



THE COLYTONIAN AUTUMN 2025

CELEBRATING OUR EVENTS, SPORTS AND STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENTS BETWEEN SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2025



Keep in Touch with Us

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR HEADTEACHER

During my assemblies and Friday Letters, I try to include some famous pieces of art to act as an illustration for my themes and this morning is no different. This one is "The Nativity with St. Francis and St. Lawrence," also known as "The Adoration," is one of the most famous works of Caravaggio, the Italian Baroque master painter. I think he is one of my favourite artists.



The work was commissioned in 1609 and hung above the altar at the Oratorio di San Lorenzo, in Palermo, Sicily. It is one of Caravaggio's last works, created during his turbulent final years when he was fleeing legal troubles. The painting was stolen in 1969 and remains missing, making it one of the most famous lost artworks in the world.



The painting, like so much of Caravaggio's work, has a sense of realism. Mary is seen looking at the child; she is depicted as crouching on the ground, exhausted. She wears a ragged dress which falls from her right shoulder. The choice of dress is unusual for this type of painting and shows the lack of conformity – she is more normal rather than a holy figure. Joseph is aged, and the setting is rustic, emphasizing the humanity of the scene. In the background are St. Francis who represents humility and poverty, aligning with the Nativity's theme, and St. Lawrence who is associated with charity, reinforcing Christian virtues.

Caravaggio depicts the idea of the birth of Christ with an uncertain future. This baby Jesus is a saviour to the world, but his future is uncertain – it is not a perfect world ahead. The genius of this interpretation is that the Christian message tells us that the baby accepted that challenge and in doing so provides great HOPE to the world – despite the struggles that lie ahead.

One of the common experiences of hope is that it is dependent on someone or something else. All of these desires can be filled with an excitement and anticipation. But what happens when over time that sense of hope grows dim? What happens when the one we depend on to make this hope come alive doesn't come through for us? This is a reality of life, and this is what the painting shows us. Caravaggio's use of light and shadow creates a sombre, sober mood, reflecting his own troubled state during this period. When we think of greatness, we often imagine perfection. But the life of the artist Caravaggio reminds us that this is rarely the case. Caravaggio was a man of extraordinary talent. His paintings transformed art, using light and shadow to reveal deep truth, suffering, and beauty. Even today, his work draws people toward reflection and awe.

Yet Caravaggio was also deeply flawed. He lived a turbulent life marked by anger, violence, and poor choices. His personal failures did not disappear because of his genius. In fact, they followed him everywhere. His life shows us a difficult but honest truth: great gifts can exist alongside great weakness. We should celebrate each other's greatness but importantly we should also act with compassion, understanding and forgiveness.

This should not excuse wrongdoing, but it should invite humility. Caravaggio's story reminds us that no human being is perfect. We are all a mixture of light and shadow. Like his paintings, our lives contain both brilliance and brokenness. What matters is not pretending the darkness isn't there but allowing the light to enter it. Do not dwell on the negative but embrace the positive.

This picture, as in the Christmas message, God chooses the flawed, the struggling, and the broken to bring about something beautiful. Caravaggio's art, born from a troubled life, continues to point people toward truth and transcendence.

We are not much different than many of those who have gone before us. Struggles academically and socially can cause us to lose hope. We can forget and become discouraged when that hope grows dim, and this can often lead to poor decisions being made. How sad that our memory of Hope can fade. When Hope fades and fear and anxiety reign, we can become cynical and even hopeless. A fire that once burned inside us flickers out.

But hope is built on memory: "Advent is concerned with the very connection between memory and hope." The season of Advent is meant to give us that time to help us slow things down and remember. Each year, we can begin anew, remembering once again the hope that was promised to us – we can become refocused and reenergised.

The angels, the star, John the Baptist all bring a message of hope in this child – he has come to bring light from the darkness, but this picture reminds us that such a journey is never easy and requires support from those around us.

And what about Christmas and, more pertinently, what about Hannukah, since Christmas is next week and Hannukah began last week. What are we to make of these festivals? So, this is what it's all about, well, might be, could be, should be, about. Its overriding message is in the excitement and the glory of a new beginning and new Hope for another year. It is about Hope, happiness, Joy and tradition – It's about lights in the darkness, so we can all be the smile that lights up a room, or we can put a candle in the window and enjoy the smallness of the flame in the silence of the night. I love that Hannukah and Advent have a tradition of marking the passing of time by lighting more and more candles because it is dark and it is cold and what it is really all about is helping each other through those dark times, encouraging each other, being more cheerful, more robust, more welcoming, more likely to survive to spring because we are not alone. There are dark times but together as a community we can create a powerful light that helps each and every one of us to be happier, more fulfilled and successful. Christmas is a time of light, of joy, of happiness and of Hope.

This has been a wonderful term and certainly provides an abundance of Hope that our students will go on to make huge progress, continue to enjoy their lives at school and be ready to flourish in their next steps. I hope that you enjoy this edition of The Colytonian and most importantly that you and your families have a wonderful break.

I'd also like to congratulate my colleagues listed below on passing their final assessments and gaining the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership. This is an excellent achievement – well done!

- Mr L. Brown
- Miss E. Paviour
- Miss F. Maiden
- Mrs A. Stenner

Merry Christmas and happy New Year, thank you for your continued support.

Mr Harris
BA Hons, FCCT, NPQEL, Headteacher

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August

A-Levels Results: An impressive 87% of grades were awarded A*-B, with over two thirds of all grades achieving A* or A, with 27 off to Oxbridge.

GCSEs Results: 32% of grades achieved were the highest grade 9 and 79% of grades awarded were grades 9 to 7. Out of this year's cohort 23 (15% of the year group) students gained eight or more grade 9s.

September

The Tempest Performance, took place with over 400 people attending.

Year 7 Tea Party

October

The Witness for the Prosecution, took place with nearly 500 attending.

House Music

November

Year 7 Learning to Learn Evening

Year 11 Mocks

December

House Matches

House Drama

Carol Service & Christmas Concert

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

THE BIG PICTURE

WHAT HAS THIS TERM INVOLVED?

192

Number of students joining us
in Year 7 & 12

1083

Total number of students at CGS

67

Days of learning

335

Hours of learning per student
(Y7-11)



ATTENDANCE

95.5%

Whole school average attendance
over the term

Y7

The best year group for
attendance

THE BIG PICTURE

TRIPS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE THIS TERM

44

Number of
trips

941

Number of students
taking part

SPANNING ACROSS ALL DEPARTMENTS INCLUDING: DRAMA, ECONOMICS, CAREERS, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, STEM SUBJECTS, MUSIC, ART AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION!

