



THE COLYTONIAN SPRING 2026

CELEBRATING OUR EVENTS, SPORTS AND STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENTS BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL 2026



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A MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.



In the poems of *A Shropshire Lad* by A. E. Housman, we are reminded of a simple but powerful truth: youth is precious, and life passes more quickly than we often realise. Though written over a century ago, these poems still speak clearly to the experience of being young today, full of hope, uncertainty, and quiet pressures.

As students, it is easy to feel that everything depends on success, grades, achievements, and recognition. Yet Housman's work gently challenges this idea. It suggests that success is not the most important measure of a life. Fame fades, victories pass, and even the brightest moments do not last forever. What endures instead are the qualities we build within ourselves: kindness, resilience, integrity, and the way we treat others.

The poems also remind us that it is natural to struggle. Feelings of sadness, confusion, or loneliness are not signs of weakness, but part of growing up. Rather than hiding these emotions, we are encouraged to face them honestly and to seek support when we need it. In doing so, we grow stronger and more understanding of others.

At the same time, *A Shropshire Lad* calls us to be mindful of our choices. Life is shaped not only by big decisions, but by small, everyday actions. The way we respond to pressure, the friends we choose, and the paths we take all help determine the kind of person we become.

Ultimately, the message is both gentle and urgent: make good use of your youth. Not by rushing or striving endlessly, but by living thoughtfully. Value your friendships, learn from your experiences, and take time to grow. For while youth does not last forever, the character you form during these years will stay with you for life.

I am so proud of our students as they are seizing the moment and making the most of the opportunities that come their way. This term alone we have witnessed great sporting success and endeavour, musical genius, dramatic delights and classrooms full of scholarship. This term students have won national competitions, competed in the finals of national competitions and simply done their best; through participation they have grown in character.

As Housman suggests, it is this character that will live with them for ever and enable them to flourish. At the Spring Concert on Tuesday evening, the school choirs sang beautifully and the soloists were magnificent. Congratulations to Aparajita, Jayden and Tomas and thank you for your uplifting voices. Another highlight was the arrival of an Old Colytonian Choir, students from a range of years came together and without much practice produced a stunning performance. We are a family school, and it was wonderful to see past students so keen to return to the school; once a student at the school, always a Colytonian - thank you!



It has been a very exciting time and next term will bring exams with thoughts turning to endings and new beginnings - more of that on our return. Best wishes to those in Year 11 and Year 13 who are revising for examinations and I very much hope that you can all find peace and happiness at the Easter time.

Happy Easter and Happy Passover to all those who celebrate.

“Think of all the beauty still left around you and be happy” - Anne Frank

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

The spring term: a term of change and progress. Journeys to and from school for staff and pupils move from the dusky dark to shining sunlight.

Temperatures climb and a procession of flora – snowdrop, crocus, daffodil – flower and flourish as the months march onwards. UCAS deadlines and university offer dates, subject choices and sports fixtures, all come and go. And the busy business of learning, of scholarship, goes quietly but steadily on.



As we look back on the spring term there is much to reflect upon, and much to be very proud of.

A much-delayed Government White Paper provides some indication of direction and allows the Senior Leadership team at Colyton Grammar to shape the strategy for the continued success of the school. The ingenuity and flexibility of this team to do so, plan, and then to implement, is greatly appreciated and admired by the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees has been thrilled to hear of the successes in almost every extra-curricular activity that diverse and talented pupil body has participated in. I have previously used this letter to list some of the more notable achievements of the preceding term but to do so here and now would need a long list that my column inches will not allow. Chess champs, F1 in Schools champs, winning local matches and attending national competitions in netball, hockey, football and rugby, music awards and a Spring Concert on the evening that I write this.

The Trustees applaud each and every one of you: the teachers and support staff that run the clubs and courses, the parents that support, and the students as they continue to excel.

Our core purpose is 'to enable all students, regardless of background, to flourish on highly selective courses at elite institutions and in their future lives'. These extra-curricular successes complement the delivery of this core purpose.

As university offers are received throughout this term it is clear that the school is supporting our students to grow and flourish. It should be a source of great pride to us all within the school that we are sending our students onto degrees at prestigious universities, and onwards into the world with the academic and real-world knowledge and experience to flourish in the 21st Century.

As the Board seeks to support the school in sustaining these outstanding outcomes, we see ahead challenging times for those involved in the provision of education. Central and local government budgets are reduced in real terms and frontline services in health, defence, justice, education and elsewhere are all required to do more, with less. To face this difficulty reality, the Board remains engaged with relevant bodies and departments and will support Mr Harris and his team as they seek to continue the long tradition of excellent educational provision at the school.

To this end, the Board extends its most sincere thanks to all of those that have signed up to the regular giving of the Student Experience Fund. We have been so pleased with the uptake, and do not take your support for granted. Your donations enable the triumphs, attainments and excellence you will have seen documented in the weekly letters from the Headteacher. Find out more about how you can support us [here](#).

On behalf of the Board of Trustees we would like to wish you all a restful Easter break, and to thank Mr. Harris, the Senior Leadership Team and all of the teachers and support staff at Colyton Grammar School for another term of outstanding educational achievement.

January

Our new **student leadership** team took to their new roles with passion and excitement

We held our annual **Y8 Cyber Day**, giving students an opportunity to learn about the importance of cyber security

February

35 of our students were offered places at **Oxford and Cambridge Universities**; 25% of Y13!

Y12 undertook their **work experience** placements; contributing to a wide range of organisations across the region, country, and indeed the entire globe

Our **Cabaret** performances took place, with nearly 400 attending

March

We celebrated **World Book Day** with costumes, games, and activities in the library

Exeter **Phoenix Gig** - Our student bands took to the stage for a night of rock n roll

Our two **STEM Racing Teams** attended the National Finals in Rotherham

The U16 netball squad finished 2nd in the country at the **Sisters N Sport National Finals**

The singers of CGS performed the **Fauré Requiem** in St. Andrew's Church

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

THE BIG PICTURE

WHAT HAS THIS TERM INVOLVED?

1085

Total number of students at CGS

58

Days of learning

290

Hours of learning per student
(Y7-11)

ATTENDANCE

95.9%

Whole school average attendance
over the term

Y8

The best year group for
attendance

DATA SNAPSHOT · DATA SNAPSHOT · DATA SNAPSHOT ·

THE BIG PICTURE

TRIPS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE THIS TERM

76

Number of
trips

9000

Number of students
taking part

165

Number of Period 3 ³/₄ clubs

MUSIC LESSONS

425

Music lessons per week

24

Music Groups/Ensembles

THE BIG PICTURE

SPORTING FIXTURES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE

56

Number of sporting fixtures this term

262

Number of students who have taken part

DESPITE MANY SPORTING FIXTURES BEING RAINED OFF AT THE START OF THE TERM, WE HAD SUCH SUCCESS AS THE TERM PROGRESSED.



