



RIVERLINE

Wisbech Grammar School

2019



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Riverline Introduction 2019

I have often been quoted as saying that ‘marginal gains’ are the key to success and making sure that whatever enterprise one is involved in keeps improving and moving forward. With regards to progress it is probably one of the few areas in life where I am truly impatient (I am sure staff, pupils, parents and governors will list others!) but there are times when small steps are appropriate for the School.

However most exciting of all are the times when an opportunity arises to ‘leap-frog’ the improvement and progression timeline. This past year has been such an instance and the structural changes and improvements that have been achieved throughout the last year have been amazing.

Back in November I received the green light from the Governing Body to embark upon an ambitious change programme that was internally known as ‘7 in 7’, or more fully ‘7 projects in 7 months’. By the time the planning and scoping work had been completed it had been officially named ‘Project Kaizen’. If you Google the term you will discover that the Kai zen philosophy is drawn from the Japanese word kai which means ‘continuous’ and zen meaning ‘improvement’ or ‘wisdom’. The management philosophy, therefore, is defined as making ‘continuous improvement’ - slow, incremental but constant and in all areas of a company.

The genesis of the project came from the drive to add an international element to WGS, which from my perspective had been lacking. We did and continue to have international day pupils however in the illustrious history of the School there was never any boarding or specific international outlook. For me this was something that was missing from the education on offer at WGS and looking forward felt it was a gap that needed filling as many of our current pupils will end up in the world of work where the chances are the parent company will be international or more specifically Chinese. Therefore the creation of a boarding house became the catalyst for the ‘7 in 7’. So what has been achieved since the beginning of 2019?

1. Hazel House (the former 6th Form Centre) is now up and running and we have 11 Boarders residing on campus.
2. The Dwight Centre has been completely re-purposed to become the new 6th Form Centre. The former Music department is now a state of the art common room and café. New Head of 6th Form offices have been created as well as an innovatively designed collaborative working space. A second room provides a quiet/silent study space with desks, cubicles for private study, computers and the all-important charging points for lap tops and mobile devices.

The Drama department is still housed downstairs in the Dwight Centre, however, the other English classrooms have been transformed into three Classrooms for the teaching of Business Studies, Economics, Politics and Psychology.

3. Music has moved into a brand new facility opposite Food and Nutrition, and this space now provides a Creative & Performing Arts Hub, housing F&N, Music, Dance and Drama.
4. Geography, History and RS (which has never previously had a home at WGS) are now located in the new Humanities Hub on the site of the old ‘mobiles’ where the second hand uniform, DofE store and Doc Miller’s Warhammer club used to reside.
5. Maths has moved from the main corridor and now sits underneath the Science rooms, thus creating a STEM Hub where the Sciences and Maths are taught in close proximity.
6. English has moved to where Maths used to be, therefore creating an Arts Hub for English, Modern Foreign Languages, Art & Textiles.
7. The old caretaker’s house at the front of the main car park has been converted into ‘The Annexe’ - with a resident tutor’s flat on the top floor and a Medical Centre for staff and pupils on the ground floor.

So as you can see, it has been a busy year! Pupil numbers have continued to grow and interest in coming to WGS - to the Prep School, Senior School and 6th Form - has never been stronger during my time here. So what’s next? Time to catch our breath? Perhaps, but with such positive momentum and engagement there could be more boarding on the horizon and increased partnership with our international partners. The aim for the School, although evolving, remains the same - to grow whilst at the same time providing all of our pupils with a constantly improving education. Our ethos remains to deliver academic opportunity and pastoral care tailored to the individual needs of each of our pupils. We are certainly making steps in the right direction.



We are very proud to be appearing in 'The Good Schools Guide' and here is a little of what they had to say:

I can't fault the school academically,' said every parent we spoke to. We get the impression from parents that the School's purpose and intent have intensified, taking all with it. They have stiff competition from local Grammars so have had to up their game, offering a well-rounded education, and parents appreciate this. "Confident children are what they produce, happy to stand up and speak in front of people..."



High-achieving pupils at Wisbech Grammar School celebrate GCSE success



Headmaster, Mr Chris Staley, said:
“I am really pleased and encouraged by the GCSE results at Wisbech Grammar School. Considering the curriculum changes and the move to the new more rigorous 9-1 grading system, the pupils here have responded brilliantly.

A considerable number of pupils achieved just 9's, 8's or 7's which is outstanding and testament to their hard work and the superb individualised academic and pastoral care on offer at WGS.

With the headline figures of:

- An overall pass rate of 90% (pupils achieving A* to C or 9 to 4)
- Almost 50% of the year group achieving top grades in their examinations (A* to B or 9 to 6)
- 10%+ of pupils gained 9 or more results at grades A* to B or 6 or above
- 5%+ of pupils were awarded 9 or more grades at A* to B or 7 or above

These results demonstrate that through inspiring teaching and tailoring learning to individual pupil needs, fantastic progress can be made. Many pupils achieved results they would not have thought possible when they embarked upon their learning journey. I am very proud of everyone associated with these results”.



“We are well ahead of the National pass rates overall and at the very top end of the academic spectrum we have received some stellar results with one candidate achieving eight 9 grades and one 8.

Chris Staley
Headmaster

Individual quotes and results:

Ruth Logan who is an Academic Scholar gained eight 9's and an 8, she is taking A Levels in Maths, Further Maths, Physics and Art. “I enjoyed all my subjects and was really lucky with all the help and support from teachers. After A Levels my aim is to study Architecture at Cambridge University”.

Silvi Rathod gained three 9's, two 8's, two 7's, two 6's and is taking A Levels in Maths, Economics and Psychology. “I am feeling so happy with my results. I want to work in Finance eventually and this is the first step towards my goal. I would like to thank all my teachers as without their commitment and support I wouldn't have got the results I have today”.

Matilda Kerman-Staley who is also an Academic Scholar gained one 9, six 8's and two 7's. “I am so pleased with my results; all the studying has paid off. I am now really looking forward to starting my A Level courses in Geography, Biology, Chemistry and Textiles”.

Matvei Kokin gained three 9's, three 8's, one 7 and one 6.

William Hamilton gained four 9's, two 8's and three 7's.

Georgina Avery gained two 9's, four 8's and three 7's.

Christopher Lemagnen gained three 9's, two 8's, two 7's and two 6's.

Pupils achieve top grades to study at first choice Universities

"I am really pleased with the A Level results this year. These are very good results, particularly the top grades where pupils achieved 36%, with more than 62% gaining A* to C grades.

The overall pass rate remains in excess of 92%. Against a background of more change in education, pupils have successfully made the leap from the older GCSE's to the new, more rigorous A Levels, and these results are a testament to the pupils' hard work as well as to the dedication and resilience of the teaching staff and parents. These results will provide an excellent springboard for their university careers, where well over 50% of pupils gained a place at their first-choice university and one pupil, Elvira Baranova, earned her place at the prestigious Sorbonne University in Paris to read Modern Foreign Languages". Chris Staley, Headmaster.

"I am so pleased with my results and they are a reflection of the hard work I have put in and the incredible support of my teachers, especially Miss Taylor (Head of 6th Form) and Mrs Cooper (Head of Art and Textiles). I can't wait to start at Durham University and find out more about how I can make a positive impact on climate change". Charlotte Brett

Jack was over the moon with his results and can't wait to start at Loughborough University where he will read Economics and continue to play Rugby.

Investment banking was always on the cards for Leena who will study International Business Management at Warwick. "Ever since a young age I have been interested in banking and my advice to other pupils is to never give up, and take advantage of all the support from teachers at WGS". Leena Hussain

Sam Martin is off to Bath to read Natural Sciences. Sam wants to spend time at University exploring his options before he decides his career path. With such impressive results and Sam's work ethic, we have no doubt that he will be a great success.

No matter what the future holds for all of our pupils, the door to WGS will always be open and we look forward to hearing the news and updates from our former pupils.



Just some of the highlights are:

- Charlotte Brett - A* in Art and Design Textiles, A in Geography, B in English Literature and B in Biology - will read Geography at Durham
- Leena Hussain - three A's in Business, Economics and English Literature - is going to Warwick to study International Business Management
- Imogen Leader - three A's in English Literature, Geography and History - is going to the University of West Anglia to study English Literature
- Sam Martin - A* Mathematics and Further Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics - is off to Bath to read Natural Sciences
- Demelza Mason - A in Biology and B in Chemistry and English Literature - is going to Southampton University to read Archaeology & Anthropology
- Catherine Missin - A in Music, B in English Literature and Psychology - will take up her place at the prestigious Guildford School of Acting
- Jack Trundle - A in Economics and Geography and C in Chemistry - will read Economics at Loughborough



The future looks bright for Wisbech Grammar School pupils

On Tuesday 26 February, Wisbech Grammar School held its annual Higher Education Day for 4th-6th Form pupils, including a University and Careers Fair and talks from a range of universities and industry leaders. The day concluded with workshops covering the Higher Education application process. The aim is to prepare pupils fully to make informed decisions about their 6th Form journey and beyond.

The variety of career paths open 'post-18' has never been wider. Whilst, in essence, the UCAS system and traditional 'university degree' path has not changed significantly, the introduction of Degree-Apprenticeships and Two Year Degrees has added to the mix. All pupils were encouraged to think about building a repertoire of transferable skills that will facilitate career flexibility.

"The wide range of talks and advice provided will help them as they move towards their onward journey. We are incredibly grateful to the visiting universities and businesses, and look forward to welcoming them back to future Higher Education Days". Alex Laybourne (Deputy Head 6th Form).

Stephenson Smart were on hand with their Junior Accountants, Cara Rose and James Taylor, to speak to pupils about their experiences.

"Taking up a career in Accounting has been an excellent choice and the support we get from Stephenson Smart in studying for both the AAT and ACA has been incredible".

"Keep your options open and gather lots of advice before you decide what your next steps will be. There are so many opportunities for 6th Form pupils now and these types of events are great in helping pupils gain more insight into what's on offer".

James took up a post with the firm after studying Economics at University and Cara went in as an Apprentice.

“ It was an incredibly productive day for all of the pupils in what is a very important stage of their school career. ”

Alex Laybourne
Deputy Head of 6th Form and Head of Careers



We would like to thank the following institutions for their support:

- Newcastle University
- University of Portsmouth
- Bishop Grosseteste
- Loughborough University
- UCFB
- University Centre Peterborough
- Aim Apprenticeships
- Mercer
- Stephenson Smart
- Ramboll Acoustics
- Kier



6th Form Pupils explore an International Education

As part of our enrichment and extended learning programme for 6th Form pupils, we were excited to welcome David Hawkins who is a member of the International Association for College Admission Counselling, an affiliated consultant to the Council of International Schools and a trusted and well-known member of the international university admissions community with connections to universities around the world.

Mr Hawkins, a former teacher and university adviser in schools in the UK and abroad, has helped hundreds of students to make successful applications to universities internationally and visited our School for its first International University Fair, on 8 May.

The event proved to be both popular and highly informative, hosting representatives from a wide range of universities who gave valuable presentations of their respective institute's offerings and the advantages of a truly international education. A number of business and hospitality focused universities (the American based Hult International Business School and Les Roches and Glion in Switzerland) emphasised a unique course structure that in some cases encouraged students to study in a different country every year. Bishop's University and the Savannah College of Art and Design gave similarly impressive presentations.

All of the universities present impressed that their degree structure and focus were very much student-centred with small class sizes, and considerable flexibility. It was a great opportunity for our pupils to explore opportunities they may not have otherwise considered. David and his team provided a plethora of useful information that the pupils can use as they explore their onward journey options. We are proud of everything that we offer at WGS to support the pupils and this is a huge part of it as they look to take the next steps in their education and careers.

Alex Laybourne

Quotes from outgoing Heads of Prep and Senior School



I have enjoyed my time as Head of Senior School and my commitment to the wider School. My tip to all pupils is to really take advantage of all the School has to offer. I focused on Sport and I wish I had tried more things across Performing Arts. Highlights for the year for me were meeting HRH Prince Charles and watching his helicopter land on our playing fields; it was a real honour to meet him.

Laying the wreath at the Poppy Ceremony was also a poignant moment for me and all the fundraising work I have been involved with. Giving back to the School and community has made me very proud and I am looking forward to travelling around Australia for the next year. When I return I will be studying Engineering at Portsmouth University.

Frazer Brown

“

As always, 2019 has been a jam-packed year full of learning and a lot of fun. For me, highlights include our Wonka's Golden Ticket School production, Prep 6's residential trip to York, all of our sporting fixtures (though rugby in particular) and of course everything that I have been lucky enough to take part in as part of my role as Head Boy.

I have enjoyed meeting new parents and children whom I have had the pleasure of touring around our wonderful School. There was also great excitement and a definite buzz about the School on jump-up day as we all look forward to joining our new classes in September - Senior School for me, and I for one can't wait!

Harry Gee
Outgoing Prep 6 Head Boy

“

KLFM was a highlight for me; I got the opportunity to speak on radio about the impact of mental health on young people and the pressure of social media. I took my role very seriously and acted as an Ambassador for the School, representing pupils' views and helping to make positive changes to the School to benefit all pupils. I also enjoyed leading the teacher debate and taking part in all of the fundraising activities we have done throughout the year.

Laying the poppy wreath will be a memory I will never forget and I felt very proud to represent the School. As I look forward to the next part of my journey, I am so excited to have been offered a place with Guildford School of Acting, starting in September 2019. I am excited about my future and following my passion to perform on stage.

Catherine Missin

”

“

Being elected Head Girl was my proudest moment and I have really enjoyed the last year. As Head Girl I have really enjoyed representing the School by attending open mornings and showing parents around the School. I am very proud of helping the Form to raise money for charity too.

The absolute highlight for me was when I got to meet HRH Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall earlier this year. I was really nervous and had to take a crash course in curtsying beforehand – thank you Mrs Beck! It was a huge honour to represent the School and it is something I shall never forget. My last piece of advice to you all is to work hard and play hard. Make the most of your time here.

This School offers so many wonderful opportunities, all you need to do is grab each one with both hands and see where it will take you. You never know - you might find yourself with talents you never knew you had!

Jemima Mitchell
Outgoing Prep 6 Head Girl

”

Wisbech Grammar School ‘Minds Ahead’ for Mental Health Award 2019



Wisbech Grammar School is proud and delighted to be one of the first Independent Schools in the country to have gained the prestigious School Mental Health Award.

The school met the strict criteria demanded to achieve the Award, established in 2017 by the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools - part of Leeds Beckett University - and social enterprise Minds Ahead. The Centre was set up to help boost wellbeing at all levels of the UK education system.

The Award aims to strengthen pupils' mental health by supporting schools to make a positive change, improving students' outcomes and life chances. Across the sector, Teachers are seeing rising numbers of young people in need of mental health support as the pressures of exam stress and social media take their toll. A crisis in young people's mental health means teaching staff are being trained to spot the signs of emotional problems in youngsters.

The school has used the framework and content of the Award to very good effect to develop their mental health and wellbeing strategies, structures and practices.



Scholarships at WGS

For those students who aspire to be leaders in their sphere of interest, be it Sport, Music, Drama or Academic, and have the talent to truly excel, Scholarships are available.

An interest in academic work and drive to achieve at a high level in internal and public examinations are characteristics expected of all Wisbech Grammar School pupils, and we aim to support all pupils in achieving their potential. Rigorously assessed by interview, performance and examinations, the awards offer recognition and carry responsibilities.

Academic Scholars are expected to lead discussion and debate in class, attend enrichment events, set an example in learning, intellectual curiosity and maintain the highest standards of attainment. Awards are reviewed annually.

Academic Scholars are automatically members of the Poyser Group.

Scholarships carry the title 'Scholar' and include financial support. Our Scholars have immense pride and live the values of the School, and, along with Exhibitioners, act as role models for other pupils and are actively involved in the School Community. Existing and prospective pupils can apply to become a Scholar on entry into 1st, 3rd and Lower 6th Form.

Once you become a Scholar at WGS, there are many opportunities to attend enrichment lectures, trips, debates and to participate in an extensive range of activities. Scholars work with an Academic Mentor, often a Head of Department, who guides and extends their learning and research. The Poyser Group offers a forum where discoveries may be shared, debated and celebrated.



The Poyser Group

Named after former headmaster (1890 – 1920), Arthur William Poyser, the purpose of the Poyser Group is to create amongst its members an ethos that places the 'life of the mind' at the centre of individual development.

Whilst it is unapologetically elitist, it is certainly not exclusive. In addition to those who hold a formal Academic Scholarship or Exhibitionership, there are also a considerable number of 'staff nominees' i.e. individuals whom staff believe will benefit from the activities of the Group. Junior and Senior programmes are conceived to provide those pupils who are the academic leaders of the School with a far wider acquaintance with, and deeper understanding of, the realm of ideas in intellectual pursuits than a curriculum alone could be expected to provide.

Through discussion, meetings and readings, pupils explore fine arts, literature, history, aesthetics, music and theatre, encountering great thinkers, artists and original writers throughout the ages.

The Poyser Group meet once a week and pupils are encouraged to take the lead in areas of serious discourse of their choosing. In Forum meetings Scholars have the opportunity to engage in seminar discussions on any one of a very wide range of subjects.

The Poyser Group provides a unique haven for those for whom grades alone are insufficient, and offers a remarkable springboard to the next intellectual level.

To expect truth to come from thinking signifies that we mistake the need to think with the urge to know.

Arthur William Poyser

Vrettos Prize for Prep 6 Pupil Emilia Chrapko

On Monday 24 June, Prep 6 pupils presented the work they had done for the Vrettos Award Scheme to the Governors and Senior Leadership Team. In total 20 pupils completed all of the tasks and were presented with their certificates by Mr Staley, Headmaster.



I am delighted with the work that the pupils have produced. Although some pupils did not complete the Award they have still produced work of a high standard. This work has been on display in the Science Department and the older pupils have been interested and impressed by it.

*Sarah Fox
Head of Lower School Science*

The Vrettos Award scheme provides Prep 6 pupils with an opportunity to extend their learning experiences beyond the expectations of the National Curriculum and to carry out independent research by using a wide range of secondary sources of information and completing a series of tasks over a number of months.

These tasks included designing a classification key to identify different species of turacos, two short research tasks (adaptations of turacos and the threat to hornbills), one research project on an animal from the Philippines or Guyana as well as a design task (designing a zoo enclosure to meet the needs of the animal as well as the keeper and the public).

The standard of work was extremely high this year. The judges- Alan Pringle of Port Lympne Reserve in Kent and Mike Downman of Newquay Zoo - were thoroughly impressed and had the difficult task of choosing the pupil who had produced the highest standard of work overall.

They selected Emilia Chrapko to be awarded the The Vrettos Prize - a large and very heavy book on animals, kindly funded by the International Turaco Society.

The Vrettos Award Scheme is named after Dennis Vrettos, who spent most of his adult life working with animal collections, especially with birds, dedicating much time to the study of hornbills and turacos. He also took part in many expeditions to study wildlife, and those to Guyana and the Philippines made the biggest impact on him.

In 2017 he died after a long battle with a lung condition brought on by his close work with birds. The Vrettos Award was established to commemorate Dennis' life as he would have been delighted to be involved in encouraging young people to study the natural environment.



Year 5s don lab coats for experiential fun!

The snow didn't dampen the spirits of the Year 5 pupils who attended our Science Morning on Saturday 2 February.

The 54 Year 5 pupils, from many different primary schools, started the day by donning their lab coats ready to begin their Science taster sessions.

Pupils had the opportunity to take part in a variety of Science-based activities from blowing up tea bags, making bridges to hold a specific weight, to testing bones and making skeletons.

These sessions, delivered by our expert Science teachers, took place in the School's laboratories which provided an ideal environment for everyone to get involved and gain some valuable hands-on experience.

The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the event, which culminated in everyone receiving certificates of achievement for their newly discovered skills. When parents were asked what their child enjoyed most about the day, they responded with, "the experiments and being at the School", "the flying tea bag experiment and making new friends" and "every single thing from start to finish" - to quote just a few!

Wisbech Grammar School will be running more workshops in the future including Amazing Maths, English and Performing Arts.



It was fantastic to see the children's confidence grow throughout the morning as they put their newly discovered skills into practice.

*Dr Shillings
Head of Science*



“ I really enjoyed Super Science Morning as it was so much fun, I especially loved the flying teabag experiment and making new friends. I also feel so grown up when we get to have lessons in the Science Labs. ”

*Francesca Pittman
Prep 5 pupil*

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Maths made 'egg-citing' for learning 3D shapes!

Easter provided an 'eggcellent' opportunity for 3rd Form pupils to utilise their understanding of 3D shape geometry.

A selection of well-known confectionery products sparked a discussion about the properties of 3D shapes which led pupils to calculate the volume and surface area of a range of chocolate treats from cuboids and triangular prisms to spheres and frustums. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed their 'eggceptional' lesson!



The UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT)

The UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT) is a registered charity the aim of which is to advance the education of children and young people in mathematics.

The UKMT organises national mathematics competitions and other mathematical enrichment activities for 11-18 year old UK school pupils. The 'Regional Finals for the Junior Team Mathematics Challenge' was held on Monday 18 March, hosted by the University of Cambridge. The Wisbech Grammar School team consisted of two 2nd and two 3rd Form pupils. They were competing for the first time as a team of mathematicians and this was also the first time they had been to the University of Cambridge.

They tackled the timed complex logical problems with a calm approach and worked very hard in all four rounds - Group, Shuttle, Cross Number and Relay - to enable them to gain 13th place out of 31 schools from the region.

The 2nd Formers who took part will have the opportunity to compete again next year with younger pupils and they are already looking forward to the challenge, hoping to beat their placing to gain a top ten ranking.

We are very proud of Andrew, Virroch, Phoenix and Lemuel; coming 13th out of 31 Schools is a real achievement.

Kindergarten children have had a busy year - learning, developing and having fun

We are committed to offering the most exceptional early years experience, to provide a solid foundation from which the children make their journey into Reception class and beyond.

Opening of Kindergarten, 2018 - with a special guest...