24

Different trip
locations



21 UK LOCATIONS PLUS POLAND, GERMANY AND CHINA!

THE BIG PICTURE

SPORTING FIXTURES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE

80

Number of sporting fixtures this term

70%

Percentage of the whole school who have taken part

WE HAD SUCH A WIDE RANGE OF SPORTING FIXTURES THIS TERM: HOCKEY, FOOTBALL, BADMINTON, NETBALL, TENNIS, CROSS COUNTRY, RUGBY AND EVEN ULTIMATE FRISBEE!

18 vs 57

At-home Games

Away Games

12

Primary Outreach Sessions



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!

THE BIG PICTURE

PERIOD 3 $\frac{3}{4}$

162

Number of Period 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ clubs

20

Number of sporting clubs

LAST YEAR WE HAD 271 CLUBS OVER THE COURSE OF THE WHOLE YEAR AND WE'RE NEARLY THERE IN ONE TERM! NOT TO MENTION THE LUNCHTIME CLUBS WHICH AREN'T INCLUDED HERE.



MUSIC LESSONS

375

Music lessons per week

20

Music Groups/Ensembles

THAT'S 187.5 HOURS! AND IT WILL SOON RISE TO 455 LESSONS NEXT TERM! A BIG THANK YOU TO MR BRIMELOW AND MISS SALTER FOR ORGANISING THESE LESSONS.



TOP TERM STORIES

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



ART

YEAR 9 RESIDENTIAL TO ST IVES

During the last two days before the end of half term, the Art department held a residential trip to St Ives with our Year 9 students. As soon as we dropped off our overnight bags, we visited Barbara Hepworth's Museum and Sculpture Garden, where students explored Hepworth's former home and studio. Surrounded by her iconic bronzes nestled among palms and bamboo, students sketched on location – work that will be included in their GCSE sketchbooks.

Afterwards, we headed to the Tate St Ives, where students encountered work by both modern and contemporary artists who have been shaped by the unique light and landscape of the Cornish coastline.

One of the highlights of the trip was a hands-on workshop at the Kurt Jackson Foundation. The students experimented with mixed media processes and mark-making techniques connected to the Cornish environment. On our way home, our final visit was Tremenheere Sculpture Gardens; a stunning hillside space where contemporary sculpture sits amongst subtropical plants. It was the perfect setting to conclude an inspiring and creative trip.

Throughout the residential, our Year 9 students demonstrated engagement and real artistic growth. Most importantly, we had a brilliant time—working together and discovering new artists, places, and ideas.





Primary School Outreach

In the Art Dept this term we spent a fantastic morning with Colyton Primary School along with several of our supportive sixth formers. During a cold November morning, an entire Year 4-5 class walked to and from Colyton to learn about print making in black and white ink and a Japanese Notan paper collage. They were accompanied by their class teacher, TA and Headteacher.

The children were impeccably behaved and threw themselves into the two challenging tasks with the help of 6 of our wonderful A level Art students. It was definitely a 'hats-off' moment to all Primary school teachers - they took everything in their stride and weren't daunted by the morning nor the walk home with 33 small children, all wanting to hold their hands.





BCAS

The Big Colyton Art Show was an incredible success again this year and whilst this is solely down to the efforts of the highly organised and ambitious committee, we, in the Art department took advantage of their offer for us to exhibit the work of our own Colyton artists.

Our fabulous technician Ms Cobb, exhibited the current work from every year group as well as a section of work where students put forward their work to sell. All the students' work was, as always, highly praised and received quite a few offers to be bought (most of the offers were levelled towards current coursework unfortunately), encouraging none the less!





CAREERS

It is always a very busy term for careers, with next steps on the horizon for Year 11, the start of the process of big decisions for Year 12, and Year 8 beginning their careers journey properly at Colyton, but this really is a bumper edition! So get comfy, maybe a hot chocolate in hand, and take the time to learn more about the wide range of careers-related activities that have taken place since the summer...

Careers talks

We have had a slightly quieter term of talks to start the year, although lots of efforts behind the scenes to secure more talks, and a greater range - as you can see in the second list below!

This term's talks:

- Studying law, at University of Oxford, Mahima Nayak (OCS2023)
- Army officer careers, Jason Button
- Maths careers week talks (more below)
- Economics & financial careers, James Float (OCS2018)
- Civil Engineering, Tom Osborne (OCS2019)

The talks scheduled for next term and beyond:

- Clinical Psychology, Dr Claire Parker, NHS
- Medicine including sexual health & HIV, Fiona Fargie, Consultant at RD&E (parent)
- Law, Rhys Hadden, barrister with Serjeants' Inn chambers and part-time Crown Court judge (parent)
- Robotics, Professor Prathyush Menon, University of Exeter
- Mental health, research & clinical application, Barney Dunn, Professor of Clinical Psychology (parent) & Helen Newson (OCS2023)
- Earth Sciences and postgraduate study, Helen Underwood (OCS2020)
- Neuroscience, Telitha Kerrigan, Associate Professor of Neuroscience, University of Exeter (parent)
- Medical research, Jonathan Snicker, Executive Chair & Chief Strategy Officer, Attomarker Ltd. (parent)
- Drama in careers, Dr Aparna Mahiyaria, University of Exeter
- Accountancy careers, Simpkins Edwards
- Law, Nick Barber, University of Oxford

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 11 Future Pathways

To inform and support students in Year 11 in their next steps after GCSEs there was a programme introduced to them at the start of the year, with key elements:

- Meeting with the independent careers advisers - *advisers from Seetec providing independent, impartial advice and information for students about future pathways, with an 'action plan' of ideas and resources saved to their Unifrog profile.*
- A-level options - *Sixth Form Open Evening, guidance and opportunities to research future pathways using Unifrog.*
- External provider talks - *the University of Bath, Exeter College regarding apprenticeships and T-levels, and University of Exeter talking about degree apprenticeships, and the range available.*

Then at the end of January they will make their A-level subject choices.

Year 12 beginning the next stage of their journey...

