



### INTRODUCTION



*“The bells of waiting Advent ring...”*  
(John Betjeman)

I write to you at the start of Advent, a period of time in the Christian tradition for reflection, expectation and hope, and not exclusively given over to chocolate calendars. I think it has become even more difficult to disentangle the message of Christmas from the commercial noise (whether you filled your census response in as a Christian believer or not). I recently revisited the poem *The Cultivation of Christmas Trees* by T.S. Eliot in which the modernist poet uses the symbolism of the decorated tree to reflect upon the season with a certain cynicism. And yet there are also “surprises... delight... expectation” in “the gilded angel/ Spreading its wings at the summit of the tree.” At the start of the Autumn term, I believe we all felt a renewed sense of optimism in coming through the worst of Covid, ready to embrace all the opportunities for learning and enrichment as well as challenge and fun. Looking back at all we have achieved as a learning community

this term, there is so much to celebrate. As Eliot epitomises: “The accumulated memories of annual emotion/ May be concentrated into a great joy” as we enjoy the run up to seasonal celebrations.

I have particularly enjoyed re-engaging with so many different voices this term. Our Student Council at the Prep and Senior School have been working hard on our strategy for green sustainability as well as proposals for taking our Merits and Rewards system from strength to strength. Mrs Macallister and I have really valued re-connecting and engaging with you all face-to-face at Principal’s Breakfasts and, in the Senior School, Parent Ambassadors, who have so generously invested their time in detailed feedback for our continuously improving School. The visiting Regulatory Compliance Inspection (RCI) brought us their autumnal presence at the end of September, and then we received the early Christmas present of a fully compliant inspection report. I could not be prouder of our

School community as we enjoy this recognition, professional affirmation and external endorsement of the educational provision at Ewell Castle. There will be no resting on our festive laurels, however, as we throw ourselves in to our strategic plans for future initiatives, and enhanced provision for all our young people.

Highlights of the term have been too many to include here but the hardest working PTA in the country (led by awesome Chair Emma Mitchell) have presided over: the (sold out again) BBQ and Fireworks evening; Winter Village Experience; crafty wreath-making workshop; buzzing Christmas Fair and Santa’s Grotto; and Prep Christmas Celebration. Add to all this the ever-popular New2U uniform sales, we can only send our thanks for everything these dedicated volunteers do for us.

Competition has been hotting up in the House contests, with House Singing this term, House Football and Rugby tournaments as well as the first ever (and weather-proof) House Ten-Pin Bowling Challenge. On the Sports Field, our Tennis Academy was runner-up at the National Tennis finals in Bolton, narrowly losing out, but resulting in the School now being ranked Number 2 in the UK for the 15U Boys’ Schools Tennis. Our Rugby First XV went on tour to Cirencester, winning the Jonny Wilkinson Cup at Rendcomb College (for the first ever time in our history). Our Sixth Formers learned how to Safe Drive, Stay Alive, contested the Great Debate, also enjoying a team-building day, and our Senior Prefects appreciated the inaugural President’s Dinner alongside scholars, our Alumni Ewellians, Governors and guests. Paul Goldstein, founder of

Worth More Alive and internationally renowned wildlife photographer, shared his inspirational story and miraculous images.

The much-missed battlefields trip to the Somme was finally reinstated, as was the Year 9 Bushcraft residential, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award got back into full swing while the Senior School toured the West Coast of America during October half-term. Lunchtime Live concerts re-emerged, and the Musical triumphantly returned to the Epsom Playhouse with *The Wiz*, characterised by some outstanding performances, joyful singing and impressive choreography – how wonderful to see so many confident young people from The Castle so comfortably enjoying the stage.

Mrs Macallister will be writing *Tales from the Turret* in detail about the vibrant and exciting goings-on at the Prep School this term, but I would be remiss if I did not mention a few personal highlights myself. Year 3 and Year 6 had a splendid 3 Peaks adventure day while inspiring trips to the Science Museum and Bocketts Farm were wonderful educational visits. Year 6 got to stay at School that day instead for the most fun of all: their 11+ and scholarship assessments! The Prep School Harvest Celebration and fund-raising for Epsom and Ewell Food Bank epitomised the School's commitment



to social responsibility and kindness; and Acts of Remembrance in the Church, at the front of Glyn House and in Chessington Lodge as well as at the Epsom Clocktower underlined further our commitment to embracing our wider community. I could not refuse the personalised invitations I received to the Nursery and Reception nativity, as well as the Year 1 and Year 2 nativity – essential fixtures in the calendar and the perfect preparation for the Prep Carol Service and Carols by Candlelight, with Year 6 singers joining Senior School choristers in the Chapel Choir. In the words of my favourite Prep School Performing Arts project, Ewell's Got Talent.

