

Charters Chronicle



EXCLUSIVE



CHARTERS ALUMNI GETS
HER SKATES ON TO ROLL
INTO WEST END

No experience? No problem! Eve Humphrey proves determination can outpace doubt in theatre's fastest show

BY ELLA TONEY

“I can’t even skate!”

That was Eve Humphrey’s first thought when she got an audition for *Starlight Express*, one of theatre’s most physically demanding musicals. Known for its roller-skating and fast-paced choreography, it’s not the kind of show you expect to be cast in if you’ve never touched a pair of skates. But in just a few months - before she’d even finished drama school - Humphrey went from student to professional performer. Her path wasn’t traditional, but it was proof that determination, and a whole lot of improvisation, can go a long way.



Since it first hit the stage in 1984, *Starlight Express* has been seen by over 30 million people. So it’s hardly a surprise that when asked to sum up her time on the

show, she didn’t hesitate: “It was a whirlwind.”

And it’s easy to see why. Imagine being cast in a major musical then realising you have to learn an entirely

new skill before stepping in front of a live audience.

“I remember when I got the job,” she said.

“I was so excited but part of me was like I couldn’t even imagine myself doing it because I couldn’t do the main skill.

“I was really nervous. Normally when you get a performance job you’re like ‘yeah, I can really imagine doing this’ but this I didn’t really.

“They’d redone the show so I was like, I don’t know what songs I’ll be doing, what costumes I’ll be wearing and I can’t do the skill.

“I think it’s a feeling I’ll never experience again.”

For most, just overcoming the nerves would be the hardest part but for Humphrey, it was the three months that she spent learning to skate.

“It was the most challenging part. You’re in a room with people you don’t know, learning something you’ve never done before. I remember thinking, I can’t even go backwards! And people were already buying tickets. I was like, I’m a fraud.”

She laughed before adding:

“everyone says they wish they could go back to skate school — but that’s only once they know how to skate!”

Whilst performing in front of thousands was a huge milestone, rehearsals stood out amongst the whirlwind of happy memories.

“I loved them,” she adds. “Normally when you step into a show that’s long running, you just step into what the person before you did. It’s all very carbon copy but it works”

In this Starlight Express revival though, the cast was given the rare opportunity to build their characters mannerisms from scratch. No choreography set in stone. No blocking to copy. Just music, roller skates, and pure instinct.



“They were just sort of like ‘throw your ideas at it’. I was very much in my element when they would just start playing the song and you wouldn’t have any direction.”

The moves she came up with on those days are now set in stone forever. After finishing up her time with the musical, she went back to watch the latest cast practice.

“It’s mental because I was thinking they’re doing this random movement because I one day decided I wanted to do that and now it’s in the show forever,” she laughs. “You got to create something special.”

Humphrey's move from education to the world of drama was not your traditional pathway.

"You don't have to go to university straight away just because your friends are," she said, "It doesn't make you any less accomplished." Humphrey, like many of her classmates in 2019, applied for further education, drama school, before the long-awaited 'A-level summer' but didn't get in.



"I decided to take a gap year and I went to Artemis College where I worked part-time," she recalled. "After that I tried again and I got into a foundation course and then, after that, I tried again and finally got in. "I think the main thing is that you can't compare yourself to your friends. Don't rush into something if you're not 100% on it. That's not always the route you have to go down.

"I found it hard during Sixth Form because I was surrounded by people where the 90% were talking about going to university.

"When people say they are doing an apprenticeship or taking a gap year, you sometimes feel like people are judging."

She laughed, shrugging off the memory before adding: "I was like, 'I'm kind of clever - I could have gone to university!'

"Why would I want to do that just to say to people back at Sixth Form 'oh, I went to university?' When I'm 35, that's just not going to matter"

Starlight Express is set in the imagination of a child, where toy trains come to life and race to become the fastest engine in the world.

Performed entirely on roller skates, it's known for its dazzling choreography, larger-than-life characters, and electrifying pace.

Humphrey spent around 350 shows playing Dinah who is a southern dining car characterised as a hopeless romantic with strong morals.

It is therefore easy to understand why the easiest question to answer was what Dinah's social media bio would be.

"It would probably have like a link to her coffee shop that she has and her Pinterest board or something like that," she said.

"I think she'd be really aesthetic online and post those kind of quotes that are like 'you're doing great' when actually she's just be a bit of a mess."

DIFFERENT LEADERS, DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

We sat down with some of this year's student leadership team to hear their stories and goals for the year.



Senior Student Leadership Team 2025-26

EMMANUEL

BY AMY H (Y7)

An informal interview with Year 7 reporter Amy.

What is your role?

"I am one of the Head Students. This means that I overlook the senior student team. As a Head Student, I get information from the Senior Leadership Team and feed it back to my colleagues, additionally we take

care of events as well as sometimes doing public speaking for the school and essentially representing Charters."

What inspired you to apply?

"For me it was a mixture of a few things. My main reason was that I wanted to put meaningful change into the school and I decided that becoming a Head Student would be the best way to do that. I've had quite a unique experience as I might not

look like a majority of students at this school, so I thought that I might be able to do something from my experience to better the school. Another big motivation as well I think is how being part of the senior student team looks on [university] applications.”



Emmanuel - Head Student

What key changes do you hope to make this year?

Some key changes I want to make this year are better inclusivity policies, significant parts of culture being allowed in the school rule - uniform being one of them - and increasing our public outreach. Also to inspire change in our community through Charters.

What advice would you give to students who want to apply for this role?

“Don’t limit yourself just because you think you might not deserve the role; everyone’s got a free shot at it.