Answering the call from our parents to extend the provision already on offer, we opened our new Kindergarten class in September 2018 and remodelled our existing Reception class.



Mr Steve Smallman, author, illustrator and muralist, joined us on Thursday 1 November to mark the official opening of our Early Years setting as a Centre of Excellence. All pupils were involved in the day by participating in workshops, learning new techniques to bring out their 'inner artist'. The day culminated with an official opening for parents, pupils and staff.



The setting has quickly received the great reputation of providing an enriching and enabling environment (both indoors and out) for children to develop, grow and discover who they are.

The educational provision for the children within the Kindergarten comprises a personalised journey for every child. With all of them achieving - and in many cases exceeding - their goals, the Kindergarten provides each child with an optimum start to their journey through Wisbech Grammar School.

Every day brings a plethora of new learning experiences, encouraging the minds of our youngest pupils to explore the world around them.

In addition to enjoying the delights of the Kindergarten, children have taken part in visits around the local community, including a trip to select the School Christmas tree.

The transition into Reception is now so much easier as the children have become familiar with the staff, surroundings and expectations within the setting.

“Creating this wonderful new learning space has been truly beneficial for our pupils and we look forward to their continued success in the coming years.”

Keryn Neaves
Senior Deputy Head Prep School

Just some of the highlights:



Singing Christmas carols at Edina Court

During the festive period the Kindergarten visited the residents of Edina Court to perform their Christmas carols which they had been busy practising and were very excited to share with the community. After their performance, the children presented the residents with Christmas gifts that they had made in the Kindergarten. The residents were overjoyed with their gifts and the visit was rounded off in style with tea, coffee, squash and biscuits!

Visit to Church Farm

As part of our 'Spring and Growing' topic we visited Church Farm where the children enjoyed seeing all of the baby animals and took it in turns to bottle feed the lambs. Once they had explored the farm they were taken on a tractor ride to see the larger animals and to learn interesting facts about them. During the ride the driver stopped and gave out carrots for the children to feed to the pigs. Once back at the farm the children enjoyed playing on the equipment and the day finished with a refreshing cold drink and a song-filled bus journey back to School!

Visit from the tractor

As part of our harvest topic, the Kindergarten children were excited to receive a visit from Mr Doubleday-Collishaw. As they had been learning all about the different types of harvest machinery, it was a great experience to be able to explore a tractor 'up close'. Mr Doubleday-Collishaw answered all of the children's questions and then spoke about the different parts of the tractor in detail. He even let the children sit inside the cab and have a photo! The day ended in even more excitement when all of the children received a John Deere goody bag full of lots of wonderful items including a John Deere hat!



Mrs Oram (Reception Teacher) reflects on a fun-packed year of adventure and discovery

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.

High quality early learning provision provides foundation aged children with all they need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow. This is our aspiration at Wisbech Grammar School; we endeavour to enrich our curriculum by taking the children into the wider community to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

This academic year has, as always, been a fun-packed, busy time for our Reception pupils, with many visits and excursions. As part of our autumn topic we visited Elgood's Gardens to look at how the trees change colour and we collected items to make collages. At Christmas all the EYFS pupils went with Mrs Neaves to Mr Esser's Nursery to see how Christmas trees are grown and to choose one for School. In the New Year our topic was People Who Help Us. We visited Wisbech Fire Station and Library and invited our local community police officer, PC Dave Russ, and the ambulance service in to school to talk about all the different roles they undertake in our community. Mrs Easthall, our school nurse, ran a very engaging, hands-on session teaching all the children how to bandage an injury.

In Spring, the children and I set up an incubator with nine eggs. We counted down excitedly the 21 days to hatch day and to our happy surprise and amazement all nine eggs hatched into cute fluffy chicks! The children learned to care for the chicks' day to day needs and they grew very quickly until they went off to live happily at Mr Doubleday Collishaw's Farm. Spring time also brought walks around the School grounds and back to Elgood's gardens to see how the changing of the seasons reflects in the trees and nature generally. We took photographs of the emerging spring flowers and watched daffodils open from buds. The children perfected their brush control to paint observational watercolours using block paints.

Steaming ahead into the Trinity term we embarked on all things creepy crawlly - bug hunting, digging for worms to make a class wormery and eagerly watching caterpillars metamorphose into butterflies. We even had marching ants in a viewing chamber! The children became adept at spotting and naming many different types of minibeast. During our class visit to Ferry Meadows the children had the opportunity to pond dip and to build a den house for the 'Gruffalo'!

We ended the Trinity term with a fun visit to the Sea Life Centre at Hunstanton where the children especially appreciated seeing the young orphaned seal pups in the hospital wing.

The foundations that are set in Reception class will certainly help them as they grow and move through Prep School and on to Senior School. I can't wait to see each pupil discover who they are and take advantage of all the School has to offer them.



A close-up photograph of a young child with blonde hair, wearing a dark school uniform with a striped tie. The child is looking intently at a small, dark object held between the fingers of an adult's hand. The background is a soft, out-of-focus teal color.

Academic

“ Reception Class is all about exploring, learning and finding your feet in the wider world and as the class teacher, the children amaze me every day with their enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge.

”
Emma Oram
Reception Class Teacher

Introduction to Enrichment

As part of our Enrichment programme, pupils have the opportunity to extend their learning beyond the classroom, by attending lectures and workshops with visiting experts and guest speakers.


The School was very fortunate to have Dr Guy Sutton spend time with pupils as part of their enrichment experience. His primary areas of interest are the genetics of neurodevelopment and neuropathology and the interactive nature of genetic, biological and behavioural factors in chronic disease processes. In addition to his role as Director of Medical Biology Interactive (MBI), he is Honorary Lecturer at the University of Nottingham Medical School, where he teaches both at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Pupils, parents and teachers had the wonderful opportunity to learn about new research and technology in neuroscience. Dr Sutton demonstrated how neural engineers tracked participants' neural activity as they listened to recorded speech, then translated brain patterns into synthesised speech, showing that a computer could communicate directly with the brain (even of coma patients). They also learned about brain organoids - 'lab grown brains' - and debated what makes us conscious, looking at MRI scans of fetuses and astonishing images of the human connectome.

Dr Sutton spoke about case studies where tumours and brain injuries have changed people's personalities; he talked about lobotomies and water baths and the structures and functions of the brain. Forty eight pupils joined in with a brain dissection, learning about brain plasticity, how our brains are consistently modifying and adapting and the effects of drugs and social media on nerve cells.

“It was fascinating to learn about neurobionics and the future of psychology and neuroscience, how advanced the research is and the amazing careers that are now possible within this field.”





“As part of our Enrichment Programme, Dr Guy Sutton inspired pupils with his vast understanding of neuroscience. His enthusiastic delivery was contagious, enabling the pupils to develop their understanding of pioneering technology used to research and study the brain, way beyond the scope of the A Level curriculum. Pupils were able to help dissect a real brain and learn about ground-breaking developments in the field of Psychology.”

*Joanne Gomm
Head of Psychology*

Joel Forrester Inspires and Engages Leaders of the Future

The School was delighted to welcome Joel Forrester, CEO and Founder of Hockey for Heroes, on Wednesday 8 May, to speak to the pupils about Leadership.

Joel spoke from his position of expertise, with experience both in the military and counter terrorism as well as in sports leadership. He served for eight years in The Parachute Regiment and a further three in the Special Forces, leaving in 2008 after a number of operational deployments, including three to Afghanistan and two to Iraq - and with a National Bravery Award. He was then recruited as a Counter Terrorism Specialist Firearms Officer, where he spent a further ten years.

In an engaging and inspiring 90 minute talk, Joel shared many stories and anecdotes, taking the pupils through his background and career and relating his own life experiences to their upcoming challenges and future aspirations.

Joel spent a further 90 minutes with the Elite Sports pupils from 3rd Form upwards, working on some leadership exercises and tasks. At the end Joel fielded questions from the group, leaving them with the one word he used to guide him as a leader - 'Loyalty'.

“

Joel was a thoroughly inspiring speaker, with pupils talking about him and his workshop long after his visit. His ability to relate his experiences - at the elite level - to the pupils' upcoming challenges really resonated with them. They have each taken away personally relevant messages from Joel, which will help them as leaders amongst their peers and within the School.

Alex Laybourne
Deputy Head of 6th Form and Head of Careers

”

Gary Burgess Motivates Pupils and Staff

On Tuesday 5 February as part of our Enrichment Lectures, the School was very pleased to welcome Gary Burgess, a Super League and International Netball Umpire who delivered an inspiring and engaging talk to pupils and staff about how he became involved in the sport and his career and experiences as an official.

Gary began his career as a netball umpire in 1998 and quickly became a well-recognised figure on the sidelines of netball courts up and down the country. He left his former career as a PE teacher to pursue the role of Head of Officiating at England Netball. He volunteers as an international umpire in his spare time, and his dedication to the role has seen him progress to umpire at some of the biggest international netball matches in the world, including the 2015 Netball World Cup final. Gary was also one of a team of 17 umpires to officiate at the Vitality Netball World Cup 2019 in Liverpool in July.

He offered pupils a real insight into the industry and how he became a successful umpire in a female dominated game.

Pupils had the opportunity to ask lots of questions at the end of the lecture. Their key take away from the time they spent with Gary was “never be told you can't do something you love”.

“

Never stop
doing something
you love.

Gary Burgess
International Netball Umpire

”

We would like to thank Gary for taking time to visit our School. He has certainly inspired pupils to want to be more involved in the industry and possibly one day become umpires themselves and travel the world.

Enrichment Lecture with Mountaineer Ricky Munday takes pupils to new heights!

Ricky Munday - a Chartered Accountant and an experienced Mountaineer who has conquered Mount Everest and stood at the highest point on the earth's surface - visited the School in February.

In a fascinating talk, Mr Munday explained how mountaineering and the challenge of operating in some of the world's most hostile environments have given his life meaning and focus.

After a period of time working for the British Antarctic Survey, Mr Munday set his sights on Mount Everest. Although failing in his first attempt in 2017 due to ill health, a second effort the following year was successful and at around 0615 on Friday 18 May, Mr Munday reached the top of the world having climbed through what mountaineers refer to as 'the death zone'.

Mr Munday - also a successful rugby player with Glasgow Hawks - eloquently described the challenge of completing the infamous Marathon des Sables in 2004 and how it helped give him the confidence to face life beyond an established comfort zone.



Introduction to Houses

The House system at Wisbech Grammar School is an integral part of daily life. Meeting on a weekly basis, the four Houses, Clarkson, Holmes, Peckover and Sparks – all named after important characters in the rich history of the town or School – provide the opportunity for pupils to interact with other year groups, engage in the many inter-house competitions, raise money for charity and develop leadership and other key skills required for later life.

The House system offers something for everyone, no matter the ability, promoting friendly competition across a wide range of subjects as well as providing a forum in which relationships can be fostered, and pupils can benefit from key learning experiences.

As well as being a showcase for talented athletes, the House Athletics Championships provide opportunities for those pupils who are willing to have a go and do their best for their House and to contribute to the team effort.

In Magdalene House, the Prep 3 and 4 competition was won by Clarkson and the Prep 5 and 6 event by Holmes. Overall Holmes were the winners, followed by Clarkson, Peckover and then Sparks. The Prep 6 Victrix Ludorum was won by Jemima Mitchell and the Victor Ludorum by George Milton.

Charlotte Williams set a new School record for the 300m.

In the Senior School Competition pupils are split into three groups: Junior (1st and 2nd Form); Intermediate (3rd and 4th Form) and Senior (5th and 6th Form). The pupils thrilled us with some amazing athletic displays and competition was fierce.

In the Intermediate Competition Sparks were the winners, Peckover came second, Clarkson in third and Holmes in fourth position.

The Senior Competition winners were Clarkson with Holmes in second, Peckover third and Sparks in fourth position.

House Athletics was the main House event of the Trinity term for the Prep and Senior School pupils. With the final points of the year up for grabs, pupils ran, jumped and threw with all their might, displaying great skill and endeavour.



Houses



Overall the winning house was Sparks; runners up were Peckover, with Clarkson in third and Holmes fourth.

The Junior Victrix Ludorum was jointly awarded to Holly Lawrence (winner of the 800m, 1500m and Long Jump) and Charlotte Beck (winner of the 100m, 200m and Triple Jump). The Junior Victor Ludorum was awarded to Lewis Wing (winner of the 100m, 200m and High Jump).

The Intermediate Victrix Ludorum was awarded to Lucy Prior (who won 1500m and Javelin) and the Intermediate Victor Ludorum was awarded to Ethan Jones (winner of the 100m, Shot and Long Jump).

The Senior Victrix Ludorum was awarded to Lucy Lim for the second year in a row (winner of the 100m, Long Jump and Triple Jump) and the Senior Victor Ludorum was awarded to Will Gowler (winner of the 100m, High Jump and Long Jump).

New School records were set by Oliver Coles (39.17s in the 300m) and Lewis Shipley (12.14m in the Triple Jump). Lewis Wing, Hetty Hoyles and Abby Watson broke their own School records for a second time in the term.

As always, the pupils participated with enthusiasm and great sportsmanship in support of their Houses.

“ In the Junior Competition Holmes were declared winners, followed by Peckover in second, Sparks in third and Clarkson in fourth position. ”

Raising awareness of what matters most

Pupils from the Senior and Prep School joined together to undertake one of the biggest projects of the year. Each House was assigned two current affairs topics about which they were challenged to raise awareness, via a display board and presentation.

The topics included Wellbeing, Cleaner Oceans (Clarkson), Endangered Animals, Go Green (Sparks), Screen Time, Kindness (Peckover), Bullying and Immigration (Holmes).

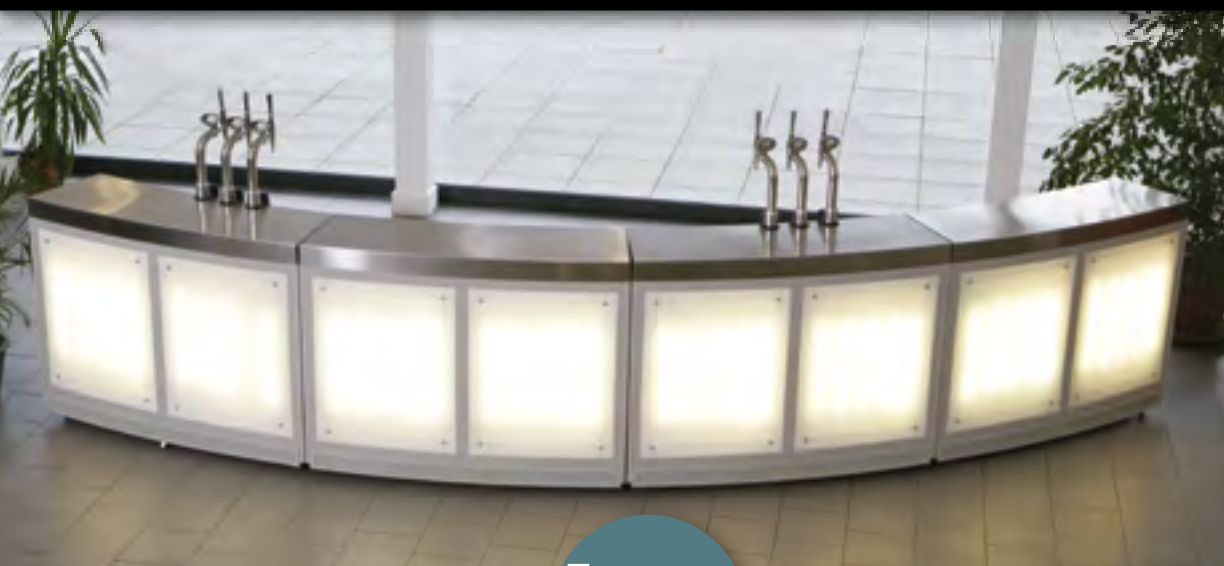
Pupils were encouraged to discuss and research these topics in order to create their presentations. The aim of the project was to collaborate across the year groups, fostering positive relationships and team work. Teams had only one hour in which to create their displays and pupils certainly rose to the occasion. The competition was judged by the School Governors and points were awarded both for the displays and the presentations.

Pupils who presented performed confidently and did each House proud. After adding up the final scores, Peckover won for best presentation and Clarkson for the best display.



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House Athletics is a fantastic opportunity for all pupils from our youngest to our oldest to compete and earn points for their House.

Keryn Neaves
Senior Deputy Head Prep School

”



House Music Competition – 16 October 2018

The annual Competition began with the Lower School soloists - Roisin Larham (voice), Amelia Mitchell (voice), Phoenix Plowman-Blake (piano) and Tamzin Naish (piano). After four outstanding performances Roisin Larham (Clarkson) was declared the winner, for her captivating performance of 'Naughty' from the musical "Matilda".



Middle School performers were Druce Purves (voice), Kevin Huang (piano), Charlie Edinburgh (voice) and Grace Winder (voice/guitar). All displayed incredible musical talent, and Kevin Huang (Peckover House) was crowned the winner with his performance of 'Modulations'.

The Russell Hall was 'sold out' for the evening, where Roisin and Kevin both performed their winning pieces beautifully.

The highly competitive Upper School Solo competition comprised of Amy Everall (voice), Sam Birch (electric guitar), Catherine Missin (voice) and Ellie Fradley (voice). Catherine (Clarkson) won with an emotional rendition of 'With You' from the musical "Ghost" which the adjudicators felt captivated the audience, with its range of dynamics and vocal nuances.

In the House Ensemble Competition, Sparks kicked off with 'Demons' by Imagine Dragons; Clarkson performed 'Valerie' made famous by Amy Winehouse. Holmes gave their version of 'Riptide' by Vance Joy, followed by Peckover with 'Never Enough' from "The Greatest Showman". After careful consideration, the adjudicators declared the best performance was given by Holmes.

The eagerly anticipated House Song competition was themed 'Songs from the Noughties'. The four, 70-strong choirs assembled in House colours, to provide a fitting climax to the evening's proceedings. Holmes performed 'Year 3000' (Busted), followed by Peckover with 'Fireflies' (Owl City). Clarkson were next with 'Viva la Vida' (Coldplay), followed by Sparks, who sang 'Rule the World' (Take That). The volume and energy was impressive and certainly gave judges Holly Cook, an ex-Grammarians and now professional flautist, Mrs Harding and Mr Duncan, a very difficult decision. After much debate Sparks were crowned winners.

The 'Most Promising Musician' award was presented to Sam Birch (Sparks).



The four, 70-strong choirs assembled in House colours, to provide a fitting climax to the evening's proceedings.

The four Houses were virtually inseparable; Holmes and Clarkson were announced joint overall winners and Peckover and Sparks, just one point behind, were awarded joint third.

A big 'thank you' goes to:

- Our pupils for giving us this fantastic experience
- Heads of Houses, Ms Goodier, Ms Gomm, Mr Rodriguez and Mr Garfoot for their superb support
- Jayne and the staff in the Skelton Hall for a great dinner before the event
- Mrs Missin, for putting the final show together and presenting it in such a lovely way
- Mrs Duncan for ensuring the technical aspects ran without a hitch.

House Tug o' War – Clarkson crowned winners second year running!

Grit, determination, resilience, fortitude and mental toughness are just a few of the attributes pupils at WGS demonstrate, not only in the annual House Tug o' War Competition but in everyday life.

On a sunny September day, in front of the rest of the School, competitors from the four Houses took each other on in the first event of the year, fighting it out to become champions of the much anticipated Tug o' War Competition 2018. Each team put out an impressive number of participants, with boys and girls from across the 5th and 6th Form donning their respective coloured shirts. Each House entered the arena to their chosen theme tune and limbered up, ready to give every ounce of strength they could muster. The event once again demonstrated the huge amount of pride, teamwork and camaraderie that each House has developed over many years.

As always, it was an impressive show of power, team coordination and tactics, with each House taking on the other three in turn.

Clarkson vanquished all of their opponents, gaining maximum points and holding on to the title for another year. Second place went to Holmes, third to Sparks and fourth to Peckover. Miss Gomm, the new head of Clarkson, was delighted with this result and congratulations go to her team. A massive well done to all those who participated and thanks to the tournament referee, Mr Timmis.



House Activity Day

At the end of exam week, the 1st and 2nd Form took part in a House Challenge Day. They competed in a 'stomp' style music-making task, a treasure hunt around the School site and an Egg Drop Challenge.



Mrs Missin was very impressed by the variety of items pupils used and how they incorporated the ideas learned in music lessons into their ensemble pieces.

During the treasure hunt, House teams were given 20 questions and challenged to find the answers. Each clue led them to a place on the campus, where they had to count, apply mathematical skills and 'think outside the box' to find the solution. On solving all of the clues, they faced one final challenge. Teams had to be precise and work together to complete all the tasks and finally arrive at all of the correct answers. Only one team managed to do this!



For the Egg Drop Challenge, teams had to engineer the best protective bubble or parachute and landing pad for an egg. They were given newspapers, card and sticky tape and tasked with using their imagination to develop a design that would stop the egg breaking from the greatest height. Everyone had a cracking time and no team chickened out! (Pardon the puns!).



Houses



To create their musical piece, pupils were asked to bring in an item from home that would make an interesting sound - however, it could not be a normal musical, or percussive, instrument. Some of the items utilised were:

- A newspaper
- A plastic box and something to beat it with
- A plastic bottle with ridges on
- Clean tin cans and a beater
- A hair brush
- A bucket
- A pencil case with a noisy zip
- A packet of rice

f o c u s

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Outstanding Wisbech Grammar School pupils, past and present, receive Gold DofE Award

We are very pleased to recognise the success of four current and six former pupils who have achieved their Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an internationally recognised programme designed to hone participants' self-discipline, ability to work within a team and resilience. Wisbech Grammar School has been a supporter of the Scheme for many years, holding it in high regard; it complements the academic achievements of our pupils in School and is strongly valued by universities and employers alike. We therefore encourage as many pupils as possible to participate in the Award Scheme.

