

Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2015

St Gabriel's

Your Route to Success



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dame Carol Black, Principal of Newnham College Cambridge, consistently urges young women to aim high and not hold back. I am currently working with Oxford University Careers Department and Carol on a 'Career Confidence' programme for girls in the Sixth Form throughout the country which we have piloted at St Gabriel's and hope to launch in the Autumn. Carol Black is inspirational and often refers to *The Confidence Code: The Science and Art of Self-Assurance – What Women Should Know* by Katy Kay & Claire Shipman – an absolute 'must read' for our girls. The book reminds us that "perfectionism is a confidence killer", which often extends throughout women's lives. "We don't answer questions until totally sure of the answer, submit a report until we have edited it ad nauseam or sign up for a triathlon unless we know that we are faster and fitter than required."

There is no doubt that some women watch their male colleagues take risks whilst they hold back until they are absolutely sure that they are perfectly ready and perfectly qualified. We will however continue to instil in all our students that their lives are theirs to succeed in and that they should live life to the full. Our alumnae

constantly refer to the opportunities they enjoyed at St Gabriel's, both in and out of the classroom, that ensured they developed the personal power and emotional intelligence to succeed. They acquired the confidence to offer answers very early on! We know that risk-taking, failure and perseverance are essential to confidence building. Our holistic ethos and broad curricular and extra-curricular life certainly build our students' self-confidence and aspiration; their success in music and the creative arts cultivates that much needed grit to approach problems creatively and resolve them.

St Gabriel's is an unashamedly warm, nurturing and happy environment, but most certainly not a hiding-place to escape from the fray - just read on!



THE BIG BASH STILL THUMPING

Worried that your children are obsessed with technology? Afraid that they spend too much time in front of a screen? Wondering if they still know how to play outdoors? Do not be alarmed, The Big Bash was a ringing endorsement that if you give children the opportunity to play, they will. Not an iPad or mobile in sight, in fact the only techie on show was Mr Jones sending out his tweets!

The bouncy castle and slide were in constant use, whilst Anna Perkins, Victoria Williams and Tara Conway ran Dr Tebbs and Mr Dove ragged around the football field (for the best part of two



hours), ably assisted by Paris Howe, the Mannion sisters, Louisa and Izzy, and even our one-time Head Girl, Megan Kerrigan. The likes of Zara Peel, Kirsten Steel and Evie Williams, meanwhile, decided to demonstrate that Miss Pearmine has successfully taught the Junior School how to take out either the ball or the player. Elsewhere, we saw some inner child released as parents tackled the mini-trapeze brought in by the Circus Skills experts.

The two bands kept the atmosphere chilled, with the mellow sounds of Miss Gunn's band complemented by some brilliantly played covers from the Ashman sisters, Maddy and Juliette, and their band.

A big thank you from The Big Bash committee to all those who helped to make it happen: the PFSG, Tim, Angela, Jacqui, Alison, Ashley and Tracey.

The secret of the Big Bash? Keeping it simple in a complicated world. We look forward to seeing you there next year.

Baby Room



The babies enjoyed lots of activities during the Spring Term, including going for lovely walks in the sunshine around the school grounds to see the bright yellow display of daffodils. On warmer days they enjoyed their tea outside in the fresh air.

The children had great fun getting messy with painting activities and even made their own Easter egg decorations. They also joined with the whole of Sandleford to celebrate World Book Day, dressing up as their favourite storybook characters, and raised money for Comic Relief by dressing in red.

During the Summer Term the babies have spent lots of time exploring the outdoor environment. They have particularly enjoyed playing with the pushchairs and dolls, pushing them around the garden and 'chatting' to them as they play.



The babies have also experienced different types of messy play and have explored different textures, enhancing their sensory development.

Toddler Room

During the Spring Term, the toddlers had lots of fun taking part in World Book Day. The children all came in very proudly dressed as their favourite book character. This led to a topic about books, which involved many exciting activities including making Gruffalo cakes and porridge play for Goldilocks and the three bears.

We continue to encourage and develop the children's love of outdoor play and have been making the most of our free-flow area as well as taking the children on some lovely walks in the school grounds to look for early signs of spring and to explore the wider world. They extended their learning by painting pictures of daffodils and displaying these for their parents to see.



Every week Miss Highton visits the Toddler Room for inter-active storytelling. We have a repertoire of many stories and participation songs and the toddlers have learned to join in with all the calls and responses. They are starting to act out some simple role play and it is a real pleasure to see their confidence growing and developing.



Pre-School Room

In March, we celebrated World Book Day. The children enjoyed reading a variety of traditional nursery stories such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, which then informed our topic. The children re-created the story in the role play corner by making the three bears and Goldilocks. We also went on a *Bear Hunt* in the woods, collecting daffodils to draw and paint.

On Red Nose Day the children dressed in red clothes to raise money for Comic Relief. They even made and decorated their own red nose biscuits.



Reception

To celebrate Father's Day, Sandleford invited dads and granddads to spend time with their children in school. The Reception dads and granddads were fantastic sports as we went to the woods to build dens in very wet conditions. The heavy rain tested their den-building skills and we were all very happy to take shelter in the two dens made by the two teams – well done everyone!

The Reception children enjoyed a sunny afternoon watching the Junior School Sports Day. They can't wait to be in Houses next year and be able to take part with the 'big children'. They cheered everyone on and were treated to an ice cream to make the afternoon just perfect – thank you Mrs Gabriel!

As part of our 'growing' topic, Reception has found out about the lifecycle of a butterfly. The children eagerly watched our caterpillars eat all their food and grow quite big, ready to spin their cocoons. The children were fascinated by how wet the butterflies' wings were when they emerged from their cocoons and patiently waited for them to dry out so they could start to flutter about. On a warm day we released the butterflies into the school grounds.

In OWL Time, the children have been collecting natural objects to use to make caterpillar pictures. They have also enjoyed experimenting with ink, using pipettes to drop it onto absorbent paper and watching it spread to make the patterns on the wings of their fluttering butterflies.

In June, Sandleford and Reception children took part in the Barnardo's Big Toddle; they were joined by many parents and relatives. We walked, or in the case of the babies were pushed, around our stunning school grounds, at the same time raising money for a very worthwhile cause. Everyone enjoyed strolling through the woods and around the lake in the beautiful summer sunshine. The afternoon finished with tea in the grounds and the children received medals for their efforts. An amazing total of £684.00 was raised.



Towards the end of June, the Pre-School and Reception children took part in their annual Sports Day and Teddy Bears' Picnic. The children participated with great enthusiasm, from our older and more experienced Reception children right down to our youngest. There was a wide variety of races, which provided the opportunity to showcase the skills the children have learned in their PE lessons. Our Junior School Head and Deputy Head Girls and Year 6 House Sport Captains supported the children during the races and helped Mrs P with the organisation of the afternoon. After receiving their 'bubbles' for being such fantastic sports stars the children enjoyed a picnic in the school grounds with their families.

This term Reception has enjoyed reading *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* and were very excited to have the opportunity to go to the Corn Exchange in Newbury to see one of their favourite stories brought to life. The show was performed brilliantly with lots of audience participation and a highly comical tiger! It was a wonderful afternoon out to celebrate the end of their year in Reception.



Princess Charlotte

There was a special little girl called Princess Charlotte, who had a safe delivery and caring helpers on this very exciting and important occasion! Oh, yes, and another four girls and five boys hatched, too!

Year 1 had an incredible fortnight witnessing nature's miracle of hatching eggs and are now officially 'co-ed' with their fellow fluffy 10 classmates. Indeed, controlled chick-mania has ensued with Mrs Webb's lessons being halted for hatchings. The children have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in this educational programme, which has inspired their writing, improved their scientific knowledge and taught them how to look after chicks. There were class competitions to name the chicks and to predict the outcome of the hatching using number bonds to 10! Well done, Emily, Evey, Julia and Imogen for guessing correctly! Year 1 also competently recorded their Living Eggs experience as an iBook on their iPads, which they shared with Reception in assembly.

The five female chickens will be staying at St Gabriel's to provide eggs for the kitchen and to extend pupil's understanding of the life cycle of a hen.



Year 1 Scientists

During the Spring Term, Year 1 learned about the uses of materials and their similarities and differences. The children went around the school taking pictures of different materials on their iPads. They then used their new app, Skitch, to label their photographs and confidently presented their work to the class.

'I liked using my iPad because it is easy to label my pictures. I liked changing the colours of the pen.' **Evey Pinchin**
'I liked dragging the arrows onto my photograph.' **Penny Page**

Year 1 Geography

Year 1 had a new subject in their Spring Term timetable, geography. We covered the topic 'Our Local Area', with the children learning about addresses, landmarks, jobs that people do, leisure facilities and the changes that are taking place in the area.

Their learning was brought alive on their school trip to Newbury. The children had lots of fun being eagle-eyed in the landmark quiz, interviewing estate agents and visiting the library. As always the favourite part of the day was the café break on the canal where our intrepid geographers rested their very tired legs!



Year 1 shared their Geography topic with the Junior School in an assembly, where they sang topical geography songs and presented their class iMovie. All in all, Year 1 have decided that they are very lucky to live in such a nice and attractive place as Newbury!

'We know our addresses and found them on a map of Newbury.'

Sophie Donnelly

'We know what a landmark is and that it helps us find places.'

Mary McLeod

We learned what jobs people do in Newbury and that a lot of people in the area work for Vodafone.'

Kara Scaplehorn

Red Watch Visit

During the final week of the Spring Term, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 had a very exciting visit from the firemen of Newbury's Red Watch. We were shown around the fire engine and had to memorise what was kept in each of the different compartments. The firemen told us that the fire engine is like a giant toolbox on wheels, carrying all the equipment they need to put out fires or rescue people who are trapped. It even has equipment to rescue cows and horses who are stuck in the mud! After looking in all the compartments we played a game where we had to find the different pieces of equipment. Our prize for remembering where everything was kept was to sit in the fire engine. Mrs Lawrence and Miss Beake got to sit in the front and set off the siren....it was very, very loud! We then learned about the protective clothing that a fireman wears and we even dressed Mrs Blossom up as a fireman! It was a very informative and exciting afternoon.



World Book Day

On 5 March, Junior School pupils celebrated their love of books with thousands of other children around the country by dressing-up for World Book Day. This celebration of books took a new twist this year with each year group being given an author or book genre to base their fancy dress outfits on. The creativity of the children shone through with many recognisable book characters walking around the Junior School, including a Blind Mouse, Puss-in-Boots, a class full of animals, Saucepan Man, a self-inflating Violet Beauregarde and Billy the Kid. Everybody should be congratulated on the effort they put into their costumes this year.