“Try to improve your speaking skills as much as you can, Head Student is a very speaking intensive role. It’s also very important to improve your communication skills. Most importantly, it’s a big responsibility but don’t let it overwhelm you if you apply. Just believe in yourself.”

What achievement are you proudest of so far?

“We haven’t done much yet, but I would definitely say that how quickly we set up our groups and established a lot of communication between everyone is something I’m very proud of.”

If you could add a new subject to school what would it be?

“For me, I would add Law or maybe Ethics. Like PSHE but slightly more discussion based.”

What advice would you give to Year 7s?

“Enjoy it while it lasts. Year 7 is definitely the lightest year in terms of studying so I would say to use the time to build up communication with your teachers, with your friends and your classmates. Try get used to the school and take it slowly if you have to.”

MICHAELA

**Interviewed by Mehher J (Y7), written
by Ella T (Y12)**

For Michaela, becoming Head Student was something she had in mind from the moment she started secondary school.

“Since Year 7, it’s always been something I looked up to,” she says.

“I remember thinking, ‘When I’m older, I’d love to be Head Student.’ I’ve always liked having a say in things, and this role gives you the chance to do that. Plus, I really enjoy chatting to people, so being able to work with all the different year groups was a big part of why I applied.”

Now in Year 12, she is part of the student leadership team and already thinking about what changes they’d like to make.

“One of our main goals is to bring the year groups closer together,” she adds. “The school is massive, and when I joined in Year 7, it felt a bit overwhelming - like being a tiny tadpole in a big pond. We’re looking at setting up a mentoring system so older students can offer support, whether that’s advice, GCSE help, or just someone to talk to.”

The team is also discussing how to improve cultural integration across the school - making sure everyone feels included and represented.

When asked what advice she’d give to someone thinking about applying for Head Student, Michaela doesn’t sugar-coat it.



Michaela - Head Student

“You need to really think about why you’re applying. If it’s just for the title, it’s probably not the role for you. For me, I’ve always helped out, parents’ evenings, school tours, and if you enjoy doing that sort of thing, then definitely apply.”

Michaela’s been involved in different leadership roles before, including being a prefect in Years 10 and 11, taking part in the ‘*Next Gen Leaders*’ programme, and helping run the school’s medic book club. She’s also been on the year group council in the past.

When asked what subject she’d introduce to the school if given the choice, she offers something a bit different.

“I grew up in South Africa, and at my old school they had taxidermy,” she adds. “I love science and dissections, so something like that would be interesting, though obviously you’d have to think about the ethical side.” And her advice to new Year 7s?

“Try your best in everything, even in subjects you don’t think you’ll take later on. Just give it a go, and don’t be afraid to ask for help when things get tough.”

ISAAC

BY ORLA C (Y7)

Year 7 reporter Orla sat down with Head Student Isaac.

What inspired you to apply for Head Student?

“One of the reasons I wanted to apply is because I’ve enjoyed my whole time at Charters, from Year 7 all the way up to now. I really appreciate what the teachers have done for me and helping me do well in my exams. Overall, I’ve had a great time here. I wanted to give back and see what I could do to try and make the school even better than it currently is. That was one of the main reasons I applied.”

What advice would you give to students who want to apply?

“I would say just go for it. If you have any inkling that you want to apply, and you’ve got any ideas of how you can improve the school, and you’re that sort of character who’s good at public speaking, or maybe just wants to improve their public speaking, I would just go for it. When I applied, I never thought I’d 100% get it because there’s about 50 people that apply each year.”

What achievement are you proudest of so far?

“I would say my GCSE results. I was really proud of them. I worked really hard over last summer revising. I spent a lot of hours in my bedroom when I could have been out with my mates or doing other things, but it definitely paid off because I got the results I wanted to. This obviously meant that I was able to study the subjects in A-Levels that I wanted to.”



Isaac - Head Student

If you could add a new course or subject to Charters, what would you add?

“I would add a life skills kind of subject, so learning about how to deal with money, basic skills like how to fix a lightbulb, how to fix a tyre, that type of basic life skills. In a few years' time, I'll be potentially

going to uni where I'll be living alone, so I'll have to know these basic skills like how to apply for a mortgage or how to apply for a loan. I think that would be a really useful subject that could be added."

What key changes do you hope to make this year?

"I would like students to be more respectful of the overall school environment, because there are times where the school environment looks quite damaged and run down because people are either littering or just not treating it as well as they could. Just making sure the site is treated a lot better. I'd love for more students, especially the older years, to get involved in sports. I feel in the lower years, a lot more people go to extracurricular activities. When you reach the older years they just don't want to. I think doing activities outside of school is so important, because you're not here to only learn and study, there's so many other parts of school, so I think if we can encourage more maybe sports and extra clubs, that would be good."

Would you add any extra clubs?

"I think it's hard because of the facilities, you can't do golf and swimming and stuff like that, but I think the ones we are currently running are good. I think we should just promote them more and be better at celebrating the achievements and really try and get people to get involved a bit more. I've spoken to people and they've gone to a club and

they've suddenly enjoyed it and that's become their passion, so it can just take one day for that to happen."

ARYA

BY Lily F (Y7)

An informal interview with Year 7 reporter Lily.

What inspired you to apply?

"I originally wanted to do it to prove people wrong, but then I sat down and thought about it and the thing that really inspired me was making a difference and making sure all students voices were heard. Making sure the things that they want are actually put into action instead of being brushed over or ignored."

How do you want to implement that?

"What we are trying to put in place is more of an integration program, so, as Head Students, Heads of Committee, or even committee members, we are looking to go into classes, show our faces and show that we're here to talk, or give support. We'd cater it per year so for example, Y11 might need support with GCSE's or tips for Sixth Form but Y7 might want some advice on settling in"

"More than that I want make sure people know I'm here to talk"

What advice would you give to students who want to be part of the student leadership team?

