young band!



U:Dance Success

We are delighted to announce that our dancers who took part in this year's UDance competition have been shortlisted by the panel members for the U:Dance National Festival 2024. The standard was incredibly high, and we were the best performance of the night. This is a huge achievement

as we were up against lots of competition. The students choreographed the dance with Ms Pickett which focused on the fear the dark and the streets at night. Students were creative with their use of costume and torches. Well done to all those who took part.



A Rising Star

One of our Year Eleven students has been given multiple opportunities to share her amazing vocal talent. She recently performed at Bedford Corn Exchange as part of a big charitable annual event and has performed at various concerts all across Poland and other countries, raising money for hospitals in Poland. She was a support/warm up act for a very well known Polish star and his band who even flew her over for the concert!

She coped amazingly with the big stages and audiences. Well done.



Photography by Ela Walenda



Art

**Key stage three artwork** - Students have been working hard this term developing key skills and experimenting in a variety of materials. Take a look at some of their creations!



Trip to the Higgins

A group of Key Stage three pupils visited the 'Bawden & Me' exhibition at The Higgins. They were in awe of all the wonderful prints and artwork on display. Students enjoyed hearing about the work and the ideas behind

each creation, as well as sketching their favourite pieces. They also enjoyed seeing the 'Circus of Illustration' work upstairs, showing a range of work from local artists who have previously held workshops or exhibited at our school.



Bedford Creative Trail

Our wonderful Creative Arts ambassadors have been working on a huge project this year - the Bedford Creative Trail. They met to discuss their favourite creative venues in Bedford that they could then create a trail, in the form of a map, to allow others to discover the venues. Students worked with local illustrator, Katie Allen, to design the map. All the drawings and text are their own creations. Every child will receive a map as well as thousands being distributed to feeder schools and the local community. We encourage everyone to take part to discover all, or just one venue! You can even collect a badge at The Higgins for taking part!



**BEDFORD CREATIVE TRAIL**

Bedford Creative Trail is a project by Goldington Academy Arts Ambassadors, to showcase the plethora of visual arts, music and theatre in our town. The students invite you to choose venues on the trail to explore, all within walking distance of Bedford High Street, and is perfect for families. You can even pick up a badge at The Higgins Bedford for taking part! #BedfordCreativeTrail

Illustrations, words and art direction by  
 Bee, Chloe, Danica, Eric, Frank, Kitty, Lani, Soraya, Sofia, Tiana  
 With thanks to Mrs Lopez, Design and workshop support from illustrator, Katie Allen. This project was funded by the Town Centre Priority Fund.

- 1 THE MUSIC CENTRE**  
35-37 TAVISTOCK STREET MK40 2RB  
A plethora of picks, pianos and musical pleasure in this retail shop.
- 2 THE QUARRY THEATRE**  
26 St Peter's Street MK40 2HN  
Great entertainment, captivating comedy, pristine plays and marvellous music.
- 3 THE PLACE THEATRE**  
BRADGATE ROAD MK40 3DE  
Storytelling, comedy and gripping performances. A family friendly local theatre for all ages.
- 4 POP STUDIO4**  
4 MARKET HALL THE ARCADE MK40 1NS  
Open studios, creative flow and art in action. See artists in their studio space creating new wonders.
- 5 COFFEE WITH ART**  
82 HIGH STREET MK40 1BN  
Comfy couches, brilliant brews and authentic art.
- 6 FRESCOES**  
20 MILL STREET MK40 3HD  
A cosy, independent cafe nestled in a quiet nook of Bedford.
- 7 THE ARC**  
7 HOWARD STREET MK40 3HS  
This quirky store will help you with anything and everything, from breadbins to picture frames, as well as a space for artwork and a brew!
- 8 BEDFORD CORN EXCHANGE**  
ST PAUL'S SQUARE MK40 1SL  
Music, performance, a lively evening out in a beautiful space.
- 9 BUNYAN MUSEUM & BASEMENT AT BUNYAN**  
MILL STREET MK40 3EL  
Discover a wonder of artefacts and artwork in an impressive underground gallery.
- 10 THE HIGGINS BEDFORD**  
CASTLE LANE MK40 3XD  
Incredible art, history and discoveries of our local culture. A huge range on offer to be explored.
- 11 PANACEA MUSEUM**  
11 NEWNHAM ROAD MK40 3NX  
Local history and beautiful gardens, all found in this wonderfully quaint building.