The Scheme consists of three levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold. Within each award there are four sections, Volunteering, Physical, Skill and Expedition, with an extra fifth section, Residential, included at Gold. Each section requires our pupils to undertake an hour a week on each activity for three, six or twelve months, depending on the level. This is often possible within our extensive co-curricular offering and is also undertaken in the wider community.

We are delighted to enjoy a high completion rate, well above that of the national average. In particular we are very pleased to celebrate the achievements of ten current and former pupils this year who have achieved their Gold awards. Reaching the pinnacle of the Award Scheme is an achievement that should not be underestimated; many started their journey in 3rd Form with the Bronze award, travelling through Silver and on to the extensive Gold award, requiring an immense commitment both of time and effort.

Current pupils Molly Sears, Charlotte Brett, Jack Clingo, Morgan Smith and former pupils Daniel Robb, Georgina White, Hetty Beckett, Cameron Mauremootoo, Harriet Munson and Asena Yendley, have all reached the pinnacle and enjoyed a well-deserved trip to the gardens of Buckingham Palace to receive their Awards.

We also recognise the significant accomplishments of the 29 pupils who earned their Bronze Awards and the 23 who achieved Silver and look forward to helping them move on to the next level.



Charlotte Brett, Harriet Munson, Morgan Smith and Georgina White with their awards at Buckingham Palace.

Bronze Award

At the very beginning of their DofE journey, approximately three quarters of our 3rd Form will meet weekly and commit their time to complete three sections of the Award.



In the warmer months of May and June the group undertakes the expeditions, consisting of two journeys - a practice and a qualifying - each lasting two days and one night. The need to be totally self-reliant and spending a night under canvas is a shock for some, even in the 'friendly' countryside of rural Suffolk and Cambridgeshire respectively. Navigation and map reading very quickly become important skills when standing in the middle of a field! Many of our pupils' anecdotes and experiences will involve navigational mistakes and miscalculations!

DofE Silver Award pupils in 'Peak' condition for expedition!

The 2019 expedition season kicked off in the Peak District, with the 26 members of the Silver group undertaking their practice expedition during late March.

As expected for the time of year the evenings were cold, with a heavy frost dusting the grass on the second morning. However, during the day the conditions were ideal for walking - sunny and bright with just the right temperature - particularly for pupils carrying heavy loads! This was the group's first experience of carrying backpacks up 'mountains' (actually small hills), which proved to be a 'steep' learning curve for some.

All members of the group coped extremely well and felt sufficiently prepared to undertake the Assessed Expedition - hoping for some warmer evenings and that their waterproofs could once again stay inside their rucksacks!

The Assessed Expedition took place in early July, again amidst the rolling hills of the Peak District, but this time centred on Edale and Castleton. Learning from the experiences of practice expedition and enjoying much warmer conditions, all teams coped well and passed with flying colours. This section for most participants will be the final part of their award and so we look forward to verifying their Silver awards in September.





Practice DofE Gold Expedition Hails the Dales!

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award practice Gold expedition took place in the rolling hills of the Yorkshire Dales over the Easter Break.



Fourteen pupils navigated their way through the stunning Yorkshire countryside, during the four day expedition.

Their routes covered anything up to 20 km each day, but also included several hundred metres of increased height each day - a novelty for Fenland residents!

Taking in features such as Ingleborough, Malham Cove and Malham Tarn, the bright sunny conditions experienced for the majority of the trip showed the Yorkshire Dales at its best and proved to be a fitting 'warm-up' for the Assessed Expedition planned for the Lake District in August.



Following on from the practice expedition earlier in the year, pupils travelled from the western side of the Lake District, starting at Ennerdale Water, travelling through Borrowdale and The Langdale Valley on to Glen Ridding and Ullswater in the eastern lakes. This year it was not only the terrain that was challenging; Mother Nature decided to dispel any fears of a drought with torrential rain and high winds hitting the area for two days. This made the whole experience more challenging and tested the resilience of the entire group, leaders included. The harsh conditions made the expedition more rewarding for the participants, who, having adapted their routes due to the weather, developed an appreciation for the environment and a greater sense of accomplishment and achievement when reaching the mini bus in the car park at Glen Ridding. A testing experience that will live long in the memory - exactly what a DofE expedition should provide.

“Having personally planned their routes and booked the campsites, the three groups were self-sufficient, carrying everything they needed with them for the duration.”

*Dominic Garfoot
Head of Outdoor Education*



“

As Head of Outdoor Learning,
I am extremely proud of the achievements
of all of our Award holders. The opportunity
to explore different parts of the country has
left a lasting memory with all participants.

Dominic Garfoot

”



As a recognised Trinity Champion Centre for Music and Drama we were very proud of our pupils' latest achievements in their exams. On 1 July 2019 candidates demonstrated a wide range of skills and disciplines for the examiners, with extremely successful results - a testament to the high quality teaching and enormous self-motivation of WGS pupils.



Round up to a Dramatic Year *By Susan Duncan, Head of Drama*

It was a busy start to the year with several theatre trips to hone 'Evaluation of a Live Performance' skills for 3rd – L6th Form. There were trips to see 'The Wipers Times', Rambert Dance, 'Kindertransport' and 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time', as well as a workshop opportunity with Steve Lambert and Badac Theatre Company centred around their new hard-hitting production about refugees, 'The Journey'.

The late November nights were considerably brightened by the powerful impact of 'Shout The Mod Musical'. In February Charlotte Beck represented the School at the 30th National Cranmer Awards in Lambeth Palace and was presented with her certificate by the Patron, HRH Prince Charles.

Following another two highly successful rounds of Trinity College London exam entries the School became a Trinity Champion Centre, where our experience and expertise will be used to train prospective teachers and examiners. This is a great honour and a reflection of the dedicated staff who help prepare the motivated pupils for their chosen disciplines.

Among the many notable results we are delighted that Eleanor Sloan and Faye Thompson have both achieved Distinction at Grade 8 in Acting and Musical Theatre.

The performance schedule has also included another two 'Taking the Stage' evenings, a study trip to the Victoria and Albert Museum Theatre Galleries, GCSE and A Level devised performances and some notably creative Third Form collaborations.



Wisbech Grammar School pupils shine at 30th Annual Cranmer Awards

I am delighted that all four girls took the opportunity to compete, and I was impressed by their commitment to rehearse and prepare for the Awards. It will be the third consecutive year that WGS will have a National Finalist at this prestigious public speaking event.

*Mrs Duncan
Head of Drama*



Congratulations to Charlotte Beck and Roisin Larham for securing First and Second places respectively at the Regional Cranmer Awards - a public speaking competition run by the Prayer Book Society and now in its 30th year. We are equally proud of Amelia Mitchell and Ugne Fenton who also represented the School. Anne Robinson, who was the guest adjudicator, said our pupils demonstrated 'the highest standard of entries so far'.

Entrants from across the country read or recite a passage of their choice, of 3-5 minutes' duration, from the Book of Common Prayer. Local heats are held around the country, the winners of which go through to the National Final where competitors must recite their chosen passage by heart. Entrants are encouraged to seek guidance from a teacher or priest, on how to prepare for the Cranmer Awards. Judges award marks for clarity, fluency and intelligent communication of meaning.

On 21 February, 2nd Form pupil Charlotte interrupted her half term holiday to attend the Cranmer Awards final - in the medieval splendour of Lambeth Palace.

Charlotte was one of fifteen listed Junior finalists. The Conference Room was a large, demanding space that required all of Charlotte's Speech & Drama training and performance experience to project her voice effectively. Her presentation of the gospel story of Lazarus and the joyful Psalm 95 gave her the opportunity to display a mastery of Cranmer's measured prose and the rhythm of verse.

The organisers were delighted to welcome Patron of the competition, HRH The Prince of Wales, to present prizes and certificates to all Junior and Senior contestants. Although unplaced in this year's event, Charlotte is looking forward to competing again next year and would highly recommend the rewarding discipline of learning 'off by heart'.



Prep School Production is Just the Ticket!

The performance from our pupils left us with a great sense of pride as they sang, danced and acted this year's production, *Wonka's Golden Tickets*.

The colourful array of costumes, combined with the outstanding props and lighting, made for a spectacular display showing our pupils' finest talents. It took a true team to put this show together and we could not have done it without the vision of Mrs Beck and the incredible efforts from our pupils, parents and staff.

“The dedication of the staff to support our pupils in gaining the confidence to perform and reach their potential in this area of the curriculum is truly amazing and something I am so grateful for.”

Keryn Neaves
Senior Deputy Head Prep School



“ I was really happy to be chosen to play Willy Wonka in the Prep School production of Wonka’s Golden Tickets.

It was fun learning the lines and acting it out on stage and I loved every moment. It will be something I will remember forever.”

*Ryan Busby
Prep 6 Pupil*



Mod Musical and Exam successes to Shout about!



The costumes were fab, the music was groovy and the comedy surprising!

Shout The Mod Musical played to a nightly full house at the Angles Theatre in Wisbech and the colourful girls of the swinging '60's (6th Form pupils Faye Thompsett, Eleanor Sloan, Megan Pledger, Catherine Missin, Ursula France and Amy Everall) sang and danced their way through (arguably) the most exciting decade of the 20th century, delivering comedy monologues with arena stand-up confidence. Supported by the technicians from lower years - Victoria Garner (Stage Manager), Callum Duncan (Lighting) Piotr Wisniewski (Sound) and Olivia Pugh (Wardrobe), with the live band on stage, including Mrs Missin and Music Scholar Gabrielle Ayling, Shout had the packed audiences yelling for encores of the iconic music of the 60's. Paying tribute to Dusty Springfield, Lulu, Cilla Black, Nancy Sinatra and Aretha Franklin, this was live performance at its very best and totally deserving of the Distinction from Trinity College for Grade 6, Plays in Production. Those who were lucky enough to secure a ticket will hold it as a benchmark for excellence for many years to come.



Please pass our congratulations on to all the performers who were brilliant, to Mrs Missin, who as Musical Director did a superb job and to everyone who helped to make the performance so successful.

Liz Morris
Governor



‘On The Brink’ at Edinburgh Fringe Festival

This year’s On The Brink Theatre Company entry into the Edinburgh Fringe Festival Programme, began with a prospective Drama Scholars’ interview with the Headmaster - a few days after the alarming documentary narrated by Sir David Attenborough, highlighting the plastic that litters our oceans.

Anna Florance thought it could be a challenging subject for the devised show, to raise awareness of socio-political issues; the Headmaster suggested the title ‘The Rubbish Show’.

The company - two technicians and six performers, from 4th Form to U6th held meetings for logistical planning and photo calls, organising brochure entries and finalising numbers. Mr and Mrs Duncan led intensive workshop sessions to write and hone material to find a coherent through line for the story the company wanted to communicate. A sketch show format was agreed to provide the optimum medium and specific tasks were assigned to each member of the company to research and shape the chosen sections.

Late in July ‘On the Brink’ returned to take up residence in the Dance Studio for four days. Each sketch was rehearsed and refined, the puppet man created, remade and adapted, the technicians set out final designs and completed soundtracks, and then somewhat unexpectedly became accompanying musicians for the songs - an illustration of one of the significant attractions of devised theatre; with multi-talented members of the company anything is possible! The final step was to ask a few willing friends and family to provide an essential audience for a final run through and to give some honest feedback.

Off to the train, an evening orientation walk around the Castle, the anxious rush of the technical rehearsal, the terrifying ordeal of ‘selling’ the show to total strangers on The Mile, a deep breath and... the first show was gone in a blink of an eye!

After our first performance, between eight pupils and three staff, 153 performances from musicals to dance, from stand-up comedians to silent discos, we racked up over 160 hours immersing ourselves in the Edinburgh Festival!



The Rubbish Show had some great reviews. Robert F said:

“ Relevant, thought-provoking, beautifully constructed, and well-performed. Mixing humour and variety with a serious theme and solutions, this is an incredible original show. ”

Mrs E who saw the show a number of times said:

“ As thought provoking as it is jaw-achingly funny, The Rubbish Show addresses world-changing issues with a mix of well-timed comedy sketches, songs and observations shining a spotlight on the talented young cast and the problems that are theirs to fix in the future. Don’t expect this young company to entertain you with a show that’s merely good. We laughed until our faces ached and gasped at their insight. ”

WGS Talented pupils 'Taking the Stage' to Entertain

Pupils from the Senior School were thoroughly entertaining in the 'Taking the Stage' open mic event in May.

As a seasoned pro, Miles Whittaker kicked off the show with his astounding magic tricks. Libby Baker was accompanied by Mrs Missin as she sang 'Burn' from 'Hamilton'. George Ayling took a more classical stand and played the clarinet. Mr Duncan instructed the worried, if strangely amused, audience about the most effective way of poisoning pigeons in the park, as written by satirist Tom Lehrer.

James Hall used the opportunity to try out two short pieces that he went on to play for his Grade 3 Piano exam towards the end of term. Callum Duncan strummed his way through 'Auld Lang Syne' on the guitar and Niamh Ward commanded our respect and applause with her virtuoso rendition of 'You are the Reason'.



Charley Kirby and Ellie Dix rounded the show off with 'What is this Feeling?' from the ever-popular 'Wicked', which was thoroughly enjoyed by those who attended the London theatre trip in February.

This was another set of charming and thought-provoking performances which provided a platform for pupils to show us who they really are.

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Music Department 2018–19 highlights

The Music Department has seen some very exciting developments this year. We started the year in the Dwight Centre and ended in our new accommodation, complete with large teaching and rehearsal space, Harkness Room and dedicated Music ICT suite.

The large teaching room is already proving a hit with pupils, who appreciate the flexible working environment. The high ceilings provide a very generous acoustic; our musicians are enjoying this in rehearsals, and look forward to performing in this space in the future.

Eight full scale concerts in the Russell Hall and in the wider community have involved large numbers of Prep and Senior School pupils, singing and playing in a wide variety of ensembles, many of which are new this year. In the Prep School we now have a Samba, a Ukelele and a Wind Band, which have all made an excellent start. Newcomers Scola Cantorum, Cantabile and Rock Choir demonstrate the strength of singing in the Senior School.

Other highlights include a major musical production, 'Shout', staged at the Angles Theatre, a two day visit to London for 43 pupils, recitals from visiting musicians, Jazz Breakfast and a very special performance for the visit of HRH Prince Charles.

To round the year off WGS Jazz Band were invited to perform at Festival Too, Europe's largest free music festival.



Grand performances delight audience at annual piano recital

The audience which gathered in the Russell Hall on the evening of 10 October for the annual Piano Recital was treated to an evening of delightful music.

Performers ranged in Year group from Prep 5 to Upper 6th and in level from Grade 1 to Grade 8, with each one displaying a high level of musicianship, drawing out some wonderful colours from the Steinway grand piano. The attention to the expressive detail required by each composer was testimony to the hard work and preparation of each pupil and their piano teachers - Claire Harding, Ivan Garford, Dorothy Morris, Elizabeth Eden and Claire Stewart - who provide wonderful support and put pupils through their paces week after week.

Every pupil deserves our warmest congratulations.

Perhaps worthy of a special mention are: Archie Lensen and Lemuel Agcaoili who performed effortlessly despite arriving late back from an away rugby fixture, mid-recital; Louisa Parker, who has been learning for just six months; Isobel Croker for whom this was her first public performance, despite playing at Grade 4 standard; Phoenix Plowman-Blake who performed her own composition; Olivia Pugh who valiantly changed the piece she was playing at the last minute to avoid performing the same piece as Harry Fox; and Catherine Missin, for whom this was her last piano recital at Wisbech Grammar School before moving on to pastures new at the end of her Upper Sixth year.



Prince Charmed by Baroque Ensemble during Wisbech Visit



Arcadia Baroque Group, directed by Mrs Harding, was delighted to be asked to be part of the event held at St Peter and St Paul's Church for the visit of HRH Prince Charles to Wisbech on 27 November.

The group is made up of seven musically talented pupils from Prep 6 through to Upper Sixth. Their focus is playing music from the eighteenth century and they are accompanied and led from the harpsichord by Mrs Harding. They worked extremely hard in rehearsals to prepare music which provided a fitting background and ambience for the time that the Prince spent in the church. When Prince Charles met the Group he said he had enjoyed the music immensely and that it had reminded him of when he played the cello at school and university.

Prince Charles congratulated the group on creating such a beautiful atmosphere at the event and was impressed to hear that one of the pieces performed was composed by Gabrielle Ayling (Lower Sixth), who plays flute in the ensemble, as part of her GCSE course work.



“It was a real honour to welcome their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall to Wisbech Grammar School, arriving by helicopter and landing perilously close to the senior cricket wicket! Head Boy of the Senior School, Frazer Brown and Head Girl of Prep School, Jemima Mitchell made up the reception party, presenting Prince Charles with a Prefects' tie and the Duchess of Cornwall with a bouquet of flowers. The whole School came out in force to greet our guests and both the Duke and Duchess were thrilled and touched by the welcome they received.”



Senior School Carol Service

The Senior School Carol Service on 12 December was a feast of musical delights.

Roisin Larham performed the traditional role of opening the service with the unaccompanied first verse of 'Once in Royal David's City'. Schola Cantorum, made up of Music Scholars, gave a moving rendition of Rutter's 'Christmas Lullaby'.

The entire First Form rose to the occasion, filling the Church with the delightful 'Do you hear what I hear?' Arcadia Baroque accompanied Ursula France and Catherine Missin who gave a serene performance of 'He shall feed his flock' from Handel's famous oratorio 'Messiah'.

“The human voice was also showcased in Cantabile's rousing performance of Adolphe Adam's 'O Holy Night'.”



Performing Arts Exam Results

Congratulations go to all 19 pupils who took part in the latest round of Trinity College London Musical Theatre and Acting examinations.

The results are a solid testament to the talent and dedication of all of the candidates, particularly to the Senior School pupils who achieved Distinctions across the board, including the Shout cast, crew and musicians.

During the course of this academic year 40 pupils have enjoyed success in Trinity College Music exams. All pupils deserve huge praise for their achievements. Special mention this year is made of the following two pupils who have successfully passed their Grade 8 practical exam, which is the highest level before moving on to very advanced repertoire for a Diploma:

Ursula France
Tom Williamson

Grade 8 Singing
Grade 8 Cello (ABRSM)



Leavers' Concert 'left' everyone mesmerized!

The Leavers' Concert on 22 March marked the end of music making at Wisbech Grammar School for Upper 6th pupils Amy Everall, Ellie Fradley, Demelza Mason and Catherine Missin. There was a fantastic atmosphere as the evening started with the Chamber Orchestra playing Mozart's 'Concert Overture'.

Just Flutes, directed by the super talented Mrs Garford, performed a lively 'Cachuca'. Training Wind Band performed two pieces, producing a lovely blended tone. Jazz Band, led by Mr Garford, gave renditions of classics, 'At Last', featuring Catherine Missin on vocals, and 'Spooky', with vocals from Charley Kirby.

The Arcadia Ensemble, under the expert guidance of Mrs Harding, performed some medieval pieces, featuring Demelza Mason on the top line, as well as the famous Bach/Gounod 'Prelude'.

One of the highlights of the evening was a movement from a concerto for two cellos, which featured Prep 6 cellists Tom Williamson and Jasper Pike. Cantus Choir, who are becoming a vocal force to be reckoned with, gave vibrant performances of 'Fields of Gold' and 'Fernando' – no musical evening being complete without Abba! Special mention should be given to the newly formed Allegro Strings, who were impressive in their performance of Mozart's 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik', led with vigour by Mr Williams-Wandoch.

Ellie Dix, Music Scholar, captured the audience with her performance of 'Legally Blonde' and Steel on Steel brought energy and fun to the proceedings with 'Bare Necessities' and 'Riptide' under the direction of Scholar Catherine Missin.

We are extremely grateful to all of the performers who gave so much energy to the evening and have worked hard throughout the term in preparation. A particular mention must go to our wonderful Upper Sixth pupils, who over many years have contributed so much to the success of music making in School. Amy Everall's heart-warming performance of 'Memories' was full of emotion. Demelza Mason's dexterity on the recorder in the medieval pieces was joyful. Ellie Fradley filled the Russell Hall with a powerful and assured performance of 'Life I never led' from 'Sister Act', as well as playing clarinet in Orchestra.

Catherine Missin demonstrated impressive musicianship and versatility as she moved between instruments – violin, saxophone, flute, piano, drums and vocals. She was at ease with the challenging Rutter 'Waltz' on flute, extracted beautiful lines from the Steinway in Grieg's 'Notturmo' and captivating on vocals in 'At Last'. We wish all of our Upper Sixth musicians the best of luck in their onward journey and thank them for being wonderful role models to our younger pupils. Once again at the end of the evening the audience left the Russell Hall buzzing with enthusiasm and full of praise for all that they had heard.



Choral pupils bring grace and harmony to the annual Rose Fair

One of the highlights of the annual Wisbech Rose Fair is the Choral Evensong service, which is held at the Church of St Peter and St Paul.

The evensong liturgy dates back hundreds of years and is still going strong in churches and cathedrals all over the country. On 4 July our Schola Cantorum singers, made up of music scholars and GCSE and A Level pupils, were invited to be part of this special celebration. They performed an anthemic arrangement of 'The Lord is my Shepherd', made famous as the theme tune to the television comedy 'The Vicar of Dibley'.

Later in the day Cantus Choir presented a superb concert to a hugely appreciative audience. The Church looked magnificent, decked out with stunning floral displays designed around the theme of '100 Years of History'. Cantus Choir has had an exceptionally successful year and performed a wide ranging repertoire in School; this concert gave them an opportunity to round the year off and showcase to the wider community all they have achieved. Alongside pieces ranging from Abba's 'Fernando' to 'On my Own' from the musical Les Misérables, the audience was treated to solos from members of the choir.



Huge congratulations go to all of the soloists – Charlotte Beck, Phoenix Plowman-Blake, Amelia Mitchell, Charley Kirby, Sophie Fyson, Ellie Dix, Libby Baker, Grace Winder, Druce Purves, Faye Thompson, Ursula France and Catherine Missin.