“Just be yourself, be confident, don’t think you can’t get it just because of whatever reason. As Head Student, you’re a role model for everyone, so make sure you also believe in yourself. Be independent but make sure you support others.”

What advice would you give to new Year 7s?

“I know Charters looks like a big, scary place, but I know from experience that we are all here to help, don’t be scared of putting your hand up in class or making new friends. Also, really take it all in because once you get to about Year 9, Year 10, the pace really ups. Try to make friends, you’ll find your people.”

What achievements are you proud of so far being part of the school?

“In year 10/11 I was a prefect, I was proud of that. Also, I like to speak up

a lot about equality and make sure everyone is equal. For my English Language speech, I spoke about that and people really began to understand the hardships that

sometimes other people experience. I know that’s not an achievement in everyone’s eyes but it definitely was for me. An empowering moment for sure.”

If you could change anything about this school, what would you change?

“That’s a good question! Maybe inclusion and the equality because I’m not sure that’s quite perfect yet. I think we

could definitely advance with that, so I would love to start something like a culture club, or something where everyone’s being appreciated and loved, and all their different cultures are being shown.

“Maybe that’s something we need to work on more, we’ve already started but it could always be better.”



Arya - Head Student

AMELIA

BY Abi C (Y7)

Abi sat down with Welfare Committee chair Amelia for an informal interview.

So, what is your role in the student leadership team?

"I'm on the welfare committee, I look through ideas and what proposals my members are coming up with and take them to the Headteacher, Head Students and all those sorts of meetings."

What kind of proposals do you get?

"We've got a lot of stuff to do with mental health, we've got 'hello yellow' coming up and we've got to come up with some ideas to take round to tutors, so lots more to come!"

What inspired you to actually apply for this position?

"I wanted to apply as, I personally, struggled with my mental health in lower school and I got so much help and support that I wanted to repay the school for what they had done for me and help others get through things like I did."

What key changes do you hope to achieve in this position?

"I'm hoping to do some focus groups with people who have the same sorts

of struggles, so they can hear from other people and their experiences, making the community better and doing fun activities on mental health week to bring awareness to them. Making sure everyone is up to date with their knowledge on mental health."

What advice would you give to someone who wants to apply for this role in the future?

"I'd say, if you're doubting yourself, just go for it. It's such an achievement to even just write the letter, show your skills and how you've developed as a person. Just take the opportunity and run with it."

"Looking back, if I told my Yr 10 self that I was applying to be Head Girl they would definitely be like, "Do it!". Just take the opportunity, you aren't going to get many more like this."



Welfare Committee 2025-26

What process was there for you to apply for this position?

"We had to write a letter to Mr Fletcher and explain why we would be a good fit for the role. It gives a fantastic opportunity to show off your

skills and communication within school.

“Then they narrow it down to quite a few people and we had to do an interview, I had mine with Mr Fletcher and all of the previous Head Students.”

What achievement are you proudest of so far?

“We sent out an email to Yr 13s to bring in their old textbooks for new Yr 12’s to use. This is good for people who don’t have the money to buy them or are unable to for whatever reason. They can just borrow them from someone else and recycle them as second hand.”

“On a personal level, the greatest achievement I have done so far is finding the right people to support you within school, because it’s really hard sometimes to step away from those people who are bringing you down and tearing you apart, that you thought were your good friends and I’m trying to do that myself now.”

SOPHIE

Interviewed by Abi C (Y7), written by Mehher J (Y7)

Abi & Mehher sat down with Welfare Committee chair Sophie

What is your role?

“I’m the chair of curriculum committee. My aim is to introduce new ideas and improvements, especially for the lower school and Sixth Form, focusing on GCSE and

If you could add a new course or subject to school, what would you add?

“I think some people are going to disagree with me on this one but make PE mandatory for Sixth Formers once a week, because it can be a whole group exercise and we are usually stuck indoors all day on screens and doing work, so it would be great to get outside and do a sport all together.”

What piece of advice would you give to Year 7 currently?

“I would tell a Yr 7 to not be scared. When I came into Charters, I was so scared and nervous, but within the first couple of weeks, it turned into something that was so fun, and you realise how great the school can actually be. I’d say honestly, do whatever you want, don’t feel afraid to join after school clubs you want to do and express your interests.”



Curriculum Committee 2025-26

A-level students. I want to help with things like setting up revision sessions and making sure they run smoothly. I also want to help Year 12s understand what to expect in Sixth Form, so they feel prepared for the next couple of years."

What inspired you to apply for this role?

"I've always believed in going for as many opportunities as you can. I was nervous about applying and thought I might not get chosen, but at the end of the day, I'd rather know I tried my hardest. I also really wanted to contribute to the school and make a difference, specially since I'm only going to be here for a year and a half. I thought it would be worth using that time to have an impact."

Do you think that being an external student made you feel like more uneasy about applying?

"I think so because especially at first I didn't really know how the process worked, so I thought maybe being external would lower my chances. At my old school we didn't really have as many opportunities to interact with the school community like we do here, Charters has a better system set up for that. I was definitely a bit more nervous about applying, but I was Deputy Head Girl at my old school so at the same time I'd had that behind me so it was that made me more confident, I'd say."

What key changes do you hope to achieve this year?

"I want to improve the overall flow of the curriculum. I'm not aiming for one huge change—more like lots of small, meaningful improvements that add up over time. One of my main goals is helping Year 12s and Lower School students feel more confident and in control of their education. If they understand what they're doing and why, that's a big thing for me."