Class themes:

Year 1	Nursery Rhymes	Year 4	Enid Blyton
Year 2	Fairy Tales	Year 5	Roald Dahl
Year 3	Dick King-Smith	Year 6	Michael Morpurgo



Junior School Science Week – March 2015

Great fun was had by all year groups during the Junior School Science Week. We had science happening in classrooms, in the playground and we were visited by two brilliant road shows.

At the Ugly Animal Roadshow, Simon Watt demonstrated why we always give the cute animals attention when we should be giving the ugly ones our love! Do you know the ugliest animal is



the blob fish! We were introduced to a few other ugly animals through some games and pictures, including the axolotl, the flightless dung beetle, the greater short horned lizard, the pink velvet worm, the pig nosed frog and quite a few more. We learned some fascinating facts about the animals such as how the greater short horned lizard can squirt blood from its eyes when it is in danger and how dung beetles lick their claws as the dung burns them.

At his roadshow, Jonathan Cleverly brought along tarantulas, geckos, millipedes and a snake called Goldie. We saw the animals up close and held them, if we were brave enough. Some children even got the opportunity of letting Stripe, a gecko, jump on them, much to everyone's amusement. We now know what a snake's skin feels like and what it is like to be licked on the nose by a snake. Did you know that a gecko has no eye lids? They use their tongue to lick their eyes to keep them clean and dry.

The 'Mad Scientists' entertained us at break with some exciting demonstrations and interactive activities, including how to push a straw through a potato, how to poke a skewer through a balloon without it popping, how to make marshmallows double in size and how to make homemade lava lamps. They finished the week off with a spectacular coke and Mentos explosion – it was very messy!

Annual Prep Schools Quiz

Children in Years 3–6 took part in a general knowledge quiz at the beginning of the Spring Term. From their individual results, a team representing St Gabriel's travelled to Elstree School for the regional heat of the annual Prep Schools' Quiz run by Quizclub. Nerea Halley Martin, Matilda Ley, Rose Clark and Sasha Marriage made up the team, answering questions on a broad range of topics from current affairs to pop culture and world history. The combined knowledge of the team earned them joint fourth place.

Crossharbour at The Corn Exchange

On 12 May, Year 4–Year 6 went to the Corn Exchange to see Crossharbour. The band, part of Newbury Spring Festival, played a mixture of traditional and modern Irish dance music, which had all the children stamping and clapping along. Crossharbour also taught the audience about the instruments they use and how you can create different timbres and effects. There were even some opportunities to sing along with the vocalist. It was a lovely afternoon and we were inspired to create some of our own Irish compositions later in the week.

NRICH Hands-On Maths Roadshow

In February, Reception–Year 4 hosted their first NRICH Hands-On Maths Roadshow, inviting pupils in Years 1 and 2 from Welford and Wickham and Stockcross primary schools. A total of 133 pupils participated in the morning's event.

The Roadshow is '*a collection of hands-on mathematical puzzles, games and activities that are designed to promote creative approaches to mathematics and strategic thinking and to stimulate mathematical curiosity.*'

Each session started with the pupils sitting in a group for a short introduction and warm-up activity. Frances Watson, the School Liaison Officer, quickly engaged the pupils in age appropriate mathematical thinking, whether this was silent sums or looking for 2D and 3D shapes hidden in the roadshow logo.

After the warm-up activity pupils were placed in groups of three with a Year 8 helper. The children were actively encouraged to talk and think out loud whilst trying to solve the problems they had been presented with. Everyone soon realised that a can-do attitude helped their mathematical thinking and that 'I can't ... yet' was a far better way of thinking.

At the end of the session, pupils were brought back together to reflect on their learning. Everyone agreed that they had to think, talk, and try in an effort to solve some of the more complex problems.

The Soma cube was one puzzle that had everyone from Reception to Year 8 thinking! But whilst the solution proved elusive to most, the resilience shown by students in their strategic thinking showed the worth of hosting such an event.



Ufton Court Adventures

During Cross-Curricular Week, all children in Reception–Year 4 visited Ufton Court for a day of outdoor learning.

The children explored the herb garden and created their own herb bags – as the children discovered 'some smelt nice and some smelt stinky!' Down in the woodland the children (and teachers) went on a skywalk. Mia Wright said, 'that was scary, you had to put a mirror under your nose and look into it... up into the trees.' With great teamwork they worked together to guide each other safely through the woodland. The children also built bug hotels, using woodland materials, and went on a bug hunt to find lots of interesting guests for their hotels!

For many children the highlight of the day was lighting fires. They collected sticks and, in teams of 4, attempted to ignite cotton wool with a spark using a flint and steel. This proved very challenging, with some teams more successful than others, but they all got there in the end!

The Junior School had a great day at Ufton Court and the children had lots to say about it afterwards.

Year 4 to Lulworth Cove



Year 4 gathered excitedly at school on a Monday morning in May for their overnight trip to Lulworth Cove.

Having checked in to the youth hostel, our first stop was Durdle Door, a perfect example of an arch formed by the erosion of softer rock. The children looked for evidence of the different types of rock and produced some excellent sketches of the Door itself, before investigating the formation of Man O'War Bay.

A long hike along the coast path took us over the hill and down to Lulworth Cove, where we enjoyed a well-deserved ice cream and a rest. Some children estimated that we must have walked over 20 miles! Our busy day concluded with a delicious meal at the youth hostel followed by a games session as the sun set over Dorset.

The next day, one of the Lulworth Rangers, Jim, shared his knowledge of the geology of the area and showed us Stair Hole as well as Cove Beach. We were all thrilled to spot a peregrine falcon flying over the cliff tops. Many children were amazed to find out that this is the world's fastest animal! After meeting up with Year 4 from a local school for a game of rounders, we headed home. It was a fantastic trip and we all learned so much.



Imogen Takes Second Place

Congratulations to Imogen Strong (Year 4) on coming second in her character solo at the All England Ballet regional finals. Imogen also gained distinction with special commendations for her other solos, the second highest mark achievable.



Year 5 Spend the Day as Tudors at Ufton Court

'Back in March, Year 5 had a fantastic day out at Ufton Court. It was an incredible place and, 500 years on, it truly felt as if it had retained its former glory.

'After visiting the Long Room, we proceeded to the Green Room, where we had to find 'somewhere to hide' and 'six faces looking down on you'. The place to hide was accessed by climbing down the chimney into a secret room and the six faces looking down on you were amongst the beams. We then proceeded up the stairs to the bedrooms and opened the secret doors to reveal the catholic letters: MR and IHS. My group then moved to the secret prayer room where we saw the same initials on the wall. It was so cold in there and so small! The next place we went to was the attic where we looked down into the priest hole.

Ufton Court is built in the shape of an E to represent Queen Elizabeth I. I definitely want to go to Ufton Court again - it was an amazing experience.' **Rose Clark**

'We went upstairs and looked at some paintings behind a panel. This was a sign that the family were catholic and were breaking the law. Then, we looked at the priest holes and even climbed into a small one. We did some epic role play in which Tiggy (Lord of the Manor) and I (the priest) were killed in a raid. It was really fun.' **Amber Cowan**

'After lunch we played some Tudor games. My favourite game

involved rolling a hoop and hitting it with a stick.' **Anneliese Brown**

'Then we looked around the grounds and saw a tree, but not just any tree. This tree had seen all the history of Ufton Court for 500 years.' **Alaina Anidjah**

Yummy France!

At the end of May, Year 5 had an amazing week in France. The boulangerie made a truly delicious start, with a tray full of freshly baked croissants and pains au chocolat to eat when we had finished our activity there. The yummy element came up again on Wednesday morning at the chocolaterie, where we learned all about making chocolate and tasted a selection.

Following lunch at a crêperie in Etretat, we investigated the missing necklace at 'Le Clos Lupin', where we enjoyed looking at all the old fashioned clothes and disguises that the cartoon character, Arsène Lupin, wore in the 1890s.



We really enjoyed meeting our penfriends at their school. We worked with them until lunchtime, asking and answering questions in French, and then in English, and found out much more than we had learned from our letters. We had great fun at playtime, too.

We all brought home souvenirs from the Cité de la Mer in Dieppe, including knots on card, as well as delicious honey we had tasted and candles we had made at the bee farm. The market provided another good shopping experience, where we could buy whatever we liked as long as we spoke in French! Sadly, that was our last activity and we returned to the coach fully laden for our return journey.

These are memories we will cherish for a long time.



Year 6 Cineclub



This year, our Year 6 film-makers created two short movies as part of the national Cineclub competition. Following the manifesto, the girls had to plan, shoot and edit their films by themselves using every ounce of their creativity and imagination as well as heaps of teamwork. Their first film, *The Ghost Tree*, was inspired by the strange story of a tree in the school grounds and was shortlisted for one of the national awards. More recently, *The Dream House* cleverly shows what might happen if you fall asleep in an art lesson, with an unsettling twist at the end. Both films were shown at The Corn Exchange in Newbury in July.

An Explosive Day Out at the Big Bang

Year 6 had an explosive day out at The Big Bang exhibition in Birmingham. They got to experience hands-on Science and Maths workshops and even watched a Supertasters show on the main stage with the guest presenter, Stefan Gates, giving St Gabriel's a shout out!

Supertasters are people who have lots of taste buds! About 10-25% of us are supertasters. At the show they picked out three people from the audience and tested them to see if they were supertasters; two of them were. They then made concoctions out of random foods (including worms and crickets) that they had to try! The first was rated a two and a one. But, the second one was rated a one, four and a six! So the poor girl who made the first concoction had to drink a whole shot of it! After she had drunk it, well, it looked like she was going to be sick!



The workshops were also extremely entertaining and ranged from medicine workshops to looking at lights and lasers. Eleanor's favourite part was the "What Crew Are You In Quiz?" where you took part in a quiz to see what you might be suited to when you grow up! I was in the Sport Crew, Isobel was in the Design Crew, Elliya was in the Food Crew and so was Harriet. Ella was in the Technology Crew and Eleanor was in the Construction Crew!

Personally, my favourite part was the machine that made your hair go static! You put your hands on a metal ball and then stood on two plastic "step ups". When the man turned on the machine, the fun began! Your hair goes really static, especially if you washed it the night before, which I had! The man gave you a mirror to look at yourself in! You look ridiculous!

We all had a brilliant day and came back with many memories, freebies and experiments we want to try both at home and in our science lessons; so watch this space!

Chloe Balls

Digital Leaders

During the Spring Term the Digital Leaders presented an assembly on e-safety, informing the Junior School that they need to be SMART online.

- S** Stay Safe - do not give out your personal information to people you don't know
- M** Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Always check with an adult you trust
- A** Accepting emails, files, pictures or texts from people you do not know can cause problems
- R** Reliable - check information before you believe it. Is the person or website telling the truth?
- T** Tell Someone - tell an adult if someone or something makes you feel worried or uncomfortable.