The confidence and musicality of each and every performance throughout the evening was highly impressive. The choral sound was beautifully blended and Cantus Choir now seem to breathe as one, making for some truly electrifying moments.

1st and 2nd Form delighted by The Ella McCready Trio

Following on from the success of their previous visit, the Ella McCready Trio returned to the School on 8 November, to perform to First and Second Form pupils.

Along with her father Ivan McCready (cello), and pianist, Ian MacGregor, Ella performed a packed programme of songs from a variety of genres – pop, jazz and musical theatre.

Her version of Amy Winehouse's 'Back to Black' and David Bowie's 'Life on Mars' were particularly impressive and demonstrated the wide range of emotions she is able to communicate to an audience. Other well-known numbers, including Taylor Swift's 'Shake it Off' and Aretha Franklin's 'Natural Woman', were real crowd pleasers. Ivan and Ian performed a beautiful arrangement of Einaudi's 'I Giorni'.



Pupils were reluctant for the concert to finish, but had the opportunity to ask the musicians questions about what had inspired them to learn an instrument and what music they liked playing together the most. After the concert Ella conducted a workshop with the cast of 'Shout'.

She gave invaluable advice to the pupils (Ursula France, Catherine Missin, Megan Pledger and Faye Thompson) about how to project their voices in the high range and how to prepare their characters to give convincing performances.

Ivan, meanwhile, worked with Jasper Pike and Tom Williamson, two promising cellists in Prep 6, on some ensemble pieces.

Prep 6 Cellists win places at top Conservatoires



Tom Williamson, Prep 6 pupil, will take up his place at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire this September.

Fascinated by a signed caricature of Julian Lloyd Webber he saw when he was five, Tom chose to play the cello, gaining a high pass in his Grade 1, with the examiner commenting that 'there is obvious potential here'. Tom was later introduced to cellist Santiago Carvalho, the longest serving member of the London Philharmonic Orchestra who worked with Tom over a five month period. Skipping Grades 2-4 (and later Grade 6), Tom subsequently gained Distinction in Grades 5, 7 and 8 exams.

Tom also passed Grade 5 ABRSM exams in Theory and in Singing. In October 2018 he was thrilled to have the opportunity at Wisbech Grammar School to try out the trombone and is aiming to take his Grade 4 in 2019/2020. He began playing the piano age seven, passing all Grades with Distinction and will next take Grade 6 in Autumn 2019, under the tutelage of Dorothy Morris. Having jumped at the opportunity to attend a residential organ course at Oundle which included a day in Cambridge, playing some of the College organs, Tom also performed in the end of course recital, thoroughly enjoying the whole experience. He is now having organ lessons at Peterborough Cathedral with Tansy Castledine.

He recently attended the North Norfolk Festival, receiving an Honours (the highest accolade) for his cello performance, and the Stamford Festival where he won 'Best in Class' and 'The Copthill Cup for the Most Promising Performer', playing cello, piano and trombone.

Tom loves music and drama and is looking forward to the wonderful opportunities to get involved in all things performing arts – at Wisbech Grammar School and beyond!

Jasper Pike who is also in Prep 6 has just won a place at the Junior Department of Trinity College of Music, starting from September 2019, which is a fabulous achievement, considering the high standard of competition. Since joining Prep School Jasper has impressed his teachers with his musical ability.

Jasper first started playing the cello at the age of 7, initially inspired by the Croatian cello duo The 2 Cellos. After some initial taster sessions, he began lessons with Ivan McCready and took part in his first chamber concert achieving his Grade 1 shortly afterwards and gained a Distinction in Grade 5 in July this year.

His love of music increased when he became a chorister at Sandringham Church and started learning to play the piano. He is taught by Claire Stewart for both piano and singing, and it was on her recommendation that he auditioned for a place for the junior programme at Trinity Conservatoire. The audition consisted of two cello and one piano piece, some aural tests and an interview. The feedback from the panel was that they were very impressed by his musicality and would be delighted to offer him a place starting in September 2019.

As for ambitions, Jasper says he would like a career in music, ideally being a soloist with a full orchestra accompanying him!





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Co-Curricular and Period 5

Dr Kevin Mann, Assistant Head Co-Curricular

A key aspect of life for pupils at our School is 'Period 5' which is at the heart of our Co-Curricular provision.

It would be impossible to write about all of the highlights I have seen as I have gone around the Clubs each day and so here are just a few. Rock Choir, with Mrs Missin, in the Michaelmas and Lent terms in particular, was a real room filler and crowd pleaser, particularly with 1st and 2nd Form pupils, singing everything from ABBA and Coldplay to Ed Sheeran (an Ipswich Town fan by the way) and Bruno Mars.

The Science Department has been particularly active with their Academic Support Programme, known as Science Hospital, as well as their range of extension activities. Biology Society got understandably very enthusiastic over their campaign to save endangered species, involving not only the Club, but also the whole School community from the Prep to Senior School. Robotics saw a team of 6th Formers design and build a robot and compete in front of judges. Watching the Drama Department rehearse in the Drama Studio and, much more unusually, on the School fields, has broadened horizons and sparked enthusiasm and participation. It has been great to see archers out there on the School fields in almost all weathers peppering the target and then some Club members going on to compete in numerous competitions to achieve amazing success.

History and Military History Clubs are also very well supported and the rivalry at the Chess Club is visible in the very atmosphere in the room when I pop in. Other favourites are the various Art and Textiles Clubs, seeing the talented pupils produce some amazing pieces. In addition, there are always a number of pupils cooking up a storm in the Food and Nutrition rooms with Competitive Dishes, McMug and Street Food. DT, with its Open Workshops and Young Engineers sessions, remains ever popular with pupils of all ages working on a wide range of projects. I love the buzz in all those spaces.

Looking forward to next year, Period 5 will take place on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. There will be around 30 Clubs and Activities running on each of those days. Some of the new Clubs include: Graphical Experts, Beginners' Italian, Sports Society, Poetry and Creative Writing Clubs, Lego Robotics, Archaeology, Junior and Senior Science Clubs, Cryptic Crosswords and the unusually spelt Wasgij Club (see if you can work out what it is)!. A wide-ranging selection which I hope will really engage and involve our pupils. Pupils are always invited to be brave and try something new and they can take a different activity each term. In the feedback we get, many pupils find they really enjoy daring to do something different. I am delighted with the range on offer next year - all curriculum areas are covered - and I have also asked staff to share their areas of enthusiasm and hobbies with pupils.

An important element of our Co-Curricular provision is to create opportunities for older pupils to lead sessions.

This has been the case with Marcus Shrosbree in Art and Textiles, Matilda Kerman Staley and Jake Chilton in Otaku Club, Molly Sears in Psychology Club, Demelza Mason and Ophelia Griffiths in Biology Society and Catherine Missin in Women's Society. Well done and huge thanks to all of those involved.



I have been enjoying archery as part of what the School has to offer in their co-curricular programme and Games lessons. Earlier in the year I travelled to Archery GB Junior (under 21s) Masters hosted by Oxford Archers. This is an invite only competition which only has the top 2% of junior archers in the country.

Laura Wright, 6th Form pupil

"A fantastic achievement, well done Laura".

Sean Fox, Archery Coach



Virginia McKenna inspires the next generation of pupils at WGS, raising £2000 for charity.

This year the Biology Society has continued to raise awareness of topics about which they feel passionate. Due to a large number of volunteers signing up to be involved, the beginning of the year saw pupils split into three groups, each with a different focus. The first group continued the work of their predecessors, increasing the sales of reusable water bottles.

The second group felt strongly about the 'Adopt, Don't Shop' campaign. They researched the advantages of adopting animals from shelters rather than buying from breeders. They presented their findings to all of the 1st and 2nd Form groups and answered lots of questions from our pupils. Following this they started thinking about the 'Save the Bees' campaign and designed a number of prototype bee feeders using recycled materials. This is a project that they are hoping to revisit next year.

The third group wanted to raise awareness of endangered animals so began the 'Born Free' Campaign. They produced a quiz for each tutor group about animals at risk of extinction, unless there is some human intervention. All of the answers were animals available for adoption through the Born Free charity. Following this, they organised a non-uniform day for the Lent term and raised a total of £709.

The Biology Society chose Born Free because of their nine main aims which can be summarised as protection, reintegration of the animals and the education of those who live close to them.

The aim of the fundraising was to get enough money so that each year group in the school could adopt their own animal. This was achieved, so every pupil voted for the animal they wished to adopt. So far the School has adopted 18 animals; one for each year group, two from the teachers and one by the Biology Society. The money that was raised will greatly help the adopted animals. The Biology Society has created a display centrally in School, to showcase the adoption certificates, toys received and information about the adopted animals - so everyone in School can see the difference they have helped to make.

Following a chance meeting between Prep 5 pupil, Libby Hoyles, and Virginia McKenna during a holiday to Kenya, The Biology Society was lucky enough to have the founder of Born Free accept their invitation to visit the School in the Trinity Term. The Prep School Forum organised a day of fundraising through a sponsored 'sleeping lions' and a quiz, raising £2000 to donate to the worthwhile cause. Virginia gave a talk to the Prep School and the Biology Society, covering the history of Born Free and how it all started as a book and how in 1966, Virginia and her husband Bill Travers starred in the classic wildlife film 'Born Free' which told the true story of conservationists Joy and George Adamson who rescued a lioness cub called Elsa and successfully

returned her to the wild. They went on to make a number of other wildlife films and after one in particular, an elephant they worked with was given to London Zoo by the Kenyan Government. When they went to visit her, they could tell she was in distress and campaigned to get her a better life. Unfortunately she died, aged 16. They were determined that her death would not be in vain, so in 1984, they launched Zoo Check – the charity that has evolved into Born Free.

Next year, the pupils have decided they are going to make 'sustainability' their focus. Pupils are passionate about making a difference and will certainly be putting all their energy into worthwhile causes.





“The Biology Society would like to thank everyone for their support this year. Without the generosity of our community, we would not have been able to support this worthwhile charity.”

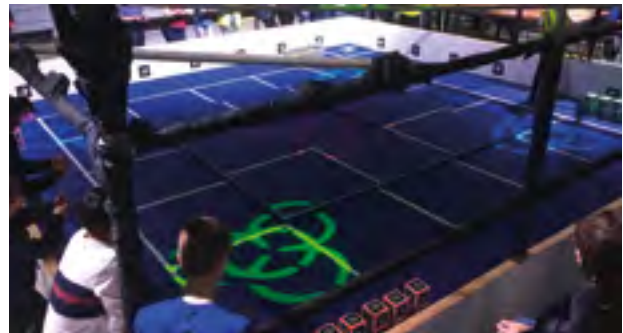
Robot Wars for 6th Form Pupils at 2019 Student Robotics Competition

Student Robotics is a volunteer based organisation that runs an annual free-to-enter robotics competition for 16 to 18 year-olds.

In October, competition teams are provided with a kit containing custom-made electronics and then have until the start of the Easter holiday to build fully autonomous (not remote controlled) robots to compete against each other.

37 teams from across the UK took part in the competition hosted by the University of Southampton during the weekend of 6 and 7 April 2019. This year's game, named 'Caldera', challenged teams to control scoring zones with tokens while navigating an arena with raised platforms. Twenty-five scoring zones were arranged in a grid, varying in value from two points for each of the outermost 16 zones, a ring of eight on a raised 'volcano' worth seven points apiece, to the central 'Caldera' which was worth thirty points. Parking your robot in a zone tripled the points of that zone and the 4 adjacent zones. The Wisbech Grammar School team had been working hard since November to design, build and test their robot.

They programmed their robot to use an attached webcam to detect which tokens were theirs in the arena, so the robot could then position itself correctly. After all eleven of their league matches, they finished 5th overall and for a brief moment were in 1st position. In the first knockout game, they came 2nd, qualifying for the quarter final, where they met strong opposition, so sadly were unable to progress any further.



The team thoroughly enjoyed the experience and atmosphere of the competition. This challenge helped them not only to develop and improve their engineering and programming skills, but also to work as a team. They would definitely encourage others to take part and put their own skills to the test next year.

Introduction to Sport *by Phil Webb, Director of Sport*

It has been a busy twelve months both on and off the field with continued development of our pitches, training facilities and partnership programme. We have also welcomed Neil Evans as specialist Hockey Coach and Steve Goldsmith as specialist Cricket Coach.

It has been good to see our 'Old Grammarians' excelling at sport after leaving WGS. George Russell has performed well on the Formula 1 Circuit, despite not having the best car and Ali Price has played rugby for Scotland again this year. These "Old Grammarians" are certainly inspirational for our current pupils. Across the sports we offer, there has been some impressive play with Sam Philips and James Kerry playing for the England Hockey U17 Performance Centre, based at Bury, whilst Matt Goodley is a member of the England Hockey U18 National Age Group Squad.

On the Rugby front, Jack Trundle played for London & South East U18 and was selected in the U18 Shadow Squad as a non-travelling reserve. Henry Hoyles and George Lemon represented the Lambs National XV and Frazer Brown played in the Sevens team, whilst Henry Mair continues to make strides with the Scottish Exiles. The Netball teams have continued to thrive and have produced good results across the board this year. The 1st VII won seven of their eight matches, setting the tone for the younger teams who have tried hard to follow their example.

In the Cricket programme, seven girls and boys have played County Cricket this season and Will and George Gowler have both represented Northants CCC U19 team.

There have once again been individual successes in a range of sports including swimming, ice hockey, archery, shooting, inline speed skating, horse riding, cycling, golf, trampolining, karate, sailing, go karting and athletics to mention but a few.

This year has seen us launch our Partnership Programme with local primary schools, who have joined WGS pupils for festivals and coaching clinics. We have developed our Partnerships with Northampton Saints, Northampton Steelbacks and Rookies Netball Club as well as with Cambs County Cricket Club. The aim is to give WGS pupils the best pathway to elite sport, as well as helping those in our local community. We have also launched our Easter and Summer sports camps for pupils at WGS and from our local community.

As part of the partnership with Cambs County Cricket, the School hosted their first 'All Stars Cricket' Programme, followed by 'A Chance to Shine' Roadshow. May saw the first of many cricket events involving pupils from WGS from Reception to Prep 3, and during the same month the School invited children from the local primary schools to take part in 'All Stars Cricket' and hosted a Cricket Festival for Year 5 and 6 pupils.

This is a great way to showcase how cricket can be integrated into the community and through Schools and this is the 3rd year of running 'All Stars Cricket'. We look forward to working with Wisbech Grammar School to offer this Programme to their own pupils and the wider community through our partnership. We want today's children to remain in cricket for the long-term – whether that's as players, volunteers, officials or spectators.

Nick Reeves
National Programme Officer for Cambs CCC



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Netball Highlights *by Sam Goodier, Head of Netball*

It was an outstanding season for all of the Wisbech Grammar School netball teams. From the 1st team to U11s, players trained hard and as a result, experienced a great deal of success. We played 121 matches and won 80 of these, scoring 1660 goals.

The 1st VII led by example and produced a season of excellent results. They won 7 out of 8 matches and played free flowing and highly skilled netball. Ellie Payne-English captained the side confidently and her time as a netballer at WGS culminated in one outstanding performance after another. The team scored 338 goals, demonstrating a high percentage shooting accuracy and dogged defence throughout the court. The highlights of the season were impressive wins over Ratcliffe (35-29), Kings Ely (19-16) and Wymondham College (52-36). The future of 1st team netball is very exciting and we look forward to next year.

Training for the County tournament began in September and we are looking to place higher in the competition. The Greyhounds won 5 of their 6 fixtures and made great improvements in their possession and attacking play. They produced pleasing victories against Ely, Stamford and Uppingham and thanks goes to Claudia Naylor for captaining the team.

There was competition to get into the U15A and B teams and both trained extremely hard to improve their individual and team skills. The A team notably beat Stamford, Wymondham and Kimbolton and the B team finished the season undefeated, beating Ratcliffe, Kings Ely and Wymondham along the way. We look forward to seeing these players move up to senior netball next year.

The U14 sides were both dedicated to training and new players took up the pressure positions as Shooters. The A team won 5 of their 7 matches, beating Kimbolton, Ely and Ratcliffe and scored an impressive 154 goals in total.

The U13A team played a massive 22 fixtures and won 13 of these. They made huge improvements as a team and this culminated in their victory at the St Hugh's tournament, where they claimed the silverware.



They have also played and beaten several U14 sides - a record of which they should be very proud. The B team continued to develop their skills and tactical knowledge and produced some good performances. The U12As also had a very busy term, playing 20 fixtures and coming Runners-up in the Inter-schools competition for Isle of Ely.

They played in the second stage of the competition in June, coming third in their group. They have worked with enthusiasm and commitment in training and all made good progress. For the B and C teams, it was the first competitive netball that many of the pupils had played and the improvements in skill level and confidence were very promising. They have enjoyed match play and even if the result did not go their way, they never gave up and always learnt from their experience.

The U11A team had an absolutely outstanding season. They played 19 matches (winning 16) and 3 tournaments, finally taking the trophy at the Laxton competition. They beat Witham Hall in the final (6-4), which the team were very proud of. They also played in the IAPS netball at Uppingham and put out some very good performances against tough sides. We very much look forward to them joining the Senior School as our U12 team next year. The U11B, C and D teams worked hard all season to improve their skills and understanding of the game and enjoyed match play. Every girl in year 5 and 6 played competitively and will be back in training in September.

Our aim is to push on even more next year and will be hoping to improve on this year's results. We have three players through to County netball - Jemima Mitchell (year 6), Olexandra Klibanecz (1st Form) and Alana Pritchard (4th Form). The Netball World Cup held in Liverpool this summer will definitely motivate all players to come back and put their skills into action next year.



Success at Netball Tournament

WGS U13A Girls Netball Team claims silverware in tournament, with netball certainly in the spotlight this season!

On Saturday 2 March, the U13A team travelled to St Hugh's for a tournament against eight other schools. The girls improved throughout the day and put on an excellent display of netball with the ball flowing perfectly from defence to attack. They went on to win the whole tournament, unbeaten after eight matches with seven wins and one draw. This included a 14-0 win against St Hugh's, 6-2 against Birchfield and a 10-1 victory over Hull.

Mrs Eggleton, the U13 coach said, "The team are a credit to the School and should be very proud of what they have achieved. Their netball skills and teamwork have improved throughout the term and winning this tournament is testament to their hard work and commitment".

The team comprised: Hetty Hoyles (Captain) Martha Hoyles, Maggie Haime, Amelia Goode, Charlotte Beck, Amelia Mitchell, Libby Baker, Annabel Gee and Karise Sherry.

The U11A team also celebrated success in the IAPS Netball Competition held at Uppingham School, winning two of their three pool matches, beating Kimbolton 6-5 and Stamford Junior 10-1. This meant they went through to the Cup section of the competition where the top eight teams played. The team got through to the quarter finals and played some outstanding netball. Mrs Goodier, the U11A coach said, "The team have trained really hard for this event and have proven themselves to be a formidable side. You can see this from the results they have put together this season, winning 11 of their 13 fixtures".



In the Senior School, the 1st VII Team have had their best season for many years. After a great start, they went on to beat Stamford U16A's, Kings Ely (19-16), Wymondham College (52-36) and Dartford Grammar School. The team have been ably captained by Ellie Payne-English, who herself has played an outstanding level of netball, along with the rest of the team.

The U15A, B, U14A and B teams have also clocked up some notable victories following hard work in training. The U15A team beat Stamford 27-3 and Wymondham 20-14, whilst the B team remain undefeated, beating Ratcliffe, Ely and Wymondham. The U14A team most recently beat Terrington and played some great netball in the Uppingham U15 tournament.



Athletics Highlights *by Sally Webb, Head of Athletics and Swimming*

On Saturday 11 May 2019 WGS took 18 athletes to compete in the Cambridgeshire AA Championships at the Cambridge University Track.

There were several outstanding performances on the day with WGS athletes winning podium places, as well as breaking School records and setting Personal Best times in all age groups. I would like to congratulate all the pupils who took part in the competition.

The following pupils gained medals in their events:

County Champions – Gold Medal

U13 Javelin – **Emma Markillie**, 19.56m
U15 High Jump – **Freddie Allen**, 1.30m

2nd Place – Silver Medal

U15 Shot – **Alfie Hoyles**, 10.55m
U15 300m – **Alfie Hoyles**, 42.3s
U17 200m – **Oliver Coles**, 24.71s

3rd Place – Bronze Medal

U17 400m – **Oliver Coles**, 55.2s

A number of School records were also broken:

1st Form Javelin – **Emma Markillie**, 19.56m
2nd Form 200m – **Freddie Allen**, 26.84s
2nd Form 300m – **Alfie Hoyles**, 42.3s
2nd Form 300m – **Holly Lawrence**, 49.12s
4th Form 400m – **Oliver Coles**, 55.2s



On Thursday 23 May, 50 Wisbech Grammar School pupils competed in the District Athletics Championships at LynnSport. There were some excellent performances both on the track and in the field, with some athletes achieving new Personal Bests.

New School records were achieved by Alec Marchbank in the 300m with a time of 48.85s, Emma Markillie in the Javelin with a distance of 20.54m, Charlie Tunmore in the 1500m with a time of 5m32, Alfie Hoyles Putting the Shot 11.70m, Oliver Coles jumping 11.09m in Triple Jump and Abby Watson in the 300m with a time of 45.99s as well as equalling the High Jump record of 1.45m.

All of the athletes' hard work on the track and field was rewarded as Wisbech Grammar School won the District Athletic Championships.

On Friday 7 June 18 athletes from the Prep School and Lower School, who had achieved the qualifying standards in their events, attended the East Area Athletics Championships at the International Athletics Stadium in Bedford. The athletes are all to be congratulated for their performances with several achieving Personal Bests in their events.