Are you already focused on like education for the younger years?

"Yes, especially for GCSE students. Some of them might not realise how important GCSEs are in leading to A-levels and then to even more opportunities. It's all connected. If you start building that awareness early on."

What advice would you give to students who want to apply for this role in the future?

"I'd say be confident, though obviously that's a tricky one, but be as confident as you can in yourself and don't put yourself down before other people so you never know you might get a role even if you don't think you will. There's always an opportunity because everyone has a fair chance when they're applying that's my biggest tip."

What achievement are you proudest of so far this can be with the committee, or it can be just before?

"I'd say I was proud of my GCSE results because I got straight nines in my GCSEs and that was a very big

achievement for me. I didn't think I could at the time, so I was quite proud of that, that's my biggest moment I'd say."

If you could add a new course or a subject to school, what would it be?

"I'd love to see a course or programme where Year 12s can work with younger students—maybe mentoring or shared sessions. It would help bridge the gap between lower and upper school and show students what all their learning is building toward. It would make lessons feel more purposeful and less like random topics that don't connect."

What piece of advice would you give to Y7 for the future?

"I'd just say don't waste opportunities. You never know what everything's going to lead to, just say yes to as many things as possible, even if you're a bit nervous, no one's going to judge you for trying and they shouldn't judge you for trying. Just like make sure when you look back at it, you're happy with everything you've done rather than thinking that you wasted your time, and that can be with friends or with school, always just say yes to as many things and see where it takes you."

"Accept the changes and just go with the flow, that's a big thing."

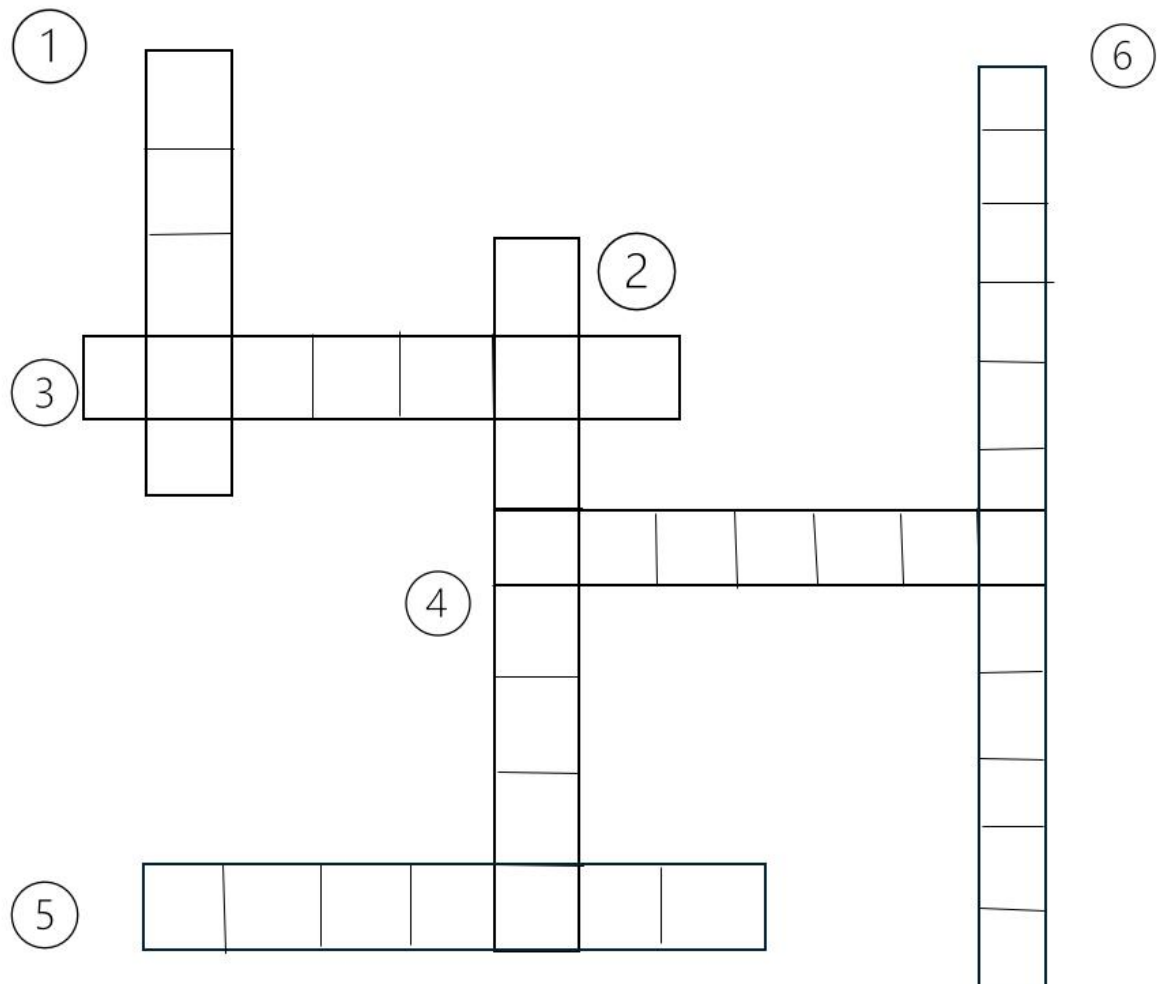


Community Committee 2025-26

The Community Committee weren't interviewed ahead of this edition but we are working to ensure they feature in our first edition of the 25/26 academic year.