The digital leaders have also been very busy trialling new apps, running a help desk, entering competitions, setting challenges, getting involved with iPad maintenance and helping teachers and their fellow pupils with technology during lessons.

Chessington World of Adventures

On 2 July, Year 6 spent the day at Chessington World of Adventurers. This was their final trip as a year group and excitement ran very high. To learn more about their character, the children were challenged to push themselves outside of their comfort zone. They all had to try one ride that they feared, whether it be Vampire, Raging River or Rameses Revenge. This was a huge challenge for some of the children, however they all gave it their best shot and the sense of achievement and accomplishment was high.

The children then had the chance to relax and enjoy learning about different animals and the environments and habitats that they live in. Lots of different activities and educational talks were available on a variety of animals; however, the penguins were a particular favourite.

Overall it was a fantastic opportunity for the children to challenge themselves, learn and enjoy their last trip as Year 6 of 2014-2015.

Winchester Science Centre & Planetarium



In January, Year 6 went to the Winchester Science Centre. The main focus of the visit was a planetarium show, A Tour Around The Universe. This was to consolidate pupils' knowledge of their science topic, The Earth and Beyond. We have talked in class about how enormous the universe is but it is extremely difficult to imagine. The planetarium is a great experience as it gives you a real appreciation of how large the universe really is and how small the Earth, the Solar System and the Milky Way actually are.

"The planetarium was amazing. This is a hemispherical dome with a screen running up the walls and across the ceiling. A scientist took us on a tour of the universe showing us the constellations on the screen above us. She took us around the planets to show us what they look like up close. We even went out of our galaxy (the Milky Way) and found out that it is one of billions in the universe. My favourite bit was when we looked at one of Jupiter's moons called Io, which is like a planet of lava, continuously being resurfaced by giant volcanos erupting. I did not realise how small Earth is when compared to the emptiness of space."

"I enjoyed looking at and interacting with all the different science activities. Some of them were about building and teamwork but others were about discovering new things. There was one where there was a triangular box with mirrors on each side and when you went inside it, you saw a thousand reflections of yourself. There was another where you had to draw your own reflection on a mirror which was hard because you naturally kept moving."

Mill-on-the-Brue Activity Week

This summer, Year 6 spent a week away in Bruton at an outdoor activity centre. Excitement was high on the morning of departure and the children were very much looking forward to spending a week away together. On arrival, the children were put into four



groups and embarked on their first challenge. They were lucky enough to experience activities ranging from canoeing to raft building, zip wiring and a high ropes course.

Year 6 had a fantastic time and certainly came away from Mill-on-the-Brue with a sense of pride, accomplishment and a unity that they will never forget.

Year 6 Learn Flight Dynamics



At the end of the Summer Term, Year 6 had a visit from Mr Foxley and his helicopter and Mr Havercroft gave us all a lesson on flight dynamics. Through lots of small experiments we learned how an aerofoil (wing) works on an aeroplane: the shape of the wing causes a pressure difference between the top and bottom surfaces of the aerofoil producing lift. It was great fun trying to design and make a paper aeroplane that could fly up instead of diving straight to the ground. We also discussed how a helicopter works and why it needs a tail rotor. Then, it was time for the helicopter to land. We all stood and watched as the rotor slowed down and stopped turning. Mr Foxley gave us a tour of the helicopter explaining how it works as he went. We already knew the answers to his questions thanks to Mr Havercroft's lesson. We learned that flying a helicopter is very difficult as there are lots of controls and you have to be able to use both hands to do different things at the same time. Can you rub your tummy and pat your head at the same time and then switch hands very quickly and back again? If you can then you might be able to fly a helicopter. I would like to thank Mr Foxley for an amazing experience.

The Lion King



This term Year 6 have been working very hard on their spectacular production of the Lion King, which was performed over two nights to a packed theatre. It was a challenging musical to learn and the girls spent all of their spare time living and breathing the story. They worked extremely professionally and it was a real triumph in the way that it all came together.

In Art the girls created and decorated animal masks for use in the show. Miss Hunter was extremely impressed with the attitude and commitment of the girls and their enthusiasm for making the 3D



structures. They produced some amazing masks, which they thoroughly enjoyed wearing.

Well done to Year 6, it was a fantastic way to end the school year. Thank you, too, to the staff and parents who gave up their time to make it all possible.

Junior School Chamber Choir Tour

At the end of March, the Junior Chamber Choir sang their way along the Amalfi coast of Italy, singing in the grand and beautiful cathedrals of Sorrento and Amalfi, in local pizzerias, to passers by, and in the ancient amphitheatre of Pompeii. The children even entertained their fellow passengers on the flight from Gatwick to Naples.

As we explored the cobbled streets of Sorrento, we had many opportunities to practise our Italian language skills with the local residents and shop keepers. The Italians were fascinated by the spirit of our group, and we were received warmly everywhere we visited.

We experienced the culinary delights of Italy, too, trying local dishes and even making our own gelato in the Gelateria.

The girls were enthralled by the stories our guide told of Pompeii and were ecstatic to sing in the Amphitheatre, where they also re-enacted scenes in the marketplaces and streets from Roman daily life.

Overall it was a brilliant trip, with memories to last a lifetime. The quality of the singing was so high, with the girls' energy and vitality showed through in their performances and confident language skills.



JUNIOR SCHOOL SPORT

Spring Term

Netball: The netball term kicked off with a win against Cheam for the Year 6 team by a commendable 15 goals to 1, setting the bar for a full and successful tournament season. With over 60 games played by the Year 6 teams, including four tournaments, their final tally of results made for fantastic reading. Won 51: Lost 9.

Our tournament form has been consistent. We won the Newbury Netball Tournament, came 3rd at Princes Mead and Prior Park and 9th in the IAPS National Netball Tournament at Port Regis. In the Newbury Netball League, after winning eight of their nine matches, St Gabriel's were narrowly beaten to the top spot by an on form Thorngrove team.



Gymnastics: We entered our second Key Steps Gymnastics Competition with the children memorising two routines and completing a vault to impress the judges. They performed extremely well and enjoyed their morning of competition. The Year 2 team gained the silver medal place and the Year 5 & Year 6 team were placed 1st, with Emma Scott gaining the bronze medal for overall best gymnast. The girls progressed from this competition to represent West Berkshire in the county finals at Pinewood Gymnastics Club in Wokingham, where the Year 2 team managed to get onto the podium in silver medal position. They were thrilled to be placed second in the county. Well done to all the girls (Emma Scott, Amy Struthers-Semple, Amber Cowan, Aggie Rose, Emma Kitching, Mia Wright, Claire McGonnell, Ellie Abbott and Neve Wright).



Swimming: Four Junior School swimmers went to the pool at Mary Hare School to have a lesson with inspirational Paralympic gold medallist, Graham Edmunds. The girls, who were already experienced club swimmers, really enjoyed their session and learned how their core strength can influence their performance. All gained a lot from their experience and will be taking the advice they were given by Graham back into their club training sessions.



High Five Netball: This is a fast and furious adaptation of netball with fewer area restrictions and with players rotating positions every half game. The girls have to show versatility and resilience in a very fast paced game.

In the preliminary rounds of the High Five County Netball Tournament, we played and won 7 games with 48 goals for and 1 against. This qualified the team to represent West Berkshire in the county finals at the National Centre for Sporting Excellence at Bisham Abbey, where the girls met the best teams from across the county. The St Gabriel's team played faultlessly, gaining the gold medal and the title of County High Five champions.

Cross Country: Our Monday morning Running Club has grown in numbers thanks to the infectious enthusiasm and expert coaching by Dwayne and Anne Stewart-Powers. It is a testament to their hard work that we had two squads running in the West Berkshire Cross Country competition. St Gabriel's also competed at The Manor, where the team was placed 5th overall, with Ava Elverson (Year 3) being placed 3rd.

Selection for the cross country relays at Thorngrove was extremely competitive as we were limited to two teams of four. This is an excellent event with the race visible throughout and, with the lead changing all the time, it becomes a bit of a cat and mouse race. After her fantastic performance at The Manor, Ava Elverson took the baton on the lead leg and came home in a commendable time, giving the rest of the team a medal chance. After really solid runs the team finished in bronze medal position.

The Year 6 team ran equally well and were neck and neck with Thorngrove throughout the race. Gabby Stewart-Power ran the final leg in the team's fastest time to bring the baton home in silver medal place just behind Thorngrove.

Year 3 & 4 team: Ava Elveson, Poppy Russell, Georgia Teeluck & Isabelle Law

Year 6 team: Emma Scott, Joanna Evans, Issie Burn & Gabby Stewart-Power

Football: Having progressed through to the semi-finals of the Newbury District Cup, our footballers played a tough game against Parsons Down but unfortunately did not make it through to the final. Our teams played extremely well in two other small-sided tournaments and are gearing up for the annual 6-a-side competition run by Thatcham Town Ladies & Girls FC. There have been some outstanding performances all round, but special mention must go to Issie Burn, Poppy Simpson and Scarlett Hale, who have set up or scored most of this season's goals.

Summer Term

We all love the Summer Term, the lazy days in the sunshine on the rounders pitch, at the cricket wicket or in the pool. This term, the sun took a while to arrive and we were shivering in below seasonal temperatures for most of May. Enrichment activities once again included running, gym, climbing, judo and football. We had a cricket coach in for the first six weeks to start off our cricket season and, of course, Rounders Club to get us ready for the league. In the swimming pool, we started two new clubs, one for girls who just wanted to build up their water confidence and a more arduous club swimming session.

Cycling: The first British mountain biking competition in the area was held at St Gabriel's and two teams of six girls excitedly tried the course and made themselves familiar with their bikes. After half an hour of familiarisation and warm up, the competition started with the sprints. Some children found the gear shift quite challenging but we soon started to master the controls. In the distance event Amy Struthers-Semple was the fastest girl and went through to represent West Berkshire. The team came second overall, which is a fantastic result on our first outing.



Rounders: The season brought a mixed bag of results, 50% wins 50% losses. All were well fought games where we developed our play and decision-making skills. The Year 6 team are now on track to win the Winchester Rounders League, with one match to go.

Swimming: The squad had a gala against Daneshill, narrowly missing the winning position by 10 points.

Thursday evening Swimming Club has proved extremely popular,

with sessions ranging from swimming for fitness and endurance to stroke development. Our thanks go to Mr and Mrs Teeluck, Mrs Cowan, Mrs Tweedie and Mr Glitz & Ms Atkey for their time.

Kwik Cricket: Our first Kwik Cricket competition was held at Falkland Cricket Club. We had to work very hard to pick up the rules of the competition and it seemed strange that we started each game on 200 runs; we could add to our score in the usual way by scoring runs, but we could also score five runs for a catch, two for getting a batsman out and two if we were bowled a wide. It was not long before we were starting to score 4's and 6's by hitting over the boundary. We won all our first round matches and the semi-final quite easily, but came across a very hard-hitting team from Pangbourne in the final and lost by just 20 runs.