Head Start Day

This was a morning of talks and activities to inform, guide, and inspire students in beginning their journey to future pathways and careers:

- Mr Davidson, Head of Careers - *setting out the roadmap for making decisions for their next steps.*
- Independent careers adviser - *the 'squiggly' nature of careers, and key skills to prepare for future careers.*
- External provider talks - *the University of Bath, Exeter College regarding apprenticeships and T-levels, and University of Exeter talking about degree apprenticeships, and the range available.*
- Careers research - *using Unifrog to learn more about potential courses, and careers leading on from their A-levels.*
- Ethical use of AI to support learning - *information and activities to understand appropriate ways that AI can support their studies.*

Work Experience Launch

The process was launched for Year 12 students, with guidance on updating their CV, the best approach for making enquiries and applications, and the use of Unifrog for setting up placements for approval for undertaking in February.

UCAS Applications

Year 13 students have been completing the final stages in their journey, using UCAS:

- Personal statements completed and checked
- References written by teachers, tailored to their course and institution choices
- Applications submitted on UCAS
- Interview preparation, with both internal and external practice
- Receiving offers

Year 8 Careers Morning & Parents Guidance evening

This morning of talks, guidance and activities has given a real kick-start to Year 8 students' thinking around where they might want to take their future, and the tools and actions they can take to make the decisions to get them there:

- Introduction to careers education, and what a career can be
- Independent careers adviser - *the 'squiggly' nature of careers, and key skills to prepare for future careers.*
- Nick Mills, an alumni who took a few turns on his journey to become a chartered structural engineer - *decision and choices, and their impact on your life.*
- 'Who am I?' - *reflecting on what they enjoy, and what they may want to do in the future*
- 'What skills do I have?' - *identifying employability skills they have, and want to develop for possible future careers*
- Careers research: learning how to use Unifrog to investigate a range of different careers, including details about what activities are involved, the working conditions, opportunities for progression, LMI (labour market information), and related careers, and subjects.

Parents Guidance information Evening

A new addition this year, following up the information and activities for students with a summary and further information for parents:

- Information on careers and how to reach them provided to students.
- An introduction to Unifrog, and how parents can log in for their own access to it's resources.
- The GCSE Options process.
- The Careers Journey at Colyton ahead of their child.

Year 10 Work Experience launch

We provided Year 10 students with a full morning to begin their process of identifying possible employers and preparing their CV, letter of application and covering letter. They were given clear information, and motivation for seeking out a high quality placement, supported by an ex-student Emma Matthews or came round discussing CVs and applications with students, and spoke to the year group about her own career journey and all that she learned from her work experience placements.

Industrial Cadets Gold

We are continuing to work with Amsafe Bridport in the EDT Industrial Cadets Gold scheme, with this year's team of eight Year 12 students given the brief of designing a 'DUSLE net' or 'drone under-slung lift equipment'. This is a new area of technology, little developed and without any formal regulations currently, so an exciting opportunity for them to consider key factors without significant precedent to guide them. They have so far taken on team roles, mapped out the timeline for their project process, and undertaken weekly meetings with their mentor. Through this they have identified the important areas of research, explored them fully, and used their findings to define and refine their original brief - disaster relief is a major use case for this product, and there are a number of considerations around the use of a drone.

Last week they visited Amsafe to have a tour of the production facilities, gaining a greater insight into the processes and products, and presented their progress so far and next steps to senior engineers, with very positive feedback received. At the end of January they will attend the Workshop Residential at University of Bath, using the time to develop and test their automatic release mechanism, and explore the aerodynamics of the lift bag using a wind tunnel.

STEM Racing

STEM Racing (formerly F1 in Schools) provides students with an insight into an array of careers and subject areas, as they work in teams of up to 6, to design, manufacture, test and brand a 1/20th scale F1 car.

The competition involves project management techniques; marketing and sponsorship and financial management, alongside developing technical skills - such as how to use CAD (computer aided design) software including CFD (computational fluid dynamics) and CNC (computer numerical controlled) machines. The many aspects to the competition help to build, develop and hone numerous transferable skills, building confidence, developing resilience, encouraging and developing independence and team working skills.

Once they have developed their car, created two portfolios of their work, designed and built a custom Pit Display and written a Verbal presentation, they are able to compete in a Regional event, where they race against other teams. Teams also presenting to a wide range of judges, comprised of industry professionals. Success at regional level can see teams progress to Nationals, and, for the very best of those in Professional Class, this can culminate in competing against other countries in the STEM Racing World Finals.

This year we entered 4 teams into the Regionals (the greatest number of teams we have ever entered in one season). Pitching to represent CGS in the 2025/26 season took place in June, with 11 teams taking part in a team-building exercise alongside a formal pitch. Teams were judged by previous participants and professionals, the standard was very high, we even had to have a re-pitch to ensure the decision was correct, and for the first time we decided to enter 4 teams - one Year 8 team into Entry Class and three Year 10 teams into Development Class. Two of these Development Class teams were returning teams from the 2023/24 season having moved up a class.

The teams' performances on race day were outstanding, they were all successful, being nominated for/winning a variety of awards. Nitro Racing were awarded the Research & Development Award across all classes and they were crowned southwest Regional Champions in Entry Class.

Vector were nominated for the Verbal Presentation Award across all classes, they were awarded Fastest Car in the Development Class. They were placed 4th in the Development Class in the southwest. Gear Six COMSOL were nominated for the award for best Pit Display across all classes, they were awarded the Sponsorship & Marketing Award across all classes and they were placed 2nd in the Development Class in the southwest.

Peregrine Racing were nominated for the Sponsorship & Marketing award, they were awarded the Best Pit Display across all classes, Best Engineered Car in the Development Class and were crowned 1st place, southwest Regional Champions in Development Class. The four CGS teams won 8 of the 17 awards which they were eligible for.

All teams would like to thank their sponsors, without whom their participation in the competition would be limited. As such Gear Six COMSOL and Peregrine Racing have been invited to take part in the National Finals in Rotherham next March, the first time CGS will have had 2 teams at the Nationals. Pitching to represent CGS in the 2025/26 season took place in June, with 11 teams taking part in a team-building exercise alongside a formal pitch. Teams were judged by previous participants and professionals, the standard was very high, we even had to have a re-pitch to ensure the decision was correct, and for the first time we decided to enter 4 teams - one Year 8 team into Entry Class and three Year 10 teams into Development Class. Two of these Development Class teams were returning teams from the 2023/24 season having moved up a class.

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Maths Week

You will have seen the fantastic array of activities provided by the Maths department through this week in the Weekly Newsletter (5/12 edition, if you want to go back and see it all!).