A HUGE AMOUNT OF EFFORT GOES INTO THE ORGANISATION OF THESE FIXTURES SO A BIG THANK YOU TO THE PE DEPARTMENT WHO HAVE WORKED SO TIREDLESSLY THIS TERM!

DATA SNAPSHOT · DATA SNAPSHOT · DATA SNAPSHOT ·

TOP TERM STORIES

A chance to catch up on our amazing top term stories and an opportunity to read some unseen ones!



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

In January we announced our new Student Leadership Team.

With over 100 applications from our Year 12 students, it was an incredibly difficult task to narrow down our nominees. But the votes were counted and the new roles are as follows:



School captains:
Oscar F and Tallulah H



Deputy School Captains:
Jack T, Lily E, and Taran D.



Senior House Captains:
Srasta B, Amelia G, Daniel H, Daisy R, and Alma D.

We look forward to seeing what this exceptional team bring to our school community this year.

OXBRIDGE OFFERS

In 2025, a record 34 Colyton students secured offers from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

We are delighted that this year's Year 13 cohort has surpassed even that achievement, securing a total of 35 Oxbridge offers – another new record for the school, representing 25% of the year group.

Levels of competition for places at Oxford and Cambridge remains exceptionally high. Successful candidates must demonstrate not only outstanding grades but also deep subject knowledge and commitment well beyond the A Level curriculum. Their abilities are rigorously assessed through admissions tests and interviews.

Our students have received offers for an impressive range of courses – from Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic to Computer Science, and from Chinese to Law and Engineering. These achievements reflect an extraordinary amount of hard work and sustained dedication to scholarship, one of Colyton's core values.

We are very grateful to the subject specialists who supported students throughout their applications, and particularly to the wider school community – including parents and alumni – who provided invaluable interview practice.

In addition, to Oxbridge success, Year 13 students have received offers from a wide range of the most selective higher education provider in the UK. Students are competing for places at Ivy League institutions in the USA, with one student has awarded scholarships to both Pratt and Parsons School of Design in New York, two of the world's leading Art Schools. We are incredibly proud of their hard work and success.



CHARITY

Our second House Charity event of the year took place on Monday, and we are pleased to say that it has so far raised a total of £385. The 'Family Fortunes' event, brilliantly hosted by Taran D, saw 8 members of staff tested on questions that had been previously answered by students across the school.

Mrs Ilo, Ms Rust, Mr Pester and Mr Smith made up a team representing the Humanities, while Mr Lynch, Mrs Hudson, Mrs Davey and Mrs Bennett made up a team representing STEM subjects.

They were asked a range of questions, from 'Which teacher is most likely to be a secret agent?' to 'What piece of punctuation would you say is the most important?' It was the STEM team who were ultimately crowned the winners though, while a fantastic amount of student spectators cheered them on!

We'd like to say a huge thank you to the staff who took part and our Senior House Captains who helped to put the event together by sorting the advertising, sending out the surveys, putting together the PowerPoint and more.

There is still time to make a voluntary contribution on ParentPay should you wish to. The suggested donation is £2. All the proceeds raised from our House Charity events this year will go to the school's chosen charity, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).

Thank you very much for your continued support and generosity.



COMPUTER SCIENCE

YEAR 8 CYBER DAY

In January we held our annual Year 8 Cyber Day. The day gives Year 8 the opportunity to learn about the importance of cyber security, how to stay safe and legal and about the wealth of careers available in cyber security. The Cyber Day forms part of our commitment as a Cyber First Gold school.

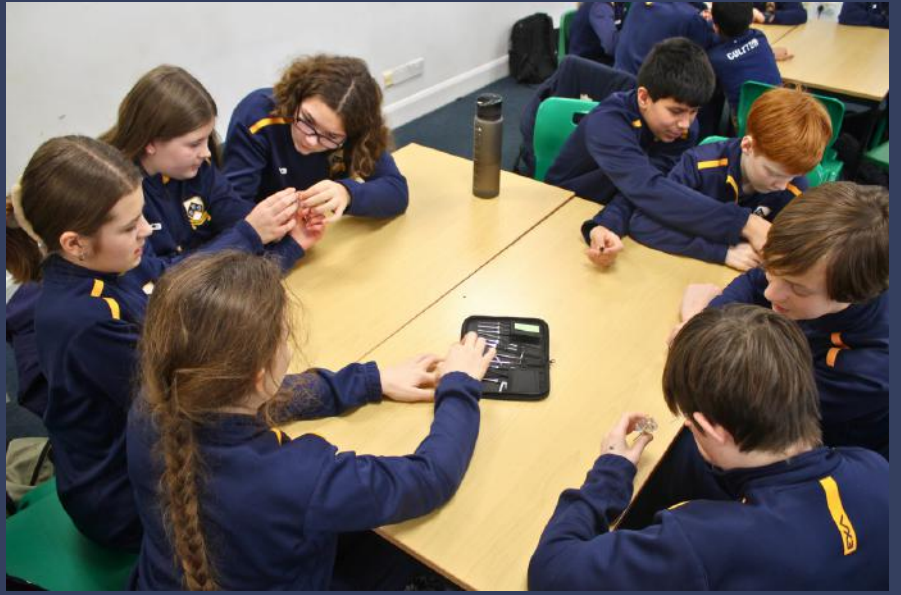
The students took part in a range of activities. They learnt about cyber related laws and crimes from the SW Regional Cyber Crime Unit, getting the opportunity to do some investigative work to crack a PIN and break into a safe. Students also learnt about network security from Fortinet, a network security provider; having the opportunity to compete in teams to attack a system.

NHS England explained how organisations respond to cyber attacks, with a session simulating a ransomware attack on a hospital. Students learnt about the importance of the physical security aspect of cyber security from the University of Exeter Cyber Security Society, having the opportunity to try their hand at lock picking.

Finally, year 8 learnt about how our own Alumnus, Chris Farmer, works to keep customer and restaurant data secure in his role as Senior Software Developer at Just Eat, before putting their problem solving skills to the test programming Sphero robots.

Finally, colleagues from Blundell's School and Dorset Digital Futures joined us for the morning to gain an understanding of how to plan and deliver a cyber day.