Athletics: At the annual inter-school relays we were the only school to get both teams into the final, with the Year 5 and Year 6 teams gaining 2nd and 5th places in the final and the Year 3 and Year 4 team achieving 1st and 4th.

Junior School Sports Day: Our annual Sports Day was a huge success. We used the Quadkids format as a basis for events and added some extra races to help keep all the children busy and having fun for the whole day.

We have been inundated with positive feedback from parents and families who enjoyed their day in the sunshine watching children compete at all levels, with the common aim of helping their House to score points. Aidan won the House Cup but judging from the smiles, laughter and sportsmanship on display, everyone was a winner on the day.



Year 7 Humanities Trip to Wales



Our first stop was Chepstow Castle, a Norman castle sitting above the bank of the River Wye. It is the oldest surviving post-Roman stone fortification in Britain. We visited the two Great Halls and climbed the battlements from where the arrows would have rained down onto the enemy.

After dropping our bags at our accommodation, we donned waterproofs and set off for the River Dare. We spent the afternoon measuring the depth and width of the river, and worked out the speed at which the river was flowing by timing how long it took a ping pong ball to travel 5m. At every stop we sketched the landscape in front of us, including features in the vegetation, river and environment. We walked back to our accommodation reciting the names of the Kings and Queens of England.

The next morning we left for The Big Pit. This was the most exciting part of our trip because we went down a real coal mine guided by an ex-miner, who had been down the mine when there had been a fire. The miners used to carry special lanterns that did not go out when carbon monoxide or methane were detected. We had to leave all electronics on the surface in case they started a fire with a spark from the batteries. We learned about the jobs the young children had as trappers, opening and shutting doors for the horses and carts, and about the difficult life miners had.

The final stop was the Museum of Welsh Life, where we saw over 40 buildings from different historical periods that had been re-erected in one place. Here history was brought to life as craftsmen demonstrated traditional skills. I particularly enjoyed



visiting the churches and learning about the line that separated the people from the priest. They painted pictures on the walls to tell the stories from the Bible as not everyone who attended church could read.

Lily Rostron

C & E Animation Workshop

In March, Iona Fabian ran an animation workshop with the Art scholars. She started by showing us how animation has evolved over the years. We then created our own plasticine models, including a cow, eeyore, scrapydoo, a monster and medusa. By fixing a camera to the table, taking a picture, moving the model a tiny bit and then taking another picture we created snapshot animations. We repeated this process and then played the photos in very quick succession to create a moving creation. It was a fantastic workshop which we all really enjoyed.



Year 7 Castle Competition

Well done to all of the Year 7 girls who participated in the History Department's Castle Competition. Having recently studied medieval castles, the girls were given a brief to use any material they liked to produce a model. They were allowed to work independently, or in groups, and could produce a 2D, 3D or online version of their medieval castle. The standard of work produced by the girls was outstanding.

Special congratulations go to Katie Sylvester, Poppy Adams and Ellie Taylor for their entries, and to Amelia Bennett, who received the award for the best castle.



Year 7 Trip to the Jewish Museum



In June, Year 7 travelled to the Jewish Museum in London. The day started with a talk about change and responsibility. We then learned about Bat Mitzvah (when a girl turns 12) and Bar Mitzvahs (when a boy turns 13). These are the celebrations undertaken when children are considered to be adults in their Jewish communities. After the talk we looked at different objects in the museum related to the responsibilities taken on by Jewish girls and boys after their Bat and Bar Mitzvahs, including little Torah scrolls and different items that they are allowed to eat within their religion. We then learned more about the history of Jews and their lives.

After lunch we talked about Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath, which runs from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. Everyone has to rest all day and you are not allowed to turn on lights or even watch TV! We acted out the seven days of creation in order to consider why it is important to rest and then looked around the museum for things related to Shabbat and made Havdalah candles, which are used in the ceremony that Jews perform at the end of Shabbat.

Sophia Jennings

Activity Week

Year 7 rose to the challenge when they were asked to plan and create 12 identical Danish pastries using puff pastry and a selection of summer fruits. Teams produced a wide variety of shapes and fillings as well as accompanying coulis. Supervised by Mel and Sue (aka Mrs Reeve-Howarth and Mrs Rumbol) and judged by Mrs Sams, team 'Queen of Danish Pastries' was declared overall winners.



7T worked with Miss Hunter to produce a large scale four panel mural for the senior library, which will be completed in September.



The Art Department also worked with Year 7 to create an exciting, collaborative rendition of Vincent Van Gogh's famous *Starry Night*. Each girl was given a section of his painting to enlarge and subsequently add colour to. The girls worked in the style of Van Gogh using vigorous mark-making whilst listening to music. Attention was paid to creating an energetic and vibrant outcome.



SENIOR SCHOOL

Year 7 2015

On 26 June, we welcomed 50 new Year 7's into the St Gabriel's community. What a day we had! After a quick trust activity led by Mr Jones, girls completed a treasure hunt around the school site to get their bearings. Afterwards girls conducted a Model United Nations where they gave world leaders a run for their money! After a spot of lunch, and a game of 'Block' with the Head Girl and Deputy Head Girl, they completed an 'Alternative Netball' workshop. Parents who came back for tea in the marquee that afternoon were in awe of the new friendships that had already been made.



The Journey So Far

I got my first pair of ice skates for Christmas in 2007 and was six when I had my first lesson. I fell in love with the sport! I started with group lessons and over the next year and a half worked through the Skate UK levels. Aged 8, I entered my first club competition and came 3rd. This was around the same time as I moved to St Gabriel's. I went to my first Beginner Level National



Opens competition in April 2010 and came 1st in my age group! I have moved steadily up through the National Ice Skating Association (NISA) national levels, landing my first double jump in March 2012 aged 10. I continued to work hard and, in March 2015, entered my first International competition and achieved my Level 8 Competitive Test and was allocated a National ranking of 31 in the 15 years and under category!

As I train six days a week, St Gabriel's has been extremely flexible with my homework and school timetable, allowing me time off for competitions and tests. My teachers have been very supportive in helping me to catch up on my missed lessons.

I am now in the National Ice Skating Association Team GB Development Squad and hope to improve my National Ranking as the season progresses. I have lots of competitions lined up for this year and am waiting for confirmation that I have qualified to compete at the British Championships in November.

Jess Gill

Ballet Central

In May, dancers from Years 7 - 10 went to the Corn Exchange to watch Ballet Central's technical rehearsal of their graduation performance national tour. Ballet Central comprises third year students from The Central School of Ballet in London, where young dancers train to become professionals. It was a wonderful performance of beautiful classical ballet pieces alongside a wide range of modern ballet and contemporary works. During the interval, four of the dancers took part in a Q&A session where we got a unique insight into what it is like to study at the school and the work that goes into producing such a mesmerising show. We were especially interested to hear that three of the dancers had been finalists in the BBC Young Dancer of the Year.

Martha Croggon

Year 7 & Year 8 Maths Challenge

In April, girls in Year 7 and Year 8 were entered in the Junior Maths Challenge Competition. Congratulations to the following girls for their excellent achievement.

Bronze: Inisa Sangha, Emma Goodyer, Ellie Cowan, Hannah Lawrence, Harriet Turner, Olivia Kynaston and Sophia Jennings

Silver: Isabelle Ryder, Connie Pike, Emerald Cundy, Giorgia McCann, Natalie Carpenter, Isobel Mannion, Lauren King and Anna Spence (Best in Year 7)

Gold: Lottie Swainston (Best in Year 8)

Rowan Saltmarsh & Lottie Swainston also qualified for the next round of their year group competition.

Scholastic Essay Presentation Evening

Girls in Year 7 and Year 8 on the Challenge & Extension Program were given the theme of 'Adversity' to explore. The theme could be taken in any direction and so we each chose a topic that interested us: some wrote about a specific person or people and the hardships they had endured, while others chose to discuss natural disasters or diseases. We then made a presentation on the outcome of our research. Parents attending the presentation evening and were impressed by the diversity of subjects discussed!

Lauren King

Swimming Success

Ellie Cowan, Year 8, had a string of excellent swims at this year's Berkshire & South Bucks County Swimming Championships. Swimming as a 13 year old, she won an impressive nine gold and four silver medals in her age group as well as breaking the age group record for the 100m individual medley. In the finals for the 14 years & under Junior Championships she went on to win two Junior titles, three silver positions and two bronzes.

Her sister, Amber, Year 5, was selected to swim in the county relays for Newbury Swimming Club in the 9-11 year old age group.



Year 8 Visit Harry Potter Studio

It was a large coach, rather than a train at platform 9¾, that whisked Year 8 away to the Harry Potter Studios at Leavesden in March. Sorted by a bona-fide sorting hat into one of the four iconic houses, we arrived at the studios ready for a day of magic and adventure.

As well as hosting the Harry Potter experience, Leavesden is home to a fully-functioning collection of film sets; we learned that it had recently played home to a variety of films including *Superman* and *Thor*, and is currently hosting the likes of Tom Cruise, working on a *Mission Impossible* film due out next year (he was a mere 200 metres away from us!). A glance beyond the converted aircraft hangar that is now a temple of all-things-Potter revealed the crenulations of a recently-constructed Camelot as well as the largest water-set in Europe, all being used on current projects.

Although our day did not include any *tête-a-têtes* with Hollywood's mightiest, it was split into two parts: the tour itself, and a workshop with a member of the studio team. Workshops took place in a restricted area of the studios and focussed on elements such as the types and selections of camera angles used by directors and the process by which a film goes from script to screen. These interactive sessions enlarged our awareness of the film industry in general and the minutiae of Harry Potter in particular.

The Studio Tour, hosted by a horde of enthusiastic Potterites, was an astonishing opportunity to experience first-hand some of the hundreds of thousands of props, sets and costumes that were hand-crafted for the Harry Potter films. Every item on display on the tour is genuine, from the eye-popping bigature of Hogwarts itself to the 17,000 hand-made wand boxes from Olivanders. You could take your place in the Great Hall, distinguished by its genuine Yorkshire flagstones, check the propriety of your uniform in the Mirror of Esired, take a snoop on Snape in his potions lesson, witness the cruelty of Voldemort's table, stroll down Diagon Alley



or take a gander at the Knight bus - as well as take your turn to be green-screened onto a broomstick or drink Butterbeer. The tour, of course, culminated in the gift shop - an Aladdin's Cave where most of us were forced to window shop rather than spend our cash due to the prices!

The day was an amazing insight into the hard-work and scale that goes into recreating on screen what an author can create at the stroke of a pen, and certainly sated our Potter palates!