#### Girls' Resilience Pathway:

I am so pleased to share an update on all the progress we have been making to ensure that all our formidable young women have the confidence, resilience and skills to carve out their own pathways at Ewell Castle. Special assemblies, PSHE and RSE sessions have been excellent opportunities to support our girls in finding their own strengths and self-awareness. This term saw the launch of Luna App (designed to put adolescent girls in touch with expert advice and guidance) and our young ladies were able to download this to their devices for free, well before the national launch in the App and Google Play Store a few weeks later – this was their privilege as Ewell Castle is the only pilot independent school currently working with Luna.

In the Spring and Summer terms, inspiring guest speakers addressing gender issues will be visiting the School and Voice at the Table will be contributing to our PSHE programmes, enriching our young women to have a voice (and not just a seat) at the table. We will be investing similarly in our young men and non-binary pupils as well in the coming months to ensure that everyone's perspectives and feelings are appreciated, fostering a greater sense of empathy and mutual respect around gender issues. My



thanks go to the colleagues and parents who have been collaborating on this project.

### Staffing Update

We are sad to be saying goodbye and thank you to the following colleagues, who will always be a part of our extended Ewell Castle family:

- Mrs Cowie - Psychology teacher
- Mr Edwards - Maths and PE Teacher, and lifelong Ewellian
- Ms Bryce - Prep Music Teacher
- Ms Ireland – Prep School Teacher
- Ms Li - Teacher of Business/ Economics
- Mr Baig - Data Manager
- Mrs Boer Nielson - Events & Operation Manager

However, we are delighted to welcome the following new members

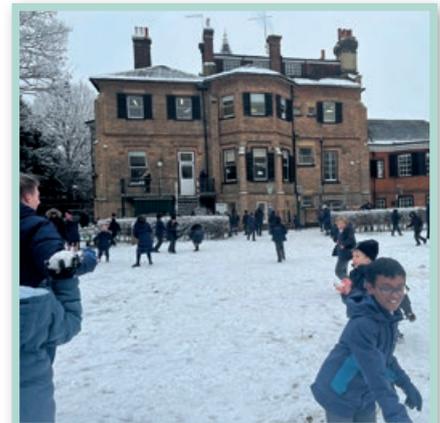
to our Ewell Castle learning community from November 2022:

- Mrs Bonner - Teacher of Business & Economics
- Mrs Grierson – Re-joining us as Prep School Supply Teacher
- Mr Millar - ICT Technician - November 2023

With the following new staff joining from January 2023:

- Ms Wells - Head of Prep School Music
- Mr Lennon - Teacher of Maths
- Mr Nedjai – Modern Foreign Language Teacher Prep and Senior School
- Mrs Forsyth - Prep School Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- Mrs Evans - Psychology Teacher

I would also like to thank Ms Scott



for her significant contribution to the School as a Governor over the last few years. Her expertise and experience will be sadly missed. We really appreciate our Governors' dedicated support for the Ewell Castle community as demonstrated in their regular attendance and contribution to Governor meetings; their involvement in a wide range of school life including health and safety, wellbeing, safeguarding and development opportunities; and attendance at many key School events.

### In Conclusion

I send my thoughts and best wishes to all our Year 11 pupils who are working and revising hard for mock examinations before and after the Christmas break – of course, you can close the books on Christmas Day!

And to you all, I extend my greetings for a merry Christmas, filled with good cheer, a peaceful and a prosperous new year. I look forward to welcoming everyone back in 2023.

**Silas Edmonds**  
*Principal of Ewell Castle School*

## CHESSINGTON TRIP

At the start of term, Year 7 got to go on a trip to Chessington World of Adventures. We went because we were very new to the School and the teachers wanted us to settle in and meet other pupils. We went in two coaches and were in groups of 6 or 7.

My group went to Tomb Blaster and Truck Driving. We also saw a real tiger and played carnival games. At midday we had lunch – I had a ham roll, apple, crisps and a smoothie. After lunch we went on the ride Tiger Rock, it was scary but fun! We then did a safari and saw flamingos, apes, giraffes, and a lion. Lastly, we went on the bumper cars and a boat ride before getting the coaches back to School.



It was a very enjoyable trip and a great start to our year, I think my teachers enjoyed it too.

*Hektor Kapsalis, Year 7*



## LANGUAGES DAY

This year the pupils enjoyed their Languages Day with Years 7-9 producing some amazing cakes in their Bake Off competition, a dressing up competition allowing pupils to come in dressed in their national dress and a Languages Quiz for years 10-13. All money raised went to one of the charities supported by the School.