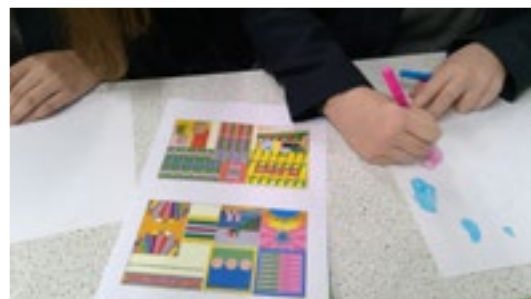
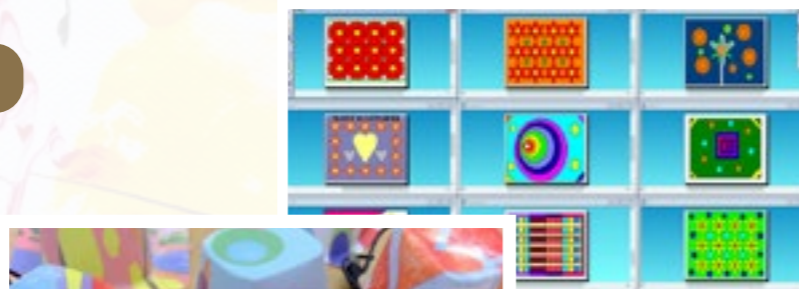
Faces Exhibition

A plethora of portraiture artwork to admire! As part of National Careers Week, we welcomed six incredibly talented local artists to exhibit work in our Exhibition Space. Students really enjoyed talking to the artists about their work, the ideas and processes they take. Big thanks to Mo Rahman, Mique Moriuchi, Samantha Thompson, Marta Plizga, Yvette Rose Bramwell and Giacomo Verdura for taking part in this year's exhibition!



Design & Technology

Marvellous mood lights! Yinka Ilori was Year Seven's inspiration for these funky mood lights. Lots of skills were learnt and developed to complete these such as work of others, computer-aided design, vacuum forming and soldering circuits! Well done, Year Seven.



Design & Technology

Year Eights moved onto themed chocolate designs using a combination of computer-aided design to create MDF moulds ready for vacuum forming and simple packaging gift boxes. Check out this one!