Two key careers elements were the Maths in Clinical Trials activity, and a range of careers talks from alumni:

- Gemma Downs (OCS2008), explaining her work as a 'data engineer', after working as a management consultant and analyst.
- Liam Proctor (OCS2010), who has made ice lollies for Google and Disney, and invented a new process for manufacturing footwear components.
- George Broomfield (OCS2021), working as a forensic consultant at Baker Tilly consultancy.

ICE CityZen Competition

We had five teams taking part in the competition this year. They have completed a series of online challenges to use a limited budget to design improvements to a conurbation, learning about the major factors, and constraints on large civil engineering projects (some getting rather exasperated about the weighting towards coming in under budget in the scoring system!).

They are now completing a project to design an improvement to their local community, presenting the results in a video report.

Careers Events Ahead

- Careers talks
- Year 8 CyberDay
- Industrial Cadets Gold Workshop at the University of Bath
- Year 11 A-level Option choices
- Year 12 Work Experience
- Year 8 GCSE Option choices
- 'Industrial Cadets 4 All' Year 8 project - *this will be a 6 week project starting after Feb half- term that will give students a chance to carry out and present a research and design project*

Careers@Colyton Development

Experience of the workplace in Years 7 to 9

In line with national careers guidance development we are looking to enhance our careers activities for our students, in particular the provision of meaningful experiences of the workplace for students in Years 7, 8 and 9. Getting experiences in the lower years will be a very useful addition to the programme our students undertake.

It will be challenging to create days that provide a high quality experience, with a range of employers, for all our students, but we are keen to work with employers in the region to achieve this.

If you think your organisation could help with this, or know someone who works for somewhere that might, we would be very grateful for an introduction. Please contact us at careers@colytongrammar.com.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

UK Bebras Challenge

Every year, students at Colyton who are studying Computer Science take the Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge. The UK Bebras Challenge is organised by the Raspberry Pi Foundation. In the challenge, participants have 45 minutes to tackle a series of interactive tasks, designed to encourage logical thinking and problem-solving skills appropriate for their age group.

Computational thinking involves the thought processes and problem-solving methods used to develop algorithms. These skills include: Decomposition, pattern recognition, abstraction, algorithms, evaluation, generalisation, debugging and logical reasoning. Importantly, computational thinking isn't limited to software development; these skills are valuable in various problem-solving contexts.

Well done to all those who took the challenge.

Whilst the challenge is not a competition, the students answers are marked and, as always, many of our students achieve scores in the top 10% in the country. In addition, we have a number of students who did exceptionally well and either achieved 100% or achieved very highly within the UK.

In the Junior challenge (Year 6 and 7) several of our students achieved 100% and joint first in the UK:

Alistair C, Eliza B, Zoe D, Joshua D, Remy M

In the Intermediate challenge two of our students achieved 100% and joint first in the UK:

Reid R, Ryan W

In the Seniors challenge, two of our students achieved Best in Devon and joint 64th in the UK:

Toby S, Theo W

In the Elite challenge, James L achieved Best in School and 14th in the UK.

DRAMA

House Drama

The evening of Wednesday 10th December hosted Colyton's Third House Drama competition, each House performing a scripted extract of between 10 and 20 minutes. There was a fun range of styles and subject matter from the dry humour of 'Art', Yazmina Reza, exploring just how subjective the art world can be; via 'Teechers' John Godber set in a 1989 comprehensive; to '6 Ways to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse' by Don Zolidis. Students across all year groups participated, either on stage or off, including a year 8 Ash House seamstress, Harriet H, who made a skirt and jacket for one of their characters.

The adjudicators this year included Dr. Aparna Mahiyaria, a lecturer in the Drama department, Exeter University, Mrs. Beth McLean, retired Drama teacher and our very own Mr. Rowe, PE department.

These were well rehearsed, vibrant, pacey, confident performances which took the adjudicators over half an hour to reach a decision as to which was the winning entry. The winner was Elm House's humorous interpretation of variously styled zombie attacks, alongside extremely well timed pertinent and current commentary, with Cedar the close runner up. Three special adjudicator commendations were awarded to Siaan M (Elm), Joel M (Cedar) and Elsie L (Oak) for the high standard of their performances.

The Tempest

Review by Daniel H (Y12)

I always hated Shakespeare, and I never expected to think any different — but watching *The Tempest* has permanently changed my mind. Directed by Mrs Rees, with help from Dylan S, Cameron D and Hope H, this abridged version of *The Tempest* blew other youth productions out of the water!

The Tempest is a mystical tale of betrayal, love and forgiveness. Set on a mysterious island, it follows Prospero, the former Duke of Milan, and his daughter Miranda. After conjuring a storm that wrecks the royal ship, Prospero unleashes chaos: a plot to murder the King, a drunken conspiracy against himself, and — rather less violent — the budding romance between Miranda and Prince Ferdinand. With spirits, harpies and wild island dwellers in the mix, this play is far more exciting than the tired, textbook Shakespeare many might expect.

The characters and performances were a true standout. The modernised Spirit narrators had excellent chemistry and drew the audience in from the very first moment, paving the way for Prospero, played by Quique F H. Quique gave the role the commanding stage presence it demanded. Miranda was equally impressive — the actress (Neala D on the night I watched and Emily W on Friday) was completely immersed, responding to every moment on stage with sincerity and showing a better understanding of Shakespearean than I have of modern English. Her love interest Ferdinand, played with warmth and charm by Beibei L, was endearing to watch and quickly became a favourite for both directors and audience alike. Ariel, performed by Emma K, brought poise and elegance, often singing acappella — and doing so with great skill.

The comedy trio of Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban (Dylan R, Theo H and Joey L) brought wonderful energy. Dylan's Stephano was every inch the convincing drunk, Theo's Trinculo showed sharp comic timing, and Joey's Caliban was brilliantly physical, with a clear sense of character that held the audience's attention. Meanwhile, Isla P gave the King a sense of dignity and melancholy, Jasper T-K made Gonzalo suitably pompous, Emily R played Antonio with cold calculation, and Henry E delivered Sebastian with hilarious bite.

The design aspects were just as strong. The lighting, managed by Isaac F, was strikingly effective — the opening scene, lit only by the chorus holding candles, instantly created an eerie and enchanting atmosphere. The wardrobe department also excelled, with Sophie A managing the spirits costumes and forming Ariel's too, and Charlotte E doing the fittings and adjustments for the entire cast. Personal highlights included the Harpy's striking feathered costume and Caliban's earthy, leafy look taken from the school's extensive costume cupboard. The set, while simple, was thoughtfully done, with drapes enhancing the magical feel and islands of flats providing space for the large chorus.