## THE BATTLEFIELDS TRIP, NOVEMBER 2022

We went to the Canadian Memorial on Vimy Ridge which was beautifully constructed over 11 years in total. The Ridge itself had been very important to capture as it would have provided a strategic location for the allies, allowing a high vantage point where they could see for miles around and give them an advantage over the enemy. We also went into the underground tunnels to see what it would have been like during the war.

The Newfoundland Memorial in Beaumont-Hamel had a very different feel to the Canadian Memorial. While the Canadian Memorial was majestic and imposing, the Newfoundland Memorial felt a bit more personal. Since they could not take their men home, they brought their home to them. The Newfoundlanders planted pine trees all around and the main feature was a bronze caribou on a hill, with arrows pointing to all sorts of important landmarks, including Newfoundland itself.

We went to the cemetery and ossuary at Notre Dame de Lorette which is the largest French military cemetery in the world. However, we were unable to enter the ossuary which is a bit of a disappointment but just looking at the expanse of the cemetery was incredible. We then saw Charlie Smith lay a wreath for his great, great uncle and a few poems were read.

The Thiepval Memorial was incredibly beautiful, made in memory of the 72,337 soldiers that went missing in the Somme. The structure consisted of lots of victory arches with each pillar holding hundreds of names. The architect even made an assortment of books with the names of every soldier whose name is on the memorial and the exact pillar and side that the name is on, so that people can find the names easily.

*Alexander Stoker, Year 9*



## JACK THE RIPPER WALK FOR THE YEAR 11 HISTORIANS

On Friday 2nd December, the Year 11 historians travelled by train to Whitechapel to follow a tour focussing on the testing conditions and grinding poverty that led to the crimes of Jack the Ripper.

The GCSE History course focuses on three angles, the poverty and deprivation in the area in the 1880s, the problems of policing and the murders themselves. Walking the streets, we looked at surviving evidence from the period - the public bath houses, the church and graveyard and houses dating from the time. Parts of the area are pretty much unchanged although the houses are far neater and more expensive than they would have been then. Forensic science was in the future and given the network of tiny streets, the offender was virtually impossible to catch. Well-meaning vigilante patrol and hoax letters written to police by journalists purporting to be the killer made it even more difficult. Jeremy, our guide, really brought the subject to life and the pupils had an enjoyable time. I am sure they will incorporate it into their revision.

*Mr J C Blencowe*



## BRITISH MUSEUM VISIT, YEARS 11 - 13 CLASSICS

The British Museum is a vital trip for the classicists as so many of the artefacts that we study are there. We travelled by train and had a great time. The Elgin Marbles had centre stage and we also looked at the Bassae frieze, the Temple of Athena Nike and several smaller items such as Greek helmets and Roman armour. A highlight was the Vindolanda tablets - pieces of wood used for writing on that contain a priceless insight into the mundane life in a garrison in a remote and unruly part of the Roman Empire.

The pupils all learnt a great deal which will be put to good use in the exams.

**Mr J C Blencowe**



## DUKE OF EDINBURGH BRONZE EXPEDITION

This was the first year that we returned to the higher standards and comprehensive training of the pre-Covid era. The year group had a full week's training in June. At the start of Year 10, they faced the assessed weekend in the Surrey Hills.

I was very impressed. All the groups faced the stern triple challenge of Leith Hill, Ranmore Common and finally Boxhill. They all coped. The navigation was spot on, demonstrating the value of a proper

training course in map and compass. In the campsite at Boiderhurst, their camp administration was excellent.

The second day on Epsom Downs also went very well. The map reading is trickier, and they were tired so had to dig in. I then uttered the fateful words – “we have got to the end, and no-one has got lost yet”. Needless to say, one group did get themselves into a bit of the muddle at the end. However, they redeemed themselves with an epic six-mile tab in under two hours, finishing just as it was getting dark. All very impressive and they certainly earned their award the hard way.

We are registering new groups for Bronze, Silver and Gold at the moment, so that as many pupils as possible will have the opportunity to take the Duke of Edinburgh challenge.



## DUKE OF EDINBURGH SILVER EXPEDITION

The Year 11 candidates were back in the New Forest for their final expedition. Divided into five teams they walked in a wide loop through remote country. We camped at two campsites to complete the experience. This is a big step up from Bronze as the expedition takes place in unfamiliar territory. The New Forest is fairly flat and the map reading can be a challenge.

During WW2, the area was used as a base for training aircrew. Operational Lancasters and Mustangs were also based there and with plenty of evidence on the ground, the pupils did a study into what they found.

The pupils did well. The organisation was good, even if the packing by one group of a large tepee provided to be an error! When it rained the tepee became very heavy to carry the next day. However, they battled through, and all groups navigated themselves successfully to the finishing line.