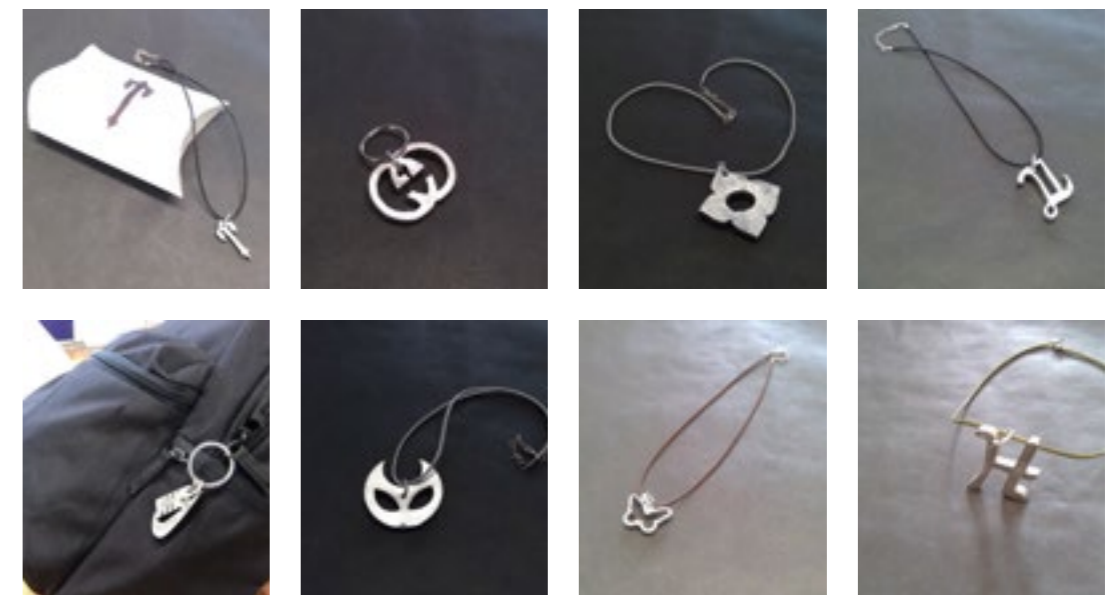


Four Year Nine pupils entered an inspiring competition set by Design Ventura in connection with the Design Museum, London. The girls were given the brief of creating and developing a product which could be sold in the Design Museum's gift shop. Within the brief the themes of community and colour were absolutely key. Lots of research, creative processing and an abundance of team work and compromise saw the commencement of Imagic. Words from our pupils:

*"In today's complex and multicultural world, putting a heavy emphasis on diversity is vital. Teaching young children to appreciate and tolerate different ethnicities fosters a sense of community and positivity. Our story card game consists of prompt, scenery, character and challenge cards with the united aim of creating a unique and original narrative. Kids use this open structure to manifest individual stories in a group. This innovative game aims to promote English grammar and vocabulary, whilst being fun, engaging and enjoyable. Our product - Imagic - is a unique and authentic creation which develops children's innovation and teamwork."* Great work from Aleeza, Delia, Vanshi and Zara.



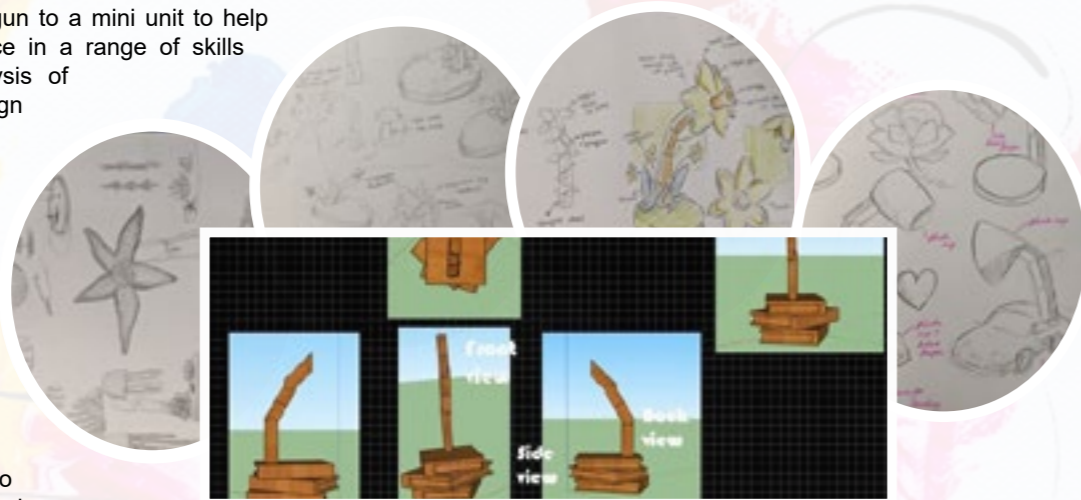
Year Nines' new crop of perfectly polished pewter pendants from our latest rotation! Pupils have worked really hard exploring themes to run alongside their pewter developments. Enjoy some of the lovely outcomes! Well done, Year Nine.





Design & Technology

Year Tens have begun to a mini unit to help build their confidence in a range of skills such as task analysis of mini briefs, design development and utilising computer-aided design all in order to prepare for the upcoming non-examined assessments. (June 2024). So far, pupils have really shown great creativity and taking risks. We can't wait to see the outcomes coming later this year!



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.

