

# INSIDE ST GABRIEL'S

St Gabriel's  
NEWBURY

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The end of the Spring Term is always a significant time in the academic year, a pause before the final push through to the promise of the Summer Term. It seems to be that there is a surreal quality about the world that we live in at present. Going back over the last six years, we have had the Brexit decision, a global pandemic, and now a war in Ukraine that is having far reaching implications for all. So, it is with a sense of relief that this newsletter gives you an opportunity to reflect on the now for St Gabriel's.

We celebrate all that has been achieved this term - a fabulous Senior Dance Showcase, winning displays in sports, wonderful musical performances and impressive academic progress. Of course, we are also looking forward to and are excited by the countdown to the introduction of boys to Year 7 this September.

I hope that you enjoy this chronicle of the some of the term's events and achievements. I wish you all a relaxing and well-deserved break.

## School Dance Showcase 2022

Performing is back!

Energy levels were high and feet were sparkling as 165 children took to the stage in this year's fantastic Junior and Senior Dance Showcases.

Dancers in Years 3-10 wowed their audiences in our Sports Hall with a magical programme of dance from ballet, hip-hop and acro to lyrical and contemporary.

Seven months of intensive rehearsals certainly paid off - performances were confident and polished and the dancers clearly took real pride and pleasure in entertaining their audiences. Several budding young choreographers had an opportunity to create their own dances for the show and their pieces were inspirational.

It was wonderful to welcome parents back into school and their enjoyment and support was appreciated by all the performers on stage. The Junior and Senior School Dance Showcases were a huge success and we celebrate the hard work of all those involved.

- Mrs Hastings, Head of Dance



*"I loved the backstage part of the dance show and when we walked onto stage for the first time in ages!"*

- Amelie

*"My favourite thing about the dance show was when we did the finale to the funny music and we all laughed together and so did our families."*

- Isabelle

*"I liked every single part of the dance show and also listening to the music backstage."*

- Elodie

*"My favourite part of the dance show was the rehearsal because we got to see all the other children's dances and solos."*

- Phoebe





## Duke of Edinburgh's Award 2022

The Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award is a life-changing experience, a fun time with friends and the opportunity to discover new interests and talents. The award has many benefits to develop essential skills for life and work.

On Saturday 26 April, 17 outstanding St Gabriel's students started their Bronze DofE expedition setting off at 10.00 am on Saturday from The Rowbarge pub (Woolhampton) and made their way to Ashampsted Green at 15:00 on Sunday, walking in total 19 miles across the two days.

The British weather was on the girls' side with glorious sunshine. The students planned a route and successfully navigated the Berkshire countryside using a map and compass. After six hours of continuous walking, the students were ready to set up camp at the stunning Thirtover Girl Guides Camp. The students were treated with ice lollies and celebrated together after an epic adventure.

After putting up their tents in teams, the girls had an hour to rest and recharge their batteries. Students then cooked a vast range of meals over a stove. Ramen, noodles, curry, garlic bread and bolognese were just some of the culinary delights. Next up in the evening was the hotly contested general knowledge quiz, which went well with students and staff battling for the number one spot. The students then had the opportunity to wash up and settle down for the evening.

The students relaxed in front of their tents, cooking smores and drinking hot chocolate. All whilst looking out over the magical sights the countryside can offer, sighting birds of prey, deer and hares. It was indeed a special place to be watching the sunset. Whilst sitting outside their tents, the students debated what star constellations they could see, discussed light pollution issues over nearby towns, and were lucky to see many shooting stars. Sitting quietly, the students discussed their expedition and many adventures and funny stories of being a St Gabriel's student over the years. After an exhausting day, students went to bed early and rested before another day of walking.

The morning fog crept across the camp, and the frost had spread across the ground and tents.

Slowly, excited chatter spread across the campsite, as the students quickly awoke and got breakfast on the go. Eggs, bacon, croissants, toast, Weetabix and cups of tea were the smells wafting through the campsite giving the students some well needed slow-releasing energy for the day. Finally, students organised their bags, packed their tents and cleared away. The students then planned their route and headed off for their last day.

I could not be prouder of the students. They worked hard, gained essential skills, were resilient, problem solved and worked as a team. They are a credit to the school and themselves. The students had a fascinating adventure and a lasting memory. Ultimately it will allow the students to enhance their CV, university and job applications. The students finally arrived at Ashampstead Green, smiling and ready to take off their bags and boots! The students debriefed with staff and ended with a game of football. The energy, laughter and enthusiasm never fail to impress me with young people. So, a successful weekend. Roll on the Year 9 DofE camp and Year 10 practice expeditions in the Summer Term!