**Mr J C Blencowe**



## NATIONAL POETRY DAY COMPETITION

This year, Ewell Castle School has celebrated National Poetry Day in many ways. In Year 8, our year group have primarily focused on Amanda Gorman's 'Earthrise', along with the photo labelled 'Earthrise'. Additionally, our pupils were invited to either write a poem, a song or photograph anything relating to the brief of 'The Environment', offering many rewarding prizes for our efforts and creativity. The focus of our lessons has brought us insights to how the Earth is viewed and a chance to step back from our everyday endeavours and view different perspectives of our globe. Overall, we think National Poetry Day has been a very successful and exciting event for our School community this term.

**Michelle Stone, Year 8**



We completed many enjoyable activities, including listening to the poem 'Earthrise' by Amanda Gorman, viewing the original 'Earthrise' photo.



We discussed the importance of both the photo and the poem, as well as the ideas both conveyed. Additionally, we started writing a poem or song in class with the theme of 'The Environment', which could have been continued for homework to enter a special National Poetry Day competition. We were also given the option to submit a photo on the same theme, and many pupils decided to choose this.

I really enjoyed National Poetry Day and the most interesting part was analysing the poem and thinking about deeper meanings. I hope celebrations for National Poetry Day continue to inspire pupils and help them discover their creative writing potential.

**Henry Leigh, Year 8**



## MATHS CHALLENGE

This term, Years 12 & 13 took part in the UKMT Senior Mathematics Challenge, along with Mingyo Kim in Year 11. We obtained three Gold awards for Zachary Fox, Mingyo Kim and Harrison McLean, who were invited to take part in the Senior Kangaroo in November. We received

a further 2 Silver awards, 11 Bronze and everyone else were awarded Certificates of Participation. Mingyo Kim and Ruari O'Rourke achieved best in their year groups and Harrison McLean achieved best in the School.

Following the Senior Kangaroo,

Mingyo Kim, Harrison McLean and Alexander Cridland all obtained Certificates of Merit and Zachary Fox obtained a Certificate of Participation.

Well done to all who took part!

**Miss L Francis**

## TRIP TO THE USA!

The trip all began with us meeting Mrs Din, Miss Hernandez and Mr Oscoz at school early in the morning, to leave for Heathrow Airport. We were all buzzing with excitement and anticipation for what awaited us, this being for most of us our first visit to America. We settled down for the 10-hour flight to San Francisco before our coach ride to our first hotel, which looked out on the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz.

We were exhausted after the long journey and the 8-hour time difference, so took a few minutes to rest on our beds and chill out. Not long afterwards, we took a stroll to dinner, down steep roads to Fisherman's Wharf, where we watched the seals on the docks. I found it interesting seeing the way the streets in San Francisco were organised. By the time we returned to the hotel, everyone was ready for a good night's sleep.

The next morning started with an early knock at the door. The plan for the day was a visit to the prison island - Alcatraz. In the queue to board the boat, there was a statue of the last surviving prisoner of Alcatraz, now aged 89, who had got locked up at 21 years of age. We listened to an audio guide as we walked through the prison. We walked past the cell of Frank Morris (made famous by the film 'Escape from Alcatraz') through the dining room, the courtyard, and the cells where they held prisoners in solitary confinement and complete darkness.

The next morning, we left for Yosemite National Park. As we drove through beautiful landscapes, we stopped off at a few tourist spots to take photos. The views were stunning, with rocks the size of many skyscrapers and we looked down at trees that looked like bushes in bloom. We began our hike, climbing up rocks piled on top of each other which would have been underwater if the waterfall at the end of the valley had been flowing at full capacity. We continued our short walk, looking out for different animals and taking photos of the amazing



scenery in every direction. Some of the trees were three thousand years old and were around at the time of Jesus. By the end of the walk, we sat down for lunch, and everyone was in high spirits.

The following day, Death Valley was our next destination point. This is the hottest place on earth. At the time we went, it was 38 degrees Celsius! Throughout the journey we were surrounded by mountain ranges on either side of the road and at other times we passed areas of completely flat ground. These variations in landscape were stunning and very atmospheric. We got off the coach at the deepest place in Death Valley. We walked around and took in the scenery. On a nearby rock, we saw a sign indicating that we were 20ft below sea level.

Once all were back on the coach, we were off to the one and only Las Vegas. In the coach you could sense that there was a party-like atmosphere. Once we got settled into our rooms and got dressed up, we set off to watch 'Cirque du Soleil' KA in the MGM Grand. This set was the best I have ever seen. The stands were decorated in a Victorian style. At one point, the stage moved through a 90-degree flying rotation, going from being horizontal to becoming a vertical 'wall' with acrobats climbing

up it, on the other side of which was a massive boat sculpture that the performers entered. At the end of the show, we returned to our rooms and got some sleep before another adventure packed day.