And what a chorus it was. Possibly the most astonishing part of the production, the Water Spirits — led by Hope H and largely self-choreographed — delivered routines that were unlike anything I've seen in a school show. Opening both acts with impressive dance and gymnastics, including lifts, flips and falls, they brought remarkable energy and precision. Their flowing stage movement throughout scenes was reminiscent of professional work, and each performer was given a moment to showcase their talent. My only regret was that we didn't get to see more of them.

Overall, The Tempest was a resounding success, and everyone involved should feel immensely proud. The cast and crew took on the challenge of Shakespeare and made it not only understandable, but genuinely enjoyable — several audience members even remarked that they grasped the story as clearly as at a professional production at The Globe. The lower school has proven itself more than capable of producing outstanding theatre, and they've set a very high bar for the upper school's upcoming show, Witness for the Prosecution.



Witness for the Prosecution

Review by Taran D (Y12)

I left *Witness for the Prosecution* feeling overwhelmingly thrilled and impressed, unable to stop talking about it for all the car journey home, especially given that I'm not much of an Agatha Christie fan. From the very first scene to the bows at the end, it was clear that every aspect of this production had been crafted with care and dedication. Philip P, director, guided the show with his vision, with the fantastic set and costume designers Edie H, himself, and Rosalia A-E aiding in bringing it to life, executing period-accurate set and outfits that made the narrative feel alive and real. The lighting in this production was equally as vital, being run by Oskabah L-K and Javier expertly.

The show opened modestly with Greta, played by Cecilia L-E, delivering a performance that was both charming and believably cheeky in a run-of-the-mill 1950s office. Leonard Vole, portrayed by Daniel H, makes his way onto the scene, proclaiming that he has been accused of the murder of a Miss Emily French. Hay captured the perfect balance of awkwardness and cunning, evoking a "wolf in sheep's clothing" aura. Leonard explains to his lawyer, Sir Wilfred, played by Tomas O-E, the circumstances and why he is completely innocent. Tomas brought a coolly piercing presence that was both agreeable and terrifying. The use of harsh white spot lighting effectively mimicked that of an interrogation room, enhancing the tension in the opening scene. Tomas also put his own amount of effort into his image, styling his hair in a way that was classic of a gentleman in the 50s - combed over to the left with a lift. It is certainly worth noting how successful the show was in its authenticity, even down to the use of accents, such as that of Mrs Romaine Vole, played by Libbie B, which truly allowed the audience to escape reality and become immersed in the plot.

As the play unfolds, we go to the courtroom where Leonard is on trial. The set of the courtroom requires special mention as a highlight of the production, once again feeding into the idea of authenticity and dedication that was put in by the team. Reuben G, in the role of Myers, the prosecution lawyer, commanded the stage in a way that reflected his character's upper-class, well-to-do, private education persona.

O-E as Sir Wilfred delivered his legal arguments with clarity and precision, allowing the audience, who worked as the jury in a creative and interactive deviation from the norm, to follow even the most complex legal language. While the whole of the supporting cast brought individuality and depth to every role, Esther M as Janet was a standout with her Scottish accent that was thoroughly brilliant, even convincing me that it was real at points! As the courtroom was reaching a boiling point in the play, the audience really got to see what these actors were capable of. Tomas' raw, vindictive emotion as the defence lawyer and Daniel's outbursts of sadness-filled rage allowed me to sympathise with Leonard and the efforts that Sir Wilfred was putting into the court. The use of a more focussed spotlight when Leonard took the witness stand was a perfect choice, as it forced the audience to pay attention to this pivotal moment in the story. Act 2 offered further delights. The chemistry between Sir Wilfred and John, played by Luke T was a joy to watch, capturing their professional friendship believably. The scene transitions were executed with precision, moving around large pieces of set succinctly and quietly, assembling and disassembling the items. I believe it would be an injustice to not comment on the impressive work of the stage crew. And as if you weren't drawn in enough into the narrative, Christie delivers twist after twist, leaving the audience both satisfied and exhilarated.

Overall, when I went in to watch this show I did not know what to expect. I've watched Agatha Christie before and have never been a fan, even having considered leaving through one of her shows before. However, Witness for the Prosecution here at Colyton did not bore me; it did not make me want to leave at the interval; and it certainly did not leave me disappointed. I was amazed at how well the show came together and when they asked the jury at the end what our verdict was, I knew my answer. That play was incredible.





MATHS

Maths Week England

In the week starting the 17th of November, we celebrated Maths week England for the sixth time.

We started the week with daily puzzles, run competitions, had career talks, Maths embroidery as well as escape rooms all around Maths. Several hundred students took part in these activities over the course of the last 2 weeks, which I am blown away by. One student said: "It was very good this year so similar next year would be good, but you could maybe do some more activities like the treasure hunts and daily puzzles as these were quite fun and something everybody can participate in."

Maths House Countdown

Sixth formers organised and ran a house countdown competition. Students enjoyed this, and many asked for more competitions to be organised. I will work on this and hope to bring another competition to the table later in the year. I am pleased to announce the winning teams for the Maths house countdown; the week's house scores, and overall winner will be announced later:

Year 7: Elm

Year 8/9: Ash

Year 10/11: Ash and Cedar





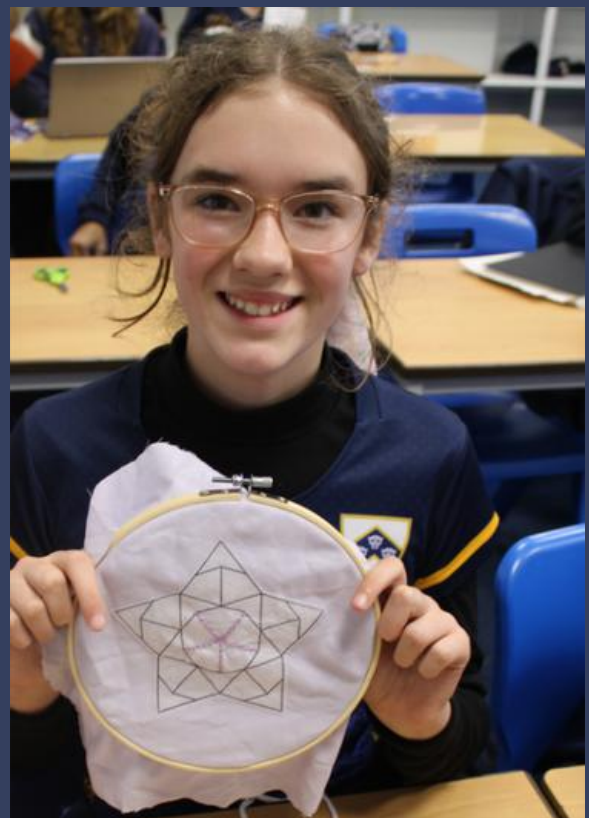
Creative Maths

As part of the creative side of Maths, we ran an exciting and unique event: a Maths Embroidery Workshop!