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](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- **In an immediate emergency always dial 999**
- **Bedford Borough Early Help** call - 01234 718700 - [EarlyHelpHub@Bedford.gov.uk](mailto:EarlyHelpHub@Bedford.gov.uk)

This term's high achievers

Year	Winner	Runner Up
Seven	Ethan M	Isaac H
Eight	Lily N	Ella R
Nine	Vanshi M	John L
Ten	Liam W	Brandon E
Eleven	Kaylee E	Joseph C



Eco Club

Members of Eco-club delivered a brilliant and engaging assembly to Year Seven students highlighting the work that they have been doing this year.

The committee have been continuing to work hard on completing the key components for the Eco-Schools award application which we still aim to submit by the end of April. Ambassadors have organised their 3 projects on biodiversity, citizenship and litter around the school.

1. Biodiversity - with the support of Gardening Club

What have we done?

- 25 tree sapling being planted
- 3 bug hotels
- 12 bat boxes
- Compost bin
- Bird feeder have been installed

(Students have also bought a bench in the garden area that is made of 3501 plastic bottles)

What are we hoping to do?

- Install a water feature/water system in the garden
- Plant more herbs in the garden area
- Recycle water to help with the watering system

2. Citizenship:

To support with our Eco-Schools award application, students organised a clothes drive where unwanted clothes will be weighed and the money raised be sent to Greenpeace.

3. Litter:

Our final project encourages students to support with litter in and around our classrooms. New signs have been created to help identify the correct bins for different items.

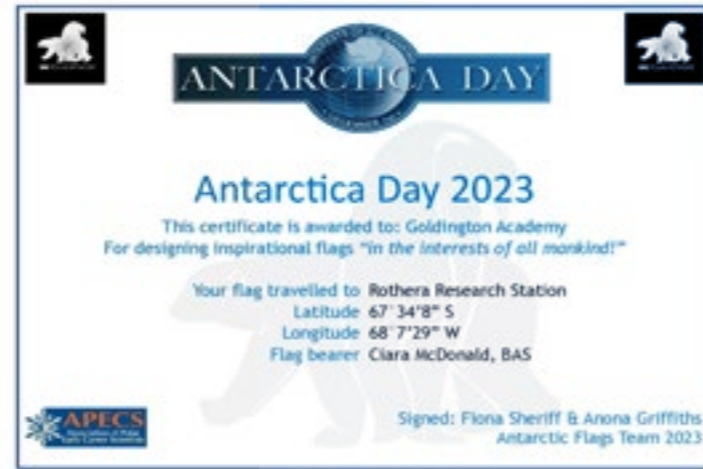


Geography clubbers are continuing to work on their project in conjunction with Mindful Art Club. They are busy making bees! More information to be revealed in the summer newsletter. Geography Film Club remains popular with some Year Eight and Nine students who enjoy watching environmental documentaries. #geogrocks



Antarctica

Some exciting news from our Year Eight geographers. The flag they sent to Antarctica back in November has finally arrived. Check out the pictures to see how awesome their flag looks! Their flag travelled to Antarctica with Ciara McDonald, an electronics engineer with the British Antarctic Survey and Aurelia Reichardt. They are based at Rothera which is the largest UK base on Antarctica. The purpose of sending this flag to Antarctica was to raise awareness of the fragility and importance of this continent. Year 8 will start their studies of the frozen planet after the break, which include a place study on Antarctica. Well done, Year 8!



Geography

All Year Nine Geographers took part in a Restless Earth Workshop before February half term. Here they had to use decision making skills and leadership skills all while using their geographical understanding relating to hazards. The workshop allowed year 9 students to discuss the Japanese earthquake and tsunami from 2011 and how it impacted

Japan. During the workshop, students adopted roles relating to aid response workers in 2011. Students had to plan and map out who and how aid was going to get into the affected areas of Japan. At the end of the workshop, students had to present their disaster planning map and justify what they had decided. It was great to see students lead groups, problem solve and work well together to come to a solution.





PE Department Success

We are thrilled to share the latest accomplishments of our talented young athletes who recently participated in various county finals, showcasing their dedication, teamwork and sportsmanship. The energy and commitment demonstrated by our students in the Sports Hall Athletics, Netball, Futsal, Cricket, Tennis and Basketball events are truly commendable.