There were 2 new East Area Records:

Yusef Alsiwan – U13 Hurdles 13.1s
Alfie Hoyles – U14 Shot 10.26m

There were 2 new School Records:

Lewis Wing – U14 200m 26.7s
Freddie Allen U14 Long Jump 5.05m

On Saturday 8 June 18 athletes from 2nd, 3rd and 4th Form attended the County Schools Athletics Championships at Peterborough Athletics Arena, competing for the Isle of Ely Team. All athletes competed well on the day despite wet weather conditions. Podium positions were achieved by:

Alfie Hoyles – 3rd in the Junior boys' 300m
Ashton Webb – 1st in the Junior boys' Discus
Abby Watson – 2nd in the Inter girls' High Jump
Tia Bideau – 3rd in the Inter girls' Hurdles
Lucy Prior – 3rd in the Inter girls' Javelin
Abby Watson – 3rd in the Inter girls' 300m
Emily Thomas – 3rd in the Inter girls' Shot
Tia, Abby, Poppy & Millie – 2nd in the Inter girls' Relay
Ethan Jones – 3rd in the Inter boys' 100m
Lewis Shipley – 2nd in the Inter boys' 200m
Harvey King – 1st in the Inter boys' Shot
Felix, Ollie, Lewis & Ethan – 2nd in the Inter boys' Relay

Usually the first three pupils in each event are selected to represent Cambridgeshire at the Anglian Championships, but this event has had to be cancelled, which is disappointing for those who achieved podium places.

On Monday 1 July, three athletes attended the National Athletics Championships at the Alexandra Stadium in Birmingham. Freddie Allen competed in the U14 long jump event and came 3rd overall with a jump measuring 4.97m. Yusef Alsiwan competed in the U13 hurdles and was the overall fastest in the heats with a time of 12.1s. In the final hurdles race Yusef came 3rd overall with a time of 12.42s. Alfie Hoyles qualified to compete in two events in the U14 age group; the 300m race was tightly contested, however Alfie came 2nd in the Shot event with a throw of 10.23m.

It is an amazing achievement for three Wisbech Grammar School pupils to attend the Nationals and for all three to get a podium place!

I would like to congratulate all of the athletes who took part on the day.



Hockey Highlights Report *by Andrea Glover, Head of Hockey*

This season saw a new era of Boys' Hockey at WGS. The Boys' 1st Team started their campaign early with the Indoor Programme, winning the County Indoor Championships and achieving a great win over The Perse School. They also gained a well-deserved place at the Eastern Regional Finals which was a fantastic achievement.

WGS Boys' first outdoor fixture of the term was the 'County Cup' where they finished in 2nd place to a very well organised Saffron Walden team. The team have been committed and worked hard for each other - an important factor in their success this season. Following the County Championships the Boys played in the East Regional 2nd Round at Bedford, where they won all of their games convincingly against Haberdashers Askes, Coopers Coburn, Royal Hospital and Stamford to earn them a place in the Regional Finals. These were held at the UEA in what can only be described as challenging conditions. This was a tight affair with all teams competing well. It all came down to the final games and WGS finished in a very creditable 2nd place - a fantastic achievement for the Team who played some very mature and disciplined Hockey throughout the tournament.

The U15 Boys had a more challenging season with the results not going their way, but with hard work and commitment their results will improve. The U14 Boys had a much more promising season with impressive wins over Gresham's and Culford. The U13 Boys have been really enthusiastic and committed to training and enjoyed their season. The U11s have been working really hard to develop their core skills and their understanding of the game, as well as applying these skills within game play. This age group will certainly be the ones to watch next season, as they are a talented group who work hard and have shown great commitment - all of which will stand them in good stead for next year.



The Girls' First XI started their season with an emphasis on fitness and team sessions combined with individual skills work. This enabled many of the senior girls to improve their Individual and Team performance during the season. The girls also had the County Championships early in the season and played really well winning two out of three games and gaining a well-deserved 2nd place overall. This also earned them a place at the East Regional Finals, held at Bedford H.C. The Team had a fantastic Tournament winning all of their pool games convincingly to gain a place in the finals, where they came a close second. The girls also entered the County Indoor Finals and finished in a creditable 3rd place. The Senior Girls' season has been very positive and it is very much hoped that this will continue into next season.

U15 Girls showed great promise at the start of the season, playing some really impressive hockey and showing that commitment is the key to success. They had some very good wins over Oundle and King's Peterborough but the highlight was their last game against Culford. It was a really nail-biting game, but the girls stuck to their game plan and earned a well-deserved victory.

U14 Girls played in the County Tournament and finished in a creditable 2nd place which enabled them to progress to the East Finals. They showed glimpses of promise throughout the day and scored some well taken goals which inspired the girls to take this into their next games, winning against King's Peterborough and Culford.

WGS U13/12s this year have been a very keen group and were able to put out A, B C & D teams on a regular basis. This is a testament to all the hard work and commitment from the players and coaches pushing Hockey in the right direction and enabling young players to develop their individual skills whilst enjoying their sport.

Perseverance paid off for Girls' U11 Hockey Team in the Laxton Tournament leading to them winning the Silver Plate.

Emily Thomas, Ellie Padmore, Issy Pope, James Kerry and Sam Phillips have had a great County season at the Norfolk Hockey Academy Centre. James and Sam were invited to the England Hockey Performance Centre Trials at Bury and were both accepted on to the programme. Matt Goodley who is already established at the Midlands Performance Centre has also been attending various training camps and competitions.

“I am very proud of the girls’ performance as they produced their best Hockey when it really mattered; their perseverance, hard work and commitment to training has been highly commendable.”

*Andrea Glover
Head of Hockey*



Cricket Highlights

by Neil Taylor, Head of Cricket

There is no doubt that this has been a challenging season due to the extremely inclement weather - over sixty percent of fixtures have unfortunately been lost to this. The Boys' 1st XI have continued to work hard on all aspects of the game.

The team has been led well by Frazer Brown and all the bowlers have performed to a high level. What is particularly pleasing is that this is a very young 1st XI, and I would like to thank the captain Frazer Brown and Charles Kerman-Staley for their excellent contribution to first team cricket over the past three years, and wish them all the best for the future.

The Girls' 1st XI are also a very young squad and have really improved as the season has progressed. Only one player is leaving us this year - Eleanor Payne-English - who has been an integral part of the 1st XI for the last three years. Isabella Oldershaw-Ellis captained the side exceptionally well. The future looks bright with several younger cricketers demonstrating the ability to cope with 1st XI cricket.

The U15 Boys are an exciting team who have had two notable wins against Spalding Grammar and Culford School respectively. Six of the A team have also stepped up and represented the School 1st XI, and we expect many of these boys to represent the 1st XI next season.

The U13 Boys have had notable victories against Thomas Deacon Academy, Stephen Perse Foundation and Carre's Grammar School. They have competed well in all matches this season and have risen to all the challenges that have been put before them. Oliver Taylor has led the side well and I look forward to working with them closer in the future.



The U15 Girls have performed to a high level winning three matches against Stephen Perse Foundation, Leicester Grammar and noticeably a fifty run victory against a strong Stamford side. Seven of the girls have represented the Girls' 1st XI this term, which bodes well for the future.

U13 Girls have had victories over Oundle School and Stamford and have also flourished in the hard ball version of the game. The girls have batted and bowled well and worked very hard in the field. It is exciting to see many of the girls really enjoying their cricket this season.

It has been particularly satisfying to see William Gowler make his season debut for the Cambs Cricket 1st XI and to see six other pupils playing for their respective counties.

My thanks go to the School ground staff for all their hard work in keeping excellent pitches on which our young cricketers can perform and also to the excellent sports team at WGS for all their hard work and commitment to the cricketing programme at the School.

The School is now running 20 cricket teams with over 200 pupils playing in competitive matches. The following pupils were chosen to play to represent their County last season:

William Gowler (CAMBS U17)

Joshua Porter (CAMBS U17)

Hannah Smith (CAMBS Girls U15)

George Gowler (CAMBS U15)

Ross Gardner (CAMBS U14)

Adam Gardner (CAMBS U12)

Phoenix Sherry (NORFOLK U14)

Jemima Mitchell (CAMBS U11)

George Gowler was also awarded a place by Northamptonshire County Cricket on their 'Emerging Player Pathway Programme'.



All Star Cricket with Cambs County Cricket arrives at Wisbech Grammar School

As part of the partnership with Cambs County Cricket, Wisbech Grammar School hosted their first 'All Stars Cricket' Programme in May. This involves inviting local Primary Schools to attend the programme and taking part in cricket coaching offered by Cambs County Cricket.

All Stars Cricket is a national programme that is designed to inspire girls and boys aged five to eight to take up cricket by providing a great first opportunity to play the game - putting fun right at the heart of the experience. The School combined the event with a Cricket Festival for the Year 5 and 6 pupils.

Also in May the School held the 'Chance to Shine' Roadshow. Over 3.5 million boys and girls in more than 14,000 state schools are playing and learning through cricket today thanks to the Chance to Shine schools programme.

All Stars Cricket, Cambs CCC and Wisbech Grammar School aim to instil in children a lifelong love of the sport.

Nick Reeves, National Programme Officer for Cambs CCC stated, "This is a great way to showcase how cricket can be integrated into the community and through Schools and this is the 3rd year of running 'All Stars Cricket'. We look forward to working with Wisbech Grammar School to offer this programme to their own pupils and the wider community through our partnership. We want today's kids to remain in cricket for the long-term - whether that's as players, volunteers, officials or spectators".



Pupils selected to represent their County: Phoenix Sherry, Jemima Mitchell, Adam Gardner, Ross Gardner, George Gowler, William Gowler, Joshua Porter, Hannah Smith

6th Form pupil Laura Wright aims for gold at Archery GB Junior Masters

Laura Wright, 6th Form pupil and a member of Wisbech Grammar School Archery Club and Archery GB Young Ambassador, has been enjoying archery as part of the School's co-curricular programme and Games lessons.



Laura recently travelled to Archery GB Junior (under 21s) Masters hosted by Oxford Archers, an invitation-only competition for only the top 2% of junior archers in the country. There were ten other archers in her category, five of whom were Archery GB Academy Archers.

Sean Fox, County Coach and Head of Archery at Wisbech Grammar School said:

“This is a fantastic result for Laura in what is her highest stake competition to date. Although she narrowly missed out on a medal, she gained invaluable experience of the pressure of head to head rounds which are new to her. She never ceases to amaze me with her dedication to Archery, her resilience and the way she continues to improve - all this while also maintaining a sense of humour and dedication to her A Level studies.”

Wisbech Grammar School pupils selected to be Archery GB Young Ambassadors

Laura Wright (6th Form) and Thomas Fox (3rd Form) were both selected to be Archery GB Young Ambassadors.

Both Laura and Thomas were invited to Archery GB, Lilleshall National Sports and Conferencing Centre in Shropshire, for an induction course and were provided with expert coaching in goal setting, and training from experts in other fields of sport. They had the opportunity to meet Olympian Archers, as well as those training for the Tokyo Olympics.

The Young Ambassador programme has been designed to develop the skills, knowledge and experience required to support long-term archery career aspirations and both Laura and Thomas will receive a programme of training, branded clothing and financial support to complete the Youth Sport Award and fund any other specific training requirements.





Rugby Highlights - XVs and VIIs (Boys and Girls)

The Boys' 1st XV had an outstanding season, recording eight wins out of ten, remaining unbeaten at home in a winning streak unbroken since September 2017.



It has been a fantastic year for the Rugby Club at Wisbech Grammar School, both on a team and individual level. We have seen success for XVs and VIIs teams across the age-groups, including a number of bits of silverware, and we have had a high number of individuals go on to gain further, much deserved, recognition with representative and professional club selections.

I am hugely grateful to those who have supported the success of the programme, from the coaching staff who prepare the teams so well, through to the admin and support staff who ensure we have pitches to play on, post match teas and great facilities. I would also like to add my gratitude to the Senior players who have left this year; they have left the shirt in a better place for their contributions to WGS Rugby.

Alex Laybourne
Deputy Head of 6th Form and Head of Rugby

They scored over 400 points and 65 tries, toppling the likes of Worksop College, Culford, Hereford Cathedral School and Ratcliffe College. Not only were they nominated as one of the 'Schools Top 5 Teams of the Week' after their win over Worksop but also their try against Hereford Cathedral was highlighted by DHL as one of their 'amateur Rugby moments of the month' in October. The Rugby they played was simply outstanding. Pushing the 1st XV players to improve week on week have been the Greyhounds, a side that has played with energy and enthusiasm, making the 1st XV work hard to keep starting shirts. Eight of the Greyhounds at the start of the season made appearances in the 1st XV by the end of the season and their contribution to the success of Senior Rugby has been immense.

The U15s also recorded some impressive wins over Spalding, Hereford Cathedral and Worksop. The U14s made great strides throughout the season; under Mr Garfoot's guidance they dramatically improved their skill set and game understanding. The U13s continue to impress, backing up their performances last year with another eight wins out of 13 games this season including wins over Oundle and Woodbridge which were the highlights for them. They have been pushed hard by an U13B side who won three of their four games, including a last minute win over Gresham's in their last game of the season. The U12s took the transfer to Senior School Rugby in their stride, improving game on game and finishing the season with a run of wins over opponents including Beeston Hall and Robert Clack.

The success of the XVs season fed into the VIIs season, especially for the 1st VII sides. The Boys won two back-to-back Cup Trophies, beating Norwich School 17-14 in the first, where they retained the WGS 7s title, and then winning the Midlands Floodlit 7s 33-5 (Oundle), 19-5 (Uppingham), 29-0 (Bedford) and 45-5 (St Christopher's) in a round robin. The 1st Team Rugby remained unbeaten at home in the 2018/19 season – a first in the School's history. Five out of five wins in the XVs season and nine out of nine in the VIIs season makes for some excellent reading! In their other tournaments they made the cup semi-finals at Reigate, another first for the School, and at Trent College 10s. They were then knocked out to eventual winners Bromsgrove in the Rosslyn Park National Schools' 7s in the season finale.

The Girls' 1st VII won their first ever silverware - the Plate at Reigate VII - where they beat RHS Ipswich 10-0 in the final. They also had a good run in the Rosslyn Park National Schools' 7s, losing in the Cup quarterfinals.

“I was very surprised and happy at being selected to play for Saracens as I had only just taken up the game. I train with the squad once a month and I hope to be selected to start playing matches in the near future.”

Lucy Lim



On an individual note, it has been another great year for the programme. 1st XV Captain Jack Trundley represented the London & SE Division in the U18s National Divisional Festival as well as Eastern Counties U18s and the Lambs U18s National side. Jack was also selected for the England Counties U18s 'shadow squad' as a non-travelling reserve for the tour to Ireland.

Leavers Henry Hoyles and George Lemon were selected for the Lambs U18s and toured South Africa at Easter, whilst George, Jack and Head Boy, Frazer Brown, have all represented the Lambs on the 7s circuit. Next season's 1st XV captain Henry Mair continued to represent Scottish Exiles, with 1st XV winger Jack Robb involved with Northampton Saints DPP.

Lower down the school in the U15 age-group Oliver Coles, Felix Young and Ethan Jones have all been part of the Northampton Saints Developing Player Programme (DPP), and Ethan has been selected for the U16s Gold Group for 2019/20 – the top level of the DPP programme. In the U14s Ashton Webb, Bradley Rideout and Oliver Murdoch are also with the Northampton Saints DPP, as are U13s Lewis Wing, Alfie Hoyles, Harley Burrows and Joe Miller.

On the Girls' side, Lucy Lim has been selected to play in the Saracens England U18s Centre of Excellence – a massive achievement for Lucy who was brand new to rugby just two seasons ago.

Congratulations to all of the pupils and staff; their time, hard work and energy is really paying off, as demonstrated by improvements both in performance and results. An extra thank you must go to the leavers who have given their all for WGS rugby throughout their tenure at the School: Jack Trundley (Captain), Jack Clingo (VC), George Lemon (VC), Henry Hoyles, Morgan Smith, Harry Dyne, Louis Jones, Frazer Brown and Tom Collie.



Introduction to Food & Nutrition

It has been another busy year in the Food and Nutrition department, with trips, on the job training and famous chefs.

The flair and passion of Alison Sloan, Head of the Food and Nutrition Department, is a constant inspiration to our pupils who enjoy many opportunities to experience at first hand what a career in the food industry has to offer. Pupils have also had direct involvement in the banquets organised by Mrs Sloan - including marvellous opportunities to work alongside Cyrus Todiwala and Brian Turner here at WGS!

A taste of Italy at WGS with outdoor pizza making

In keeping with tradition, Alison Sloan organised another fabulous pizza making day on the terrace of Skelton Hall.

The outdoor pizza oven was kept busy all day while every class in Prep School (Reception to Prep 6) enjoyed making pizza from scratch in the lovely sunshine. Pupils got to roll out the dough, select their toppings and the best part of all - sitting in the sun, eating their freshly baked pizzas. The outdoor pizza oven has certainly proved to be a great hit at WGS.



Food & Nutrition

“There is something magical about cooking outdoors in the fresh air on a wood fire, it is so fast, the pizza cooks in minutes and the pupils then get to eat what they have made almost instantly.”

*Alison Sloan
Head of Food & Nutrition*

4th Form pupils get a taste for bread on their trip to London

The Bread Ahead Bakery in Borough Market was the venue for a workshop in sourdough bread making for the 4th Form IGCSE Food and Nutrition pupils. Pupils learnt about kneading techniques, how to feed sourdough and the art of forming a perfect loaf.

The group was able to make a starter culture to take home with instructions on how to feed and grow their personally named sourdough - the favourite name being Bob! After kneading and shaping, the dough was left to rise. Pupils were able to taste a finished loaf accompanied by some delicious butter and jam. After watching the bakers form croissants there was just time to enjoy an Eton Mess doughnut before catching the tube to Notting Hill. Here the group was honoured to have been invited by Emily Roux to visit her restaurant, Caractère.

Emily then took part in a 'Q and A' session, talking about what is involved in setting up a restaurant, her training and how the restaurant sources suppliers.

Next the group enjoyed a tour of all things food in Notting Hill, including a look at the fantastic food displays in Ottolenghi, Daylesford Farm Shop and the Hummingbird Bakery.

With some time to spare (and needing to return to Bread Ahead to collect someone's jewellery!) it was the ideal opportunity for a trip back to Borough Market. The group spent a wonderful hour eating their way around all the food stalls under the famous railway arches. After a walk along the South Bank, the pupils caught the tube then a train back to Peterborough, still clutching the sourdough starter ready for feeding and baking in a few days' time.



“Here the group was honoured to have been invited by Emily Roux to visit her restaurant, Caractère. After an introduction to the restaurant, pupils were taken to the kitchen which is much smaller than anyone expected - however a group photo at the pass was just possible.”



Food & Nutrition



Salad Days for Prep 5 Pupils!

Prep 5 pupils were challenged to a salad invention competition. Working in groups they discussed types of salad, the balance of nutrients and the variety of flavours that could be used. Next they invented their own, with consideration for colours, shapes and textures.

The following week they made their salad to their own recipe. Mrs Sloan and Mrs Johnston the Catering Manager judged the array of salads which included one with noodles and prawns, a duck salad with hoisin sauce, bacon salad with peppers, tomato and basil and a chicken and chilli salad with pasta, cucumber and carrot.

The winning teams were chosen and their salads served up in the Skelton Hall for lunch for the whole School to enjoy. In first place was the salad by Joe Pennells, Kai Peggs and Zeeve Kruh-Atar, composed of mozzarella, pepperami, basil, chicken, spring onion, red pepper and lettuce, with pitta pieces around the edge. Second was the creation of Oliver Sandhu, Oliver Beck and Jacob Philpott, consisting of lettuce, cucumber, sweetcorn, tomatoes, roast chicken, red pepper, spiralised carrot and a lemon juice dressing.





Annual Ghoul School is spooky and terrifying!

Every Halloween, ghosts, ghouls and ghastly monsters awaken to walk the corridors and stairs of the older parts of the School. Each year the costumes and makeup get better and better.

The screaming, the sobbing and the howling penetrate every corner of the building. Only the very bravest enter the basement where the eighteenth century butler waits to greet you, standing soberly in the darkest corner.

This year there was no shortage of brave pupils and their parents lining up to experience the night of horror, taking tours, by torchlight, guided by the talented storytellers from the 5th and 6th Form. The pupils who became the ghouls for the evening revelled in the dressing up, looking particularly menacing in the stage makeup expertly applied by the makeup team.

Blood Red Punch, Hot Dogs and Pumpkin Soup were served by the Food and Nutrition pupils to help sustain and revive those hardy souls before and after their ordeal!



The screaming, the sobbing and the howling penetrate every corner of the building; only the very bravest enter the basement where the eighteenth century butler waits to greet you, standing soberly in the darkest corner.



Pupils and teachers at Wisbech Grammar School enjoy a 'jazzed-up' breakfast!

The annual 'Jazz Up Your Breakfast' event was held on Friday 3 May. Food and Nutrition pupils helped to prepare a variety of international breakfast dishes such as Huevos Rancheros, Blueberry Muffins, Mushroom Frittata and Honey and Banana Loaves.



Pancakes were a really popular option too, made by Amy Overall and served with a selection of toppings including bacon, sausages, mixed beans, maple syrup and bananas. The So What? Jazz Band, made up of Catherine Missin, Gabrielle Ayling, Charley Kirby, Grace Winder and Beatrice Winder - and led by Mr Garford - performed jazz classics such as 'Spooky', 'At Last' and 'All Blues', featuring Charley and Catherine on vocals. The hall was full of diners who enjoyed the lively start to the day, tucking into their delicious breakfast whilst tapping their toes to the live music. Four extra-keen pupils, Callum Duncan, Patrick Calow, Phoenix Plowman-Blake and Amy Smith, were in bright and early for the final preparations and with the help of the Catering Team enjoyed serving hot food to the hungry audience.

Yule love Christmas at Wisbech Grammar School!

The last few days of term are always very busy in Food and Nutrition. The festive cooking begins with a Christmas Masterchef competition.

In First Form, Jack Madge-Smith won the Masterchef title with his homemade Yule log; Megan Culley also beat off the competition in 4th Form with a homemade roulade, decorated and transformed into a chocolate log.