Thank you to Mrs Benattar for her leadership in bringing together such a brilliant day.



CYBER FIRST STUDENT LEADERS

Cyber Day also gave the opportunity for Charlotte Smith, our CyberFirst Regional Delivery Partner, to present Emily T and Aurela N with Cyber First hoodies, badges and certificates in recognition of their roles as Cyber First Student Leaders.



ACE CYBER SECURITY COMPETITION FINAL IN BRISTOL

In February 62 students in Years 10, 11 and 12 registered for the ACE Cyber Security Competition organised by universities recognised by the National Cyber Security Centre and the Department for Science, Innovation & Technology as Academic Centres of Excellence in Cyber Security Education. Following this, three teams were invited to the regional final at the University of the West England.

In the regional final, teams competed in a time-based problem-solving cyber quiz, followed by an exciting game of Cyber Battleships, where teams identified and defended against as many cyber threats as possible in a series of timed rounds. Students monitored live network traffic logs, decoded hidden coordinates from attack signatures and identified different types of cyber attacks.

Congratulations to Ben Y, Benji O, Ella C and Kester A in Year 12 who came first overall, each winning a £25 Amazon voucher. Our congratulations also go to Annabelle M, Joh F, Rosie K and Toby S in Year 11 who had the second overall highest score. Well done also to our Year 10 team of Jibrán F, Parth A, Samuel B and Sutherland H.

In addition to learning from the School of Computing & Creative Technologies staff and exploring facilities in the computing, business and engineering areas of the university, a Q&A session with current undergraduate students provided an insight into courses, career progression and student life.

We were presented with copies of "The Rise of the Cyber Women" series of books and the companion book "The Varied Origins of the Cyber Men" by Lisa Ventura MBE, each containing a compilation of inspiring stories by women and men in the cyber security industry. These books are available to loan from the school library.



CAREERS

CHOOSING A COURSE, AND BEYOND.

In January, Year 12 heard from Lizzie Geaney from the University of Bath, who offered valuable advice on selecting the right university and course.

A key part of students' journey through the Sixth Form at Colyton is the opportunity to explore and define the academic interests and personal values that will guide their choices for the future. They are supported throughout this process by our extensive careers and higher education preparation programme, alongside personalised guidance from their tutors and subject teachers.

Our students also had the opportunity to attend the UCAS Discover Event in Exeter, and in March we welcomed parents to our Higher Education Information Evening.

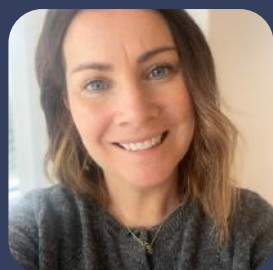


A FANTASTIC TERM OF CAREERS TALKS

This term we have been delighted to host an inspiring range of careers talks, giving students the opportunity to hear directly from professionals working across a wide variety of fields. These sessions help students explore potential career pathways, understand the realities of different professions, and gain valuable advice from those already working in their areas of interest.

A huge thank you to the speakers who generously shared their time and expertise with our students:

- Chemical Engineering/Environmental Sciences: Medwin Stephen (OCS2023), Student at Cambridge, studying Chemical Engineering & Biotechnology.
- Psychology: Dr Claire Parker, Perinatal Clinical Psychologist working in the NHS and privately.
- Medicine, including Sexual Health & HIV: Dr Fiona Fergie, Consultant at RD&E.
- Neuroscience and Cell Biology: Dr Ruth Carmichael (OCS2008), Scientist at the University of Exeter, conducting research into the biology of human cells.
- Humanities: James Anthony-Edwards, Librarian and Careers Services at the University of Exeter.
- Law: Rhys Hadden, Barrister with Serjeants' Inn chambers and Crown Court judge.
- Chemistry: Professor M Tian, Deputy Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Bath.
- Mental Health in the NHS: Barney Dunn, Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Exeter. Joined by Helen Newson (OCS2023), Clinical Assistant Psychologist at AccEPT Clinic at the University of Exeter.
- Philosophy: Dr Alexander Badman-King, Professor at the University of Exeter.
- Biology, Geography and English: Sophie Pavelle (OCS2013); Science communicator, and author.



It has been wonderful to see such strong student engagement and curiosity about future careers.

Alongside these talks, we have also been promoting a range of external opportunities for students to explore career pathways further, including:

- NHS Discover Diagnostics Careers Event at the University of Exeter, showcasing careers in radiography, pathology and healthcare sciences.
- Higher Education opportunities with the Eden Project, including courses in Plant Science, Ecology, and Garden & Landscape Design.
- NHS Virtual Allied Healthcare Work Experience, offering insight into professions such as physiotherapy, paramedicine, radiography, dietetics and more.
- British Army Experience of the Workplace Day, providing students with a chance to experience a working military environment.
- St John Ambulance Cadets, offering young people the opportunity to learn lifesaving skills and gain experience relevant to healthcare careers.

These opportunities help students develop a broader understanding of the many routes available to them after school.

A huge thank you to all of our speakers and partners for helping to inspire the next generation.

We look forward to welcoming many more speakers in the future!

We are very grateful for parents who have offered to give talks, and also sixth-form Scholarship Leaders who have made contact with potential speakers. We want to ensure our careers talks programme is as broad as possible, including even more speakers from humanities and the arts, for which we can find it more difficult to find speakers.

If you have any contacts, or could offer a talk yourself then please get in touch: careers@colytongrammar.com

YEAR 12 WORK EXPERIENCE

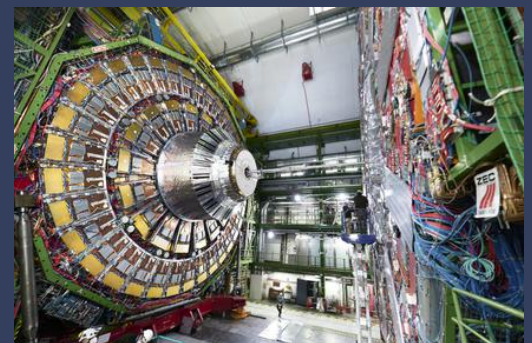
During the week before half-term all Year 12 students were undertaking their work experience placements, contributing to a wide range of organisations across the region, country, and indeed the entire globe!

Gaining valuable experience of workplaces and hopefully a greater understanding of fields and industries in which they might want to be successful in their future. As ever, we had overwhelming positive feedback from employers, over the check-in calls conducted by staff, and spontaneous messages of praise – we are very proud of our students scholarship, humility, and service demonstrated through these placements.