**Sports Hall Athletics - Year Eight boys claim bronze medal.** Our Year Eight boys in Sports Hall Athletics exhibited outstanding athleticism, securing a well-deserved bronze medal in the county finals. Their hard work and perseverance have not only showcased their individual skills but also the cohesive spirit of the team.

**Netball Triumphs Across Different Categories** Our Netball teams have had an exceptional run, demonstrating prowess in various age categories:

Year Eight: Securing the 3<sup>rd</sup> position in the county cup, the Year Eight netball team showcased their skills and teamwork, earning them a well-deserved spot on the podium.

Year Seven: Achieving an impressive 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the county plate, our Year Seven netball team showcased their determination and sportsmanship.

Years Nine, Ten & Eleven: The netball teams in this category shone in the county league finals, proving their excellence in the game.

Year Seven & Eight: Maintaining an unbeaten record in fixtures, the combined Year Seven and Year Eight netball team showcased their dominance on the court.



**Futsal and Cricket Teams excel in County Finals.** Our Year Seven & Eight girls' Futsal team has notched up another achievement, reaching the county finals. Their hard work, skill, and teamwork have propelled them to this prestigious stage, where they will have the opportunity to showcase their talent.

Similarly, the Year Nine and Ten cricket team has made it to the county finals, demonstrating their cricketing prowess. We wish both teams the best of luck as they compete at this high level.

**U13 girls' basketball team: A strong 4<sup>th</sup> place finish.** Our U13 girls' basketball team demonstrated exceptional skill and determination, reaching the county finals and securing an impressive 4<sup>th</sup> place. Their journey to this stage is a testament to their hard work and dedication to the sport.

**Leadership beyond the field: Sports Leaders shine.** In addition to our on-field successes, our sports leaders have been integral to the success of our sports program. Under the guidance of Ms Rolfe, these leaders have played a crucial role in running primary school festivals, showcasing leadership skills that extend beyond the sports arena.

We applaud all our athletes, coaches, and sports leaders for their hard work, dedication and commitment to excellence. The accomplishments of our students in these county finals not only reflect their individual achievements but also the strong sense of community and teamwork that defines our school.



Continued PE Department Success

On Tuesday, 30 January, fifteen brave cross country competitors represented the school at the North Bedfordshire District Championships at Sharnbrook Upper School on a very challenging course! This event was a trial to progress to the North Bedfordshire district team. Those who finished in the top 16 places qualified for the district event the following week. For many of our team, this was their first experience at a cross country event. Our results were fantastic: one student from Year Seven came third in their race qualified for the next round, along with two more experienced runners from Year 8 who also went on to represent the North Bedfordshire team at Amphill Park on Wednesday, 7 February.

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

Congratulations to our Year Ten runners who both made it through as reserves to represent Bedfordshire at the English Schools Championships which took place on Saturday, 16 March. Well done to all our students who competed in either race. They were a credit to the school with the way they conducted themselves on, and off, the course.



Congratulations to one of our Year Eight students for being part of the winning **U18 Bedfordshire Girls' Tennis Team** at the annual County Cup event in Tipton, Staffordshire last weekend.

Making her singles debut for the U18 Bedfordshire Girls' Team, she won her 3 singles matches as the number 5 player within the Beds' team to ensure the team won their division and earned promotion to Division 5 for next year. She showed great determination against her opponents from Cumbria, Channel Islands and Oxfordshire including a 3-hour, 3-set battle against one of her opponents!



Congratulations to one our Year Eleven students for representing the **U18 Bedfordshire Boys' Team** at County Cup during the same weekend and helping his team secure 2nd place in their division.

Playing as the number 2 player within the Beds' team, he won his singles in a tight 3-set battle against North Wales and performed well across all his matches. He showed great resilience particularly after his recent injuries.

The Boys' team narrowly lost out on promotion on the final day losing 5-4 to eventual winners Nottinghamshire.

Both of these students train at Riverside Tennis Club in Bedford.