It was a great opportunity for students to explore the intrinsic beauty of mathematics through a hands-on, creative activity. Students were challenged to complete embroidery patterns based on fascinating mathematical and scientific concepts. From intricate Penrose tiling and striking fractal embroidery like the Mandelbrot set, to elegant binary trees and flowing Stokes-flow designs, each piece allowed them literally to stitch complex theory into tangible, elegant art. The activity was a huge hit, and the results speak for themselves:

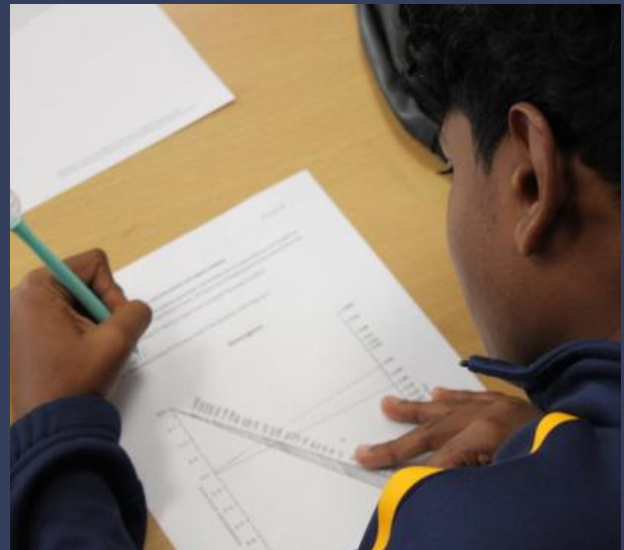
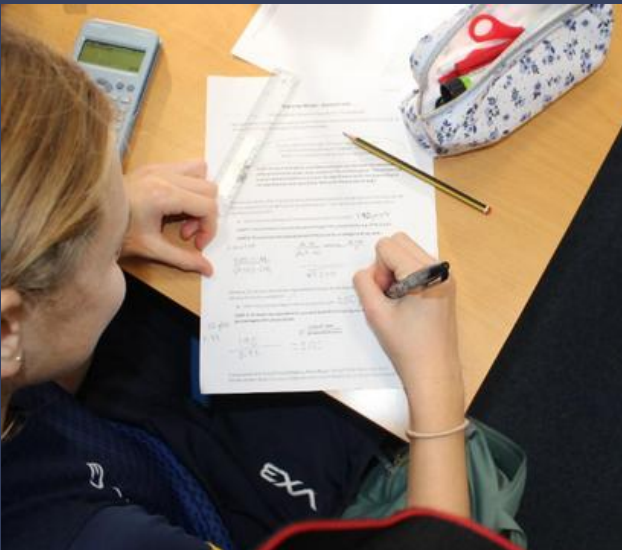


Below you will find the work of Isabella F, Zoe J. (Both 8B) and Rosanna W. (From 7O) (Mrs Davey)



Maths in Clinical Trials

On Wednesday 19th November, Year 9 and Year 10 students participated in workshops exploring some of the issues that need to be considered when setting up a clinical trial to establish whether a new medicine or treatment would improve patient outcomes. The workshop was based on a real research project that investigated whether it was more effective, in preventing anaemia in pregnancy, to ask patients to take iron supplements every other day rather than daily. It had been suggested that taking iron tablets every other day reduced the side effects, meaning that patients were more likely to continue taking the tablets and yet their iron levels were still raised to a similar level. Students looked at the design of the trial to determine whether there were any potential biases that may prevent the trial's findings being applicable to the wider population, and identified ways they could be reduced. They then calculate the optimal sample size to ensure that the results would be robust without it being unnecessarily large. Finally, students considered how patients were allocated between the two treatment groups to ensure the groups were balanced and any difference in results was a direct result of the different treatments and not some underlying population characteristic. (Mrs Langdon)



MFL

GCHQ National Language Competition

What is GCHQ National Language Competition?

The National Language Competition (NLC) is a virtual competition for teams of 13-14 year olds from around the UK to compete against each other to solve language-based challenges and score points.

With the NLC, GCHQ aims to inspire language learning by encouraging students to discover their aptitude for learning languages.

The NLC runs annually in November for a week.

How did the NLC look this year?

There was fierce competition all week with over 2500 teams from across the UK putting their language skills to the test and battling it out for the top spot on the Leader Board. It was a closely fought race right up to the very end with teams pulling out all the stops to crack those codes and solve those language puzzles!

How has Colyton Grammar School performed so far in the NLC? We have been the Regional Winner for the South West & Guernsey & Jersey since 2023, when the NCL first started. This year the winning team is the Elegant Sloth, which consists of 4 Year 9 students Annie D. Jessica G. Annie M. and Isobel R.

Here is a recap of the final rankings of some of our teams on the 2025 National and Regional Leader Board:

- Out of over 2500 teams nationally and over 350 teams regionally,
- Elegant Sloth, National 13th, Regional 1st
- Hilarious Fish, National 58th, Regional 4th
- Silky Squid, National 61st, Regional 5th
- Miniature Armadillo, National 69th, Regional 6th
- Compassionate Lobster, National 121st, Regional 10th
- Super Rhino, National 145th, Regional 11th

MUSIC

A Musician's Term - by Mr Brimelow

A subtitle for the above might be 'busy', but I hope we could add 'satisfied' and 'full of laughter' as well. The Autumn Term this year has been replete with rehearsals, workshops, concerts and trips and as I write this, is by no means over yet. Some headline figures...

Around 4,500 individual music lessons for 301 pupils.

Around 250 ensemble rehearsals for 15 ensembles and an ever-growing number of bands.

10 concerts, events and trips.

Over a third of the school involved in performances.