These organisations ranged from small accountancy or engineering firms here in Devon, through to larger utilities in Wales and banking in London, all the way up to globe-trotting students in Denmark, Spain, Switzerland, Poland, Singapore, and Hong Kong!

Many students were pursuing medical experience, at care homes, GP Practices, RD&E, or further afield John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. There were some more niche placements such as Gateway Theatre in Seaton, ITV Engineering, and the Bournville Village Trust. A few had flighty themes, at the Fleet Air Arm Museum, Exeter Aerospace, and Aviation Southwest. And those who actually took flight ranged from a L’Oreal in Copenhagen, through endoscopy in Hong Kong and Law in Singapore, to CERN in Geneva.

Well done to all students for finding, securing, and undertaking their placements (and to parents for all their support and encouragement as well!).



COLYTON GLOBAL GOALS STEAM CHALLENGE

Our Year 8 students undertook a 6 week project to design a solution to a problem they see in the world.

They formed teams, researched then chose their problem, then researched different approaches to solving it. To complete the project they then honed in on one solution, developed this as far as possible, then wrote a report and gave a small presentation for all of their work.

This has allowed them to understand and develop a range of important skills - communication, teamwork, project management, and communication - as well as the Engineering Habits of Mind that are a key part of our STEAM programme at Colyton. Also, they were given one STEM and one non-STEM lesson each week to make progress, and this gave an opportunity for their teachers to highlight the key skills from their subject that are important in STEM, and indeed all careers.

This programme culminated in the Celebration Day, on Wednesday, in which they first presented their projects to their form and then one team was chosen from each to go forward to the final presentations. Teams presented their work and outcomes to the whole year group - quite a challenge of confidence and communication, that all excelled at. They were also presenting to a panel of engineers, who had assessed their reports and then chose a winner from the five finalists.



All the teams, across the whole year, were incredibly impressive - in their inspiration and ambition, let alone the amount of effort and creativity displayed.

They should all be incredibly proud of their work, and this was reflected in the final five - it was very hard for one to be chosen, as all were worthy winners:

- 8A: Alethio, a news website with balanced editorial, by students; Beatrice D, Amy H, Amelie G, Olivia F and Harriet H - an exceptional well informed and mature idea, and approach to providing reliable news.

- 8B: Helping homelessness in Birmingham, providing help, advice and support for people to get back on their feet and take control of their lives; Ellie G, Imogen R, Lyra D, and Annabelle H - an ambitious project showing true compassion, and deep thought, including securing promises of support in principle from businesses.

- 8C: Quick Qash, a financial literacy and advice app and website; Lorcan S-G, Eddy L, Rory G, Ben D, Elliot A-B, and Yahn N-S - a very well planned and delivered project to improve understanding of money and finances, and how to manage them better.

- 8E: Fit For Life, a suite of resources and tools to tackle obesity and improve people's fitness; Finley P, Lukas K, Oliver P, and Cory W - a great understanding of the impact of and reasons for obesity, with a great range of services planned to help in all areas.

8O: BROCC, 'Building Responsible Online Communities' by tackling the impacts of social media use through a system of motivations and rewards; Dylan R, Theo H, Joey L, Jonathan S, Jasper D, and Sebastian S - an excellent explanation of the problems and impact of social media use, and addiction, with a very well thought out app to provide 'nudge factors' to change behaviours... and get outside more! The winning team.

CITIZENSHIP

In February we had the inaugural Year 10 Democracy & Government morning.

This was a series of talks and activities designed to give students a greater and understanding of local and national government, and the UK's international relations. Our speakers included local councillors, alumni, and a representative from UK Parliament:

Local Government:

- Violet Bonetta, Councillor for Honiton St Michael's - explained the structure and function of local council, and how and why she became a councillor, encouraging students to engage in volunteering and community projects as a way to be more involved, and potentially enter local politics in the future.
- Todd Olive (OCS2017), Councillor for Whimple and Rockbeare - described the make-up of East Devon District council, and his work in Place, Infrastructure & Strategic Planning, including the process of deciding on a location for the new town of Marcombe.
- Students then engaged in an activity considering the key information for three different potential locations, and reaching their own decision. A majority did reach the same conclusion as the council!



National Government:

- Tom Williams, Senior Education and Engagement Officer, UK Parliament - gave students an overview of Parliament, and the function and work of MPs and Peers.
- Jake Bonetta (OCS2020), Office Manager for Noah Law MP - spoke about his experience in running an MP's office, the work of an MP, and specific experiences in the constituency of St Austell and Newquay.

UK's international relations:

- To finish the morning students undertook a debate in form groups - "Should Britain rejoin EU?". They were randomly assigned to one of four groups: UK, EU/Europe, Commonwealth, Rest of the world. After some research and preparation time they then engaged in the debate, with lots of thoughtful and at times lively discussions, from their adopted positions. This provided an opportunity for them to appreciate the importance, and sometimes very complex nature of our international relations.

The opportunity to hear and learn more about these significant areas of government was well received by students, with lots of positive feedback, and we look forward to developing this further for next year.

If any parents have experience, or contacts that might be able to contribute, please contact Mr Davidson.



STEM RACING

The STEM Racing UK National Finals took place on the 25th - 26th March and involved teams from all over the UK and abroad. Day 1 consisted of the main competition: the first round of racing, Pit Display judging, the Verbal Presentations, team identity judging, and Portfolio judging for both the Design & Engineering and Enterprise Portfolios.

Both CGS teams, Peregrine Racing and Gear Six COMSOL delivered an incredible performance, with both teams receiving amazing remarks from the judges. Racing for Gear Six COMSOL resulted in them reaching the top of the leaderboard for Development Class legal cars, while Peregrine Racing impressed the judges with a bold and interactive Pit Display and clean portfolios and placed 5th.

The second day consisted of feedback, the second round of racing and the Awards Ceremony, along with a session to look around the amazing steel works at the Magna Science Centre. Both teams received overwhelmingly positive feedback from judges and industry professionals, as well as many awards. Peregrine Racing managed to win the 'Best Pit Display' award and were nominated for the 'Best Portfolio' and 'Team Identity' awards, while Gear Six COMSOL won the 'Fastest Car' and 'Best Verbal Presentation' awards, as well as being nominated for the 'Research and Development' and 'Project Management' awards.



At the end of the event, Gear Six COMSOL were crowned the UK National Champions – becoming the first from CGS ever to place so highly. As a result of their success, they have been invited to compete at the Aramco STEM Racing World Finals in Singapore this October, to make their debut as a Professional Class team.

