

Charters Chronicle



EXCLUSIVE



CHARTERS ALUMNI TALK ALL THINGS APPRENTICESHIPS

EDITORS' FAREWELL

This edition is our final one as editors of the *Charters Chronicle*. It has been an absolute joy working on the paper with such a brilliant team and being part of something that gives students a voice.

Thank you to everyone who has written, helped, supported, and actually read the Chronicle. We cannot wait to see what the next editing team does next, and we will be reading future editions from the other side of the page.

READ OUR FULL LETTER ON THE BACK PAGE



Image drawn by Avinash Maini

EARNING WHILE LEARNING: THREE ALUMNI ON CHOOSING APPRENTICESHIPS

BY ELLA TONEY (Y13)

This interview was also conducted and transcribed by Abi Chow
University has long been seen as the default next step after A-levels, and at times it can still feel that way. We sat down with three Charters alumni who are now completing apprenticeships at Kirk Rice to find out what it is really like to earn as you learn.

Lewis, Xander and Sam left Charters in 2020, 2024 and 2025 respectively and have each taken a different route into apprenticeships. Lewis, who studied at university, is now completing his Level 7 qualification, while Xander has completed his Level 3 and will progress to Level 7 in March. Sam, having moved straight from school into the workplace, has recently started his Level 4 apprenticeship. All three work for the Ascot-based accountancy firm, a long-standing supporter of the school and a regular presence at Charters careers fairs.

Lewis, who left Charters at the height of the pandemic, is now working towards obtaining his accountancy qualification whilst working at Kirk Rice. Unlike his fellow apprentices, he went to university and studied a combined science, technology, engineering and maths degree before making the switch to accountancy.

He believes that there are differences between the two routes and that, whilst you do learn as you earn, there is extra work involved.

“There are differences,” he said as he returned to the school to talk to the Chronicle.

“You’re learning on the job but there are times when study will follow you home and you’ve got to put in a few extra hours. Time management is important to stay on top of both the study and the work.”

Having experienced both of the most considered post-18 pathways, Lewis stands firm in the belief that students should choose what feels right for them.

“I think it’s really important to remember that there is so much pressure at that stage,” he adds.

“I’ve felt, we’ve all felt and you feel like you have to make the right choice that’s going to shape your life.

“Just try to remember that it’s okay to explore options and take the one that feels best for YOU.”



As the school journey comes to an end, the range of possibilities available can feel overwhelming. Lewis spoke openly about the importance of remembering that there is no single 'correct' path to follow.

"Take it easy on yourself," he offers. "Explore all the options and just know that taking the path that you think is best for you is the best decision you can make."

"If you make a choice and then you feel that maybe it wasn't the right one, that's also okay. You'll learn from it and you can then go again and explore other options."

Xander, who begins his Level 7 qualification in March, admits that apprenticeships are different to more traditional routes, but that difference should not be seen as something to fear.

"It's different to school and university," he explains, "You've got to adapt to being in a workplace and consider how you behave."

He adds that, like any change, there is an adjustment phase but insists that "you learn to adapt quickly."

"I'm happy with the choice I made even though throughout the whole UCAS process I had my mind set on University."

When asked what made him consider an apprenticeship, he explained his reasoning:

"I thought that if I can get the experience and get the same level of a qualification, why not." He laughs before adding the stereotypical, "No student debt is a nice one too," with a smile.

Sam received his A-level results just three months ago but had already gained a taste of office life through work experience during Year 12, something he highly recommends to students considering an apprenticeship route.

"If you're in Year 12 and you're thinking about the apprenticeship route, really get stuck in at events like careers fairs and see what's available," he said.

"I reached out to Kirk Rice and got some work experience which I think really helps with building connections."

The jump to a professional working environment can be a shock to the system at first, particularly for those moving straight from school into full-time work. Sam spoke honestly about the initial challenge of adapting to new expectations, routines and responsibilities.

"The environment can be overwhelming at first but stick with it. They will really support you and you'll get used to it quickly."

Reflecting on his own experience of settling in, he encouraged students not to be discouraged by the early stages of the transition.