Meanwhile 26 parents and pupils came into School at the weekend to make their Christmas cakes and mincemeat. After a delicious homemade lunch everyone had the opportunity to make a beautiful door wreath or table centrepiece, under the tuition of two former pupils - Lianne Goates and Tarn Chamberlain James.

Lianne and Tarn returned to School on Monday to make cakes for the homeless and one extra cake was made and sold to the Deputy Head with the donation going to pay for a homeless person's Christmas Dinner via the charity Crisis.

On the last day of term, 1st Form pupils made sausage rolls and took them around the School for pupils and staff to enjoy. For homework everyone was set the challenge to try a new food over the Christmas holiday!



Another fantastic food event at Wisbech Grammar School with Celebrity Chef Cyrus Todiwala OBE, DL



One hundred guests had booked tickets to take part in a five course Indian Banquet to be cooked and served in the Skelton Hall. One group of pupils worked in the kitchen with Cyrus while another helped to set up the room, serve the food and look after the guests throughout the evening.

In a series of evenings celebrating food, Alison Sloan, Head of Food and Nutrition at the School, welcomed Cyrus Todiwala for a second time.

Cyrus Todiwala is chef proprietor of Café Spice Namasté in Whitechapel and has a passion for encouraging young people to become interested in food and cooking.

Cyrus brought along two of his chefs from London and spent the afternoon and evening working with our pupils aged twelve to eighteen. The evening began with sparkling wine served with canapés of chicken strips marinated in coriander and cumin extract and spiced crushed potato poories seasoned with tamarind sauce, fresh green chutney and spiced yogurt.

After an introduction by Cyrus, guests were treated to pan grilled sea-bass fillet finished in classic Goan pickling masala, flavoured with crushed shrimps - followed by a beetroot and coconut soup with coriander cream.

The main course consisted of lamb simmered in a tomato sauce, flavoured with Halman apricots and baby potatoes sprinkled with spice dust.

The dessert was walnut and banana bread and butter pudding, cinnamon and clove stewed apple and maraschino cherry cream.

Pupils worked in the kitchen alongside Cyrus and his chefs, playing a key role throughout the evening. They learned how to make the sauces, spice mixes and poories and plated up 100 dishes on the pass for each course, receiving coaching in the art of presentation.

Meanwhile the front of house team of pupils served the dishes, interacted with the guests and managed each course with efficiency. Between courses Cyrus talked with guests, had photographs taken and signed books.



“It was a fabulous evening with all the pupils asking Cyrus when he could come back again. We are all looking forward to the next time!”



Georgina Avery



“This impressive and wide-ranging display will undoubtedly inspire future pupils at Wisbech Grammar School in their creative endeavours.”

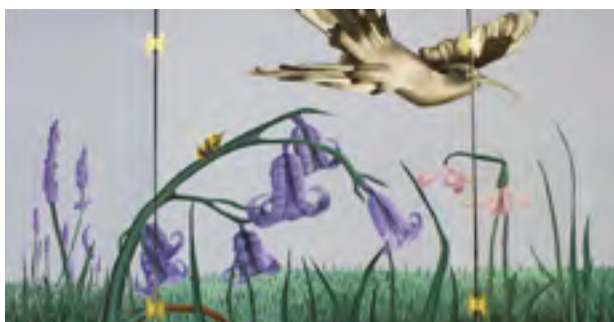
Sue Cooper
Head of Art and Textiles



Rosie Muspratt



Matilda Kerman - Staley



Felicity Wright

GCSE Art and Textile Exhibition

Art and Textiles pupils demonstrated their creativity and ambition to parents, guests and fellow pupils at the annual end of year exhibition in the Skelton Hall.

The display encompassed elements from a variety of disciplines, including Fine Art, Photographic Collage, Graphics, Fashion, Surface Pattern, Stitch and Mixed Media. Artworks ranged from the beautifully painted, architecturally inspired images by Ruth Logan to landscape influenced responses by Sophie Sayer and an ambitious triptych by Felicity Wright. Lara Grace Mount displayed an innovative approach to portraiture in both her coursework and exam, creatively painting on mirrors and acetate.

Georgina Avery gained inspiration from her cultural heritage to give a highly creative and sensitive exam response to the bombing in Bangkok. Fashion designs by Bea Winder and Rosie Muspratt, each using their own printed fabric, were again highly original and imaginative. The theme of lettering inspired Matilda Kerman-Staley to combine print and stitch in her inventive display of screen printing and collage.

The intricate pen and ink drawing by Christopher Lemagnen and the well observed trio of painted panels by Ellie Comer were striking and immediately caught the eye.

Aimee Newman and Holly Plumb both produced highly individual work showing form with a bold use of surface texture and fragmentation. The impact of Ellie Stuffs' and Cosan Ahmet's work was undeniable, with its sheer scale and bold, lively use of colour.

Domenyk Littlewood used the influence from an earlier Fitzwilliam Museum visit to develop a range of skillfully printed panels based on weaponry. Evelyn Steele's beautifully coordinating fabrics, inspired by water, were really eye-catching.

“I am very proud of all the hard work pupils have given to their work across all Art endorsements and components. It is a fitting way to end their GCSE course.

It was great to hear so much positive feedback from parents, guests and friends; they should all feel very proud.”

Sue Cooper

A Level Art and Textiles Exhibition Delights Visitors

We were delighted to welcome visitors to view the Upper 6th A Level Art and Textiles Exhibition. As in previous years, everyone was extremely impressed and complimentary about the high standard of pupils' work.

Parents and friends, including past students and younger visitors, were inspired by the pieces on show and were able to get a sense of what might lie ahead if they themselves opt for Art and Textiles at A Level.

The work was highly personal and impressive, showcasing the many talented students we have at Wisbech Grammar School. In Textiles, Charlotte Brett and Amy Everall displayed innovative fashion outcomes which contrasted well with the very bold and lively print designs by Nancy Davis, Ellie Fradley and Millie Oram.

Fine Art also demonstrated a high degree of originality with Nancy Davis exploring the concept of 'Fake' and Millie Oram's colourful sprayed and painted panels referencing cultural influences.

Over the past two years, students have been working exceptionally hard following a wide range of individual approaches to support their personal portfolio.



Amy Everall



Each journey explores critical and cultural links with a chosen theme as well as an investigation into an idea or concept and exploration of media. The work displayed in the exhibition represented both the two year course and exam project and really highlighted and celebrated the incredible talent of our pupils.

The event was a fantastic success and we would like to congratulate the pupils once again for their hard work and achievement.



Senior School pupils take an unforgettable trip to Costa Rica

23 pupils and 3 excited staff took an early flight from Gatwick, finally landing in Costa Rica to be greeted enthusiastically by Carlos their tour guide and Alfredo the bus driver. The nine days of expedition which followed were packed with amazing trips and experiences.

Just some of the daily highlights:

Day 2

A visit to the oldest coffee plant in Costa Rica, with a demonstration of the process from picking the beans to drying and roasting them – and hands-on experience of turning the beans in the sunshine to dry.

An active volcano which last erupted in 2009 - deemed safe to visit just three months prior!

A visit to a sanctuary with an amazing array of animals and birds – from scarlet macaws and toucans to monkeys, sloths, brilliant blue butterflies, hummingbirds, wild cats including ocelots, jaguars and many snakes and poisonous frogs!



Day 3

Carlos used a palm leaf to make a grasshopper; “Hoppy” was born and joined the expedition!

A tour of a chocolate plantation to learn about the history of chocolate, to see how it is made, and lots of ‘optional’ chocolate tasting!

Day 4

La Selva Biological Station – research centre working to understand and protect the huge variety of local wildlife. Los Campesinos restaurant – learning traditional recipes, helping prepare some of the ingredients and tasting everything!

Day 5

Reforestation project to learn about their efforts and intentions, planting saplings and learning to break the top off coconuts, drink the milk, and eat the insides! Off to the third hotel to cool off in the pool.

Day 6

Arenal Hanging Bridges - 15 bridges suspended in the trees, with incredible views; snakes in the branches and a tarantula nest housing a sleeping spider!

Baldi Hot springs - a series of increasingly hot pools, heated by the volcano and one freezing cold pool for rehydration! With swim-up bars and water slides everyone was excited to dive right in!



Trips & Events

Day 7

The Arenal Zip Line Tour and Finca Burio Eco farm where the owner excitedly talked about the farm and issued challenges along the way including eating a very sour fruit without pulling a face!

Day 8

Malekus Community of Palenque Tonjibe. The Malekus talked of how they use the forest resources, demonstrating herbs for medicinal treatments and showing the crops they grow – some of which they cooked up into an amazingly delicious lunch.

Decorating dried fruit shells to create a memento to take home – painting alongside some of the best painters from the Malekus, in the style of local artworks painted on shells or wooden blocks.

Gathering in a hut to see some customs of the community, the tools they use and then being allowed to try shooting a bow and arrow.

The opportunity to observe one of the ancient rituals used to bless crops, hunting and health which was incredible to watch and listen to. It was very sad to learn later that unfortunately communities like this were becoming smaller and the resources needed for the Maleku tribes to survive are at risk of disappearing.

The Iguanas Tree Stop where the trees around a bridge were full of Iguanas! Some were huge and were basking in the sun right in the open!

Day 9

There was nervous excitement for the Tarcoles River trip, in search of crocodiles – a particularly large example of which swam right alongside the boat!

Day 10

Manuel Antonio National Park – a wildlife trail here led to a large beach, for relaxation and lunch. The monkeys however had other ideas, trying to steal food from bags by undoing the zips!

The hottest and clearest day of the expedition – and an unfortunate lack of sun cream for many, who felt the burn back at the hotel!

Day 11

Back to the airport to head home after presenting Carlos and Alfredo with some parting gifts. On the plane one of the pilots came down to say “Hello” before takeoff.



This expedition was such an incredible experience and I would encourage everyone to do something like this. I learnt so much and realised just how many species there can be in one relatively small area. It highlights the reasons why reforestation is so important and why we need to preserve habitats and prevent their destruction. I loved every minute of it! I would recommend to anyone and everyone to go somewhere you've never been and thought may never go, to go out of your comfort zone and to do something you'll want to tell everyone all about! On behalf of everyone on the trip I want to thank Dr Miller for organising such an amazing expedition and Mr Laybourne and Mrs Ogston for making it all possible. We'll never forget this incredible experience.

Amy Everall
6th Form pupil



York Residential – Prep 6 Trinity 2019

After a rather long and eventful journey “up North”, Prep 6 excitedly disembarked from the bus for their first stop - the National Railway Museum.

Immediately, the sounds of the railway filled the hall and the group had the opportunity to see some of the most famous trains in the World, including The Mallard, The Rocket and a Japanese Bullet Train. Pupils were involved in a number of workshops that highlighted the need for speed and how different forces are at work when trains move. No trip to the Railway Museum would be complete without a quick ride on a train – for many of the pupils a real highlight of the visit!

Back at the hotel the children quickly made themselves at home. There was certainly no “slumming it” on this trip - it was all lovely en-suite rooms and delicious home-cooked meals!



Day two was action packed with a number of visits to some of York’s most famous tourist attractions. The group took in the magnificent sights of York Minster, experienced the gruesome nature of Tudor medicine at The Barley Hall – leeches and all, and they certainly had their smelling senses tested to the limit with a trip to the Jorvik Viking Centre. They couldn’t believe how realistic all the waxworks were as they learned about York in years gone by. Laden down with purchases from the Shambles (for many, namely their body weight in fudge!), Prep 6 returned to the hotel for a quiz and evening meal.

The final day was spent at the Ripon Workhouse. Prep 6 pupils experienced what it would have been like to be sent to the workhouse in Victorian times. They spent time in the school room, doing their chores in the yard and planting seeds for the workhouse garden. The boys even had the chance to act as crow-scarers around the vegetable patch which they enjoyed greatly. Having beaten a few carpets and practised their skills at rag-rugging, it was time to come home.



It was a great experience; I was never scared of being away from home because I knew I had my friends and teachers to support me. I had a really fun time in York – I wish we could do it all again.

Oscar Smithee

Everyone agreed that they had learned a lot whilst having a fun time experiencing the past.

Jemima Mitchell, writing about the Minster, explained – “When we went on the tour I found it interesting looking around the building. I didn’t actually know churches had crypts and the stained-glass windows were beautiful with all their bold colours”.



Adventurous start to Senior School for our new 1st Formers

1st Form pupils enjoyed their first trip as a cohort to Manor Adventure, where the aim is to get to know each other as well as the team who supports our pupils during their first year of Senior School.

For many children this is their first trip away from home and for others it is less daunting however the goal for everyone is to have a great time together, build friendships for life and challenge themselves and each other to try new things.

The activities are designed to motivate and engage pupils within a team environment as well as to achieve personal goals. The high ropes are always a little intimidating at first, but after taking part in this challenge pupils always feel a sense of accomplishment. Even the teachers take part and try to lead by example. Other activities enjoyed by pupils and teachers alike included rock climbing, sailing, building rafts and mastering the baby shark song with actions!



“ Everyone had a great time and we look forward to next September, seeing the photographs and hearing the stories from the new cohort. ”



All of the pupils left Manor Adventure with a sense of pride in their achievements:

- Cameron, for his ability to steer the sailboats.
- Zak for making his raft sink - which was probably not what his team-mates were hoping for!
- For Frankie and Anna (who is scared of heights) it was the high ropes.
- Jet was really proud of himself for staying two nights away from home.
- Lexie loved building the rafts and staying away from home too.

2nd Form Language Pupils Enjoy a Taste of France

Forty 2nd Form pupils toured northern France and Paris in the first week of the Easter break to immerse themselves in French life and culture.



Pupils were in awe of the fabulous Royal Palace of Versailles, 20km south west of Paris; a fine example of the style of the Bourbon monarchs before the Revolution. They also found the Hall of Mirrors particularly impressive.

They spent one day sampling traditional French cuisine, with a visit to a snail farm and then an artisan boulangerie where they made croissants. The day began with the 'One Euro Challenge' - pupils were asked to find items with the 'wow factor' for no more than €1. Purchases included radishes, sunglasses and miniature Eiffel Towers!

Historical landmark visits included the V2 launch site of La Coupole and the medieval battlefield of Agincourt.

Pupils also experienced a macabre walk through The Catacombs of Paris - an underground ossuary holding more than six million human skeletons in a small part of a tunnel network built to consolidate Paris' ancient stone mines.

Panoramic views of Paris were taken in from the top of Tour Montparnasse - only a fraction lower than its nearby neighbour the Tour Eiffel - before admiring the Louvre's glass pyramid and world class art at the Musée d'Orsay. Pupils viewed works by Monet and Caillebotte as well as posing for a photo in front of the building's iconic clock face.



The trip culminated with fun at Disneyland Paris where pupils enjoyed a day of joie de vivre and camaraderie!

Trips & Events



Prep 4 Pupils Buzzing after trip to Hinchbrook Country Park

As part of their Geography and English work, Prep 4 pupils attended a 'Meet the Bees' workshop held by Huntingdonshire Beekeepers' Association (HBKA) at Hinchbrook Country Park. Roger Wood, along with his two colleagues, talked to the children about how a beehive works, the different species of bees, how honey is made and the importance to us of bees in the natural world.

The beehives were opened up for the children to observe from the viewing gallery. After lunch the children took part in a House den building competition, with Holmes being declared the overall winners!

Linking in with pupils' work on recycling and the global issues surrounding the disposal of waste, Prep 4 visited Amey Waste Management Park in Waterbeach. Jon Crisp, Education Officer at Amey, led the class in many activities from practical sorting and quizzes to watching film clips to understand what can be recycled and what cannot.

The children had a tour of the site, focussing on the separation of materials and the making of compost. In the afternoon the children made a plant pot from newspaper to take home.



Prep 5 Pupils' Residential Trip to Ufton Court

WGS Prep 5 Pupils returned from a busy, but exciting, residential trip to Ufton Court - a beautiful Elizabethan manor in the Berkshire countryside.

Following in the footsteps of Sir Francis Drake from 1577 to 1580, the 'Tudor Explorers' joined the crew circumnavigating the world. They set sail in their galleons on a journey of discovery returning with their ships laden with new-found treasures and stolen cargo.

Communication, cooperation and encouragement skills all came in to play and pupils were rewarded for their hard work with a wonderful Tudor Banquet feast in the Great Barn.

The children were commended for their excellent behaviour and patience during the longer than expected coach trip back to Wisbech after such a fantastic learning experience.

Pupils enjoyed orienteering around 16 acres of the beautiful grounds and working as a team to gather natural and man-made materials to build a shelter.

Pupils Visit Whitehall and Parliament

Fifteen 5th and 6th Form pupils visited Parliament and Whitehall as part of their A Level courses and the School's enrichment programme, on 1 March.

Highlights included a tour of the Palace of Westminster, the Houses of Lords and Commons, Central Lobby and voting lobbies – as well as the medieval Westminster Hall, where Henry VIII played real tennis and past monarchs have lain in state.

The corridors of power were viewed across Whitehall, as pupils went to the gates of Downing Street and visited the Supreme Court's Number One and Two courtrooms where among many others, the Brexit Case brought by Gina Miller, was decided.

Pupils also viewed some of the public artwork and statues of 'great men and women' - discussing how Churchill, Gandhi and Millicent Fawcett had been portrayed and why Nelson had been put on the biggest pedestal, in Trafalgar Square! A Level pupils had prepared short talks about each of them and linked the figures to part of their course on the British Empire.

Although Parliament was clad in scaffolding, the impressive Victorian architecture was still plain to see, and pupils enjoyed the atmosphere of London as well as the formal teaching throughout the day.



9th Annual London Theatre Trip is Wicked!

44 pupils from 1st to 6th Form travelled to London for the annual theatre trip, now in its ninth year.

This was a fantastic opportunity for pupils to experience what London has to offer. The itinerary began in Borough Market where pupils selected food from the many colourful stalls offering everything from giant cookies to a hog roast.

After a wander along the River Thames, taking in the sights of the Golden Hinde and the Globe Theatre, pupils headed for the Shard, Western Europe's tallest building measuring 310 metres in height, to take the lift up to the viewing platform where the whole of London stretched out before them. The views, everyone agreed, were breathtaking.

After a meal at Pizza Express they made their way to the first of two shows - 'Wicked' - at the Victoria Apollo Theatre. Having great seats in the stalls, the group was enthralled by the music, lights, scenery, dancing and the moving story of the Wicked Witch of the West and her rival Glinda.

Following a hearty breakfast at the hotel, next stop was the South Bank and a backstage tour of the National Theatre, including the chance to try out various props and see how the magic on stage is achieved by huge teams of builders, carpenters, designers and technicians.

The trip culminated with 'School of Rock' in the West End. The amazing energy and skill of the cast blew everyone away. The children on stage, who form the School of Rock Band, played their own instruments and were so impressive. Everyone left the theatre with a smile on their face!



Prep 3 Pupils 'Rock' at their Science topic

Pupils were welcomed to Stibbington Centre as part of their 'Rocks and Soil' Science topic, where learning outside the classroom started with a unique and inspirational introductory talk demonstrating the importance of rocks in everyday life.



We are pretty sure there may even be a few Geologists in the making!

Pupils went by bus to a nearby disused limestone quarry, to discover how rock was formed under the sea, and hunted for fossil evidence of creatures from the Jurassic era.

After lunch, pupils carried out rock investigations, sorting samples according to features such as appearance and texture, using microscopes to aid observation and classification into igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks. They tested rock samples for permeability and hardness to identify suitable rocks for different purposes and simulated soil forming processes, going on to investigate the Jurassic rock garden and geological time tunnel. The pupils had a fun day which ended with the 'CEES (Cambridgeshire Environmental Education Service) Rock Song'.

Pupils from Prep School enjoyed World Book Day by dressing up as their favourite characters


World Book Day is the world's biggest campaign to provide every child and young person in the country with a book of their own.

A registered charity, World Book Day is generously supported by sponsor 'National Book Tokens' and brings together the UK and Ireland's bookselling and publishing industries in an extraordinary collaboration.

World Book Day will return in 2020 after one of its biggest years to date with a range of new initiatives that will help to get even more books directly into the hands of children and young people, especially those who would not otherwise have access to them.

Catering for all age groups, from toddler to teen, the expanded list of 13 new £1 titles for World Book Day 2020 has been created to appeal to the widest possible range of children and young people, tastes and abilities.





“Staff and pupils enjoy taking part in World Book Day and it is important that each child discovers their passion for reading - and of course pupils love dressing up as their favourite characters.”

*Keryn Neaves
Senior Deputy Head Prep School*

A Level History Pupils Visit Auschwitz

As history A Level students, we were fortunate to be offered the chance to take part in the Holocaust Educational Trust's 'Lessons from Auschwitz' programme, attending two seminars in London and travelling to Poland to visit the infamous concentration camps of Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau.

On Sunday 3 March, we travelled to London to meet the other students, also from East Anglia, and got to know our group and group leader. We spent this time learning what life was like for Jewish families in Germany and Europe before World War II, and the laws that were put in place over the years that meant their way of life was slowly constricted. Not only did this help us to understand how and why the Holocaust happened, but also individuals and their personal stories, as it can be hard to take it all in when only presented with such huge numbers. This prepared us for the talk by Holocaust survivor, Eva Clarke, who gave us a shocking insight into life in the camps through the story of her family - in particular her parents, who were both sent to Auschwitz - as well as the difficult adjustment her mother faced upon liberation.

The following Thursday we had a 2am start to travel to Stansted airport together, where we boarded the plane to Krakow, Poland. Here we took a bus to a small town outside of Auschwitz to remind ourselves what life was like for those imprisoned, before the war. We then carried on to Auschwitz for a tour. We were shocked by the size of the camp and the thousands of children's shoes, suitcases and other possessions.



We moved on to Auschwitz-Birkenau, which was even bigger. It was particularly poignant for us when a group of young Jewish men began to sing a traditional Hebrew song as part of their act of remembrance. To end the day we had our own remembrance service, where a Rabbi who had accompanied us read prayers and students read poems written by victims. We landed back home around 10.30 the same evening - still in awe, and appalled by all of the horrors we had seen that day.