Scott Sisters' Netball Success

Darcey Scott, Year 8, and her sister Mitzi, Year 10, have enjoyed some fantastic netballing success this season. They both train at the Maidenhead performance club, Eagles, in addition to playing hockey for Reading HC and representing the school at hockey, netball, rounders and athletics.

Darcey has been playing GA, C and WA in the Eagles U13 squad, which qualified at the start of the season to play in the highly competitive South Region League. She also successfully trialled for the County Satellite Netball Academy and was selected to represent Berkshire in the Netball South Play Day in Chichester.

Mitzi has been playing GA and WA for Eagles in the adult Berkshire Premier League. She has also made three appearances in the U19 South Region League, alongside former St Gabriel's pupil, Georgia Forsyth. Mitzi was selected for U16 County Academy training, which she attends weekly in Windsor. She also represented Berkshire at a Netball South Academy Play Day in Chichester, under the watchful eye of the England Netball regional selectors.

Parc Astérix



Early on 23 June, Year 8 arrived at school ready to embark on a trip to France. Before we set off we were told about the Calais strike. Not knowing how much this was going to affect our journey, we continued on our trip. After a tedious drive down to Dover, spirits were raised when we were taken to Dover Castle whilst we waited for our ferry. We were meant to go on the 12.00 noon ferry but eventually boarded at 5.00pm, arriving in France around 7.30pm. We stopped off at Flunch for dinner and arrived at the hotel at 12.30am.

On Wednesday morning we had breakfast and departed the hotel to get to Parc Astérix, which thankfully was a shorter journey! The park was highly anticipated by the St Gabriel's girls and it was a great excitement to be there. We barely queued at any of the attractions, with the exception of Oziris but it was worth waiting for. At the end of the day the whole year got on to Le Cheval de Troie which was really fun. In the evening, we went on the coach into busy Paris. We stopped off for dinner and then continued to the Arc de Triomphe, which we climbed at about 10.00pm. The view from the top of the building was amazing and we were able to see the Eiffel Tower's lights turn on. After some discussion with the teachers, they eventually agreed to visit the Eiffel tower. We stood right next to it and spent some time taking photographs and admiring the sight.

Early the next morning we began our journey back to England. This included stopping at a supermarket to buy our picnic which we later ate at the archaeological park, where we watched an entertaining display of fire making.

Thank you to all the teachers who came and made the trip so enjoyable.

Izzy Mannion & Darcey Scott

Year 8 to Tate Britain

During the Summer Term, Year 8 went to the Tate Britain to explore how the depiction of people has evolved from the Victorian era into the 20th Century.

The foyer had an installation art work that got several groups asking the age old question, 'Is it Art?'

The young artists marvelled at the painting technique of the English Pre-Raphaelite School. The major 'hit' by general

agreement were the drawings and sculptures of the British artist, Henry Moore.

We hope to encourage an equally strong turn-out for the Art Department trip to the Henry Moore Foundation, where students will be able to gain deeper insights into Moore's working methods and his international significance.

Code Breaking

"Right, you have precisely six minutes. Go!" So began the first of several code breaking activities that pupils from Year 8 and Year 9 were involved in during our inaugural Cryptography Day in June. We tried to recreate Bletchley Park of the 1940s in MFL2 so no air conditioning, no comfort breaks and definitely no chocolate.

Throughout the day, girls were introduced to the art of cryptography through the ages. We created our own Caesar Ciphers and moved on to secure ciphers as practised by Mary Queen of Scots (not very secure as it turned out...she was executed!) Later on we tackled rail fence encryption and matrix encryption whilst also watching clips from *The Imitation Game*.

The film threw up lots of talking points, not least the weight of responsibility on the shoulders of Alan Turing and his team of code breakers at Bletchley Park. They faced the same dilemma that successful code breakers have faced throughout history...how to use the information successfully gathered without alerting the enemy that their code system had been decrypted. WW2 was shortened by at least two years and millions of lives were saved but Turing and his team lived with the hideous reality that some messages they had decoded could not be acted upon lest the Germans became suspicious that Enigma had been broken and they created an even more complex one to crack. Truly heart-breaking life and death decisions had to be taken. This gave the work of the Year 8 and Year 9 code breakers added gravitas as we set their final decrypting challengeat 3.30pm in hot conditions and with no help whatsoever. They entered in to the spirit of the event and took up the challenge as I said for the final time..."Right, you have precisely six minutes. Go!"

Winners of the 2015 Cryptography Challenge in Year 9 were Tyra Byers and Sofia Gilks. In Year 8, the winners were Lottie Swainston and Mia Ince. The overall Cryptographer of 2015 was Amber Evans. Well done to everyone who took part in the day's event.

Mr Mannion & Mrs Haywood Smith



TeenTech 2015

TeenTech is an opportunity to learn about careers in engineering and technology whilst having fun. A team of 10 girls from Year 8 and Year 9 spent the day carrying out challenges, including assembling a Lego car inside a glove box (used to handle hazardous substances). The group also had to come up with an invention to make life better and chose a security system, which relied on fingerprint recognition rather than fobs. The St Gabriel's team won AWE's Lego Car Challenge and have been invited to visit their Orion laser facility.

Olympic Park, Stratford

In March, Year 9 went to the Olympic Park. The tour began by looking at the original shopping centre in Stratford and completing a survey to see how the shops had changed since the building of the Olympic Park. To gain a personal view of this we conducted a survey with local people to see what their opinion was. This created a huge amount of conversation, with one lady making a new friend in the bus queue from it! We surveyed the area in terms of environmental quality and were able to compare our results to the new shopping centre, Westfield. We carried on our journey through the Olympic Park to compare the different housing areas. The overall impression of the legacy of the Olympic Park was a positive one.



The Woman in Black Review

In February, Year 9 went to see a production of *The Woman in Black* at the Oxford Playhouse in support of their study of The Gothic. This is Anna Stirk's review.

The Woman in Black is a master class in acting, tension and audience manipulation. For the first few minutes, it is deceptively light-hearted and comical. You almost start to wonder if its fearsome reputation is exaggerated, but then the play within the play begins and the tension is quickly ramped up, then dropped, then raised...and so on. The lighting is impeccably well-timed and leaves no room for doubt as to what is going on. Other visual aids, such as the fog when Kipps is lost on the moor, are used to great effect. However, other parts of the set could do with sharpening up. The projected image of Eel Marsh House is like a cartoon and the graveyard, which may have been effective 20 years ago, now looks tired and shabby. In this case, especially in regard to scenery and props, less is definitely more. The entire play was conducted with the use of three chairs, a crate and a rack of clothes. Even the dog, Spider, is left to the audience's imagination. Watching *The Woman in Black* requires you to suspend your disbelief and



allow yourself to be immersed in the gothic experience. It is an immensely frightening play with a well-deserved reputation.

Year 9 Classics to Bath

In June, Year 9 went on a Classics trip to the Roman Baths. We listened to the audio guide to absorb as much information as possible about the baths dedicated to the Roman goddess Minerva. We also spoke to some of the bath attendants and a Roman centurion, who kindly posed for a "portrait" (selfie) with us. We got to taste some spring water, which was disgusting, and made an offering of coins to the goddess Minerva.

Charlotte Culley & Erin Horne



Senior School Maths Challenge

In February, girls from Years 9–11 entered the Intermediate Maths Challenge. The Maths Department would like to congratulate the following certificate winners:

- Bronze:** Tori McAlister, Hannah Scarfe, Charlotte Culley, Tara Conway, Alice McGonnell, Lottie Hutton, Megan Clark, Lauren Swain, Ellen Reed, Carli Nicholls, Millie Marbus, Amie Payne, Anisha Malli, Jemima Croggon, Holly Hathaway, Maddy Ashman & Abi Osborne
- Silver:** Anna Stirk, Katherine Lazarus, Verity Benson, Savina Sangha (Best in Year 10) & Elizabeth Miller (Best in Year 11)
- Gold:** Rowan Saltmarsh (Best in Year 9 and Best in School). Rowan also qualified for the next stage of the competition, The Grey Kangaroo.

A team of Year 8 and Year 9 students took part in the Team Maths Challenge at Horris Hill. They competed in four rounds, including a cross-number, a relay race and a challenging mini relay. They all thoroughly enjoyed the day and it was great to see them working together to fine-tune their mathematical reasoning.

Outward Bound 2015

At 7.00am on a bright Monday morning, Year 9 set off on a once in a lifetime trip to the Outward Bound Centre in Aberdovey. When we arrived we were allocated rooms, and then promptly started packing gigantic rucksacks for an expedition which was to start the next day. The following morning, after a lovely breakfast, we embarked on an 18km trek, which would last two days. I have some amazing memories from this expedition, and will remember them for years to come. Slightly dishevelled and extremely muddy, we arrived back at the centre the next day. However, there was no relaxation time for us! We lit a campfire and reflected on the good and bad aspects of the trek. A much loved phrase from our instructor was: "Even better if". The following morning we hiked, most of us rather grumpily, to a nearby town from which we canoed around the coastline of the Estuary. When we thought we had finished for the week, we were all offered the thrilling prospect of jumping off the jetty. Everybody had a go and we all felt very good about ourselves afterwards. The week was absolutely brilliant and Year 9 would like to say a massive thank you to the teachers who took us.

Cosima Woodard



The aim of our week at the Outward Bound Trust in Wales was to challenge ourselves and develop our team-building skills.

We took part in a range of activities, including jog and dip, an expedition and sailing. Each activity was designed to push us out of our comfort zone, while gaining new skills and developing as a team. The activities were fun and challenging, bringing out a different side to people and demonstrating what we were good at. We were also trying out things we had not done before, like sailing. My favourite activity was the expedition, where we walked for 18km carrying all our supplies in huge heavy rucksacks on our backs. We trekked up and down three mountains and camped in the most beautiful place I have ever seen. Using our map reading skills we had to plan our own route. Overall, I think this trip was amazing and it has given us a fantastic start to Year 10, both individually and as a year group.

Emily Evans

To Kill a Mockingbird

The Mayflower Theatre in Southampton was our destination, with Year 9 and Year 10 girls, to see a stage adaptation of Harper Lee's American classic. Often quoted as a favourite work, the theatre company had a great deal to live up to in order to do justice to such a brilliantly written novel. Sometimes novels, when adapted

for the stage, seem to lack something in terms of their power, as so much of this is communicated through the narrative description.

This production dealt cleverly with this issue, however, as the entire company came on stage at the beginning and read, in their own accents, from the novel. Mostly, actors stayed on stage throughout, sitting with their novels and out of character to give a permanent sense of the text.

The scenes seemed to grow before our eyes, as characters came on, donning their costumes, writing on the raked stage in chalk to indicate the settings for the novel: 'Our House,' 'The Dump,' 'Miss Maudie's' and so on. The props came and went, often lifted and carried from the side of the stage: a bed, a chair, a lamp, a table - simple things that represented the simple, poor lives of the deep south of America during The Depression.