*- Mr James, DofE Co-Ordinator*



## Charitable Giving

This term has been one of our busiest yet for charity fundraising!

It has seen the return of tutor groups organising their own events and choosing who benefits from the money raised. Year 11 sold sweet treats and raised £147 for NHS Charities Together, whereas Year 8 held a cake sale and the resulting £158 was sent to Unicef and the Alzheimer's Society. Year 10's cinema evening contributed £70 to our Ukraine fund.

We held two home clothes days in return for donations via Just Giving pages, and these raised an incredible £1,084 for Comic Relief and £3,368 for the UN High Commission for Refugees who are working with refugees from the war in Ukraine. And finally, our recent collection for West Berks Foodbank garnered 293 kg of groceries, enough for 616 meals. This means that St Gabriel's is now the top school in West Berks for Foodbank donations.

Thank you on behalf of the charities above for all you have donated and well done to those year groups on the events they organised. We can look forward to some fantastic fun events next term, which are being planned by Years 7, 9 and 12.

- Mrs Rayner, Charity Co-Ordinator

## Science Week

Exciting explosions, chemical reactions and fantastic science displays kicked off Science Week for 2022. Our Year 10 class were treated to a display of experiments by the Science Department.

The pupils saw how custard powder ignites, in a demonstration of how energy is released. One particularly exciting experiment demonstrated the release of chemical energy in a combustion of alcohols - the bang was loud!

The experiment "screaming jelly babies" was definitely a favourite. Jelly babies are placed into molten potassium chlorate and the reaction shows the oxidation of the sugar in the jelly baby. Sometimes a high-pitched screaming noise can be heard during the reaction.

Thank you to the Science Department for arranging a great Science Week once again.



## Performing Arts

The Music and Drama Departments were also very busy this term.

We welcomed back our informal lunchtime music concerts this term. Families were invited to watch a selection of talented musicians.

All pupils taking part should be very proud of their efforts; performing in front of an audience is a great achievement, especially as for some this was the first time performing publicly.



As Mr Smith mentioned when addressing the audience, music was impacted significantly by the pandemic and online learning so it has been fantastic to hear music ringing through the corridors at school again.

Thank you to all the performers and to Miss Woodhouse and Dr Tebbs for arranging these special events. We look forward to some more next term.



The social media team were thrilled to witness a number of drama performances this term. Year 8 devised scenes based on "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland", performed to music. These performances were a delight to watch.

Mrs Chaplin was incredibly proud of Year 8 and invited each class to watch the other perform.



### Black Classicists: From Ostracism to Scholarship

This term, each year group was invited to attend Mr Ives' fantastic project. This exhibition, "Black Classicists: From Ostracism to Scholarship", celebrates the hitherto hidden contributions made by African Americans in the field of Classics in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

Many were either freed slaves or direct descendants of slaves. It is an important opportunity to see education as a force for good and for cultural and intellectual enrichment.

This exhibition has so far only been on display in the United States. Following the showcase at St Gabriel's, the exhibition will embark on a tour of the UK with visits to schools such as Clifton College, Downe House and Cheney School in Oxford, as well as being shown at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and Reading.

Each year group was invited to attend Mr Ives' exhibition and listen to a talk which discussed racial inequalities within classics and how this has been entrenched throughout history.

This was a great opportunity to learn beyond the curriculum. Thank you to everyone who helped put this together. There will be a later showing of "Black Classicists: From Ostracism to Scholarship" on 10 May.

**Coming to the UK...**  
***Black Classicists: From Ostracism to Scholarship***

“An opportunity to reflect upon the purpose of higher education and its place in the struggle for equality and human treatment.”

Center for Hellenic Studies, Harvard University

**St Gabriel's**  
NEWBURY



## World Book Day

To celebrate World Book Day 2022 in the Senior School, pupils in Year 7 - 9 were challenged to create an imaginative artefact inspired by the best book they had read in the past year.

The artefact could be any creation but had to be the size of a shoebox. For example: a scene from the novel inside a shoebox. There were some amazing projects created, well done everyone for your efforts!



## Sixth Form Update

The Sixth Form have attended many events this term to prepare them for life after St Gabriel's.