The following Tuesday we returned to London for the last stage of the programme. In our groups we discussed everything we had seen and experienced on our trip to Poland and what we found particularly moving. We talked about life after the Holocaust and the effect on us even today. We were scared to think there are still people in the world who wish to incite hatred on certain groups but we firmly believe that as long we continue to learn, and educate young people about the Holocaust, we can stop such atrocities from happening again. We have met some really great people and learnt so much from our experiences - about the Holocaust but also about tolerance and kindness, the importance of speaking out against evil and the bravery of some human beings.

We were very pleased we had each other - as mutual support was vital during our trip to Poland where we saw some horrific things - but we know for us it was nothing compared to what the victims of the Holocaust were forced to endure.

*Isabella Oldershaw-Ellis and Eleanor Sloan
6th Form pupils*



Trips & Events

George Russell, former WGS pupil, inspires the next generation to follow their dreams!

George Russell has gone on to achieve his lifelong dream of driving for Formula 1. Staff and pupils at the School are so proud of his achievements and he has inspired many to keep following their own dreams.



Right from the beginning it was very clear that George was determined that he would have a career in motor racing. His love of speed was evident at an early age. It has been amazing to watch his progression from Kart Racing around Europe whilst at School to his impressive success with F1. We are happy that the School was able to play a part in his journey.

*Dr Kevin Mann
Assistant Head, Senior School*

Pupils spent time putting together a good luck poster for George, adding their own personal messages.

“ You taught me dreams do come true. Well done and Good Luck! ”
Frankie, Pupil

WGS were excited to welcome Sports Presenter/Senior Journalist Tom Williams from BBC Sport into the Prep School. Tom and camera man Steve Hubbard spent the day with pupils to film a feature on former pupil, George Russell. Pupils and teachers spent time with the team from BBC Sport, sharing their memories of George and their own personal goals. Mrs Beck (current Prep 6 Teacher) remembered teaching George Russell and his passion was evident from an early age.

Everyone from WGS is cheering George on and with hard work, determination, the right support and resilience, the message certainly is that you can achieve your goals, whatever they may be.



Veni, vidi, didici: I came, I saw, I learned!

On Thursday 17 May, Prep 3 pupils enjoyed a visit to Stibbington Centre as part of their 'Romans' history topic.

The day began with an introductory presentation which focussed on the growth of the Roman Empire and how archaeological work continues to develop our understanding of Roman times.

The pupils then had the opportunity to 'become' Roman soldiers. They were divided into 'cohorts' and were issued with Roman tunics and Roman names. Each cohort was led by a 'signifer' (standard bearer) who marched the pupils outside where each cohort tackled a number of Roman challenges.

Pupils enjoyed an afternoon workshop with a variety of practical activities related to Roman times. These included: identifying, examining and sketching Roman artefacts; preparing a Roman delicacy; writing sums in Roman numerals using wax tablets and decorating a clay tile, inspired by Roman mosaics.

The day ended with a rousing chorus of 'Ardeat Roma' followed by a chance to reflect on the day's activities and learning.



Birds of Prey morning brings new 1st Formers and their families together



We would like to thank Fens Falconry of Wisbech St Mary for a fantastic Birds of Prey demonstration for pupils and their families who are about to join us in the 1st Form.

The event provided a wonderful opportunity to meet prior to the start of the new academic year, and to take part in a variety of activities - from quizzes, hotly contested bird beak and nest building challenges to pellet analysis and crafts - as well as information sharing about birds of prey and an impressive flying display from Fens Falconry.

Thank you also to the many helpers including Thomas Fox in 3rd Form who is a key member of the club.

Based on the enthusiasm and enjoyment exuded during the morning, we will definitely be organising more events like this in the future.

New 6th Formers made a splash at Rutland Water Induction Day

On Friday 28 June the Wisbech Grammar School 6th Form intake for 2019/20 visited Rutland Water for their Induction Day.

The pupils took part in lots of team building activities with their new Form groups which included raft building, a treasure hunt and a range of other tasks and challenges. The purpose of the day was to encourage team bonding, problem solving and working together effectively as a community - whilst at the same time articulating expectations of pupils in the Lower and Upper Sixth Form respectively. The whole event culminated with a BBQ and a presentation of awards from the event providers, Rutland Adventure.

6th Form Pupil Ellise Hayes gave her outlook on the day: "In raft building we were given 4 barrels, 4 lengths of rope, and 4 slats of wood. Using this equipment we had to build a raft in 20 minutes. Then we had to race them in two teams within our Form groups and those with the fastest combined time at the end won a mystery prize. The treasure hunt was an activity which made us communicate with each other to work towards answering the most questions correctly to gain a mystery prize, which turned out to be Royal Air Force PopSockets. The last event of the day was the team building activities which consisted of mini games such as tennis, and blindfolded challenges.

“All of these activities allowed us to get to know the people joining our Form and work together as a group to complete each activity.”

I enjoyed these because we were able to speak to people we might not have spoken to before and form good relationships with them which will enable us to support each other next year. They were all a lot of fun and my favourite was the raft building as it was very competitive and we all equally helped to build the raft. Another one of my highlights was throwing balls at different people in certain sequences whilst saying their names, which definitely helped me learn and remember their names".

After a fun and successful day, the pupils returned to Wisbech Grammar School in the knowledge that they can 'hit the ground running' in September when they start 6th Form, in the new Dwight 6th Form Centre.



Rutland Water is always a great induction day for our pupils where they gain a number of skills and enjoy some quality time together. As well as benefiting the pupils, it also allows tutors to get to know their tutees really well. It also provides an opportunity for the 6th Form Team to see a different side of the pupils outside of their day-to-day academic, sports and co-curricular contributions at School. We are really looking forward to welcoming everyone back in September to our new 6th Form Centre and what will be a hugely successful 2019/20.

*Alex Laybourne
Deputy Head of 6th Form and Head of Careers*

Prep 6 Visit to Octavia Hill's House

Prep 6 pupils recently visited Octavia Hill's birthplace in Wisbech; this linked closely with topics they were covering in History and English, and particularly with their class reader 'Street Child' by Berlie Doherty.

During the visit they participated in three activities, each covering an aspect of philanthropy in Victorian times. Downstairs in "Little Hell" pupils experienced the harsh, cold reality of a pauper's life whilst upstairs they had a lot of fun dressing up - as the rich and the poor - and improvising mini plays.

They also played with some Victorian toys and games, and practised their sketching skills 'John Ruskin style'.



The children love coming to Octavia Hill's House as it gives them the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom and experience first-hand what life was really like for children of a similar age to themselves.

Mrs Kelly
Prep 6 Teacher

Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day is a memorial day observed in Commonwealth member states since the end of the First World War to pay tribute to the members of their armed forces who have died in the line of duty.

Staff and pupils at WGS are committed to marking this poignant day with their own assembly and time to reflect and honour fallen soldiers.

Our Heads of School, Catherine Missin and Frazer Brown, were invited to the Wisbech Remembrance Parade in the Market Place and had the opportunity to lay a wreath in the ceremony.

Both pupils felt highly honoured and privileged to be involved in the service which took place on Sunday 11 November 2018.



“Staff and pupils are very proud to be part of Remembrance Day as it gives us all the time to reflect and to remember those who died in the line of duty.”

*Paul Logan
Deputy Head Academic*



Barbados sports tour 2019

“After an early start the pupils landed safely in Bridgetown and after a short coach journey arrived at Dover Beach Hotel, St Lawrence Gap - home for the next 12 days.”



Whilst the School community settled into their first week of the summer break, 22 pupils and 4 staff embarked on their sports tour to Barbados.

During Week one pupils played both in mixed and girls' hockey matches against The City of London School at the Barbados Astro ground and against Clapham Blitz at the National Stadium. They also attended training sessions with the Barbados U18 rugby team at the Garrison and had one to one coaching with Franklyn Stephenson at The Franklyn Stephenson Academy cricket ground.

The pupils and staff enjoyed down time together on rest days with rugby and volleyball on the beach, shopping in Bridgetown and an evening visit to Oystins Fish Fry.

A highlight of the tour was the middle Saturday when pupils enjoyed a Jeep safari around the island, immersing themselves in the culture and absorbing the breathtaking views. A buffet lunch was enjoyed in the forest alongside wild monkeys, before cruising along the island's "Platinum (west) Coast", renowned for its clear warm waters and golden sands.

Sunday brought another early start, heading to Bridgetown harbour to board a catamaran for the day. With a crew of three entertaining sailors and ample food and drink, the catamaran set sail. At the first stop the anchor was dropped for the pupils to jump overboard and snorkel over a shipwreck. Another short sail took the craft closer to land where the pupils were able to snorkel with the turtles and even catch a glimpse of an impressive stingray!

The last stop was Sandy Lane Beach where pupils showed off their diving skills from the catamaran and enjoyed a refreshing sea swim.

By Week 2 the players were starting to adjust to playing in the 37 degree heat and managed good wins in the mixed hockey against Combined Clubs A teams, the U18 and U15 rugby against the Barbados team and a very impressive win and a draw at the Grazzettes, against Jets Netball Clubs U17 and U19 teams. Another great day was also had back at the Franklyn Stephenson Academy where all 22 pupils took part in a 40 over match against Academy players.

The overnight return flight from Grantley Adams International Airport to Heathrow was on Thursday 18 July and 26 very tired pupils and staff arrived back at school at lunchtime on Friday.



“Our sports tour to Barbados provided us all with the opportunity to learn about the spectacular culture and history of the island, all whilst allowing us to try our hardest in the four different sports we played. The challenges we faced have improved us as players and allowed us to reach our full potential - learning skills we will take with us for the rest of our lives.”

Hannah Smith
5th Form Pupil

It's all Greek to me!

On Tuesday 12 March, Prep 3 pupils travelled over 2,500 years back in time to spend the day immersing themselves in the world of Ancient Greece.

The day began with a Drama Festival; pupils were put into groups to practise then perform their chosen plays.

The afternoon centred around the all-important Olympic Games. As each group of children competed on behalf of their chosen city-state, the excitement grew steadily until the final team event, which would decide who would receive the winners' glory.



A celebratory banquet of typical Greek fayre was prepared for the children, giving them the opportunity to taste foods they may not have come across before. This rounded off a most enjoyable day.

A huge thank you goes to parents and carers who helped to enhance the authenticity of the day by providing fantastic costumes.

Prep 5s step back in time... at Mountfitchet Castle

On Thursday 20 September, Prep 5 pupils travelled back almost one thousand years in time when they visited Mountfitchet Castle in Stansted.

They had the opportunity to experience what life was like for people living in a Motte and Bailey Castle during medieval times. The children thoroughly enjoyed exploring the reconstructed Norman village, complete with burning log fires.

They also loved meeting the tame fallow deer and other rescued animals that roamed freely throughout the Castle grounds. However, the undisputed highlight of the day was using a working catapult to fire water balloons at the teachers who were the targets! This was a fantastic trip which enriched the children's learning in the classroom about the Middle Ages.



Fundraising and Community Spirit

Fundraising and Community Spirit is at the heart of WGS; staff and pupils are committed to raising as much money as possible, and promoting awareness, for charities throughout each year. Our aim is also to raise the profile of causes that affect everyone.

We are proud to be sponsors at the KLFM Local Hero Awards which celebrate the achievements of West Norfolk's most inspirational people. Last year we sponsored the category 'Fundraiser of the Year' which was won by Lilian Fisher, who at age 79, performed a tandem Skydive with the British Army to raise funds for The Royal British Legion.

We are also thrilled to confirm that we are sponsoring 'Young Person of the Year' 2020 and I am sure we will be equally impressed by the achievements of the nominees.



“She is a true inspiration to many people and we were very proud to present her award on stage at the Alive Corn Exchange, Kings Lynn.

Natalie Miller
Bursar

The Gift of Giving

5th Form pupils bring Christmas cheer to a mother and daughter who lost everything in a hurricane.

Ellie Stuffsins and her friends from 5th Form collected and bought Christmas presents for a mother and her daughter who moved over to the UK after losing everything in a hurricane in the Caribbean. They spent their own money purchasing gifts and delivered the presents in person on the Sunday before Christmas. The little girl Tia, was hugely excited and Tracey (Mum) was overwhelmed and extremely grateful, saying that the pupils were “a miracle” and “angels from heaven”.

Tracey spent some time sharing her stories of the horrors in the aftermath of the hurricane, how they had only hours to pack and how everything else they owned was lost.

Everyone agreed that it was a humbling experience and were honoured that they could help to put a smile back on Tia's face.



“Well done to all the pupils in 5th Form - we are so proud of your generosity.”

WGS 'Race for Life' raises £1865 for Cancer Research UK

The Friends of Wisbech Grammar School organised the annual 'Race for Life' event at the beginning of July.

Thanks to the efforts of pupils, parents, staff and members of the local community, an impressive £1865 was raised for Cancer Research UK. A tombola, raffle and the performance of the School Steel Band all contributed to the final sum raised. All in all, a wonderful day of sun, fun, laughter and fundraising.

“

What a fabulous amount of money raised! Thank you and a huge well done to everyone who took part.

”

*Jo Marriott
Local Fundraising Manager, Cambridgeshire
Cancer Research UK*



West Norfolk Mind receives £1076.60 from fundraising efforts at Wisbech Grammar School

Wisbech Grammar School pupils presented West Norfolk Mind with a cheque following a fundraising Quiz and Chips night held at the School.

A wonderful time was had by all; the evening was very well attended with many pupils, parents and staff taking part in a family quiz, organised to raise money for Mind, and also to welcome new pupils and their families to the School. A hearty and delicious fish and chip supper was provided by IB Chippy during the course of the evening and Mr Duncan was the brilliant host and Quiz Master.

“What a great way to start the School fundraising year. It was fantastic to raise such a large amount for Mind whilst also getting the chance to meet up with some old and new faces! A huge thank you to all of those who took part and in particular to Mr Timmis for preparing the Quiz and to Mr Duncan for hosting the evening. We would also like to thank Ian at IB Chippy for such fantastic fish and chips! Authentic and very tasty.”

*Joanne Munson, Chair
Friends of Wisbech Grammar School*

Mind - an independent local charity close to many people's hearts - promotes positive mental health and social inclusion within the community and provides a variety of resources for people with mental health issues, their families and friends. They aim to support people to build a meaningful life for themselves and inspire hope for recovery, with or without the continuing presence of mental health problems.



“West Norfolk Mind are so grateful to have been chosen as the beneficiary of Wisbech Grammar School's recent fundraising quiz and we were delighted to visit their impressive School to receive the cheque. The funds will go towards our projects providing emotional and practical support to young people, which helps them become more resilient and better able to manage risks which could negatively impact their future mental health and wellbeing.”

*Lee Dade
West Norfolk Mind Team Leader*



Without donations and awareness-raising events, many people who suffer homelessness would not be able to access our services. These donations will not only support those who have faced true hardship, but those who are currently living it. Thank you to all of the pupils and donors who have supported this walk. You are changing the lives of those who need it most.

*Hazel Howell
Fundraising Officer at The Ferry Project*

6th Form Pupils Raise Money to Support the Homeless in Fenland

Established in 1998, The Ferry Project is an award-winning social enterprise and registered charity that helps homeless people in Fenland; there are an estimated 176,000 people who sleep rough each year in East Anglia alone.

On Thursday 25 April Wisbech Grammar School Senior Prefects, alongside some other willing volunteers from the 6th Form and staff, completed their challenge of collectively running 176 km - a metre to represent each of those people sleeping rough, to raise donations for the Charity. So far pupils have managed to raise over £700 for the cause.

As well as raising much needed funds, pupils made donations in the form of towels, blankets, flannels, sanitary products, toiletries and bedding. These items go directly to people who use the night shelter, hostel or in making up care packages for those unable to access these facilities.

Earlier this year, when challenged to come up with their A Level Drama Devised Piece, Megan Pledger, Faye Thompson and Eleanor Sloan in the 6th Form began research into the stigma around periods and Period Poverty. Whilst doing their research they became inspired reading about girls their own age who were making a massive difference in helping to eradicate Period Poverty, all whilst doing their A Levels. This is why they have started an organisation called 'Code Red' to raise awareness of Period Poverty and to provide sanitary products to homeless shelters, through the Ferry Project.

If you would like to support the homeless by donating essential items or funds to The Ferry Project, please visit their website www.ferryproject.org.uk



‘Paving the Way’ for sensory garden at the Alan Hudson Day Treatment Centre

During the Lent and Trinity terms, the newly formed 6th Form Charity Committee raised money for the Alan Hudson Day Treatment Centre in Wisbech, who are redesigning their garden.

The committee had a meeting with Phillippa Ashcroft, the Project Development Officer at the Centre, who discussed her ideas for the new garden which will include sensory areas, accessible planting areas for the patients to tend and a water feature designed by local artist Jeni Cairns. Kim Flint is designing the garden and she visited the committee to show them the initial plans. The pupils wanted to support the Centre, so decided to try to raise enough money to pay for the water feature. They achieved this aim, through the sale of homemade cakes and pancakes, raising over £500. The committee have also signed up to help with the planting and maintenance of the garden over the coming months and years.

During the past three years, the 6th Form have held several social events, the profits from which have gone into a charity pot with the intention that once a large enough sum had been collected, it would be donated to a local charity.

“ We are very grateful for the School’s support in helping us to create a sensory garden for people with a life-limiting condition who live in the Fens.

Phillippa Ashcroft
Project Development Officer ”

The committee decided that they wanted to increase their donation to the Alan Hudson Day Treatment Centre, and so have donated £1000 towards the garden project. Michelle Knight, Matron at the Centre, and Kim Flint visited the 6th Form Charity Committee on Wednesday 3 July to receive the cheque and to talk to them about the progress made so far on the project.

We would like to thank everyone who donated their time and money to help our pupils meet their target.

“ 6th form Art and Textiles students enjoyed a fabulous workshop day by Jeni Cairns at her Juniper House studio. Building on our 6th Form success raising money for the Alan Hudson Hospice project, pupils were invited to help form the metalwork sculpture for the garden centre piece, designed by Jeni.



Cake Sale a Success in support of People Living with Cancer

The 6th Form Charity Committee organised a cake sale for the Macmillan Cancer Support Charity as part of their Biggest Coffee Morning campaign.

The entire School was invited to buy cakes from the sale in the Refectory at break time on Friday 28 September. The Refectory was decorated with balloons and bunting by pupils from Magdalene House Prep.

It was a great success, and there was a real community feel in the Refectory as everyone tucked into their cakes, helping to raise a total of £425.50 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

“ I am overwhelmed by all the time and effort put into baking and preparing for the Coffee Morning by the Charity Committee and the amazing bakers! It was a huge success raising an enormous £425.50 for Macmillan! The event was great fun and brought together people of all ages at Wisbech Grammar School with something we all love... cake! Thank you very much to everyone who baked or helped out!

Molly Sears
Chairman of the Charity Committee

“ Well done and thank you to the 6th Form Charity Committee for your hard work in organising the event.

Kate Taylor, Head of 6th Form



Locks away! Madeline's selfless gesture helps children undergoing cancer treatment

Madeline, a 2nd Form pupil who joined us mid year, has demonstrated her caring attitude by approaching 'The Princess Trust' in order to help children less fortunate than herself.



She parted with her very long hair and came to School sporting a considerably shorter style. Her own hair will now be made into wigs for children who, due to cancer treatment, have lost their own hair. Madeline will definitely put a big smile on the faces of these brave children!

“Thank you, Madeline. What a commendable deed of which you can be very proud” - Monica Skinner, Form Tutor



Courage to Start, Strength to Endure, Resolve to Finish



“Completing the London Marathon on Sunday was such an amazing experience. The atmosphere is electric and it is such a special thing to take part in. So far £2848 has been raised for Bowel Cancer UK which is fantastic. I would like to thank everyone for the overwhelming support I have received and for all the generous donations made for such a deserving charity.”

Mrs Easthall, School Nurse

Returning to work on Monday proudly showing off her medal, Mrs Easthall, the School Nurse, completed the London Marathon on Sunday 28 April, in memory of her father. Congratulations go to Mrs Easthall on this enormous achievement.

“Dad was a true soldier and fought bravely for nearly two years before passing away at the age of 56 - two months before I was due to finish my nursing degree - and he missed a lot of milestones in my adult life including my graduation, first car, first house purchase, my wedding and of course meeting his grandsons. I would love for this to raise awareness and help stop someone else from missing so much.

Bowel Cancer UK promote awareness of the disease and work hard to provide information, trying to reduce the embarrassment and stigma that many people perceive, helping them access treatment sooner therefore making their prognosis much better.

We also lost my mother-in-law, Wendy Easthall, to cancer at the end of last year. Wendy too was young and full of life, having just turned 50 when she was diagnosed; she fought bravely, defying doctors for three and a half years. Any money that can be raised to help advances in treatment and prevent other people from having these experiences would be so helpful”.

Magic Mo-ments from 6th Form Pupils

Last year, the 6th Form pupils decided to support Movember to raise funds and awareness for all the dads, brothers and male friends in their lives.

The Movember Foundation helps support men's health by raising money for prostate and testicular cancer research and also providing much needed mental health support.

Pupils and staff supported Movember by growing (or wearing) moustaches, completing the 60km challenge and attending their very own mo-moment, a charity rugby match, on Friday 30 November. This was one of several mo-ments held throughout the month of November.