The acting was nothing short of superb, especially from Atticus Finch and the young girl who played Scout. Atticus evoked memories of Gregory Peck in the film version with his inner calm and generosity of character. Scout exuded Scoutish character, both confident yet evoking pathos in the audience. At several moments I found myself with tears in my eyes, moved by the scenes depicted on stage that have the same effect on me when read from the page. Towards the end, when the shadowy and mysterious neighbour finally emerged, Scout's 'Hey, Boo,' as she took his hand, was truly moving to witness.

Ms Hall

Election Hustings

In the run-up to the general election, St Gabriel's hosted an election hustings to encourage students to engage more with the political and parliamentary process. Richard Benyon, Conservative MP, Jonny Roberts (Labour), Judith Bunting (Liberal Democrats) and Catherine Anderson (UKIP) spoke about their political beliefs and plans for the future.



The sole area where the four candidates were in complete agreement was that young people must vote. Richard Benyon, MP, stated that 'this election is more about the future of the young than anyone else'. Judith Bunting also said that 'you've got no right to complain if you don't take part'. Catherine Anderson added that 'no vote is no democracy'.

The audience, however, focused on university tuition fees and student loans. One member of the audience was particularly concerned about how rising university living costs are putting young people off applying for university.

9S Visit Bayford House Residential Home

"Brian, would you like to meet some girls from St Gabriel's. They have come for a chat!" "No! I'm watching the tennis!"

The girls giggled and moved on to the next room with Chrissy, the manager of Bayford House. The school has established a strong link with the residential care home in Stockcross and we have enjoyed several visits over the last few years. It is a lovely experience to visit and chat to the residents and it does us no harm when a member of the older generation, like Brian, tells it as it is. If he does not want to chat to us then he is perfectly entitled to say so! It was swelteringly hot on the day of our visit and this had consequences for the elderly residents for whom such heat can cause discomfort and distress. Many preferred not to take part because of fatigue and those that did were clearly making a big effort. It made us all appreciate that getting old is not easy.

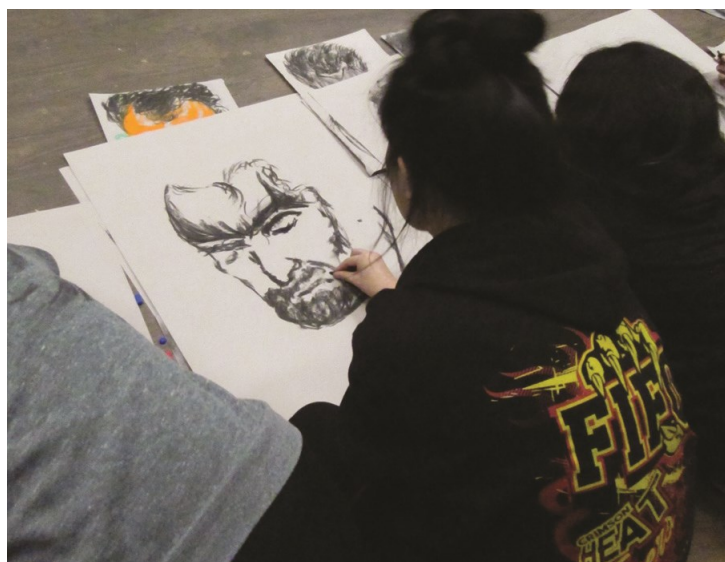
Bubbles was more than happy to chat to us and find out about life at St Gabriel's. As a resident of Bucklebury for over 40 years she had lots of stories to tell of life in the village and its famous residents. We all wanted to know why she was called Bubbles. Her father noticed that she loved blowing bubbles as a child and the name stuck. Bubbles is now in her 80s. Madeleine lived in Mombasa for 20 years and talked quietly about extraordinary experiences on safari. What would you do if a lone elephant approached the family car with its trunk raised? Reggie played professional cricket for Kent; Peggy was a worried evacuee from Dulwich, who found herself in Mortimer village hall in September 1939 waiting to be taken in by a family from the area. She found a home and later met her future husband in the village.

The girls enjoyed lots of other conversations with lovely people who are never shy to voice their opinions and make every visit a special and rewarding event. As we left, Chrissy thanked us and asked if we would like to come back because 'the residents got an awful lot out of the visit.' They were not the only ones!

RAA Portraiture Workshop

GCSE and A level artists took part in a Royal Academy of Arts drawing day based on portraiture.

Students embarked on a journey of discovery with a visiting artist and model. While exploring creative approaches to image-making, they were encouraged to leave behind previous ideas about drawing. The theatre became an artist's studio and pupils worked on the floor, in a large circle around the model using charcoal and



large sheets of paper. The workshop presented pupils with a synthesis between hand and mind as fast-flowing exercises from observation and imagination interacted with ideas about artists' creative processes and behaviours.

Exercises were designed to stretch the students' notion of what drawing encompasses and how it is a creative process in which risks are taken, responses explored, potential solutions compared, instincts acted on, mistakes made and exciting results achieved.

Everyone that took part had a fantastic day and built up a strong body of work that could be incorporated into their up-coming examination projects.

Ice Cream Profits Soar Under Scorching Sun



Year 10 students, Hannah Bowley, Jess Lang and Bethan Thomas, ran a mini enterprise during the Summer Term to enhance their understanding of some of the business theories they have learned this year and to give them the experience of working together in a team. They spent many hours deciding what they would do, finally deciding to sell ice creams.

The students set about their market research, analysing the results of over 200 questionnaires to decide on the most popular products to sell and the times and locations where their potential customers would want to buy them. The weather was going to be a major factor affecting sales, so the dates were set for the end of June and early July. It was an important part of the venture that the business would run more than once, to give the students a more realistic experience of running a business, as they would have to count stock, re-order and keep daily records.

The business was named Sunshine Paradise and its logo was of a candy coloured ice cream. There was an extensive marketing campaign, involving posters, assembly notices and other advertising materials which built up the anticipation and reminded potential customers where and when they could buy. Before the business could start the girls had to research the costs and source the essential items they would need. Forecasts were drawn up for cash flow, break-even and profit and loss.

Over the course of three scorching hot days, the team sold hundreds of ice-creams and made a profit of £237.00 from which they chose to make a donation of £27.00 to a charity supporting victims of the Nepalese earthquake. The weather certainly played a part in their success, but the team are to be congratulated for their careful planning, financial control, researching, teamwork and decision-making, customer service skills and also for the sheer hard physical work in very high temperatures!

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Over a few evenings and two weekends during the Summer Term, 30 girls from Year 10 completed the expedition section of their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award.



The first weekend away was the practice walk, where the girls got to grips with key skills such as cooking on a stove and pitching a tent, whilst also completing a 25km walk with heavy backpacks on!

The second weekend away was the assessed expedition. The girls had to contend with huge hills, high winds and some formidable external assessors... but they kept going and ultimately triumphed. They all passed this section and went home tired but proud, each wearing a well-deserved gold medal. Congratulations to all who took part. You're all winners!

Jane Austen Tea Party

Early in the summer term, the English Department hosted a Jane Austen experience for Year 10. The girls entered enthusiastically into the spirit of the times, fashioning an array of 'Austen-esque' costumes (some a great deal more authentic than others!) ready for their tea party, recitations and dancing on the lawn.



The girls brought in a splendid variety of cakes and other teatime fare which we served in the theatre, along with tea. Mrs Archer and Ms Hall raided their china cabinets for an eclectic mix of plates, cups and saucers, and other teatime paraphernalia. During the afternoon, tea consumption was interspersed with music recitations and readings from the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

After tea we made the most of the lovely weather by performing a Georgian dance, choreographed by Olivia Barr and friends, outside the Oval Room on the lawn.

All in all, it was a fabulous afternoon, giving the girls a different insight into the life of a young lady in Regency England.

Life on a Nuclear Submarine

In March, Bob, one of our bus drivers, gave a talk to Year 11 that linked in with our study of the Cold War. Bob gave an intriguing insight into life working and living on a nuclear submarine. He explained that the living quarters were very constricted so he could only take limited supplies with him for the entire duration of a mission lasting months. Bob also provided a clear view on how he personally felt about the rising tension between the West and the USSR in the Cold War. One of the more surprising points about life aboard the submarine was that submariners were expected to remain quiet, making little noise, in order to stay undetected whilst they were spying on enemy territory. Nor could they use strongly scented toiletries as they could be traced by the USSR. Thank you Bob for giving such a fascinating and engaging talk.

Lauren Atkins

Year 10 to Blenheim Palace

On 25 June, Year 10 visited Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire. This trip tied in with the 'Development of Britain' topic in our GCSE history course, where we are studying Winston Churchill.

We started the day with a walk to the victory monument of the First Duke of Marlborough, who defeated the French in the War of the Spanish Succession. We walked through the beautiful grounds designed by Capability Brown and soaked up the sunshine.

The palace itself was magnificent. My favourite story was about the Malvern College boys who were evacuated to Blenheim Palace during WWII. It took a long time for them to be served dinner so one of them smuggled in a copy of *The Spectator* every day to read whilst he waited for the other boys to finish. We admired the paintings and saw one of a young Winston Churchill dressed as a girl! We also learned about the rich history of the Churchill family right up until the present day.

Philippa Lazarus



Year 12 2015 Induction Week



We know how essential it is that students make the right choice of A level subjects which is why induction week is so important.

Throughout the week girls took part in lessons which gave them a real flavour for what their subjects involved at A level. Holiday work was set so that students start back in September prepared to flourish in their studies. The girls also attended study skills sessions, providing them with information about the newer, more independent skills they will need to work successfully at this level.

The week was not all hard work. We spent a day in London at the amazing V&A Alexander McQueen Savage Beauty exhibition and went to an evening performance of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* at the Mayflower Theatre, Southampton. There were also team building and leadership activities which provoked much thought and laughter. The girls were a delight and very welcoming to the new members of our community.

We are really looking forward to working closely with them all over the next two years.

Ms Hall & Mrs Willetts

Zulu Wins Best Business Plan

Since September, 11 girls in Year 12 have taken part in the Young Enterprise Scheme. As part of this, we had to set up a business from scratch and learn along the way how a business works. We decided our product was going to be brightly coloured waterproof shower speakers because we felt it was a unique product that we



were interested in. Throughout the year we have completed company documents, sold our products at trade fairs and managed our own accounts. Overall, it has been a highly educational and interesting experience, and we had fun along the way.

We were delighted to win the award for Best Business Plan in the Young Enterprise regional finals.

Izzy James

200th Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo

On 18 June, a commemoration service was held at St Paul's Cathedral to mark the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. St Gabriel's was one of 200 schools participating in a charity project, led by historian Dan Snow, and Mr Lewis and I were lucky enough to have the opportunity to attend.