The YouTube streams of the event and award ceremonies can be found here:

[Day 1 events](#)

[Day 2 events](#)

[Awards Ceremony](#)

Both teams would like to thank their teachers, parents, friends and fellow teams for their support throughout the competition, as well as their sponsors for making the journey to Nationals possible. These include COMSOL, Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing, Veloce, Mantracourt Electronics, FullHealth Medical and JSN Landscaping who supported Gear Six COMSOL. They would also like to thank Dartline, Merc Service SW, Hotcam, E. Linley & Son, Tabas, University of Exeter, Integrated Milling Technology and Boxtwelve who supported Peregrine Racing. Both teams would like to give a special thanks to To-An-Fro, for making the journey to Nationals physically possible as they provided them with a minibus as well as a van for transport of their pit displays and luggage.

Written by: Peregrine Racing & Gear Six COMSOL

We also had two year 11s who were judges at the competition...

As a former STEM Racing competitor, I was grateful to have been invited to volunteer as a judge at this year's National final. Aside from the amazing competition atmosphere, and the excitement and inspiration of both teams' successes, it was also very interesting to see the competition from the other side. Judging the verbal presentations of professional class teams was particularly valuable in providing insight into an aspect of the competition that is not publicly accessible, and it was also good to get to talk to judges of all ages and from many different fields, and to hear about their personal experiences. Hopefully some of the things I have learned about the way the competition is judged will prove helpful to future Colyton STEM Racing teams!

Written by: Joh F

PERFORMING ARTS

CGS CABARET

By Blossom Harvey, Y12:

“February saw Colyton Grammar School’s first ever Cabaret, and the whole event completely exceeded anything I imagined when we first started planning. The amount of talent in this school is unbelievable and seeing it all come together across three nights was honestly one of the best experiences I’ve ever had.

I was so lucky to have been given the opportunity to direct and produce the Musical Theatre numbers within the Cabaret. One of the things that made this Cabaret Night so special was how naturally the musical theatre section blended with the variety acts. Between our big ensemble numbers, the audience got to see everything from ballet solos to martial arts, each performance bringing something original, inspiring and completely its own. A few of our sixth form drama students mentored some of these acts, helping them shape their ideas, build confidence and polish their performances.

During the interval, Digory N, Xavi F and Zac D kept the energy going with live jazz. They were incredible, and the atmosphere they created made the whole night feel even more professional and exciting.

We were also so lucky to have Daniel H as our Master of Ceremonies. He brought such confidence, charisma and humour to the stage, guiding the audience through the evening and keeping the whole event flowing. He really helped lift the whole night and made it feel like a proper, polished production.

On the Friday night, I had the chance to watch from the media gallery, and I honestly couldn’t believe what I was seeing. The energy, the talent, the professionalism; it didn’t feel like a school show at all. Seeing everyone perform their hearts out, support each other, make new friendships and fall even more in love with performing made every rehearsal, every late night and every moment of stress completely worth it.

For our first ever Cabaret Night, this was something truly special. I’m so proud of everyone who took part, and I feel incredibly lucky to have been part of creating it.”





Photos by student photographer, Mark R.

EXETER PHOENIX GIG

By Esther M. Y12:

“On Monday 16th of March, 11 Colytonian bands took over the Exeter Phoenix for a night of spectacular music, which I was fortunate enough to help organise and attend. I was already aware the high calibre of the bands performing, from the preview lunchtime gig, so I entered the auditorium with high hopes - and wow, somehow I was even more impressed than I imagined. Sadly, if I were to sing all my praises from the night, my laptop would probably run out of storage, so I'll stick to the highlights.

It was great to hear our school's bands properly mic'd up and with the lights, all the acts rose to the occasion bringing confidence, stage-presence and amazing music in front of a full crowd of eager people. We started the night with Infrared, who confidently established the precedent for the other amazing acts to come, my highlight being their rendition of 'Take Me Away' from Freaky Friday which certainly got the crowd settled into the fun spirit of the night. The wavelength theme continued as UltraViolet followed, with their mighty sound on 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' and I observed the balcony head-bobbing in unison.

The music mellowed but the atmosphere didn't fade with Elysium performing an excellent and emotional rendition of 'Silver Lining'. Then we had a 'Dreams' double whammy from Blossom's Band featuring stunning vocals from the eponymous singer, accompanied by Stan and Ludo. We then enjoyed Untitled_1 who performed 'No Time to Die', which superbly intensified the atmosphere. Next, The Mangroves brought some fun with their (totally not staged) audience interactions and onstage shenanigans, alongside their top-notch covers of 'Hysteria' and 'Go with the flow'. Sideways Shapes with their impressive original songs confidently kept the fun vibes going.



I have to applaud 'Fake Band' as, despite technical mishaps, they did not let the joyous atmosphere halt and Tallulah confidently delivered excellent vocals on 'Nice to Each other' and 'Bags'. The Rubber Band delivered an awesome set which fixed a smile on my face - my highlight being the transition from waving along during 'Don't look back in Anger', to clapping along during 'Rock the Casbah' (which was performed so well). Our penultimate act was Squeaky Leaky who were just superb, I really loved their rendition of 'Talk' which has honestly been looping in my head ever since Monday. Last but not least were 'The Side Acts', ending the gig with the electric energy of 'Let's Go Crazy', the crowd pleaser 'Yellow' (accompanied by a lovely crowd wave) and then closed off the night with a vibrant 'Sweet Child of Mine'.

After the final note, the audience reverberated with applause and all who made the evening so great came onto the stage - and I wish I could bottle the electricity of that moment. I need to extend all my thanks to all who performed: my fellow Music Leaders - Alma, Isaac, Daniel, Stan, and Taran, for their organisation and enthusiasm; Mr Jones for all his support and performing on the night; and Mr Brimelow for coming up with the concept alongside the million things he's done for it; and everyone else who helped make this monumental event."

Thank you, Esther, for your excellent review. And thank you to Mark R for the fantastic photography.



SPRING CONCERT

On Tuesday this week the Junior Choir, Chamber Choir, Senior Choir and an alumnae choir performed in the Spring Concert which culminated in a performance of the Fauré Requiem sung by a massed choir of around 130 singers.

The concert opened with the Junior Choir, brilliantly led by Mrs Lester, singing selections from Karl Jenkins' Adiemus – the violence of the opening chords of In Caelum Fero jolting the audience to attention until the dulcet harmonies of the Hymn allowed them to relax.