After starting off the day with a very nutritious breakfast at the Hilton, we set off to see some of the well-known Vegas casino hotels, beginning with the Bellagio. Next, after passing the large model of the Eiffel Tower, we walked through Caesar's Palace where there was a gift shop in which we bought different memorabilia. I bought a pack of playing cards that had been used at the casino tables. After a while, we returned to the coach to leave Las Vegas and headed to our next hotel, passing Route 66 where we stopped for a pizza lunch. This was a really great place to see because it gave us a good insight to what America is like without the glitz and glamor.

By now we were over halfway through the trip, but we still had so much more to see and do before heading home. The next attraction was a thirty-minute helicopter ride over the Grand Canyon. The views were stunning! The trees looked like finely cut grass and the river running in the valley of the Canyon looked like a line drawn with a pencil because we were so high up. We then headed to the Grand Canyon

to walk around the 'Rim Route'. It was a completely different experience seeing it from the air than seeing it on foot. I preferred the hike, but I am glad I got the chance to experience both.

As the sun rose on a new day, I was eager to get out of the hotel and back onto the road because the plan was to visit Universal Studios in Los Angeles. We managed to pack several rides into the visit, from taking a tour around a mock-up of the house used in filming 'Secret Life of Pets' to the Hogwarts' film set.

Finally, we were back on the coach for a tour through Griffith Park and the Griffith Observatory, with panoramic views across Los Angeles. We could see the famous 'Hollywood' sign in large capitals on the far hillside. We walked down the 'Walk of Fame', saw the venue where the annual Oscars ceremony is held and pictures of all the Oscar winners are on the walls. To wrap up, we stopped off at Santa Monica Pier where there was a small amusement park.

This trip was packed full of new places, events and experiences which I will never forget. From touching down for the first time in America to seeing acrobats swinging off balconies at the 'Cirque Du Soleil'. Personally, this was one of the best trips I have ever been on. A huge thank you to Mrs Din, Mr Oscoz and Miss Hernandez for organising a trip everyone clearly enjoyed and will remember for years to come.

**Kamran Seward, Year 13**



## REMEMBRANCE DAY

Our pupils joined to remember and give thanks to those that gave their lives over the years during military service and the families they left behind, also remembering current day members of the Armed Forces. Poppy wreaths were laid by Mr Edmonds and pupils. A small group of our pupils were invited to join the Armistice Service at the Clock Tower in Epsom, with one pupil reading during the service.



## REMEMBRANCE DAY POEM

Seen as a man,  
But just a boy.  
Leaving behind his mother, father.  
Sister and all he loves.  
The job he worked so hard for,  
The life he always dreamt of.  
Without choice, but with sacrifice.  
He leaves for a land he's never seen,  
And yet he has an enemy.

He forms brotherly bonds -  
Where there were none before.  
He strides forwards,  
Filled with fear,  
But they stand together,  
Brothers in arms.

His eyes are opened for the first time.  
All he knew - a memory,  
All he knows - horror.  
A loss of a brother.  
A loss of a friend.  
A sorrow too great to bear,  
But greater still, the loss of a son.

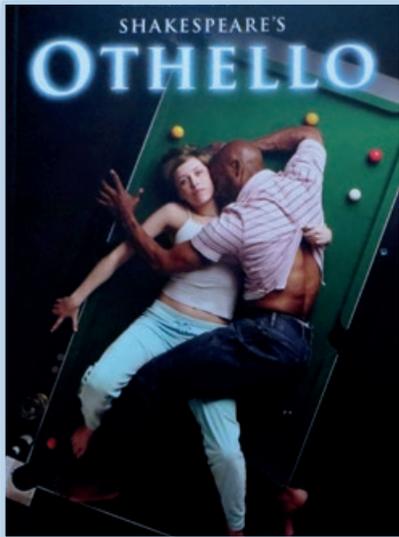
Poppies bloomed,  
Where death flourished.  
A beautiful reminder  
Of the delicacy of life.  
We can never imagine  
The cost to the mind, body and soul -  
Of those who served.  
But we can measure our freedom and liberty,  
Which they paid so dearly for.

To honour those who have, are and will,  
Pay the ultimate price.  
Fight war, not wars.  
Lest we forget.

**By Lona Patel, Year 12**

## OTHELLO THEATRE TRIP

On November 3rd, GCSE drama pupils from Ewell Castle went to see a thrilling and unique interpretation of Shakespeare's Othello, performed by Frantic Assembly. Directed by



Scott Graham, co-founder of Frantic Assembly, and starring Michael Akinsulire as Othello, this modern reimagining of Shakespeare's classic tale of jealousy, love and tragedy stood out as a phenomenal piece of theatre, elevated by a wonderful cast and magnificent production.