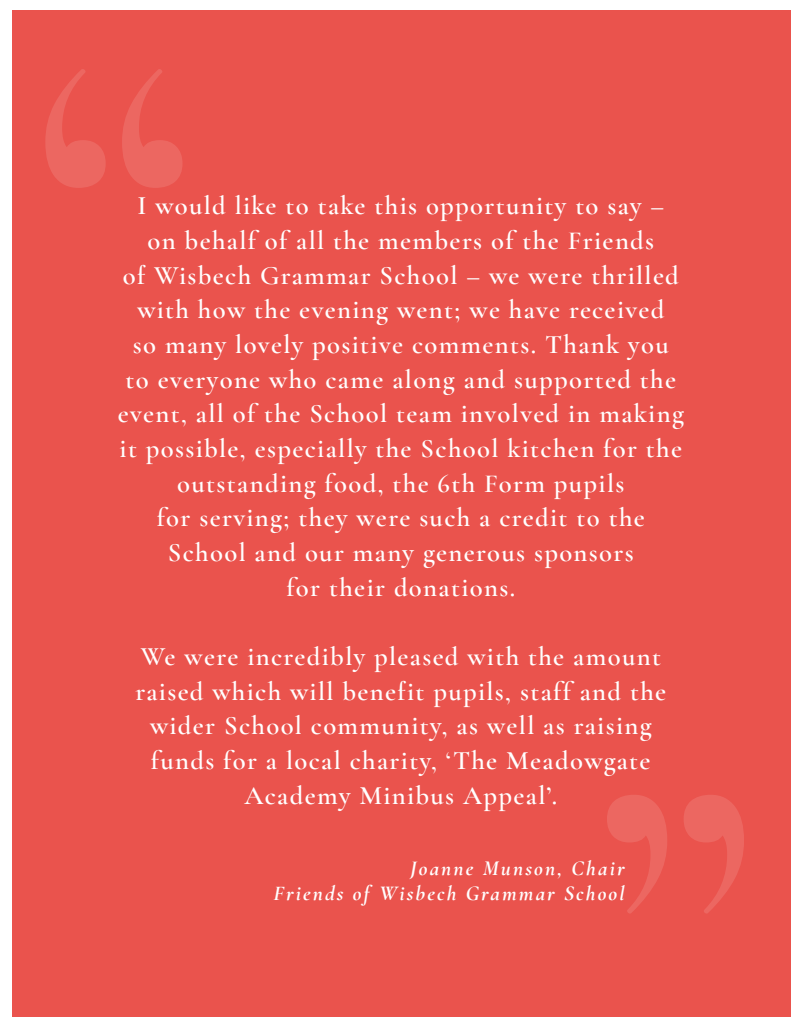
To learn more about the important work and impact of the Movember Foundation please go to uk.movember.com/programs/cause



Annual Ball is a Glittering Success

On Saturday 24 November the School held its fourth annual Michaelmas Ball; this year's theme was the 'Mirror Ball', with the Skelton Hall transformed into a glittering venue to welcome 250 guests.

With Prosecco and canapés on arrival, diners were treated to a delicious three course meal prepared and cooked by Jayne and the School catering team. This was followed by a game of Heads & Tails, the raffle and an auction hosted by Ben from KLFM. Guests danced the night away to live music from The Wild Boys (featuring Vanessa) and Nightlife Entertainment.



I would like to take this opportunity to say – on behalf of all the members of the Friends of Wisbech Grammar School – we were thrilled with how the evening went; we have received so many lovely positive comments. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event, all of the School team involved in making it possible, especially the School kitchen for the outstanding food, the 6th Form pupils for serving; they were such a credit to the School and our many generous sponsors for their donations.

We were incredibly pleased with the amount raised which will benefit pupils, staff and the wider School community, as well as raising funds for a local charity, 'The Meadowgate Academy Minibus Appeal'.

*Joanne Munson, Chair
Friends of Wisbech Grammar School*



A time of celebration for Prep School pupils at their Speech Day

Prep School Speech Day is a time of celebration and recognition for all the hard work from pupils, staff and families over the last academic year. This year the School welcomed Miss Phoebe Parker who plays for Norfolk United Netball Club Premier Squad.



Prep School Speech Day Prize winners

“My last piece of advice to you all is to work hard and play hard. Make the most of your time here. This School offers so many wonderful opportunities - all you need to do is grab each one with both hands and see where it will take you. You never know - you might find yourself with talents you never knew you had!

*Jemima Mitchell
Head Girl*

Phoebe gave an inspirational talk about the importance of being part of a team. She then turned to the timeless quote from Charlotte's Web, "Why did you do all this for me? I don't deserve it, I've never done anything for you. You have been my friend," replied Charlotte. That in itself is a tremendous thing".

Mrs Neaves, Senior Deputy Head of Prep School, reflected on the year with a speech about being kind and thinking carefully before you speak.

She said, "I love to read about the amazing journeys our pupils have travelled on this year, the successes they have had whether they be big or small... such as having the courage to walk into School through the gate leaving parents behind. We have seen a great deal of development around the School which will continue into the foreseeable future. Our Kindergarten was created over the summer of 2018 and the Reception class was transformed into a bright, airy space".

Many guests were emotional after the pupils sang the poignant 'It's My Life' and Jasper Pike and Tom Williamson (Prep 6 pupils) played solo pieces on Cello. They were both presented with a music award, and Tom was recognised for achieving his ABRSM Grade 8 Cello with Distinction.

The Achievement, Progress, and Effort Awards were presented to pupils from each Form. The current Magdalene House Head Boy (Harry Gee) and Head Girl (Jemima Mitchell) reflected on their time in Prep School, before they continue on their journey to Senior School.

Harry shared with the audience, "There is so much on offer here at WGS that when surrounded by it term after term, year after year we could be forgiven for forgetting just how lucky we are. But we mustn't forget, and I won't. As my Mum says 'we are the Masters of our own destiny' and surrounded by opportunities. In life there will be both successes and failures but try not to wallow when things don't work out as you hope - instead use this as an inspiration to succeed. Try to give new things a go when you get the chance, for after all some may say that the journey rather than the destination is really what is important".

Jemima talked about her journey so far, saying, "My first memories of Magdalene House are watching my brother, sister and all the other children on stage in the annual school production. It always looked like so much fun and I couldn't wait to be up there with them! At my very first School production I had the choice between being a princess or a tree - those of you that know me well will not be surprised to learn that I chose to be a tree. This didn't really surprise my parents either, although my mum did say it would have been much easier to find a princess costume".

Speech Days



Mrs Neaves announced the new Head Boy and Girl for the next academic year, with Oliver Beck as Head Boy and Libby Hoyles as Head Girl.



Prep 6 with their teachers, Mrs Beck and Mrs Kelly

The final words of the day were summed up in a quote from Winnie the Pooh...

“

Be bold enough to use your voice,
brave enough to listen to your heart
and strong enough to live the life
you've always imagined.

”

Employability, Success and Happiness were the key messages at Senior School Speech Day for pupils at WGS

Senior School Speech Day on Friday 5 July, was an opportunity for the Headmaster, special guests, staff and pupils to reflect on and celebrate last year's successes and to pass the baton to the next generation.

Dr Catherine Mair BSc, BVetMed, MRCVS, School Governor and Chair Elect, welcomed everyone and paid tribute to Dr Dennis Barter, Chairman of Governors, who was sadly unable to attend. Dr Mair reflected on the number of exciting projects the School is undertaking within a tight, seven month deadline. The School was very proud to welcome as Guest of Honour, Dr Gemma Witcomb - Lecturer in Psychology with a First Class degree from Loughborough (1998) and the Sir Robert Martin faculty prize for Outstanding Academic Achievement. Dr Witcomb presented prizes for outstanding performances, academic success, community service, sports, performing arts and many more. The Russell Hall was filled with a sense of pride and achievement.

"I urge you all to see gender equality and true gender inclusion as your problem and a priority for all of you, not just the girls. So champion each other, support each other, and as young leaders going off into the world, always make sure the door is open to everyone. Valuing the skills and expertise that other people bring to the table, other people that are not like you, is the most valuable lesson that I could teach you. The final thing that I want to say is to view your 'extra-curricular self' as just as important as your 'curricular self'. My time in India shaped me as a person in a way that I cannot even try to explain and I still dine out on stories of my adventures and near misses and hospital admissions!

In fact, I pride myself on being a good dinner party guest. So I want to leave you pondering a question - would you pass what I call the 'dinner party test'?

“If you had to throw a dinner party, of interesting, exciting people, who champion each other, would you invite yourself?

If the answer is no, you know that you need to change something.”

Dr Gemma Witcomb



Senior School Prize Winners

Headmaster Chris Staley's address focused on employability, success and happiness.



*Heds of School Eleanor Sloan and Isabella Oldershaw-Ellis
with Senior Prefects, Chris Staley, Headmaster and
Pete Timmis, Deputy Head of Pastoral*

I am often asked by current and prospective parents, 'What is a Wisbech Grammar School Education all about?'

My answer, to put it in a concentrated form, is **Employability, Success & Happiness.**

Chris Staley, Headmaster

So what are some of the skills that employers today are looking for?

Complex Problem Solving, Critical Thinking, Creativity, People Management, Teamwork, Emotional Intelligence, Service Orientation, what you can do for others... to name a few. So how does WGS equip our pupils with these skills?

Natasha Richardson (4th Form), a talented singer-songwriter and recipient of a Governors' Commendation whilst still at the Prep School participated in the Peterborough Music Festival showcasing her own material.

Eighteen of our pupils have entered 'Mission Contamination', a writing competition open to 11-18 year olds, to create sagas of 100 words which will be published as a collection of short stories.

A group of pupils went up to Edinburgh to perform at the Fringe Festival showcasing 'The Rubbish Show' this summer.

Not to mention Sport, Humanities, Science, Crest awards, Vrettos, Trips, Tours, Concerts, Plays, Trinity Guildhall exams, the growing lecture series for Junior and Senior pupils, DofE and all of the fundraising pupils undertake to raise money for fantastic causes like Cancer Research, Period Poverty, Homelessness, Hospice Care and many more.

Now to 'success and happiness'. I am sure we have all noticed that people are generally happiest when they're doing the things they like doing best - and that they're best at doing.

Together we need to help pupils develop decisive life advantages - things they are good at and passionate about, so they stand out in adding value to their School, their community and ultimately their employers.

To all of the parents who place the greatest trust in us to care for, educate and inspire their children: we recognise the responsibility we bear, and the privilege in contributing to your children's lives.

Heds of School Catherine Missin and Frazer Brown shared their final words of advice:

Be grateful and remember your voice is so important, and one person can make a difference. We both encourage you to take advantage of all the opportunities on offer at WGS. Work hard, find your passion and defy convention and most of all have a sense of humour. We want to thank everyone for their support and we would like to share a quote by Charles "Boss" Kettering, an American inventor, engineer, businessman, and the holder of 186 patents. He was a founder of Delco, and head of research at General Motors from 1920 to 1947:

“ The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress. ”

6th Form Leavers' Service 2019



Friday 5 July marked the last day at WGS for our Upper 6th pupils. Speech Day in the morning was a wonderful celebration of their achievements and they enjoyed listening to Dr Gemma Witcomb who spoke about supporting each other and valuing the skills and expertise that other people can bring to the table; great advice for our Leavers as they embark on the next stage of their life journey.

The evening celebrations started with the traditional Leavers' Service at St Peter and St Paul's Church, followed by a drinks reception and three course dinner held in the Skelton Hall. Pupils heard from Mr Timmis, Deputy Head Pastoral, who had worked out that he was 18 years old, 18 years ago. He reminisced about the things that he remembered from this time, including the S Club 7 song 'Reach'. Mr Timmis' speech had the room in fits of laughter, although there were also some rather confused faces among the pupils who had never heard of some of the things he mentioned! Miss Taylor, Head of 6th Form, then spoke about her memories of the Year group. Having worked with them since Prep 4, there were lots of humorous tales to recount, including F&N disasters, trips to France and piracy of rafts at Rutland Water. Advice for the future was given using quotes from some well-known celebrities including Tim Minchin and Ellen de Generes. However the final message came courtesy of Felicity Aston, an English explorer and former climate scientist who in 2012 became the first person to ski solo and manually (i.e. without kites or machines) across Antarctica. Talking about the experience she said, "The fact that I had crossed Antarctica, despite the tears, and the fears and the alone-ness, deepened my belief that we are each far more capable than we give ourselves credit for. Our bodies are stronger and our minds more resilient than we could ever imagine. To entrench it in my brain and carry it out of Antarctica, I summarised this important realisation in one simple phrase: Keep getting out of the tent".

It has genuinely been enormous fun working with this Year group.

It has been such a privilege watching them grow into mature, considerate, inspirational young adults, and I am incredibly proud of their many achievements.

What will stick most in my mind about the Upper 6th is their generosity and community spirit, as demonstrated clearly by their charity work, especially with the homeless shelter in Wisbech.

I wish them all the very best, and hope whatever happens in life and wherever they find themselves, that they will "keep getting out of the tent".

Kate Taylor
Head of 6th Form

6th Form Leavers



Wisbech Grammar School likes to keep in touch with as many former pupils as possible

We see Old Grammarians as part of the extended community of the School. Our doors are always open, as every single pupil who leaves WGS is still very much part of our history and future.



Ali Price

I'll be forever thankful to my parents and Wisbech Grammar School for playing a part in helping me achieve the career I've been fortunate enough to have.

My career started almost straight after my final day of School in U6. I moved to Bedford to play in the Bedford Blues U19 side (which Phil Webb directed me towards); from then I guess it just snowballed. At 20 years old, I took the opportunity to join a professional club - Glasgow Warriors - and 6 seasons later I'm still here.

It's eight years since I left WGS and it's gone by pretty quickly! My School days were brilliant. A place that catered for everyone, whether you were smart, sporty or into art.

I wasn't the most academic and probably slightly irritating in most lessons but all the teachers cared and wanted the best for me. I had a dream when I was 17 and 18 that I wanted a career in rugby. But what if that doesn't go to plan? What if I get injured? The teachers during my whole time at School were great at getting the best out of me even if that required a ridiculous amount of patience - meaning I could leave School with a set of results to work with if all went wrong.

I guess when I was at School that was the dream, and I'd achieved it. So you now set new goals and targets. Play international rugby, play for the Lions. Goals that keep you working hard. Everyone I work with knows how lucky we are to be doing what we love.

“ Professional sport is quite a cut-throat business. It's all about taking your opportunities, and those I got from the very beginning at WGS - plus plenty of hard work - have helped me achieve many of my goals to date. ”

Grades achieved at A Level:

Geography A*
History A*
English Literature A*



Helena Coe

After leaving WGS I took a gap year, starting university in October 2015 after accepting a place at University College (Castle) at Durham University.

I graduated in June 2018 with a Second Class (Division One) [2:1] BA (Honours) in International Relations. International Relations is a mix of Politics, Geopolitics and History (with a little bit of Law and Economics). After A Level results day in 2014 I spent a week or so considering my options and ended up withdrawing from the university place I held to study Geography, took a gap year and decided to re-apply to university to read a different subject. While on my gap year I worked for an FMCG company and a multi-channel home shopping retailer, where I gained valuable experience and the means to fund travelling to Costa Rica and Croatia.

I found the university experience very intellectually challenging but also extremely enjoyable. As well as academically, university provided a wide range of opportunities and new experiences; from all-night balls, to learning Fencing and competing for Team Durham, to organising an Arts Week for my college which culminated in a Gala Show, featured in Tatler. As well as providing both academic and extra-curricular opportunities and experiences, attending Durham also gave me the opportunity to meet new people, from all over the world and the UK. As I only graduated in June I am currently taking time to consider my career options and will be applying to graduate schemes when they open for start dates in mid to late 2019.

WGS gave me all the skills needed for life after School; it also instilled in me a sense of confidence and self-belief that helped enormously through the largely independent working environment at university. WGS, and especially my 6th Form tutor Mr Killick, helped immensely during my gap year when I was applying to university and I will be forever grateful for the continued support and guidance I received even after I left School.

“

For university applicants, my three pieces of advice would be:

- Don't be afraid to stray from the plan
- Be open to all new opportunities
- Don't dismiss something straight away as you never know where it may lead

”

Wisbech Grammar School Leavers

Thierry Jestin

After 7 years teaching French and Spanish at WGS, Thierry Jestin left in July 2019 to teach French in the Hanoi International School of Vietnam. He was a charismatic and popular teacher.

Having trained in France, he furthered his expertise in languages and linguistics in Coalville and Galway, Ireland. As Head of Lower School Languages, he taught Spanish to pupils in Prep School and as Form Tutor, he mentored many pupils in their first years of Senior School.

With his expert knowledge, he organised cultural evenings as well as a number of trips to mainland Europe known to pupils as 'the chateau trip'. Over the years, pupils visited the D-Day beaches, a snail farm, the Bayeux Tapestry, Disneyland and the Paris catacombs.

We wish the best of luck to Thierry and his family.



Jill Whiteman

Jill Whiteman, a much loved member of the teaching staff, retired in July 2019 after 18 years dedicated to teaching and supporting the young pupils in the Prep School.

Pupils loved the time she spent listening with enthusiasm to their stories. She is also fondly remembered for the weekly visit to Peckover House teaching gardening to pupils and has even volunteered to keep the Gardening club going every Thursday, come rain or shine.

Mrs Whiteman had a wicked sense of humour that kept staff entertained with laughter; they also admired her elegance and grace.

We would like to thank Mrs Whiteman for all her wonderful years spent teaching our children and helping them grow and discover who they want to be.

Amelia Ogston

Mrs Ogston's contributions were wide-reaching; as a Maths Teacher for 8 years, she never failed to get the best out of her pupils.

She was eminently popular, going above and beyond in the quality of teaching and extra support she provided. With her Child Protection and Pastoral role, her work ethic and resilience saw her through.

She was a great support to the Heads of Middle School and made a significant wider contribution to School life. She coached boys' and girls' rugby teams as well as supporting numerous School trips.

Mrs Ogston was a popular member of staff both among her pupils and her peers.



Staff Leavers

Linda Field

Linda Field was a long-serving member of staff who retired after 15 years supporting the pupils and staff in Prep School. Adored by all, she spent many hours caring for the pupils in the classroom and on the playground.

Teaching the children needlework was a great hobby of Linda's and one that the children thoroughly enjoyed and produced some lovely pieces of work.

Linda still volunteers when she can and the children welcome her back as if she has never been away.



Kerry Massen

Kerry Massen was PA to three Headmasters in her 14 year career and more recently she was Clerk to the Governors. Kerry was never one to naturally seek attention or look for a special mention, but possessed the uncanny ability to be the 'go to' person for so many people at WGS.

For me as Headmaster's PA, she managed to keep me on the rails without ever making me feel I was being managed from one thing to another. Kerry also ensured that the orchid in my study blossomed continuously for almost 2 years and in all her time never succumbed to the temptations of any of Pam's shortbread or fairy cakes.

I asked a number of her friends and colleagues how they might sum Kerry up in a few words. They said she was cool, calm and collected, loyal, makes everything look so effortless, dedicated, stylish, super-organised, classy, patient, trustworthy and lastly a true friend. It is hard to follow such words but that list only goes part of the way to explaining who Kerry was.

But most of all, I will remember her wonderful sense of humour, comic timing and in particular her love of Blackadder.

Staff Leavers

Mrs Valentina Hackett	- Maths Teacher
Mrs Amelia Ogston	- Maths Teacher
Mrs Pauline Aldrich	- Lunchtime Supervisor
Mrs Lorraine Walbridge	- Catering Assistant
Mrs Linda Field	- Classroom Assistant and Lunchtime Supervisor
Mrs Michelle Blaxhill	- Catering Assistant
Mrs Michelle Peukert	- Learning Support Assistant
Mrs Jill Whiteman	- Magdalene House Teacher
Mrs Tina Gambell	- Admissions and Marketing Assistant (Digital Lead)
Miss Julia Nicholson	- English Teacher

Mr Mike Crawley	- Science Technician
Miss Amy Thorpe	- EYFS Assistant
Mrs Emma Hollywood	- Head of Economics and Business
Mr Joss Linney	- Sports Teacher and Coach
Mrs Kerry Massen	- PA to the Headteacher and Clerk to the Governors
Mr Richard Blower	- Caretaker
Mr Russ Copeland	- Caretaker
Mr Mark Arnold	- Head of Computer Science
Mr Thierry Jestin	- Head of Lower School Science



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Dr Fiona Sconce

Dr Fiona Sconce (nee Bell), a former pupil of Dundee High School and a graduate of the University of St Andrews, died peacefully on 24 June 2018. She was a beloved mum to Jennifer, Roger, Duncan and Susannah and a doting grandma. Fiona demonstrated outstanding commitment, kindness and dedication as a governor of Wisbech Grammar School for over 26 years.

Raised and educated in Scotland, Fiona eventually took up a position at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn and made a home in Norfolk. It was here that she raised her four children who all attended the School, went on to university and pursued successful careers.

In 1990 Fiona joined North Brink Practice as their only female GP partner. She developed a particular interest in child health and went on to work exclusively with children as a community paediatrician. She was widely regarded as a wonderful colleague and caring clinician, trusted by all and promoted to Senior Community Medical Officer.

Fiona developed expertise in diagnosing and managing children with special educational and medical needs and developed a lead role on the Board of Governors in child protection, which evolved into safeguarding. Fiona was a major asset to the School; her caring, gentle approach to children with disability made her highly valued in advising the School's senior management team.

She was instrumental in setting up the Magdalene House Committee, where matters relating to the Prep School were discussed. She was a very able Chair and it was a committee close to her heart. Many times she presented the prizes and gave the welcoming speech to the children and parents of Magdalene House at their Speech Day. She supported concerts, plays and productions as frequently as she could and continued to support the School despite periods of ill health, which she bore with great fortitude.



**Fiona was Governor of Wisbech Grammar School
1 November 1991 – 21 March 2017**

Fiona was determined never to be defined or limited by illness. In fact, if it changed her at all, it was because an earlier than planned retirement meant she could throw herself into her interests. As well as continuing her role as a governor, she was a passionate gardener, sang with the King's Lynn Festival Chorus and never missed a chance to visit Scotland. Above all, she loved to spend time with her growing family.

The School is hugely indebted to Fiona for her support and professionalism. Magdalene House in particular will miss her friendship, wisdom and expertise.

“ This tough, kind, proudly Scots children's doctor is an example to us all. She is sorely missed. ”

*Dr Dennis Barter
Chair of Governors*



Wisbech Grammar School
Chapel Road, Wisbech, PE13 1RH

01945 583 631