"Give it time, and you will learn to adapt," he added.

Xander echoed this sentiment, acknowledging that feelings of self-doubt are common when entering the workplace but can also be an important part of personal development. "That fake sense of imposter syndrome that you might get, it is actually a really good thing to overcome that feeling early in your career," he added.

YEAR 12 STUDENT WOWS HER PEERS

BY ELLA HOLMES (Y12)

Performing in the concert to Year Twelve, was Nicole, a Year Twelve herself and a spectacularly talented singer. Nicole performed *Killing Me Softly With His Song* by Ms. Lauren Hill, and completely mesmerised the audience with her remarkable voice, many of the students described as “insane”. She maintained an impressively collected and confident stage presence, despite being a solo artist in front of all of her peers. Performing in front of your entire year group is undoubtedly more frightening than performing in front of a stranger-filled crowd. As a result, Nicole serves an inspiring message to

any young artists who wish to develop their confidence in singing to an audience. We interviewed Nicole to find what she has to share of her experience with singing and performing.

How did you feel walking on stage?

“I did feel nervous, however I knew I could do it, and the outcome would be worth it, which helped me ease the nerves a little bit.”

What has your singing journey looked like to you?

“There has been lots of downs, like voice cracks on stage but those little moments are what made me improve and get to where I am today.”

CHARTERS STUDENT GIVES REVIEW AS COURT OF THE DEAD RAISES THE STAKES

BY ORLA C (Y8)

Get ready for another exciting adventure in the world of Percy Jackson, because *The Court of the Dead* is finally out! Rick Riordan and Mark Oshiro have released the sequel to *The Sun and the Star*.

This book is the second in the series, so make sure to check the first out before reading if you want to avoid spoilers.

Spoiler alert: the second book in the Nico di Angelo series follows Nico and Will as they team up with Nico’s half-sister, Hazel, at Camp Jupiter.

The new release has been called “superior in intellect, heart, and meaning” and praised as a novel that “will transport readers into a fantastical literary world built on mythology and the creativity of two talented writers.”



SUPPORTING IMPORTANT CAUSES, TOGETHER

Throughout the school year, we support important causes in many different ways. Our junior editors have written about just a few ways in which the school community tries to contribute.

SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

BY ORLA C (Y8)

Show Racism the Red Card is an anti-racism educational charity that uses the influence of football to stand up against racism and promote equality. It was founded in 1996, helped by a donation by then Newcastle United goalkeeper -Shaka Hislop.



In the 1990s, in Newcastle, Shaka was at a petrol station near St James' Park when he was shouted racist abuse at by a young group of people. After one person realised that they had been shouting at the Newcastle United football player, they came over to ask for an autograph. This experience caused Shaka to realise that he (and other footballers) could use his influence to make a difference in reducing racism.

We support Show Racism the Red Card each year by wearing something red; for example, a bow, or a bracelet.

If you missed it this year, consider wearing something red next year! Every person who wears something red gets a House Point, so it's a great way to both show support for the charity and also earn points for your house!

HELLO YELLOW

BY ABI C (Y8)

Hello Yellow on World Mental Health Day is supported by the charity YoungMinds. On the day, people are encouraged to wear at least a small accessory of yellow to show their support for the project.

Here at Charters, alongside wearing yellow, the Student Leadership Team also created an art project that involved every year group. Each tutor contributed slips of yellow paper with positive messages written on them. It is proudly displayed in the main hall.

Anyone can take part in Hello Yellow to show their support, and no matter who you are, any contributions to the movement are appreciated. This event is used to raise awareness and reduce the stigma around mental health, especially



things like depression and anxiety. Self-harm is also a big focus as lots of children and adults have recently been struggling with this.

If you, or someone you know, is struggling with a mental health condition, it is a really important to contact someone and get some help. There are many different resources available, including **NHS 111**, alongside **Childline** and **SHOUT**. However, if you need urgent help,

especially relating to self-harm or suicidal thoughts/an attempt, it is best to call **999**.