Othello is set in 21st century Britain in a pub with a gang, led by Othello, slowly descending into chaos. Lago (Joe Layton) is jealous of Cassio (Tom Gill) for taking a job opportunity away from him, so he plants doubt into Othello's mind, and we watch as his sanity gives way to his hatred, as everything goes wrong. Othello's wife Desdemona (Chanel Waddock) is wrongfully accused of cheating on Othello, and this serves as the catalyst for all of the chaos soon to ensue.

The company behind Othello, Frantic Assembly, pride themselves on being pioneers of their own unique style of theatre, which focuses heavily on body language and movements on stage, and this is brought to life in a perfect way, making this adaptation stand out as one of the most unique and impressive in recent memory.

The plot remains consistent with the original, but it is presented in such a new and unique way that makes it worth the watch for those knowledgeable with the events as well as those new to the play. I cannot recommend this enough as it is truly one of the most impressive theatre productions I have ever seen.

*Henry Craig, Year 10*

## REVIEW OF THE LION KING

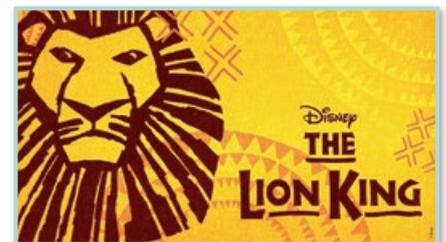
On 12th October, I went to see the Lion King at the Lyceum Theatre and to say it was good is an understatement. From the lighting to the acting, it was phenomenal. Roger Allers and Irene Mecchi did an amazing job of writing the play and the director Julie Taymore revolutionised the play with puppets and technology.

The plot follows a young lion called Simba who lives in Pride Rock, an area ruled by a pride of lions and Simba is to be the next king. Mufasa, Simba's father and king of Pride Rock, shows Simba the pride lands and teaches Simba how to be king. Scar, Simba's evil uncle, tricks Simba into going outside the pride lands to the hyenas' land. Simba was almost killed but Mufasa came to save him. Once again Simba is tricked by Scar and went into the canyon where the wildebeests were stampeding. Scar tells Mufasa that Simba is in danger and Mufasa saves Simba, but Mufasa was pushed off a large rock by Scar and is trampled by the wildebeests. Simba thinks he killed his own father, so he runs away. He then meets

Timon and Pumba, who are not the best influence. Years later, Nala, Simba's old friend came and found him - telling him of all the horrid things Scar has been doing to Pride Rock and begs him to return, however Simba is not ready to be king. He goes back anyway and defeats Scar and drives out all the hyenas. Simba becomes king as now he is ready and understands the responsibilities that come with being the king. Simba and Nala get married and have a son, and the circle of life continues.

The actors in this play are George Asprey as Scar, Shaun Escoffery as Mufasa, Thenjiwe Thendiva Nofemele as Rafiki, Jamie McGregor as Timon, Mark Roper as Pumba, Yeukayi Ushe as Simba and Janique Charles as Nala. All these people did amazingly well in their roles and the direction was given by Julie Taymore, who, completely revolutionised the musical with puppets and technology.

The sets were beautifully designed by Richard Hudson, so well designed in fact he won a Tony award for



Best Scenic Design in 1999. The fantastic costumes were designed by Julie Taymore, who also received a Tony award for Original Costume Design. Stunning makeup was led by Sara Tyndall. All these people in the background doing what they do best and working just as hard as the actors, but in the shadows.

This play is great; it gets the audience hooked, it can make you laugh, and it can make you cry but when you leave the theatre you will feel as though you want to do it all over again. I would give 4.75/5 stars because its genuinely awesome. The people at the theatre are so polite and make sure everyone is having a great time. Overall, it is an absolutely 'roarsome' play and I would 100% recommend it to adults and children alike.

*Natalie Stoker, Year 7*

## MUSIC DEPARTMENT ROUND UP

### THE WIZ

We were thrilled to return to the Epsom Playhouse in November for our musical production of The Wiz. This show was re-worked, directed, and choreographed by Mrs Brown, as more than 30 pupils and students from years 7 to 13 practised and rehearsed for many hours in the weeks running up to the show. Not only did we have actors, singers and dancers in the production, the cast were supported by our student Tech Team, on-hand assisting with the sound, lighting, and stage management. The tech crew also put in many hours pre-production, assisting Mr Watkinson with set design, build and painting – alongside some expert carpentry from our DT Technician, Mr Percy, and Mr Archibold from the Site Team. Mrs McCallum and Mrs Conibear ensured that our cast looked fantastic on stage, with their superb efforts in the costume department. Mr Essenhigh, our Producer and Musical Director, led the lunchtime solo singing rehearsals, ensemble singing rehearsals, and conducted our live band for all performances. The band included some of our own music students, giving them the opportunity of learning from and playing live alongside professional musicians. The band also included

some of our VMTs (visiting music teachers) and music teacher Mrs Edwards on backing vocals. The Wiz was a vibrant and exciting musical performance, both for the pupil and student participants, staff helpers and for the audience and we are looking forward to our next musical in November next year – to be announced soon!