SPORTS DAY CROSSWORD

BY CHARLIE MILLER



CLUES

- 1) 4 people in a team, a baton is passed between people
- 2) Competitors jump over a horizontal pole that gets increasingly higher
- 3) A stick with a sharp metal end is thrown as far as possible
- 4) Competitors run and jump over the same obstacle
- 5) A heavy metal ball is thrown as far as possible
- 6) The name for a type of running e.g. 1500 metres

ANSWERS ON THE FINAL PAGE

THE INSPIRING JOURNEY OF ASYLUM SPEAKER GIEL

BY JOANNA YOUNG

On the 30th of April 2025 all of Year 9, Year 10 and Year 12 had a talk from Asylum Speaker Giel who told his story about travelling from South Sudan to the UK. He describes his childhood as looking after cattle and playing with his friends. However, at the young age of 13 he had to leave his home due to conflict breaking out. He escaped with his aunt and cousins leaving his life behind. After months of being moved from camp to camp he fled to Sudan. For the rest of his journey, he faced hardships like modern slavery, imprisonment, run ins with gangs and torture. Despite all this he carried on. Once in Libya it took him four tries to cross the Mediterranean Sea into Italy. One of his biggest achievements he said was when he was in Libya, he freed 400 prisoners with the help of six others. They caught a guard by surprise when he was delivering food, and he ended up dropping the keys in the process. Instead of fleeing, Giel stayed and helped free the 400, showing incredible acts of bravery. After this he crossed into France and then crossed over the English Channel to enter the UK at the age of 16.

He is now 21 and is a human rights, climate change, refugee activist and

asylum speaker. His story is truly inspirational, and he wishes to live in a world of peace for his three-year-old daughter.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

BY FREDA BLATCHFORD

Friday 20th June marked World Refugee Day, shedding light on the misconceptions surrounding refugees struggles accessing their rights, long-term solutions and emigration journeys.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) aims to support refugees with every stage along their displacement journey, which can often be years for each individual. They are advocates, life-savers and supporters, for refugees that experience hardships to a greater extent than many are aware of. The UK is home to approximately 1% of the 27.1 million refugees forcibly displaced around the world, though this percentage is low, their contributions to our work force and culture is expansive and critical.



Around 1,200 medical professionals recorded on the British Medical Association's database, and 12% of school staff in England are refugees, these are examples of the highly positive impact refugees can have within society. World Refugee Day is about recognising these individuals for their merits and contributions to communities like ours; stereotypes and stigmas can be dismantled, these are some examples of actions that can be taken by individuals or groups to aid refugees around the world: International Rescue Committee (IRC) advocate for refugees and asylum seekers, you can donate to or volunteer with the IRC. You can also volunteer to support the integration of displaced people in your community. There are unique stories behind the statistics, we need to focus on them too.

EUROVISION SONG CONTEST; A REVIEW

BY LILY F (Y7)

The Eurovision Song Contest is one of the longest run shows in TV history, with the goal of uniting Europe with music. Every country competing must select a song and artist to represent them. Some countries choose to have a public 'national selection' to decide, while others choose to select internally. After that, there are two semi-finals, where 26 of the 37 countries will advance to the final. This year's contest was held in Basel, Switzerland after they won the contest last year, with their song 'The Code'.

This year, the UK were represented by pop group Remember Monday with their song 'What the Hell Just Happened?'. It was a blend of multiple genres such as pop, rock and country, appealing to a wide audience. In the grand final, our entry gained a total of 88 points in total, landing the

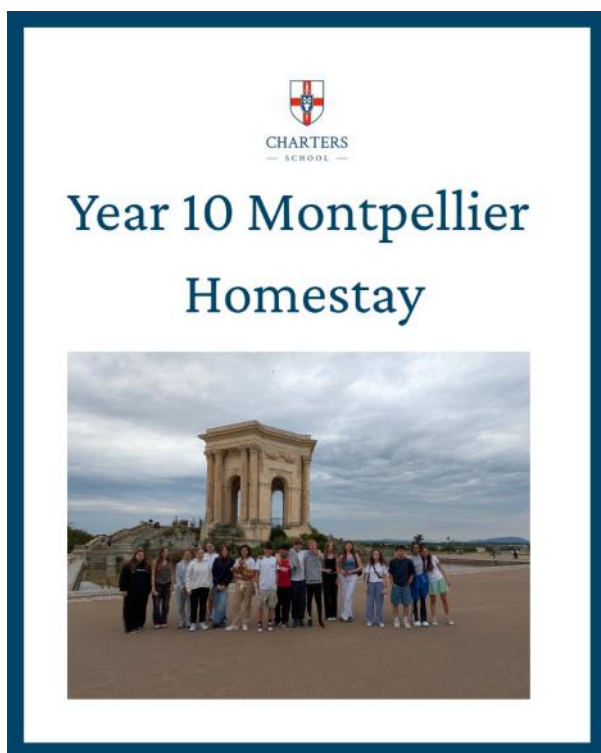
band in 19th place. Even though we didn't win this year, we have won a total of five times since 1956, and, even if we didn't have an ideal result, we are all proud of every entry.



This year the winner was JJ, with his pop-ridden opera, 'Wasted Love'. In the final, he gained 436 points! Overall, every country who partook this year left its own unique mark on the contest. If you want to check it out, you can watch the grand final on BBC iPlayer.