## Scholars Programme Graduation Event

In February, twelve Year Nine students visited Keble College, University of Oxford in order to formally graduate from the Scholars Programme. The scheme had involved a series of university-style seminars delivered by an expert PhD student and required students to complete an extended essay related to the provenance and reliability of various manuscripts of Romeo and Juliet. The students' essays were assessed against an undergraduate grading system with rigorous criteria. Two of our students achieved exceptionally high marks. Below are two extracts from one of the final essays:

*"The origins of Romeo and Juliet have been under speculation for some time. There are three pivotal variations of the play - Quarto One, Quarto Two and the First Folio. It is an ongoing debate with some of the most experienced and skilled scholars who study Shakespeare and his work, and they cannot agree – is there a definitive or correct version of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet? Or, which of the three versions of Romeo and Juliet is most reliable?....."*

*".....One widely believed idea is that Danter paid people to go to the theatre and attempt to write down what the actors were saying word for word. While it could be possible that the scribes were quick writers, this is unreliable in view of the fact that it would be incredibly difficult to write down exactly what they heard and saw happening on stage - during this time, there were no rules or standards of etiquette and behaviour during the plays and audience members were forced to stand when watching the performances in theatres, where it could get incredibly busy. Therefore, Danter's scribes would have struggled to write down exactly what the actors were saying in amongst the hustle and bustle of the theatre."*

The Oxford visit allowed our scholars to question current undergraduates about their route to university, the setbacks they have had and about life more generally when studying for a degree. It also included a tour of the college, which had its own beautiful chapel, magnificent library and a vast 'Hogwarts' dining hall adorned with portraits of noteworthy alumni. The Scholars Programme has certainly inspired many of these Year Nines to be highly ambitious about their future studies and they should all be very proud of completing such a demanding course.



## GP Visit



As part of Careers Week, many of our highest attaining Key Stage 4 students attended a seminar with local GP, Dr Khandelwal. He talked passionately about his lengthy career in the National Health Service, his experiences delivering aid overseas and the physical and emotional impact of being on the front-line through the Covid pandemic. Students learned that the medical field has a variety of jobs far more extensive than those (such as doctor or nurse) which may immediately spring to

mind; high achieving students are in great demand for roles ranging from designing medical scanners, to developing diagnostic computer software, to conducting trials of new pharmaceuticals.

Dr Khandelwal finished the session with a Q&A discussion, in which students requested advice about how to make themselves stand out in university/job applications, which A-Levels are most desirable for a career in medicine, and what are useful tips for success whilst studying for a degree.

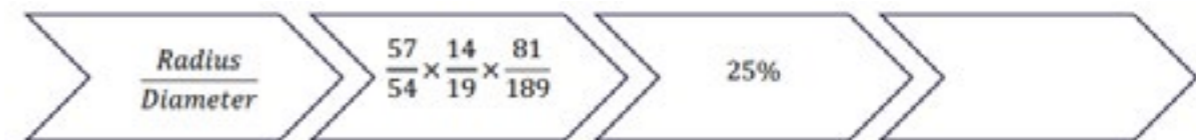
## Pi Day Competition

To celebrate International Pi Day, Goldington students took part in a Maths challenge, frantically trying to locate and correctly sequence 35 digits of Pi, which were pinned to staff members around the school site. Congratulations to winners Harry (Year Nine) and Riley (Year Seven).

## Maths Feast

In March, some of our strongest Year 10 mathematicians took part in the 'Maths Feast' at Shenley Brook End School in Milton Keynes. The Maths Feast is a competition in which teams of four students from different schools across the local area compete against each other, solving challenging maths problems and showing

great teamwork in the process. They competed in four different rounds all requiring different skills, including one where they had to create a complicated 3D shape out of paper, and another with questions in the style of popular TV gameshows, like this based on Only Connect:



All the students worked really well together as a team, and they even came second in the cross number round against over 15 other schools! It was a great afternoon and the

students really enjoyed working through problems which were often quite different to those they see in the classroom.



UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge

On Wednesday, 31 January some of our most talented mathematicians in Year Nine, Ten and Eleven completed the Intermediate Maths Challenge. This is a national competition for pupils in Year Nine to Year Eleven with the top 40% of entries across the country gaining certificates.

We had another excellent set of results this year.

In Year Nine, 3 pupils achieved Gold awards, 2 Silver and 9 Bronze.