“The audition process for the musical was fun but a little nerve racking. Throughout the rehearsal time, lots of hard work and memorable moments went on. Many new friends were made in every age group. Our first time in the Epsom playhouse, it all felt overwhelming but exciting at the same time. Backstage you could clearly see all the teamwork going on to make all the perfect finishing touches. It all came together for the performances, with only a few hiccups being quickly solved by the creativity of everyone. Overall, the play was such a fun experience and something I would do again.” – Hannah Murphy, Year 9

### MUSIC AND TECH LESSONS

The department continues to offer a broad range of timetabled music and music tech lessons. This is supplemented by our team of 15 VMTs providing 1-2-1 music and music theory lessons across all

school sites. We welcomed 4 new members of our VMT team this term and look forward to seeing their pupils flourish under their tuition. During the year, we have introduced 1-2-1 lessons for the Cello and Oboe. There continues to be a great demand for Drum, Piano, Guitar, and Voice lessons. Our Brass and Woodwind tutors also have full timetables, though we continue to welcome new applications for instrumental lessons via the Music page on the School website or this link.

### FUNCTION BAND

Our Function Band continue to meet weekly and have been working hard on their performance techniques. The Band gave a splendid performance at the Ewell Castle Live! Jazz concert at the end of the Spring term. The demand has been high from pupils wishing to join the Function Band and we have been pleased to introduce a Junior Function Band in recent weeks. Our Brass pupils are well catered for with our Brass Band rehearsing together weekly – rounding off their year with a performance in Ewell Village at Ewell Yule.

### CHAPEL CHOIR

Chapel Choir meet every Tuesday and were proud to perform at our Prize Giving Awards Ceremony at the Rose Theatre back in June. The Choir is currently rehearsing for our live ‘Carols by Candlelight’ concert in St Marys Church, as part of our Christmas celebrations, at 7:30pm on 12th December – an event we are eagerly anticipating as the previous two years have been overshadowed by the pandemic. The Chapel Choir is also due to tour Venice at the end of the academic year, and we look forward to preparing for a Mass at the Cathedral in Verona, alongside other concerts in the region.

*Mrs J McCallum*



## SIXTH FORM TEAM BUILDING DAY

On the Friday 9th September, the Sixth Form students embarked upon on a team building journey! The day involved a variety of exciting, thought provoking team building activities followed by a relaxing evening with pizza and a movie.

It began in rainy Nonsuch Park, however everyone was raring to go and as soon as we were separated into groups, we 'carouselled' around the five different activities.

My first activity was laser tag. A particular favourite moment shared by many was stealthily running to the



base to respawn but failing to make it to any cover before being annihilated. Another highlight was Mrs McManus taking the headset away from a student, and then proceeding to venture into the laser tag rampage herself!

The next activity was extremely challenging as we were required to stay out of an area called the 'toxic zone'. We had to move three cannisters from the toxic zone into a closed box, also situated in the toxic zone, and our only equipment was rope. This was an amazing experience as we learned how to communicate with one another and see how people have different approaches to problems.

The next activity put our numeracy and agility skills to the test on a giant number mat and it quickly became apparent that our GCSE Maths needed a dusting down!

After a busy morning in the drizzle, we found ourselves at lunch time. An excursion to Nonsuch café was welcome, where we were even more pleased when Cassie (Mrs McManus's dog) paid us a visit. She quickly integrated herself into the Ewell Castle family and everyone loved her within minutes.

The penultimate activity was to stack blocks. This may sound simple, but it was far from it. Each member of the group had to grasp a piece of string which was attached to a circle in the middle, with a hook dangling from it. As we moved as one singular unit, we were once again developing new skills as well as critical thinking during such high-tension moments, where

our competitive sides emerged. This activity was great fun, especially when the pressure was on as to whom would stack more than four blocks.