I can't yet write about the Christmas Concert, Carol Service or Axmouth Junior Choir mini-tour, but know that these will be by turn spectacular, hilarious, moving, and intimate. We have hosted Queen Victoria's Consort (a leading UK-based period brass ensemble), performed in two concerts in Axminster, sung at the Remembrance Day service and witnessed the ever-surprising Year 8 Christmas Song Competition as part of the house competition. But for me the two events that stand out so far this year are the Year 7 Concert and our Sixth Form Unplugged (and occasionally plugged) evening. The Year 7 Concert saw 12 soloists perform with such skill and attention to the music that they would have been a welcome addition to any concert – choosing just this small number from a year group brimming with so much talent and enthusiasm was challenging, but in the end, all performed as part of the Year 7 Choir. Forming and rehearsing a choir is never easy, even when the singers have chosen to join, so hearing such skilful and enthusiastic singing (in three-part harmony!) from an entire year was electrifying; the joy of young musicians is they never seem to realise how challenging their job is. For very different reasons, the Sixth Form Unplugged evening will linger long in my memory – my musical home flits between Tallis and Palestrina, early to mid-20th century classical repertoire and bands (Orlando di Lasso and Pavement make for good bedfellows), so this was a real personal treat. That selfish reason aside, to see Sixth Form bands and soloists playing and singing the music they love, or rather, that identity-forming genre that defines youth, and to see them laughing, cheering, and loving just being there was special – it's corny, but moments like that really make it all worth the effort.



OUTDOOR EDUCATION

In a period of wet and miserable weather we were blessed with a day of perfect sunshine for the first of our Ten Tors Dartmoor training walks last Saturday (the 13th December). The students had already completed an initial training walk in November in the Sidmouth area where they were covering a similar distance and elevation to the event itself, although the navigation was more straightforward.

The purpose of the first Dartmoor walk, where teams headed out from Belstone towards Hangingstone Hill, was to allow the them to get to grips with an area of the moor which features heavily on Ten Tors event routes, to challenge their navigation and group management skills in open moorland, and to give them practical experience of learning to judge safe river crossings. Collectively they did really well with every participant completing the full route, and several even choosing to extend it further.

Next in the calendar we have the first of our expeditions taking place over the weekend of 17th - 18th January. Day one will involve a complete traverse of the north moor, followed by a workshop on campcraft in wild environments and a (semi) wild camp, before focussing on some micro navigation skills on day two. Time, weather and energy permitting we also hope to squeeze in a fun little night navigation exercise or two.

A huge thanks as always goes out to my fantastic volunteer team, without whom opportunities like this would not be possible.





PE

Senior Boys Team X Country - Nationals 6th

Venue: Princethorpe College

Course: 5.1km

Team: Colyton Grammar School (Years 11–13)

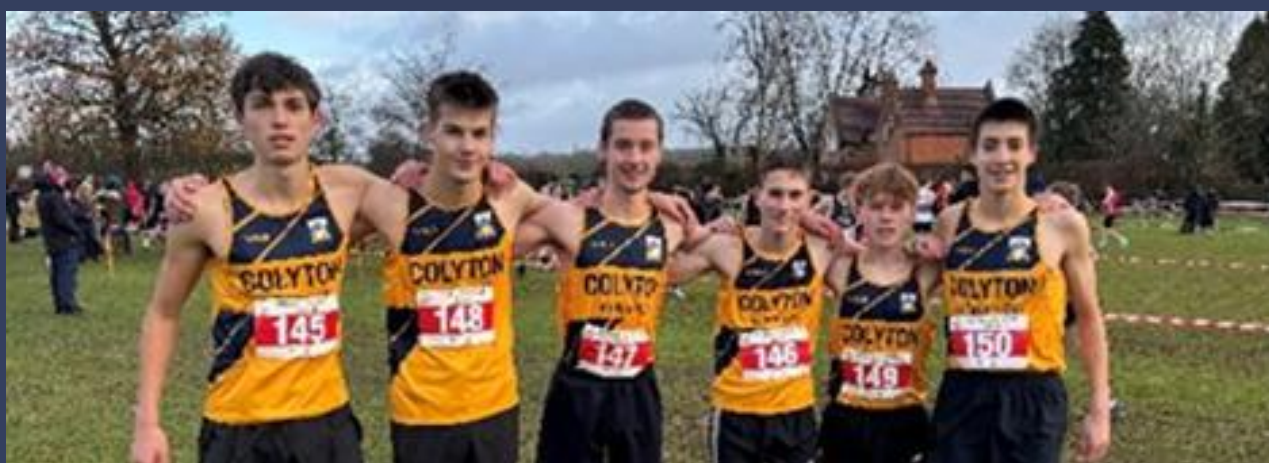
Colyton's senior boys produced a superb performance at the National Cross Country Championships held at Princethorpe College, tackling a demanding 5.1km course marked by rolling hills, soft ground, and a fiercely competitive field.

Running as a team of six, the boys showed outstanding determination and teamwork throughout the race. Their collective effort was rewarded with an exceptional 6th place finish overall, a result that reflects both their consistency and resilience against some of the strongest school squads in the country.

A special mention goes to Oscar P, who delivered a phenomenal individual display. Oscar ran with power and composure from the starting gun, holding his position among the leaders and ultimately securing 6th place finish in an elite national field—an achievement that highlights his remarkable form and competitive spirit.

Every member of the squad contributed crucial points, demonstrating grit on a challenging course and pride in representing Colyton at the highest level. The boys should feel immensely proud of their performance and the standard they set.

A brilliant day of racing and a fantastic result - well done to all involved.



POS	TEAM NAME	TOTAL SCORE
1	Ilkley Grammar School	58
2	The Sixth Form College Farnborough	80
3	The Judd School	124
4	Langley Park School For Boys	136
5	The Fitzwimarc School	141
6	Colyton Grammar School	149
7	Silverdale School	184
8	Bournemouth School	195
9	Millfield School	195
10	Abingdon School	200
11	Ermysted's Grammar School	218
12	St Thomas More Catholic School	227
13	Queen Elizabeth High School	236
14	St Anselm's College	243
15	Thomas Telford School	244



U18 Rugby Boys Unbeaten

Colyton 35 – 0 Blundells 3rd XV

Colyton produced their most complete performance of the season in a dominant 35–0 win over Blundell's 3rd XV. From the outset, the pack set the tone with strong carries and secure set-piece work, giving the back line clean ball to attack with width and tempo. The scrum held firm against early pressure, while the lineout functioned efficiently, providing a reliable platform for phase play.