We held a UCAS & Student Finance Evening for Year 12 and their parents to help them understand the pathway to university applications, while at the same time unlocking the intricacies of Student Finance with expert advice from Chris Perry, Financial Advisor.

Year 12 also attended a UCAS exhibition at Farnborough Sixth Form. This was an opportunity to explore different universities and the facilities they offer. They were able to have in depth discussions about their course, as well as receiving advice on fees, funding and support.

The entire Sixth Form were also invited to a talk from Bob Tait, DRED UK, about legal and illegal drugs. This service helps young people understand the effects of substance misuse and the harm it can cause to them and those around them. Their ultimate aim is to provide young people with the facts they need to help them make informed choices, both during their school years and in later life.

It has been a busy term for Sixth Form and we hope all our students have a much deserved rest over Easter. To keep up-to-date with all Sixth Form News, follow [@StGabsSixthForm](https://twitter.com/StGabsSixthForm) on Twitter.







### Podcast: Heard in the Square Hall

We released the first episode of our brand new podcast "Heard in the Square Hall" this term. This exciting project will show you quite how vibrant our community is here at St Gabriel's, keeping you updated with exciting stories and updates from across the whole school.

We will bring you conversations with staff and pupils on a range of topics, interviews from sporting fixtures and special guests from the wider Newbury community. This podcast will open up the doors of Sandleford Priory into the hub that is the Square Hall and share with you all that a St Gabriel's education has to offer.

In the first episode, Mr Smith addressed the key question "Why should you send a boy to a girls' school?"

You can find "Heard in the Square Hall" on [Spotify](#) and [Apple Podcasts](#), as well as the [school website](#).

Reviews of the podcast are greatly appreciated and please do follow our social accounts for all the

sneak peeks and trailers to come. If you have any pupil news or stories you would like to share please contact [comms@stgabriels.co.uk](mailto:comms@stgabriels.co.uk).

Stay tuned for more episodes very soon!



### St Gabriel's Shortlisted for another award!

This term St Gabriel's won an award courtesy of InspirED School Marketers for our co-ed announcement video, "The Time Is Now", that we released this time last year.

Thank you to everyone who was a part of this project. A huge amount of work went into making this film and it was the perfect way to launch the start of our senior co-educational journey. The strength and togetherness of the St Gabriel's community is evident throughout the video.

Many thanks to Affixius Education for producing it. If you haven't seen the video, please [click here](#) to watch.



St Gabriel's has also been shortlisted for an industry award courtesy of AMCIS! We are shortlisted in the category 'Communications Impact Award' which recognises all the work in relation to our co-educational announcement last year.

It is a privilege to be shortlisted among some fantastic schools and we wish all those shortlisted good luck!



### Admissions Update

We held another Whole School Open Morning on Saturday, 5 March, which was an enormous success. We were joined by over 60 families for tours of Sandleford, the Junior School, the Senior School and Sixth Form. Thank you to all those staff who contributed to the success of this event.

There has been tremendous interest in St Gabriel's over the last six months and we are delighted that 30% of candidates sitting the entrance examinations were boys. We are very much looking forward to welcoming our first co-educational cohort to the Senior School in September.

Our next Whole School Open Morning is on Saturday 7 May (9.30 - 12.30). Any friends and family interested in attending should contact our Admissions Team to arrange an individual tour | [admissions@stgabriels.co.uk](mailto:admissions@stgabriels.co.uk)



### PE Department

The PE Department has also been very busy with fixtures and extra-curricular clubs running weekly. Some of the sports on offer this term have included: netball, lacrosse, cross country, archery, volleyball, football and handball, to name a few.

The department always supports pupils in their sporting interests outside school. We have many talented pupils who participate in a range of sports including gymnastics, dance, cheerleading and horse riding.

One of our keen equestrian talents in Year 9, Clare, represented the school recently. Here is what she had to say

"I represented the school in the NSEA Eventers Challenge at Rectory Farm last weekend. My pony, Della, and I were fortunate enough to have an amazing round and we went on to win the class! Arena Eventing is a competition with a combination of show jumps and cross country jumps with an optimum time and, to win, you have to get as close to the time as you can.

Georgie was also there competing on her pony, Bling, and she did very well. And Daisy came to support us on her crutches!

We had a really good day finishing off with an ice cream. I am really looking forward to taking part in the championships at Hickstead in May."