MONTPELLIER MOMENTS

BY IRIS SALAZAR BERMEO

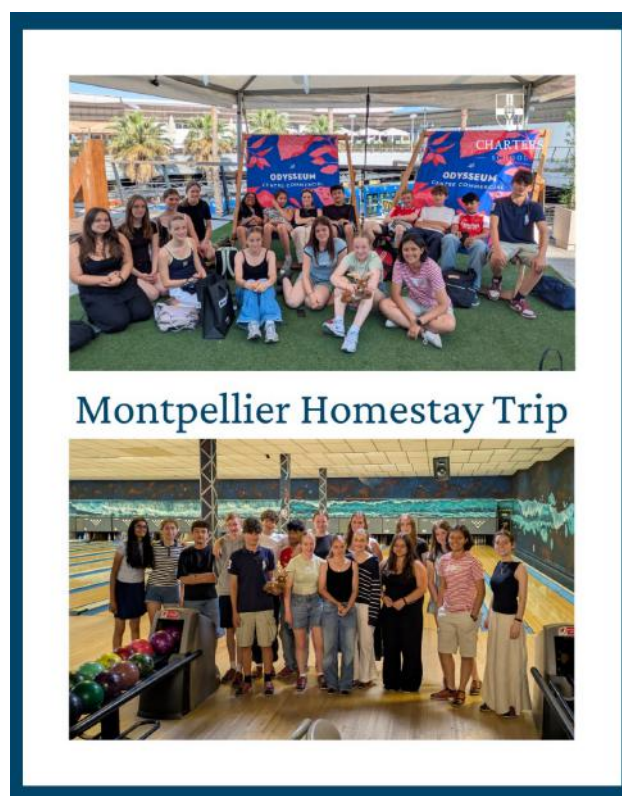


During the first week of June, French students from Years 10 and 12 had the opportunity to visit Montpellier in the south of France. Mornings were spent at a language school where lessons were given almost entirely in French, focussing on grammar and cultural aspects.

After, we took lunch together in an authentic French boulangerie, which



left us spoilt for choice. Although our trip was only five days, it was packed with plenty to do, a highlight of which was visiting a shopping centre where we completed various tasks. These challenged us in our French skills, like having to ask for a map in French, but also let us relax and have fun after having to focus in the morning. Another high point was the sandy beach where we ate ice creams and paddled in the sea.



In the evenings, we returned to our host family, having to communicate in French. This cultural immersion was so beneficial to our understanding of France and the language. Overall, the trip was an amazing experience.

BIOLOGY FIELD TRIP

BY ELLIE WALLACE

During the summer term, the Year 12 A-Level biology students had the exciting opportunity to visit Slapton field centre to gain a greater insight into ecology, and to complete part of the practical elements of the course. This varied from exploring the different organisms in the rocky shores, to visiting Paignton Zoo on the first day and delivering some engaging individual or group talks about a chosen animal. The trip also included visits to the woodland and the beach to look at some of the different plants and organisms in that area.



With the final day allowing for some independent research, where the students had the opportunity to plan their own investigation in pairs and collect their own data, while still leaving time to walk down the beach to the ice cream shop, finishing off an overall informative and collaborative week. Throughout the week, the students were surrounded not only by



areas of special scientific interest but also by areas of outstanding national beauty. In particular the beach was a favourite, visited not only for scientific purposes, but also to explore the rocks pools, eat ice cream, watch sunsets and look out for seals.

Despite there being no water on Thursday evening, the trip was a memorable and enjoyable experience, however the compost toilet will definitely be remembered less fondly.

GREAT GATSBY TRIP

BY FRED A BLATCHFORD

On Friday 27th April, the Year 12 English Literature class took an educational and exciting trip into London to see the West End Production of Fitzgerald's The Great



Gatsby at London Coliseum. The fun-filled evening involved travelling into London and grabbing some dinner before watching the lively production, with a quick stop to take a picture in front of Shakespeare's famous statue in Leicester Square. The show was

amazing with fantastic dances and costuming, definitely not to be missed for any theatre lover. It was a fantastic evening and a perfect addition to the student's knowledge of new and different textual interpretations of The Great Gatsby.

STRAIGHT FROM OUR COMMUNITY...

SUNNINGHILL'S MUCH LOVED WHEELBARROW RACE

BY AMY H & ORLA C (Y7)

The Sunninghill Wheelbarrow Race is an annual community event on May Bank Holiday, where teams of four or more, enter then dress up and race with a wheelbarrow to raise money for local charities.

The race was cancelled last year due to heavy rain and was also called off a few years earlier due to COVID 19, but was finally back and better than ever, taking place on May 5th.

This year's one-mile course, as usual, started at the School Road Car Park and finished at St Michael's Primary school, where the teams (and spectators) were greeted by refreshments and food, such as hotdogs.

It is organised by the Rotary Club of Ascot, The Windsor and Ascot Lions and St Michael's PTA. Families, friends, work colleagues, clubs and even schools all took part with outrageous fancy dress and creatively decorated wheelbarrows. Some of the teams included the Sunningdale Netball Club, Berks County Football Club, and the Rajbhoog Restaurant. Sadly, no pets were allowed to compete. Sorry, furry friends!

If this seems like an event you'd be interested in (entering or watching) and you live locally, keep an eye out for next year's race! There will be posters and news of it online.

SUMMER SOUNDS

BY ABI C (Y7)

Charters School filled the Main Hall with the sounds of music, celebration, and community spirit on the 6th of July from 7-9pm. The annual Summer Concert truly showcased the extraordinary talent thriving within the school.



It featured a diverse range of musical groups, such as orchestra, chamber choir and choral voices. Our seasonal concerts are a chance for students to express themselves through music and show it to their friends and families. Several soloists/duets/groups with the sounds of music, celebration, and community spirit performed during the concert, with many popular songs for all the audience members to enjoy.