The Chamber Choir followed with three pieces – Maurice Duruflé's Ubi Caritas, not an easy piece, was my personal high point of their performance, but Aparajita A's (13) soaring solo in Will Todd's Lead me Lord and the luxurious setting by the King's Singers of Loch Lomond were equally stunning.

There then followed a choir of 24 Old Colytonians (staff and pupils) – this was a complete unknown until 5pm on the day of the concert as we had never met as a group and I had never heard most of them sing; thankfully they turned out to collectively form an absolutely stunning choir, with voices honed by age and experience of post-school singing, many in college or university choirs, or cathedrals. As they were a good lot, we decided to perform three pieces: Bruckner's Locus Iste (a staple of the school choral repertoire), Rachmaninov's Bogoróditse Djévo and Stanford's Beati Quorum Via.



The finale of the evening was the Requiem – a piece of seven movements lasting around 40 minutes. This is proper choral repertoire and, in places, quite challenging; we had a suspicion that setting the Senior Choir a challenge rather than patronising them with easy repertoire would appeal, and it did – a choir of 90 (joined on the night by the OCs) and, for the final movement, the Junior Choir performed with panache and sensitivity.

The three soloists (Noah N-W (7), Jayden T (12) and Tomas O-E (13)) sang beautifully and were rightly applauded at the conclusion. Our thanks go out to all of the staff, parents and pupils who put so much into the concert and were there to support Colyton music.



ART

CERAMIC WORKSHOP

In February, our Year 10s committed themselves to the daunting task of creating a large scale, slab-built ceramic outcome for their project on Organic Forms in one singular day! And they did it.

There have been previous ceramic days where we had freakishly warm weather which meant the clay rapidly dried, but this year, it was normal February weather and everything went smoothly.

The students (and their outcomes) were truly brilliant. We are currently glazing their plaque maquette but will start on the outcome just before Easter. A big thank you to our technician Mrs Cobb for speedily firing 35 ceramics.



PRIMARY OUTREACH

During March, we were privileged to hold two outreach printing workshops for four local primary schools. The pupils absolutely threw themselves into the two tasks we had set up, skilfully directed by a handful of patience sixth form Art students.

We introduced them to Gyotaku printing using Red Mullet fish. Gyotaku (Japanese: 魚拓, "fish impression") is a traditional Japanese art form where the actual body of a fish is used to create a print. It began in the mid-19th century as a way for fishermen to record the size and species of their catches before photography took over.

The pupils were brilliant and the impressions captured by the Gyotaku print inspired them to do some really creative Monoprints of their own. Mr Wakeling, donned in overalls, embraced the two forms of printing just as much as the primary school pupils did – thank you for your enthusiasm too!

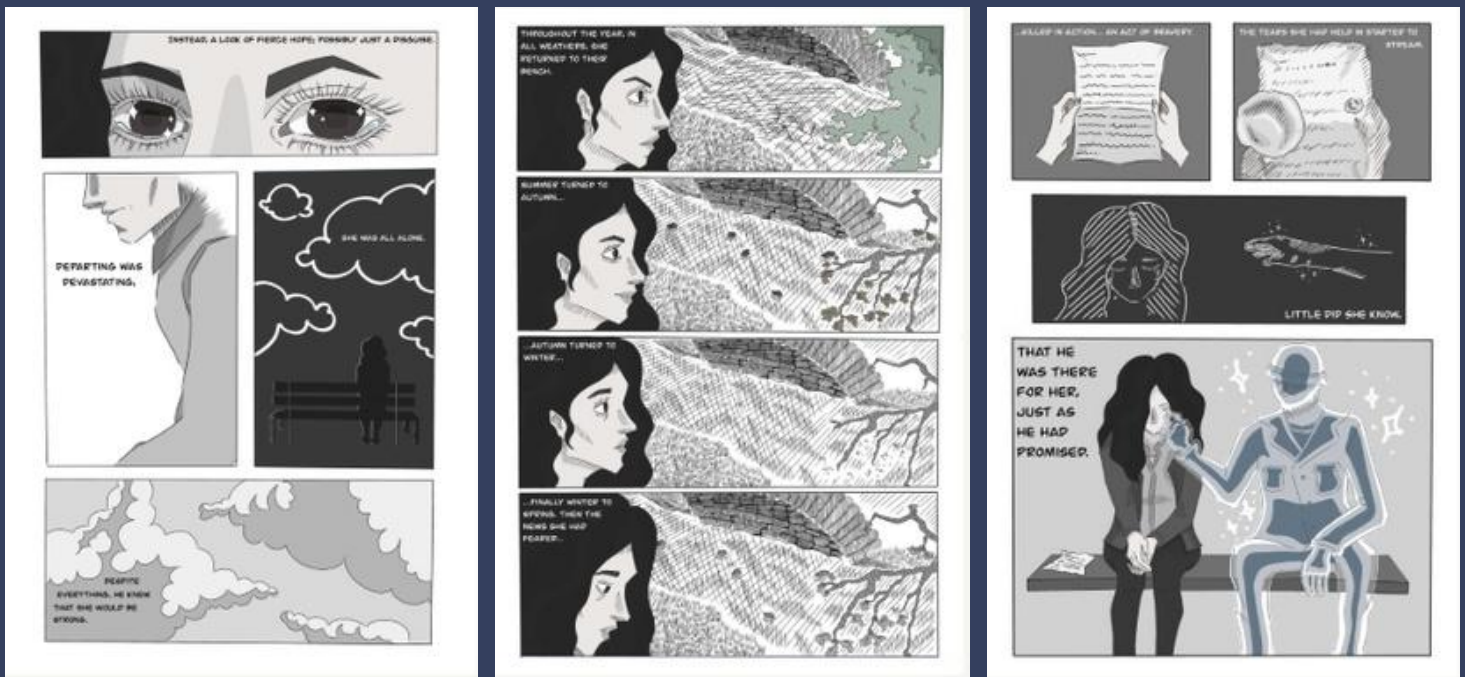


SCHOLARSHIP: MANGA JIMAN COMPETITION

This term, Betsy W in Y10 entered a Manga Jiman competition run by the Embassy of Japan. She created an 8 page 'Nemu' (or storyboard) entitled 'In Loving Memory', written and drawn by her.

Betsy said she was inspired by Riyad M in Y11's incredible involvement and success in last year's competition so spent five days creating it during the busy half term holiday.

Her effort was rewarded. Betsy got through to the final and attended a ceremony in the Japanese Embassy in London, where she won the competition! Congratulations Betsy for this fantastic achievement.