The service included a number of contemporary hymns, written to commemorate the battle, and a number of speeches. We heard the accounts of soldiers and officers through their letters and recollections: these were taken from English, French, and Allied soldiers, emphasizing the respectful, as opposed to nationalistic, nature of the service. The extracts illustrated the broader picture of Waterloo, progressing through the rising tensions before the battle, the heroism and machinations involved, and culminating in the final victory tempered with grief for the lives lost. The service was both fascinating and poignant; the remembrance of a defining moment in European history and a testament to the sacrifice and valour of the soldiers.

The approach that this project took to the battle was both respectful and educational. It has done a great deal to rekindle the fading memory of this formative moment in history and I feel privileged to have attended.

Emily Meredith



Oxford Union Schools' Debating Competition

Once again, St Gabriel's entered a team for the Oxford Union Schools' Debating Competition. We had an outstanding team: Christopher Olive who is St Gabriel's outgoing Head of Debating and Emily Meredith who has recently been appointed Head of Debating.

The team participated in the regional finals in February and won a place in the finals. Christopher and Emily took part in four debates, which followed the parliamentary style of debating with two school teams speaking for the government and two for the opposition. They engaged with motions from 'This House regrets the rise of the women's magazine' to 'This House would torture'. The standard of debate was extremely high and Christopher and Emily gained considerable experience through the demands of the competition and the excellent feedback from the Oxford students. It was an exhilarating day and we look forward to competing again.

Hampton Court



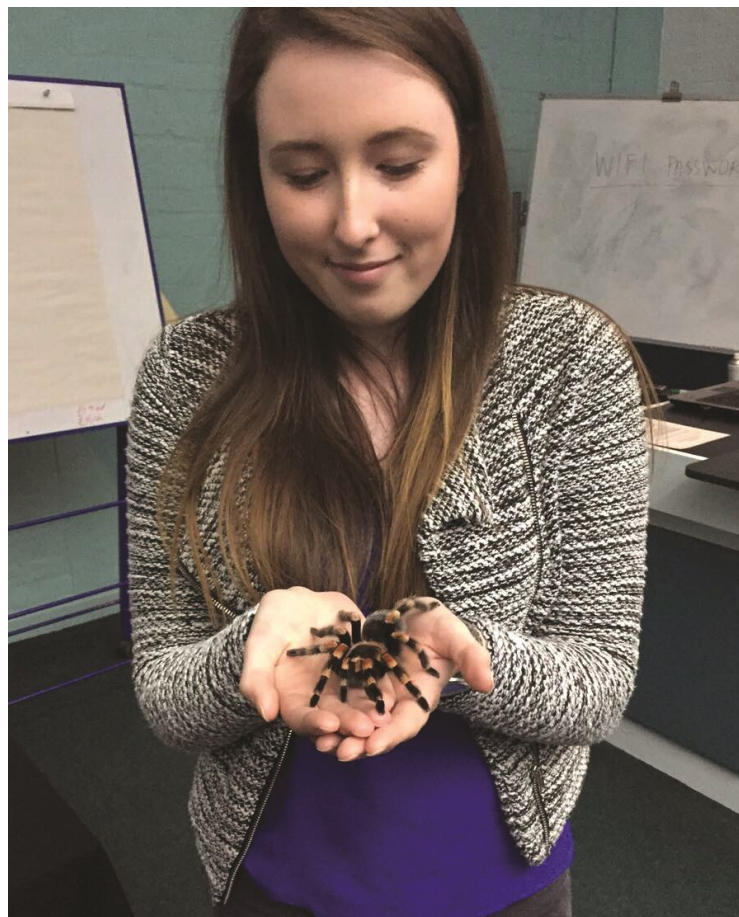
Our visit to Hampton Court will be one that we'll never forget! Coming into personal contact with Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII and Cardinal Wolsey (or at least actors dressed as them!) was something that every young historian dreams of. Our day entailed a short lesson on the history of the palace, a guided tour, and time to explore on our own. Needless to say, walking in the footsteps of such well-known monarchs was overwhelming, and we thoroughly enjoyed the day! A shout out to Mr Lewis for not getting too lost on the way down in the minibus!

Emily Thompson

Psychopathology and ZSL London Zoo

As part of A level psychology we study psychopathology and, within this, our class have chosen to focus on the anxiety disorder of phobias. In order to further our understanding and gain first-hand experience in the field, we embarked on a journey to central London to visit ZSL London Zoo.

Our day started bright and early in Newbury, where we caught a train to Paddington and then navigated our way around the Tube (trying not to lose Libby along the way) to Regent's Park, where we enjoyed a leisurely walk to the main entrance of the zoo.



Once inside, we had a small amount of time to explore the habitats of our favourite animals, which included giraffes, meerkats and zebras.

Quickly, our phobias workshop rolled around. We gathered in the Education Centre to meet, John Clifford, a clinical hypnotherapist, who gave us a very informative introduction to a range of phobias from the common to the unusual, their symptoms and triggers.

We then had more free time to explore. By this time, however, we were all hungry and decided to head to the café for lunch before meeting up for our phobias workshop.

The second part of the workshop required a small amount of bravery as a tarantula was going to join us! Luckily, and in line with our study of psychological therapies, John hypnotised us using a variety of visualisation and relaxation techniques for around 20 minutes. This resulted in most of us falling half asleep! He then encouraged us to hold Rosie the tarantula. Surprisingly, most people eventually plucked up the courage to hold Rosie with the exception of only a few of the more severe phobics. John said these people would require a more holistic and consistent approach.

Olivia Evans

Charity Ball

During the Spring Term, students in Year 12 organised a charity ball at Donnington Grove. Guests enjoyed a three course meal, raffle and auction and then danced the night away. We were delighted to have raised a considerable amount for this term's chosen charity, the Sacred Valley Project (Peru), and learned a great deal about the hard work and organisation needed to make an event like this a success.



On 28 March, 22 girls from Years 10-13 embarked on an incredible and unforgettable trip to China.

On arriving at Beijing Airport, we met our lovely and considerate tour guide Michael. We then set off to explore the park where the Olympics were held and, afterwards, visited Beijing Zoo, where we saw the famous giant pandas.

The next day was the most memorable experience - The Great Wall. The furthest we managed to climb was up to the 13th station, where we witnessed an amazing view of the landscape and the beautiful surroundings. Many of us were also asked for photographs with the Chinese citizens as they had never come across such a large group of Western tourists. On the same day, we visited the jade factory, where we were given a lesson in making jade structures and were able to purchase souvenirs!

In addition to this, we visited Tiananmen Square; the Chinese Museum; the Great Hall of the People; the mausoleum where President Mao's body is preserved, and the Forbidden City, where the Chinese emperors lived and ruled with their rigid rules and regulations. During a very full few days, we also managed to take in a Chinese acrobatics show, the Summer Palace, a pearl factory and a Chinese supermarket.

On our last day we visited the Temple of Heaven, which has a huge outdoor space where many retired people go to exercise - we even got the chance to join in with an elderly dance class! Afterwards we had a traditional tea tasting ceremony. We then visited the hutongs and got to ride in a rickshaw, which was very exciting. The hutongs are the original family dwellings in Beijing, and we spoke to one owner, who told us stories about her experience of the Cultural Revolution. After visiting the hutongs we went to a more modern China, the silk market, a huge marketplace filled with vendors selling every item you could possibly imagine. We tested our bargaining skills and got some very good deals! We then went to Wangfujing Street, which is much like Oxford Street, before heading for the street food market, which offered a whole variety of dishes from traditional Chinese noodles to deep fried scorpions! The braver people among us tried the more unusual food and found it to be surprisingly tasty!

Altogether, it was a remarkable and extraordinary experience that none of us will ever forget.



DANCE DEPARTMENT



Energy levels were high as 126 children took to the stage for this year's Dance Showcase. Dancers in Years 3-11 wowed their audience at The Arlington Arts Centre with a magical programme of dance from ballet, tap and acro to Rock 'n' Roll 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 audience. Several budding young choreographers had an opportunity to create sections of work for the show and their pieces were inspirational. The backstage and technical teams made this an incredibly professional and slick show.

I loved dancing in the show because....

'I liked seeing all the smiling faces and getting changed into lots of different cool costumes.' **Aggie Rose** (Year 5)

'The parents' clapping made me feel bubbly and proud.' **Alice Rawlins** (Year 5)

'I got to watch the seniors and when I was dancing I couldn't stop smiling at my Mummy and Daddy.' **Ismay Gallup** (Year 3)

'I liked feeling nervous and then pouring it all out on stage.' **Amelie Curtis** (Year 5)

'I enjoyed working together with everyone and the excitement we all felt just before going on stage.' **Ellen Reed** (Year 10)

MUSIC

The Music Department has been in full swing again this term, not only preparing girls for all sorts of public examinations, but providing high quality performances throughout the term. In May, a group of St Gabriel's flautists performed at the Abingdon Music Festival, demonstrating an extremely high standard of playing. We were delighted that Diani Flower (Year 7) was invited back to perform at the final gala concert, so impressed were the judges by her beautiful tone and technical assurance.

Lunchtime concerts, GCSE recordings, ABRSM and Trinity examination performances, a delightful appearance by Madeline and Juliette Ashman (guitar and vocal duo) at the Watermill Theatre's summer garden party, the outstanding 20 piece band providing all the music for the Year 6 production of The Lion King... The list goes on. The term ended in style with the Strawberries & Cream Concert showcasing a truly remarkable variety of talents from Year 7 to Sixth Form. The sun shone and we were able to enjoy our strawberries outside for the first time in about five years!

There are some staff changes to announce this term. We are very sorry to be losing our excellent guitar and drum kit teacher Mr Nick Burrage, who is moving on to become a classroom music teacher. His teaching and support of pupils, both individually and in bands, has been fantastic and he will be missed. In his place we have two new and dynamic teachers, Miss Sian Monaghan (drum kit) and Mr David Birnie (guitar). As well as having teaching backgrounds both play in rock bands, and they will be bringing their enthusiasm and performing experience into the department. We are all very excited!