The Seasonal Concerts are very joyful events, and they are the perfect opportunity to sit back and watch all the musical talent displayed. If you are interested in joining any of the Music Clubs at school, check out the website or the Daily Dispatch for more information. They are a

wonderful opportunity to improve your music and teamwork skills. In these wonderful events, there is always an extensive range of music genres, from Italian opera singing to hard metal. There are also chances to do solo pieces like singing or playing



an instrument. Also, if you're a little nervous, remember that everyone will be supportive of your pieces, and you can have fun with your friends whether you're in the audience or onstage (but remember to be professional and respectful of performers!)

THE UKMT JUNIOR MATHS CHALLENGE

BY ORLA C (Y7)

The UKMT JMC (Junior Maths Challenge) was held on Thursday 1st May for Year 7 and 8 students in the Maths Extension Band. It lasted 60 minutes and had 25 multiple choice questions. It is a yearly maths competition organised by the UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT) - a registered charity connected to The University of Leeds - for students in the UK. These competitions are designed to spark interest in Maths and encourage a love of mathematical reasoning.

The UKMT Maths challenge has three awards you can reach: Bronze, which about 25% of participants achieve (you need to score 54+ points), Silver, which approximately 20% of participants are awarded (score of 73+ points), and finally Gold, which only (roughly) 8% of participants reach per year (score of 91+points)! The top 50% of participants were sorted into these three categories in the ratio 3:2:1. There are two other extended thresholds, Junior Kangaroo (score of 100+) and Junior Mathematical Olympiad (score of 125+). We are proud to say that six Charters students achieved places in the Junior Kangaroo this year!

All the students who didn't manage to achieve Bronze this time received a

Certificate of Participation. Congratulations to everyone who participated this year; they all showed resilience and tried their best on every question.

If you are in Year 6 currently or in Year 7- having already taken part once/not taken part this year, keep an eye out for next year's event. It's sure to be very fun and challenging!

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

BY ABI C (Y7)

May, mental health awareness month, is aimed at bringing awareness to and reducing the stigma around talking about your mental health, it shouldn't be a taboo subject and not talking about it openly usually makes the issues worse. Symptoms vary from physical to behavioural changes that can affect people in several ways, but they are different for every person. However, you are not alone, you never will be when it comes to things like mental health, someone out there will have gone through something just like you.

You cannot always see people's mental health, you cannot tell if they are suffering under a crushing depression or an eating disorder, caused by body dysmorphia, (body dysmorphia is a feeling when someone does not like their own size

and shape or sees themselves as ugly because of a distorted image in their mind) however, there are usually some signs. These signs can be behavioural, emotional, physical or psychological. Some physical changes could be eyebags or weight changes. Some emotional signs could be someone becoming more short-tempered and being jumpier or jittery when certain things happen. A psychological change could be the way they talk; they could become more withdrawn and quieter because inside their own head, they are fighting their own battle against negative thoughts.

If you think you suffer with poor mental health, the best thing you can do is contact your GP or tell a trusted adult. Your GP must keep everything confidential, unless they believe your life is in immediate danger. There are some resources at the bottom of this article for teens suffering with mental health issues. This month is all about helping raise awareness about research and treatments for people with mental illnesses. It is also to educate people about mental illness; therefore, these sources are great to know for future reference and if your friends or family members struggle with poor mental health.

I found some books that also explain thoroughly about these mental health issues whilst researching, here are some examples:

1. *A teenage guide to stress* by Nicola Morgan
2. *Good vibes, good life* by Vex King

3. *The power of letting go* by John Purkiss

4. *Reasons to stay alive* by Matt Haig

5. *Teen girl's anxiety survival toolkit* by Jenna Deford

6. *The glass girl* by Kathleen Glasgow

7. *Boys don't cry* by Tim Grayburn

8. *King of nothing* by Nathanael Lessore

These are just a few examples, but if you do your research, you will find millions of support books and aids for young adults and their mental health.



Here are also some helplines for young people in the UK:

1. *Text SHOUT to 85258 (anything)*
2. *Call the Samaritans on 116 123 (anything you need to talk about)*
3. *Call Childline on 0800 1111 (mental health for children)*
4. *Call SANEline UK on 0300 304 7000 (mental health in general)*
5. *Call 111 (anything that is not crazy urgent, call 999 if it is)*

6. *Call National Suicide Helpline UK on 0800 689 5652 (suicide)*
7. *Text 07786 209 697 – papyrus (suicide)*
8. *Call switchboard for LGBT+ on 0300 330 0630 (LGBTQIA+ issues)*

All these helplines are open constantly, to make sure that children get all the support they need, no one is going to judge you on them if you self-harm or if your mind is a dark place, they will all just listen to your thoughts and feelings and try to help you.

FREE & EQUAL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

BY AVINASH MAINI

This year, Charters has launched its own Free and Equal Ambassador Programme, an exciting and important new initiative designed to promote equity, compassion and respect within our school community.

What that means is that we advocate for human rights, as well as challenge prejudice and discrimination within the school.

This ties in perfectly with our school values, Unity, Respect and Excellence, values which encompass everything the programme does.

Since launching the project in March, 18 students from across Year 8, 9, 10 and 12 have been involved, and we have had discussions about how to deal with issues such as, but not limited to, racism, misogyny and unconscious bias.

Students had one in-person training day in the spring, and since then have completed three virtual online

training sessions, themed around racism, misogyny and gender inclusivity respectively.

Three of the 18 ambassadors did a very successful presentation to the school's senior leadership team last week, which also helped raise awareness.

In terms of implementation, one of our main initiatives for this year is a project called 'Who We

Are'. It is a project themed around culture and identity, and we hope to use it to help all those in the Charters' community understand and celebrate their differences.

It consists of a set of questions that all members of the school community are more than welcome to complete and share. We hope to see as many responses as possible.