SCHOLARSHIP: ARTICULATION (A competition run by the National Gallery)

In February, Cassia B in Y12 won our internal heat to go through to the regional finals of a competition run by the National Gallery, held at the Box in Plymouth.

Each student was asked to prepare a 10-minute presentation on a theme of their choice relating to Art, Craft and Design, and which connects to them in some way. Cassia's childhood passion, which still motivates her to create, is Manga. Her presentation talk was on Akira by Katsuhiro Otomo created in 1982; a Japanese cyberpunk post-apocalyptic Manga series.

Her presentation was truly fantastic and included many clips from the anime film adaption synced perfectly to fit. Although Cassia didn't make it through to the final in London, she should feel extremely proud of her impressive effort.



MFL

In the last few weeks, Colyton linguists have risen to the challenge of two competitions run by the University of Oxford's Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages. For a Flash Fiction competition, students independently wrote short pieces in French, Spanish and German of 100 words or less. Some were funny and some sad; all were crafted with creativity and curiosity.

Secondly, students entered the Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators (Anthea Bell was known for her translations of Asterix) preparing translations from Russian, Spanish, German, French and Mandarin fact, fiction and poetry. Language teachers found it very hard to select entries for the national competition from our scholars. Results to follow in June!



Anthea Bell Prize
for Young Translators

SCIENCE

HANDS-ON SCIENCE AT THE NORMAN LOCKYER OBSERVATORY

On Saturday 14th March, twenty of our Science Student Ambassadors in Years 10, 12 and 13 delivered Hands-on Science activities in our annual Science Week collaboration with the Norman Lockyer Observatory.

They made space origami, mini hovercraft, massive marshmallows and rockets that they launched with the younger visitors as well as lots of other exciting activities.

Thanks to Mrs Kalarickalparambil, Mr Braithwaite and Mr Davidson, and to our Student Ambassadors and supportive families for giving up time on their weekend to make this fantastic community event such a success!



Mr Davidson, Rosalia, Emma and Cecilia launching the rockets the visitors had made with them.



Lucy demonstrating the 'Do Not Open! Bottle' to some of the younger visitors.

MATHS

Over 45 of our year 12 students spent several weeks of time preparing a Maths enrichment day for Year 4, which was held last Friday. With over 110 year 4 students from 11 different primary schools, this was a very productive day.

The different sessions ranged from 'Maths in football' to 'Maths in paper aeroplanes', from 'Who stole the cake' to 'Code breaking' amongst others. The Sixth formers showed excellent leadership throughout the day and feedback from the primary teachers was wonderful. "They really enjoyed British sign language - it was physical, interactive and something new", and "All leaders were patient and excellent in engaging all pupils."

Not only did the year 4 children enjoy the day, here is what some of our Sixth formers had to say:

"Last week, some year 12 A-Level Maths students worked together in small teams after creating and then leading engaging games that combined entertainment and maths problems to work with the children. Something I learnt from the experience was figuring out how to break down and rework questions in order to match the child's math level. It was really enjoyable to work with them, especially to see their excitement when they got a difficult question right, or when they were winning the game."

"I really enjoyed my time running the outreach session. It was incredibly rewarding and enjoyable to teach something new to such enthusiastic children. It was a brilliant leadership opportunity and I'd definitely do it again."



OUTDOOR EDUCATION

TEN TORS

Last weekend our fantastic Ten Tors teams completed their final training expedition.

Five teams from Years 10 and 12 headed out from Postbridge early on Saturday morning, on a route they had carefully planned between a series of given check points. The teams walked independently for the first time, with our fantastic volunteer leader team keeping a close eye on them, for between ten and twelve hours to reach their wild camp location.

The Year 10 teams completed approximately 35 kilometres and the Year 12 teams walked over 50 kilometres before setting up camp in various locations in the north of the moor. It was a cold, clear night and the teams worked efficiently to set up camp, cook a meal and get some rest before continuing the expedition on Sunday morning.

Despite losing an hour due to the clocks changing all of the teams still managed to get themselves up and packed by 07:00 for a morning of micro navigation tasks. The Year 12 teams spent the morning picking out small features and learning techniques for precise navigation in challenging conditions.



The Year 10s were walked down to Anthony Stile (the start and end point for the Ten Tors event) where it was explained to them what happens on the event itself.

Meanwhile the leaders hid themselves in various locations and then the teams were given grid references for the leader locations and tasked with finding them as quickly as they could. We are pleased to say all leaders were found so no-one is still out there patiently waiting.

The teams completed their expedition by making their way triumphantly to the finish point in Belstone. They all finished really strongly and we are immensely proud of them for their achievements.

We are still heavily oversubscribed for the three teams we have been allocated for the event itself despite everyone out at the weekend being deserved of a place. Team decisions will be made imminently, and any unsuccessful participants will be offered a reserve place.

If anyone knows of any teams locally who are looking for participants to make up incomplete teams, we would wholeheartedly vouch for all of these young people and would love to hear from you.

Finally, we just want to add a massive thank you to the superb team of volunteer leaders, headed up by Jez Turner. They have been absolutely brilliant throughout the training programme and have given so much of their time and expertise to ensure that these young people have had the most incredible experience.



SPORTS

It has been an outstanding and action-packed term, with pupils achieving success across a wide range of sports at local, regional, and national level.

NATIONAL SUCCESS – U16 NETBALL FINISH AS RUNNERS UP

Colyton's U16 netball squad produced a remarkable performance at the Sisters n Sport National Finals, finishing 2nd in the country.

A composed semi-final display saw them defeat Oswestry School 15–8, before facing a strong Cotswold side in the final. Despite a determined fightback, they finished as national runners-up (21–14).

To reach a national final is an exceptional achievement and reflects the squad's commitment, teamwork, and resilience throughout the season.



NETBALL EXCELLENCE ACROSS THE SCHOOL

Netball has been a major strength this term, with outstanding performances across all age groups.

The U13 team reached the East Devon final after an unbeaten group stage, narrowly missing out in a closely contested match. In fixtures, they secured an 11–9 win against Sidmouth and a convincing victory over Uffculme.

The U15s showed grit throughout, winning comfortably against Uffculme, narrowly losing 5–4 to Sidmouth, and putting in a strong performance in other fixtures.

The U16 team continued the success with a 32–18 win against Mount Kelly, securing a place in the South's top eight.

The Year 7 team also impressed in their final tournament, finishing 2nd with two strong wins.

Across all teams, students demonstrated excellent teamwork, resilience, and skill, making this a truly successful term for netball at Colyton.