Colyton's defence was equally impressive. Line speed and tackling intensity repeatedly forced Blundell's behind the gain line, resulting in turnovers that were quickly converted into attacking opportunities. Several tries came from well-executed support lines and accurate offloads, reflecting growing confidence and cohesion across the squad. Importantly, the performance highlighted significant improvement since the teams first met earlier in the season. Decision-making under pressure, breakdown accuracy, and in-game organisation all showed clear progression, demonstrating the squad's hard work and developing rugby intelligence.

With this strong finish to the term, Colyton now look forward to shifting focus to Rugby 10s and 7s after Christmas, aiming to carry their momentum into the faster, more expansive formats.



U13 Football Girls final 16 of National Cup

The Colyton U13 girls football team produced a stunning performance in Round 3 of the ESFA National Cup, travelling to Dorset to face reigning National Champions St Michael's Middle School. From the first whistle, Colyton pressed hard and created several chances, with Lydia and Rae keeping the opposition's key players quiet throughout the first half. Despite dominating, the score remained 0-0 at the break.

Early in the second half, Gabby latched onto a brilliant through ball to fire Colyton ahead, but St Michael's equalised after 15 minutes to make it 1-1. Extra time saw Liv pull off crucial saves to keep Colyton in the game, while the team continued to push forward but couldn't find a winner.

The tie was settled on penalties, with Minnie, Saoirse, Rae, Lydia and Gabby stepping up confidently to score four out of five. St Michael's missed twice, handing Colyton a 4-3 shootout victory and a place in the last 16. Gabby was named Player of the Match for her outstanding display, while special thanks went to Isaac and Ben- Year 12 sports leaders who have supported the girls' preparation week after week and gave up their free time to support the team on their fixture. A remarkable win against the champions — the girls should be immensely proud as they look forward to the next round.

The Under 13 and indeed Under 14 girls' football and hockey have gone through the season unbeaten. While winning is not the primary goal for CGS sport, this is a notable achievement and provides evidence of individual skill, exemplary teamwork, resilience and resourcefulness. Well done to you all and I look forward to sharing a celebratory hot chocolate next week!

U12's Hockey Girls into Regionals

The Colyton U12 girls' hockey team, with seven of their ten players experiencing competitive hockey for the very first time, entered the Devon county tournament with a mix of nerves and excitement. Their opening match against Exeter School was a defensive battle, ending 0-0 and earning a valuable point.

In the second game against Blundells, a well-taken short corner by Doon just before half-time gave Colyton the lead, and strong defending in the second half secured a 1-0 victory.

The final match against The Maynard's School saw the team play with confidence and intensity from the start, winning multiple penalty corners that were converted by Doon and Otilie before Doon added a superb solo goal to seal a 3-0 win.

With two wins and a draw, Colyton finished unbeaten to be crowned Devon County Champions, earning a place in the regional round in March.

Doon, who was outstanding throughout and scored crucial goals, was named Player of the Tournament.

The team should be immensely proud of their achievement, and we look forward to building on their success in the competitions ahead.



U15 Rugby Exeter and ED finalists (Tuesday- may progress to final)

Colyton 48 – 19 Exeter St Peters

Colyton booked their place in the Cup Final with an impressive 48–19 victory over Exeter St Peters in a high-tempo semi-final clash. From the opening whistle, Colyton showed real intent, combining strong forward play with sharp, clinical finishing out wide. Their early pressure paid off with a series of well-worked tries, giving them a commanding lead at the break.

Exeter St Peters fought hard throughout, responding with determined carries and three deserved tries of their own, but Colyton's consistency at the breakdown and their ability to counter-attack proved the difference. A late surge sealed the result, confirming Colyton's dominance on the day.

With this convincing win, Colyton now advance to the final, where they will face Exmouth on Wednesday — a home fixture that promises to be an exciting contest.



Senior Boys Basketball - Colyton vs Woodroffe School

Colyton opened their senior boys basketball campaign in impressive fashion with a strong 66–54 victory over Woodroffe School in their first outing together as a team.

From the opening tip-off, Colyton set the tone, moving the ball well and applying consistent defensive pressure. The team built a convincing lead across the first two quarters, with sharp transition play and composed finishing showcasing the squad's potential. Every player contributed, creating a balanced and confident performance that reflected excellent teamwork.

Woodroffe responded after halftime, lifting their intensity and making the contest more competitive. The final quarter in particular was much tighter, but Colyton showed maturity and resilience, holding their nerve in the fourth quarter to close out the game and secure the win. A standout performance came from Jack J, who was deservedly named Player of the Match for his leadership, work rate, and impact at both ends of the court. Fred T's passion and leadership was also fantastic to see throughout. Evan and Robbie joined Fred and Jack as top scorers, demonstrating skill and composure throughout.

Overall, it was fantastic work from the whole squad. For a first game together, this was a great performance and a promising start ahead of the return fixture next term.



U16 Doubles Real Tennis National Runners Up

On 27th November, Rosie and Ollie Kay went to Radley college for the U16 Real Tennis Interschools' National Tournament.

They entered the semifinals (best of 3 sets) with confidence, playing a pair from the Oratory School, and won the first set 6-2, with some ace serves from Rosie and brilliant ground strokes from Ollie. In the second set, Oratory pushed back, winning 5 games consecutively and everyone watching believed it would go to a third set to decide the winner.

However, Ollie and Rosie pushed back and won 6 consecutive games, dropping only a few points and winning the set. In the final, they played the defending champions, a very strong pair from Radley College.

Despite trying their hardest, the other pair had the home court advantage and played a very strong match with excellent teamwork, with the final score being 6-3 6-2 to them. Ollie and Rosie came 2nd in the tournament, a huge achievement, and we look forward to them playing in the U18 category next year.



Water Polo - ESSA Prince of Wales Cup

Last weekend Evelyn W travelled up to Manchester to compete in the Prince of Wales Cup. The event saw the best 50 girls in England born in 2012, as nominated by schools and The Swim England Water Polo Talent Centres, compete for the trophy.

Teams were randomly assigned, with most of the players meeting each other and their coaches for the first time on the day.

After a cagey first couple of quarters in their opening match with the score all square, Evelyn's team started to gel and string some attacking plays together. They managed to pull away and earn a deserved 10-5 victory in their first match.

From here they only continued to improve, remaining organised and strong in defence while racking up the goals. They went on to win all of their games, and ended up winning the cup.





THAT'S OUR 2025 AUTUMN TERM WRAPPED.

HERE'S TO NEW MILESTONES, NEW IDEAS, AND
ANOTHER INCREDIBLE YEAR AHEAD.

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