In Year Ten, 2 pupils achieved Gold awards, 7 Silver and 17 Bronze.

In Year Eleven, 3 pupils achieved Gold awards, 13 Silver and 18 Bronze.

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

Special mentions must go to the 5 pupils who performed very highly and qualified for a follow on competition, these were Rayyan Ansari (Year Eleven), Ollie Fowlds (Year Eleven), Vanshi Mehta (Year Nine), Tilly Henson (Year Nine) and Frank Marston (Year Nine). We look forward to seeing how they get on.

We also had our first pupil from Goldington to ever be invited to attend the National Mathematics Summer School with the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust. Rayyan Ansari scored so well on his paper that he received this very exciting opportunity.

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

Here is a sample question to try.

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

- A 12
- B 13
- C 14
- D 15
- E 16

We look forward to some of our Year 7 and 8s taking part in the Junior competition later in the year.

Science

This term, the Year Ten biologists have been studying plants and their structures. Part of this topic included investigating plant tropisms, in particular phototropism. The students made their own designed boxes and planted beans, peas and cress to see how light affected plant growth. Some

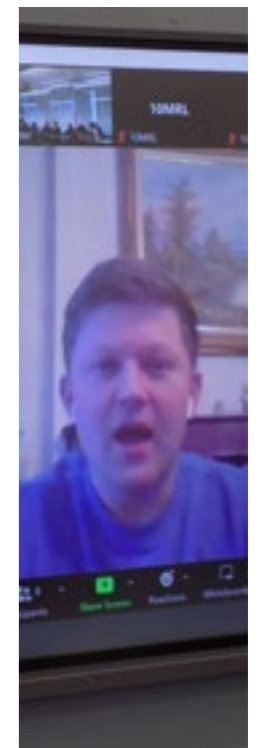
students took their designs home over the half term and had some very successful results. The plants that were left in school were planted out in the school garden by Mrs Spavins and the Gardening Club, with a view to using them in hospitality and catering when fully ripened.



Science Week

The Science department have been busy celebrating Science week with the following activities:

- Creating a time capsule with our year Seven students that we will look at again when they are in Year Eleven
- Accurately measuring time with key stage 3 students - they had to build a marble run that lasted as close to 10 seconds as possible
- A lunchtime session full of pops and bangs run by Mr. Lattimer
- A virtual talk from Great British Bake Off finalist, Dr Josh Smalley, with year 10 talking about his career to date, which includes Chemistry, baking and gardening!
- The science team also ran a competition where they held a clue and a date that linked to a scientific discovery and students had to work them all out! The answers are below:



Science Staff member	Clue	Year	Science event/discovery
Mrs Gilbert	Avogadro's constant 6.022 x 10 <sup>23</sup>	1811	Avogadro's law The year that Amedeo Avogadro declared that the number of particles of any gas in a fixed volume and at the same temperature is always identical (we now know it is 6.022 x 10 <sup>23</sup> ).
Miss McKenna	DNA	1950 1953	Rosalind Franklin X-rays of the crystal structure of DNA molecule Crick and Watson developed the chemical double helix structure for DNA.
Mr Lattimer	Periodic table	1869	Mendeleev discovered the periodic table (periodic system).
Mrs Rai	Mr (and Mrs) Potato Head	1995	The first full length CGI movie (Toy Story).
Mr Kite	Sheep	1996	First mammal to be cloned from an adult sheep cell (died in 2003) Dolly the sheep!
Mrs Ferguson	Watches	1510	The first watch (Peter Henlein, a German watchmaker).
Mrs Percival	X-ray	1895	X-rays were discovered (by Wilhelm Conrad Rontgen).
Mrs Spavins	Hearts	1967	First successful human heart transplant in the world (1979 first in UK).
Mrs Atkinson	Mae Jemison quote	1992	First African-American woman in space.
Mrs Macintyre	W (symbol for Tungsten)	1781	Tungsten was first identified as an element in 1781 (first isolated as a metal in 1783).