U15 GIRLS FOOTBALL & U13 NATIONAL CUP RUN

The U13 girls football team delivered one of the standout achievements of the term, reaching the National Cup quarter-finals. A highlight 2-0 win away at Hereford, with goals from Winnie and Gabby, showcased their quality. Finishing in the top eight nationally—scoring 28 goals and conceding just 5—represents a fantastic accomplishment.

The U15 girls also enjoyed an impressive term, highlighted by a 4-0 victory, demonstrating the depth of talent and strong teamwork across the age groups.



HOCKEY HIGHLIGHTS – A TERM OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL SUCCESS

Colyton has enjoyed a hugely successful term in hockey, with outstanding performances across all age groups.

U14 Girls: The girls finished the season at the West of England Tournament at Taunton School. Despite a challenging start, they bounced back with three goals in their final group match. Narrowly missing out on a semi-final place, they produced their best hockey of the day in the 5th/6th place play-off, scoring eight goals to finish 5th overall.

Earlier in the term, they were crowned East Devon Champions, and at the U14 National Finals in Nottingham, the Girls A team achieved an impressive 2nd place nationally. Ellie G. was named Player of the Tournament.

U14 Boys: The boys also competed at Taunton School, opening with a 3–0 win over Kings of Wessex and following up with a 1–0 victory against Ridgeway. A superb hat-trick from Noah NW saw them beat Richard Lander 3–0. A 1–1 draw against Bristol School secured top spot in their group, but they were narrowly beaten 2–0 by eventual champions Penryn in the semi-final, finishing 4th out of 10 teams.

Noah NW starred, and goalkeeper Laurence earned Player of the Tournament for his outstanding debut.



At the U14 National Finals, the Boys A team were Shield Winners, and the Boys B team were 2nd in the Shield.

Other Teams:

- U12 Girls: Joint 3rd place at the Regional West Tournament; strong performances from both teams at the East Devon Hockey Tournament, with the A Team finishing 1st and the B Team 6th. Otilie was named Player of the Tournament.
- U13 Boys: East Devon Champions, going unbeaten and finishing with an emphatic 8-0 win.
- U18 Boys: Competitive Devon Tournament, with three draws and a narrow loss.
- U16 & U15 Teams: U16 Boys finished 2nd in East Devon, and U15 Girls were East Devon Champions.

Across all events, students demonstrated dedication, resilience, and a high standard of play. The season reflects the exceptional depth and strength of hockey at Colyton, with local and national successes highlighting the talent, teamwork, and commitment of all players and coaches.



CRICKET SUCCESS – COUNTY FINALISTS & CHAMPIONS

It has been a standout term for cricket.

The U13 girls progressed all the way to the Devon County Final, finishing as runners-up after a series of impressive performances, including dominant wins in the group stages and semi-final.

The U15 girls claimed victory at the East Devon Indoor Tournament, showing composure with the bat and discipline with the ball. Izzy and Amelie earned individual honours for their outstanding performances.

Across both age groups, the teams demonstrated confidence, consistency, and excellent teamwork.



RUGBY DEVELOPMENT – U16 GIRLS 7S

The U16 girls rugby squad showed excellent development at a competitive 7s tournament.

With tries from Niamh and Lilia, and clear improvement in defensive structure and communication, the team demonstrated resilience and growing confidence—an exciting sign for future competitions.



Across all sports, pupils have represented the school with pride, determination, and outstanding teamwork.

Congratulations to everyone involved on a fantastic term of sport.

WHAT'S YOUR COLYTON STORY?

This term we've been gathering stories from students, staff, alumni and friends of the school, sharing what makes Colyton Grammar School such a special place.

If you follow us on social media you'll have seen some of these stories being shared, and you can view a collection of them on our website.

If you have a Colyton Story you'd like to share, please scan this QR code or drop us an email on ebryant@colytongrammar.com



"In 2022, I had the honour of playing the Last Post in Colyton's Remembrance Service. After a moving minute of silence, my regimental trumpet sound cut through piercingly, almost like a knife through butter. For the whole duration I was extremely nervous, my knees were knocking together, and I had a very dry throat, but thankfully I managed not to hit a wrong note despite some awkward top Gs in the piece, and I was praised by the Bishop who was running the service, which was very kind and thoughtful.

It is an occasion that always weighs heavily on me, with my great uncle and great grandfather both losing their lives in Ypres in the First World War, and I have relatives who died on the side of the Central Powers and also the Axis Powers in the Second World War, including in the Battle of Stalingrad. Three years later, I'm still playing the trumpet, and this moment of service is something I will never forget." - Tristan W, Y13

"Colyton Grammar School has given me many opportunities that I will never forget.

Recently, Colyton put on the Christmas Concert and Carol Service - two nights which made joy through incredible music. They required hard work, dedication and collaboration during rehearsal time, resulting in performances which I really enjoyed playing in and listening to. There are so many ensembles here at Colyton; the music department offers a fabulous range.

Another memory which has stuck with me was the year 7 & 8 drama production of the Tempest. It brought a team of unexpected performers together and we built strong bonds of shared effort and joy.

This connection between us Colytonians creates something really unforgettable - a sense of belonging."- Beatrice D, Year 8.

What's
your
Colyton
Story?

Share yours with us.

Colyton
Grammar
School



"It was the Year 8 Residential in 2024 and I decided to get involved with the muddy assault course the students were doing. Unfortunately, I was unable to pull myself out of a giant mud pit I found myself in, and just kept sliding back into it as I attempted to crawl out.

The students, seeing my distress, then came forward and between about 4 of them managed to push/pull me out. It was wholly undignified but we all had a good laugh about it and the students were so lovely and just liked that I'd taken part in the activity with them. The mud was soon washed off when, on a rope crossing over the river, students decided to grab the rope and shake it until I fell in the water.

The whole trip was just a joy thanks to how wonderful, funny, polite and lovely the students were." - Mrs Bean, Librarian

Read more stories [here](#).

AND NOW FOR A BIT OF EASTER FUN!

The clever fruits in Cryptic Crossword Club have come up with some Easter-themed clues:

Skip spelling before call. (6)
Max Home, 12R

Segregate strangely for chocolate treat. (6,3)
John Power, 13W

German city with energy adopts new hat. (6)
Samuel Smart (13D) and Rafa Mascarenhas (13W)

Answers will be revealed after Easter...





THAT'S OUR 2026 SPRING TERM WRAPPED.

HERE'S TO NEW ACHIEVEMENTS, NEW VISIONS,
AND ANOTHER FANTASTIC TERM AHEAD.

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