Please, if you are struggling, reach out to someone, there is so much support out there, no matter what you're struggling with, and no matter how bad you're feeling, there will always be someone there for you, someone who cares. So, reach out and get the support you need and deserve.

TRY SOMETHING NEW BY JOINING A CLUB

BY AMY H (Y8)

At Charters School, a wide range of extracurricular clubs are available, with more added every year. There is a club for everyone, with 19 sports clubs, 13 music clubs, and 18 general clubs running during the autumn term alone - That's 50 clubs right there!

Some new additions this term include juggling, careers and drama club. Clubs take place before school, at second break or after school, on various days throughout the school week. The school wants to ensure that all students get the opportunities they

deserve and have the chance to grow, whether that is socially, trying new

things or adding to your talents and repertoire.

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

BY AMY H (Y8)

The annual celebration of achievement took place on Tuesday 30th September. The evening celebrated excellence and attitude



to learning of students in all subjects for the past school year. The evening was split into the Key Stages and featured musical interludes and a speech by guest speaker and alumna Lucy Spencer. Lucy Spencer is an award-winning education entrepreneur and CEO of Education Boutique. Lucy has been featured on CNBC, The Wall Street Journal and Harpers Bazaar Arabia. The awards included Subject awards, Highest achievement and Personal recognition Awards.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

BY ABI C (Y8)

The Back to the Future trip was organised for Year Eight students and took place over two separate weeks. The first group visited the Adelphi Theatre in London on Wednesday 12th November 2025, with the second group attending a week later on 19th November.

The musical was extremely entertaining and funny. Many of the students who attended the trip thoroughly enjoyed it and would recommend it to their peers. The

actors were amazing and very professional throughout the performance.

The venue also featured impressive merchandise and decorations related to the musical, and students could even pick up free postcards to send or keep as a souvenir.

Personally, my favourite character was George McFly (Marty's dad), as he was very funny and had a strong character arc when Marty managed to get back to the future. I



also really enjoyed Emmett Brown, the eccentric inventor, who was hilariously unpredictable and wonderfully wacky.

I would recommend this musical to all age groups, especially families looking for an entertaining evening out in London. After only watching it once, it quickly became my new favourite musical. However, the show is finishing its run in April 2026, so if you would like to see it, you had better move at 88 miles per hour and book your tickets before you're OUTATIME!

IT'S....TIMEEEE!

BY MEHHER J (Y8)

Charters holds a winter concert every year, it shows a mixture of talents from incredible instrumentals to splendid singing.



On December 10th, Charters School's Main Hall was transformed into a hall full of music, joy, and supportive spirit. From 7–9pm, the Winter Concert brought together students, families, and staff who celebrated together the extraordinary talent shown by an amazing number of students.

The evening featured a wide range of ensembles, including the Orchestra, Chamber Choir, Choral Voices, and Jazz Band, each bringing their own unique music to the stage. Seasonal classics mixed with modern favourites, creating an array of music that thrilled the audience.

Alongside the larger ensembles, several soloists and small groups took to the stage, performing pieces that showed just how much potential we all have.

Charter's seasonal concerts are opportunities for students to express themselves, share their passion for music, and connect with friends and families. The Winter Concert filled the hall with a supportive atmosphere.

For those who may feel nervous about performing, remember that these concerts always hold a welcoming and supportive atmosphere.

If you were inspired by the performances, why not join one of the school's Music Clubs? They are a fantastic way to improve your skills, build confidence, and work as part of a team. Check out the school website or the Daily Dispatch for more information.



DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

GET IN TOUCH WITH THE CHARTERS CHRONICLE!

If you have a story from the Charters community that you'd love to share - big or small - we'd love to tell it.

Our growing team of Junior Editors (Y7-11) are eager to conduct interviews, write features, and shine a light on the voices that make our Community unique!

SPORTING SUCCESS AT CHARTERS

It has been another action-packed few weeks for Charters sport, with teams across all age groups competing in tournaments, leagues, and cup fixtures, and delivering some impressive performances along the way.