Helen Adams	Theory	05	Merit
Juliette Ashman	Singing	06	Distinction
Juliette Ashman	Piano	06	Merit
Juliette Ashman	Trumpet	06	Distinction
Madeline Ashman	Electric Guitar	08	Merit
Lauren Ashworth-Donn	Piano	01	Pass
Chloe Balls	Flute	01	Pass
Chloe Balls	Flute	02	Pass
Olivia Barr	Clarinet	03	Merit
Elizabeth Barratt	Descant Recorder	02	Distinction
Elizabeth Barratt	Descant Recorder	03	Merit
Verity Benson	Violin	05	Pass
Emma Blake	Alto Saxophone	03	Pass
Megan Bradd	Piano	01	Merit
Anneliese Brown	Cello	02	Pass
Imogen Brown	Cello	01	Distinction
Imogen Brown	Cello	02	Distinction
Natalie Carpenter	Flute	03	Pass
Freya Carter	Piano	01	Pass
Rosalie Coffey	Singing	03	Merit
Jessica Collett	Piano	02	Pass
Martha Croggon	Cello	07	Pass
Martha Croggon	Piano	05	Merit
Francesca Cunningham	Descant Recorder	01	Merit
Francesca Cunningham	Descant Recorder	02	Merit
Ria Deshmukh	Flute	02	Pass
Charlotte Dick	Alto Saxophone	04	Merit
Emily Ducker	Flute	04	Pass
Elizabeth Ferneley	Piano	02	Merit
Elizabeth Ferneley	Piano	03	Distinction
Jessica Gill	Flute	08	Distinction
Jessica Gill	Harp	02	Distinction
Eve Glitz	Flute	02	Pass
Elizabeth Hutton	Singing	02	Merit
Polly Jones	Double Bass	05	Pass
Katherine Lazarus	Flute	02	Merit



Tilda Leach	Singing	03	Merit
Freya Leighton-Jones	Saxophone	02	Merit
Matilda Ley	Piano	Prep	Pass
Eliza Mackworth-Praed	Flute	02	Merit
Isobel Mannion	Piano	06	Merit
Isobel Mannion	Flute	06	Pass
Emilia Marbus	Piano	06	Merit
Emilia Marbus	Violin	08	Merit
Victoria McAlister	Piano	03	Pass
Giorgia McCann	Singing	04	Pass
Alice McGonnell	Cello	07	Merit
Isabella McLean	Piano	04	Merit
Emily Meredith	Violin	08	Distinction
Emily Meredith	Piano	08	Distinction
Isabelle Moore	Oboe	03	Merit
Lauren Mukono	Singing	04	Merit
Poppy Parker	Singing	03	Pass
Isobel Peacock	Theory	05	Pass
Zara Peel	Descant Recorder	01	Merit
Antigone Pollard	Cello	01	Pass
Sophia Rostron	Cello	04	Pass
Lily Rostron	Piano	01	Merit
Anjelika Ryder	Piano	03	Pass
Talia Saltmarsh	Flute	03	Merit
Inisa Sangha	Piano	04	Pass
Savina Sangha	Piano	05	Pass
Rysa Saujani	Piano	Prep	Pass
Eve Saunders	Singing	03	Pass
Lauren Scanlan	Saxophone	01	Pass
Darcey Scott	Flute	02	Distinction
Darcey Scott	Flute	03	Merit
Lucy Simpson	Singing	05	Pass
Ashleigh Sirs	Singing	03	Merit
Holly Spencer	Flute	02	Pass
Kirsten Steel	Cello	02	Merit
Libby Stewart-Power	Piano	07	Distinction
Anna Stirk	B Flat Cornet	03	Distinction
Anna Stirk	Piano	05	Merit
Lottie Swainston	Violin	07	Distinction
Katherine Sylvester	Alto Saxophone	01	Merit
Georgia Ward	Singing	05	Pass
Tamsin Whitelegge	Violin	01	Merit
Freya Whitford	Drum Kit	05	Distinction
Evie Williams	Piano	Prep	Pass
Cosima Woodard	Violin	04	Pass

Spring Term

Hockey

Year 7 had a very successful hockey season winning the outdoor tournament and they were runners up in the indoor competition. The girls have made great progress and the stand out player of the season was Olivia Jackson.

The Year 8 squad boasts over 20 players, all of whom have contributed to an amazing season. At the St Mary's Ascot Tournament, the team narrowly missed out on a semi-final spot. The most improved first team player goes to Izzy Mannion with the best player award going, jointly, to Darcey Scott and Esther McElvenny. The most improved second team player is Emma Goodyer and the best player goes to Maddie Simpson.

Although the Spring Term was a hockey term, the Year 8 team were invited to play at the Prior Park netball tournament. The team won all their matches and went through to the semi-finals where they faced their hosts. After a tough and physical match our team won by a margin of two goals and faced St Hugh's in the final. Despite an unexpected injury, the team managed to regroup and pulled off an amazing victory. Isabelle Ryder performed exceptionally well and was awarded Player of the Tournament.

The most improved first team netball player award goes, jointly, to Allannah Weaver and Maddie Simpson. The best player award goes to Isabelle Ryder and Darcey Scott.

The Year 9 hockey team have gone from strength to strength. The team started with success against local schools and went on to win the district tournament with goals scored against a fantastic team from Downe House, confirming their deserved spot as number one in the district. A special mention must go to the captain, Victoria Williams, for being selected to play in the county team.

Year 10 played hockey fixtures during both the Autumn and Spring Terms, culminating in the Berkshire Championships in March. Although the start was slow, the team came back fighting with great team play from defence all the way through to attack. We lost a hard fought match to Downe House but beat a very strong St Mary's X1 and won convincingly against LVS, finishing the tournament 3rd overall.

Netball

During the Spring Term, the Year 10 A and B teams have competed in the Year 10 & 11 District League. The A team have put in some very good performances, winning the majority of their fixtures comfortably and just losing out to a strong Downs and Park House team. The district tournament ended in a challenging semi-final against The Downs, where in extra time the team showed some control and fluency in defence but lost by three goals.

Year 11 committed to netball this year with a renewed level of energy and perseverance. During lesson time they have worked on their skills and fitness to improve as a team and individuals. It was good to see them compete in the district tournament and win their third match against the Downs.

Summer Term

Athletics

A number of athletics meetings have taken place this term and our squads have competed well. A special mention should go to Izzy Mannion and Sophie Bundock who went through to the County Finals.

Rounders

Year 9 have had a very successful term competing locally in the league and taking part in some friendly matches. The team developed their tactics in a close match against St Swithun's and took those skills into the district tournament, where the large squad won all their games.

Year 10 have had some great performances and the team have showed real improvement in their batting placement during the season. They were semi-finalists in the district tournament, losing to Little Heath but they managed to get their revenge in the league finals with a win by one run.

Trampolining

St Gabriel's competed in the District Trampolining Competition with great success. Megan Clarke came first as the highest scoring elite trampolinist and joined the West Berkshire squad at the County Championships in May. Success also came in the Year 9 and Year 10 novice section, with Molly Taylor, Maia Steele and Libby Stewart Power going through to the County Championships.

Kayaking

During the Spring Term, a number of Year 10 girls qualified to be U Canoe Activators and delivered lunchtime indoor canoeing sessions to the younger year groups. This term we managed to get out on the lake and swimming pool. Around 16 girls have been learning to kayak and their water and kayak confidence has grown over the weeks. Their 'no fear' approach to learning was wonderful to see especially the handstands on their kayaks!



Tennis

Tennis lessons started this term with our coach Simon Parker and will continue through in to the Autumn Term.

Sports Scholars and Leadership

The Sports Scholars had another inspirational day with Ian Rose, who represented the UK in Judo at the Paralympic Games. Through a number of workshops the girls challenged themselves, learning about the importance of good team work, good communication and effective goal setting.

Our Sports Ambassadors volunteered at the Sainsbury's School Games at Bisham Abbey and at Wellington College. On both occasions the girls attended the Berkshire Leadership Academy the day before in order to be put through their paces. They were part of a volunteer team of over 100 young people trained to help deliver the Level 3 school games.

SENIOR SCHOOL SPORT



Congratulations to Mitzi Scott, Phoebe Lake, and Natasha Akroyd, who were successful in applying to be part of the Berkshire Young Coaches Academy, which is run out of St Gabriel's. I am looking forward to seeing how their coaching philosophies develop through their volunteering within school and the community club setting.

Senior School Swimming Gala

The sun shone for the Senior School Swimming Gala and record numbers participated. All girls worked incredibly hard to represent their House with Chad collecting the Swimming Gala Cup.

Sports Presentation Evening

This year we held the inaugural Senior School Sports Presentation Evening to congratulate and celebrate the girls' sporting achievements both in and out of school. The double gold Paralympic medallist, Graham Edmunds, gave an inspirational talk and awarded the prizes. Congratulations to all the girls who have done so well in a range of sports from netball to riding! A special mention should go to Mitzi Scott who was voted Sports Personality of 2015.

Sports Day 2015

We had another glorious day for Sports Day and witnessed some tremendous sporting action! The winning House was Bede, however, congratulations should go to all who participated. It was a wonderful day of athleticism, cheering and laughter!



Equestrian Team

In October 2014, the St Gabriel's Show took place at the Berkshire College of Agriculture and was attended by around 150 children from schools around the region. Our team of individual riders rode well and came back with many rosettes and prizes.

Lottie, Elizabeth and Flora took part in the Godolphin Show Jumping and Jumping with Style Competition in May. The course consisted of 20 jumps, both show and cross-country, with each rider demonstrating the different styles of riding between the two. The girls achieved creditable marks, with Lottie eventually winning the class and qualifying for the NSEA Championships in October. Elizabeth and Flora also rode in the individual show jumping class.

St Gabriel's entered teams in all the show jumping classes at the Park House Show. Our teams came fifth in the 70cm class and third in the 90cm class.

Three of the Equestrian Team's youngest members, Phoebe, Olivia A and Araminta took part in The Manor Combined Training event. The girls did a dressage test and jumped a full course at 60cm. They did brilliantly, coming 4th in their first outing together. Phoebe also won Best Turned Out and was placed 6th individually.



Millie, Annabelle, Flora, Lottie and Elizabeth took part in the Cherwell Show, adding to St Gabriel's overall tally with a win in one class, second place in another and several individual placings.

Annabelle L and Bella have been training hard to get themselves and their ponies fit as they attempt to qualify for the Pony Club Junior Intermediate Endurance Championships.

Endurance riding involves covering a set distance within a given time and bringing the ponies back with heart rates of under 64bpm. Ponies are checked over before setting off and when they return by a farrier and a vet. The rides are between 3–4½ hours long, riding at quite a fast pace. Part of the skill of endurance is knowing when to push on and cover the ground and when to slow down into a steady rhythm to get the optimum speed and heart rate. Riders need to be good at map reading, too!

In April, Annabelle and Bella did their first training ride of the year, 32km in the New Forest. Their next ride was Cern Giant in Dorset, followed by Rockbourne. They now need one more qualifying ride to guarantee their place in the championships.

Diary Dates: The Autumn Term starts with the St Gabriel's Show on 10 October at Sparsholt College. Do come and support us!

I would like to pass on my thanks to all the girls and staff who have made my time at St Gabriel's so much fun and incredibly rewarding. St Gabriel's is a fabulous school and although not disappearing altogether, I will miss being part of its unique daily routine. I wish Laura Smith all the best and I know she will make a fabulous addition to the staff and school.

Maxine Smiles Cooke, Executive Director of Sport