YEAR 7 INDUCTION TIPS

BY LARA WILKS

Year 7 is an exciting but daunting time for both students and parents. We have prepared some tips from former students on how to adjust to secondary school life and make the most out of their years at Charters School.

A worry we often see is around making friends, while we understand people come from the same schools, it is good to make friends and involve yourself with new people. A great way to do this is by joining breaktime and after school clubs such as the book club, Pride Soc, netball, tennis, football and many more. Additionally, assigned tutor groups have lots of ice breaker activities so

you can get to know your peers in your tutor. If you have friends in other tutors, don't worry! You can see them at lunchtime and breaktime.

Being prepared is a huge part of Year 7 as lessons are taught differently. Homework is manageable but requires a bit more organisation than you may be used to. It's important to do simple organising such as packing your bag the night before and making sure your pencil case has the right equipment, as it will help you focus in lessons.

Lastly, it is completely normal to feel apprehensive and nervous for the start of Year 7. Always ask for help even if it's something small like not knowing where your classroom is. You can talk to prefects, tutors, and teachers who will all be happy to help.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH SUCCESS

BY AVINASH MAINI

Many students in Year 9, 10, and 12 took part in their bronze, silver, and gold Duke of Edinburgh's award this year. It has been an incredible experience for many – giving students the opportunity to learn new skills, make new friends and develop resilience.

The award is split into four categories: skills, physical,



volunteering and expedition. A fifth category, a five-day residential, is also added to the gold expedition requirements.

In May, the silver cohort went to the Brecon Beacons in Wales for their assessment expedition in May. Brecon is a stunning natural landscape known for its mountains.

Year 10 student Alicia had only positive words. When asked what her favourite part was, she didn't hesitate to say that it was definitely the sense of friendship and community within her group. She said that working with other people helps, especially when they encountered challenges. Although the long walks were hard at times, she enthusiastically said that it was a good experience and she would absolutely do it again.

Another Year 10 student, William, expressed equally enthusiastic thoughts. When asked what his favourite part was, he said that chatting to friends in the evening after a long walk was quite enjoyable. Also, he commented that the views were amazing. He admitted that the navigating could be quite difficult, and his group did get lost, but thanks to their teamwork, they independently and successfully managed to get themselves back on track. According to William, the most important thing that he learnt was how to map-read better.

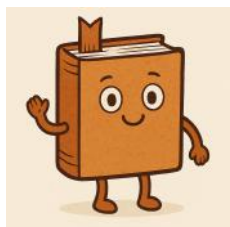
Some Year 12s on their gold expedition also travelled to Brecon, whilst others travelled to the beautiful Peak District in Derbyshire.

Tianna, in Year 12, reflected on how much her group enjoyed the expedition, and even sang songs along the way.

Iris, also in Year 12, said that her favourite part was creating bonds with people she doesn't interact with in lessons, and that the most important thing she learnt was resilience. For her, the hardest part was the start of each day, however she still commented that it was much easier than she expected and that she would in fact do it again.



From my own personal perspective, D of E was absolutely amazing, purely because of the people I met and the stunning landscapes. It was, however, an endurance exercise, and gold is certainly not for the faint-hearted. But if you are up for the commitment, I would absolutely recommend it.



YOUR SUMMER READING STARTS HERE

BY ABI CHOW



As the summer approaches here is a list of books that the members of our team recommend; maybe you will find your new favourite here. Happy reading!

A Sky Painted Gold by Laura Wood

A light-hearted Gatsby era romance set in a small Cornish village in the sticky heat of August. Throughout, the main character is whisked through dreamy summer weeks with the Cardews, an elusive, aristocratic family, but before long, she has to face her reality.

Black Rabbit Hall by Eve Chase

A compelling novel about a beautiful English country house, thick with mystery, and a family with a dark secret.

The Beloved Girls by Harriet Evans

A dark and gothic mystery about two girls and a mysterious, haunting ritual.

The Watchmaker's Daughter by C.J. Archer

A piece of historical fiction set in the 1890s that follows India Steele, a magical watchmaker.

An Arrow to the Moon by Emily X.R. Pan

A similar tale to Romeo and Juliet but intertwine the story with Chinese mythology.

Keeper of the Lost Cities by Shannon Messenger

This book series is perfect if you are looking for a book that can last you all summer. It's fun, magical and adventurous; perfect for fans of Harry Potter or Percy Jackson.

Sunrise on the Reaping by Suzanne Collins

Sunrise on the Reaping is a thrilling and engaging story that can keep you hooked from the beginning- picking up the book on a long car journey- to finally finishing it and putting the book down as you arrive at your destination (after two hours of being in a different world entirely!) The story showed the strength of the characters in tough situations; it really helps to connect with them.

The Reappearance of Rachel Price by Holly Jackson

This book is a compelling mystery thriller for young adults about a girl who is filming a documentary on the case of her missing mother. It's interesting cover and exciting blurb entices you and attracts your attention almost immediately.

Do No harm by Henry Marsh

About a brain surgeon and his struggles with morals and ethics.

DEAR CHRONICLE READER,

Thank you for reading this edition of *The Charters Chronicle*. As always, it's been a pleasure to bring together stories, achievements, interviews, and creativity from across the school community. Whether you joined us for the first time or are a regular reader, we appreciate your support.

This term has been full of energy, talent, and memorable moments - from concerts and trips to new student committee's and standout accomplishments.

We hope this issue has captured just a small part of that and given you something to enjoy, reflect on, or be inspired by.

Enjoy your summer break, and we look forward to bringing you more in the 25/26 academic year.

The Chronicle Team



ANSWERS: 1) Relay 2) High Jump 3) Javelin 4) Hurdles 5) Shotput 6) Long distance