Careers

**National Apprenticeship Week**

From February 5 to 11, our school enthusiastically participated in National Apprenticeship Week, joining in the nationwide celebration of vocational education and career pathways. Throughout the week, we organised various activities to promote awareness and understanding of apprenticeships among our students. One of the highlights of our National Apprenticeship



Week celebration was the engaging assemblies led by representatives from Bedford College. These sessions provided valuable insights into the benefits and opportunities offered by apprenticeship programs.

To learn more about National Apprenticeship Week and the multitude of opportunities available through apprenticeship programs, we encourage you to visit the official website at: <https://nationalapprenticeshipweek.uk/>

**National Careers Week**

From March 4 to 9, our school participated in National Careers Week, a nationwide initiative aimed at inspiring and empowering young individuals to explore diverse career opportunities.

We hosted assemblies with professionals, conducted form time activities, organised a treasure hunt and quiz

and facilitated online webinars with Bedford School.

Throughout the week, our curriculum incorporated career-focused activities and lessons across subjects such as Maths, English, and Science. By integrating career-related content into academic lessons, we aimed to highlight the real-world relevance of education and inspire students to pursue their passions with purpose.

Library

This term, in the library, we celebrated World Book Day by welcoming author Sue Wallman to the school. Sue spoke about her books and her career as an author to Year Nine. It was fascinating to hear how Sue writes her books, how long it took her to secure a publishing deal, and how her books are marketed. Sue spent the remainder of the day running workshops of creative writing for Year Seven, Year Eight and Year Nine. In the workshops the children all worked together to create a character in a thriller novel and to start writing their own thriller books.



To further celebrate World Book Day, a Book Swap was held in the library. Pupils were invited to bring in books that they no longer wanted from home and swap them for a different book to read. We also held a Scavenger Hunt to test pupils' knowledge of book characters.



Teaching & Learning - Did you know?

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

[www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/information/diary-dates](http://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/information/diary-dates)

**Homework**

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

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

**Homework expectations per key stage:**

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

**As a guide:**

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

**Show My Homework/Satchel One**

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

Show My Homework/Satchel One can be accessed through the Useful links page on our website – [www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/information/useful-links](http://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/information/useful-links)

Every parent can have their own login to their child's Show My Homework account to be able to support their child. This can be set up by emailing Mr Gordon – [gordonc@goldington.beds.sch.uk](mailto:gordonc@goldington.beds.sch.uk)



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

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

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.



## Improving Independent Reading

In addition to promoting reading through world book day, Goldington take the view that every day is a book day. We constantly try to promote the importance of reading to our pupils. For example, the English department set weekly reading homework across all year groups in KS3. Studies in recent years have shown that students who regularly read widely, and independently, perform better academically. As a result, we wanted to ensure pupils were being exposed to a diverse range of texts from early on in their secondary school journey. Our focus has been on exploring a variety of non-fiction texts as we found students are far less likely to engage with this style of writing at home, despite it being a crucial part of the English Language GCSE as well as reading they might find in their other subjects.



Each week, all pupils in Year Seven, Eight and Nine have been set a non-fiction text to read which contains rich vocabulary and high levels of challenge. Texts were chosen which link to themes and ideas in the scheme of work being taught so that students could make a connection to lesson content and hopefully gain a broader perspective on issues discussed. For example, Year Nine students studying the romantic Shakespeare drama "Much Ado About Nothing" were set an article about marriage in modern day society.

However, this link does not form the main outcome of the reading homework. Regular wide reading of texts is intended to support reading automaticity, promote reading resilience, expand world knowledge and stimulate reactions to texts. In addition, students were given a short list of independent tasks to complete relating to each article, such as researching unknown words, noting down what "google search" the reading might prompt them to do, and identify the purpose of the text. The aim of these tasks was to promote active reading by students choosing the words and the ideas they wanted to discover more about and help students in understanding writer's intentions. Students might also now find homework set from their other subjects that asks them to read a key text. This will hopefully result in positive long terms outcomes in literacy levels and academic performance.

Pupils also join in reading a class novel in form times on Mondays and Tuesdays, enjoying a wide range of fiction. Library time in English lessons also allow students time to choose a book from our very well-stocked library.



## 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](mailto: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 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. Invitations for next terms' meetings will be sent out soon.

### 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](mailto: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."