In early December, the U12 Boys Rugby team took part in the Chobham Festival, winning one out of three games in a competitive set of matches. Meanwhile, the U16 Girls Football team enjoyed a huge success at the Gordons 5-a-side tournament, emerging as overall winners after beating teams from five different schools, a fantastic achievement.

Late November saw the U18A Netball team represent Charters at the SE Berks competition, finishing a strong third place out of six schools. In football, the U13 Boys faced Cox Green in the EBSFA League, where despite a tough match, Charters fought hard in a 4–1 defeat.



Freddie took the title of Under-16s Club Champion at the Wentworth 2025 Club Championships

The U12 Boys Football team delivered a dominant performance in the EBSFA League, securing a 7–2 win against LVS. Netball also

saw success, with the U15 Girls A and B teams competing in the SE Berks tournament. The A team placed fourth out of five schools, while the B team finished an impressive third out of seven schools. The Year 7 Girls Netball A and B teams also impressed in their Furze Platt League tournament, with both teams playing excellent matches, including the A team winning four out of five games.



Olly competed in the English Schools National Combined Events Final in decathlon back in September. He placed 12th individually in his age group and took home a silver medal as a team.

Earlier in September, Charters teams showed determination and skill. On Thursday 25th September, the U15 Girls Football team stormed to an emphatic 8–0 victory over Holme Grange in the National Cup Round 1. The U14 Boys also competed in the National Cup, gaining valuable experience despite a challenging 7–1 loss to St Crispins.

In October, rugby success followed when the U13 Boys competed at the Reading Blue Coat tournament, winning three out of six games. Impressively, they conceded no tries in the matches they won, including victories against Park House, Maiden Erlegh, and Dunottar. Netball rounded off the week, with the Year 9 and Year 10 Girls B teams both securing friendly wins against Ranelagh, edging close contests 8–7 and 14–9 respectively.



ONE LAST EDIT AND A BIG THANK YOU

Dear Chronicle Reader,

Thank you for picking up the latest edition of the Charters Chronicle. This issue is packed with student-written stories that give a real snapshot of life at Charters so far this academic year. Whether you are reading every word or flicking through, we hope you enjoy it.

A huge thank you to Lewis, Xander and Sam for taking the time to speak with us about their experiences of apprenticeships. It was a really insightful conversation, and we are very grateful to them for sharing their journeys so openly. It was also a good reminder that there is no single 'right' route after school.

On a more personal note, this will be Abi and I's final edition editing the Charters Chronicle. It has been an absolute pleasure, and a bit of a whirlwind, to write for and edit this paper. As you can imagine, Year 13 is a very busy year, and unfortunately there are only so many hours in the day. As much as we would love to keep editing until the spring, the deadlines are only getting bigger, and we can't put the hours that we'd love to into the Chronicle.

This does mean that an exciting new chapter is beginning. The paper will now be taken over by members of Year 12, who will be able to put their own stamp on it while building on what has already been created. We are so excited to see where they take it next.

A huge thank you to Mr Metson for trusting us to continue the work of previous editors and for all the support he has given along the way. Thank you also to the Marketing team, who make sure each edition actually reaches its readers every term.

To our small but mighty Chronicle Crew, without you there simply would not be a paper to edit. To Abi, Amy, Mehher and Orla, thank you for all your enthusiasm, creativity and commitment. You have made meetings a highlight of our week, and it has been such good fun working with you over the past 15 months. Thank you also to the 24/25 editing group, Jo, Avinash and Iris, for all the work that we did together to make sure this could continue.

Finally, to Ella and Saffron, who will be taking over the running and editing of the Charters Chronicle for the Spring edition, we hope you enjoy working on this as much as we have, and we are so glad that the Chronicle is able to continue.

If you are a student reading this and are thinking about getting involved, please do come along to our meetings. Whether you love writing, want to try something new, or just enjoy having a say, we would love to have you. If you are an alumni who wants to share your journey, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch with the Marketing team.

On behalf of Abi and myself, it's finally time to say: one last edit, one last spellcheck and one very big thank you.

Ella Toney