Well done to all our talented pupils who are dedicated to sport outside school, we love hearing about your achievements.



*Our pupil, Mia, in Year 10*



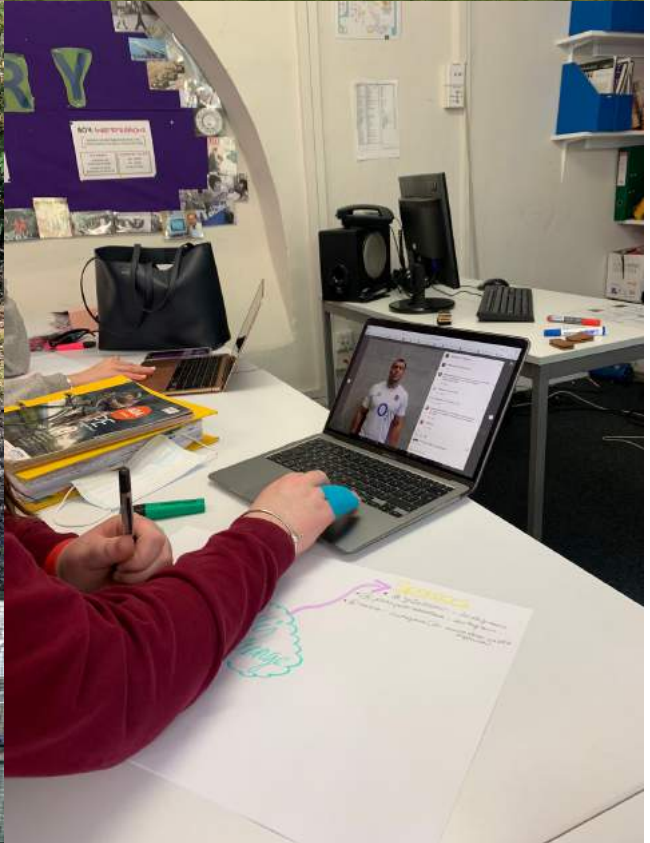
The social media team at St Gabriel's has spent some time with the PE Department this term and it has been great to see the appetite for sport. We have joined the pupils for some of the fixtures, including the Netball League, organised by West Berkshire. Weekly netball tournaments for each age group are scheduled, where the girls can play up to four matches in one evening. The sporting performances we have seen at these tournaments have been fantastic. There have been inspiring displays of team spirit and passion in our girls and we have been privy to some awesome examples of grit and determination.

Speaking with Mrs Brazendale about the participation in clubs and sport this term, she has been overwhelmed by the uptake as well as commitment to fixtures. As she has said many times, PE is for everyone so please do get involved in as much as you can.

Please do follow the PE Department on twitter [@StGabrielsSport](https://twitter.com/StGabrielsSport). Mrs Brazendale is a tweeting pro and shares regular updates of what is happening within the PE Department. Do also follow our [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts for sporting updates.









## Upcoming Events

As the weather gets warmer, we eagerly await the Summer Term and all the exciting events that are planned.

There is the postponed Spring Dinner for Year 11 - 13 which certainly will be an event not to miss. We then wave goodbye to Year 11 and Year 13 as they go on their study leave.

The term has a host of trips including exciting residential experiences, new sports for summer, more lunchtime concerts and enrichment activities.

The return of the swimming gala, sports day and the Strawberries and Cream concert later in the term are events to look forward to.

Enjoy the Easter break and get some much needed rest. We cannot wait to welcome you back for the Summer Term.



I thought I would take the opportunity to introduce myself since I have now been at St Gabriel's for six months. My name is Emily, the Marketing Assistant at the school and joined last summer. I'm sure many of the pupils know me, or at least know me as the person with the camera. I capture all things St Gabriel's as well as running our social media channels.

I love hearing from our community with updates and achievements, so if you have anything to share please do contact [ejennings@stgabriels.co.uk](mailto:ejennings@stgabriels.co.uk).

I am always eager to publish on social media or in the news section of the website.

I would also love it if you could take a second to write a review on the St Gabriel's Google page or on Facebook. It only takes a second and is invaluable to us as a school. If you would like to read all previous newsletters, please click [here](#).

Thank you ever so much for your help and I wish all our pupils a lovely break.

Warmest wishes,

Emily Jennings, Marketing Assistant

Term Begins  
Tuesday 26  
April