Finally, we participated in an activity which was composed of two parts. Firstly, in groups we would stand on two rectangular pieces of wood (one for each foot), then grasping the rope attached to the plank, as a unit, we had to make it to the end of the stretch and back. This was a great example of communication skills coming in to play, especially when everyone wanted to be vocal as to what was happening. We had one practise and then we competed against the other group; this was very amusing for all the students, as well as the teachers watching. The second race involved our groups lining up and placing circular mats down and we had to stand on them one at a time - seems simple enough right? We were so wrong. The activity leader took one mat away at a time, however we had to pass it to him without losing contact with it. This resulted in us bending over, crouching down, doing all sorts of crazy positions to try and get to the mat without completely removing ourselves from the mat we were on.

We returned to School at the end of the day where we enjoyed a much-needed pizza and watched Topgun: Maverick. A well-deserved rest after the day of lively activities. The event proved to be a roaring success, with teamwork at an all-time high, friendships thriving and everyone feeling involved!

**Lona Patel, Year 12**



## CHARITABLE WORKS COMMITTEE UPDATE

This term, it has been Year 7's turn to hold Form Cake Sales. This is where each form brings in cakes and other items to sell and raise money for their House charity. Each form should be commended for their excellent efforts, but especially 7-Bodiam, who raised £227.40 – a new school record! The forms raised the following amounts:

7-Arundel - £68.40

7-Bodiam - £227.40

7-Carisbrooke - £126.12

7-Dover - £104.40

The School has also been supporting Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, through a donut sale, as well as our House charities – Guide Dogs for the Blind, Cardiac Risk in the Young, The Donkey Sanctuary and The Sunnybank Trust. All funds from products purchased and mufti days are enormously appreciated, to help these important causes.

**Harrison McLean, Year 12**  
**Head of the Charitable Works Committee**



## A MINDFUL FESTIVE MESSAGE

*“You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn how to surf” - Jon Kabat-Zinn*

Another term has passed and both pupils and parents have had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the world of Mindfulness!

We have just completed a very successful parents Foundations Mindfulness course and the responses that we had were very positive. We were even asked about a follow-on course!

As for our pupils, there are currently different courses being taught in the following years: 1,2,5,6,7,8,9,11 and 12.

The main aims of our Mindfulness courses for pupils this term have included:

- Fulfilling their potential and pursuing their own goals e.g., being more creative, more relaxed, both academically and personally.



- Improving concentration and focus, in classes, in exams and tests, on the sports field, when playing games, when playing instruments when paying attention and listening to others.
- Experiencing greater wellbeing (e.g., feeling happier, calmer, more fulfilled).
- Developing emotional resilience.
- Making them feel more in tune with themselves and seeing positive ways of dealing with their emotions and responses.

We wish you all a happy and healthy festive holiday season.

***The Mindfulness Team***

## ENCOURAGING PUPIL RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING

Since September we have looked to introduce a number of new initiatives within the School, with the aim of promoting pupil resilience and wellbeing. The first focus was to educate pupils on what resilience is, how adversity happens to all of us at times. We have now started to look at the skills needed to help deal with adversity and therefore be able to demonstrate more resilience. During form times, Tutors have gone through these concepts and discussed the skills they may need to be able to bounce back and cope with adversity.

We are also encouraging more resilience within the classroom, challenging pupils to push themselves, work more independently and support others around them.

Posters are going up throughout the School to promote positive mindsets and inspire self-growth.

We are currently setting up our programme for next term which we will focus on the new ‘Girls’ Empowerment Programme’, working alongside Voice at the Table, who are experts in this field. This programme aims to not only promote girls’ resilience, but we will also have a number of female role models come in to speak to the girls, with the aim of inspiring and educating them. As the year moves on, we intend to set up support and education for the boys, with the aim of bringing the whole School community together with our shared values.

***Miss L Wilkinson***

## STARTING WITH THE BASICS – SUSTAINABILITY AT EWELL CASTLE

The Autumn term has been a time for investigative work to discover just how sustainable we are as a school in an endeavour to ask questions such as how much energy do we consume and what is the carbon output of this? How much waste is left over at the end of lunch service and what happens to it? What is the biodiversity of the School grounds? And ultimately, what do we as a community want to focus on developing so that we can reduce our carbon footprint and impact on the environment?

There is a lot of investigative work that has taken place, but a lot still to do before we can adopt appropriate and effective changes that will help the School reduce its environmental impact and reach net zero.

In the meantime, we decided start with the basics, and with something that the Student Council have been keen to get right – our waste.

Plastic waste contributes 3.4% of the global greenhouse gas emissions (OECD, 2022), as well as permeating our environment causing devastation

to ecosystems, habitats and people's livelihoods. So in our little corner of Ewell, making sure our plastic waste is washed and placed in the correct bin (the recycling bin!) seems an easy win.

The same with paper. One weekend newspaper produces 1.8kg CO<sub>2</sub> e, if that newspaper isn't recycled 2.3 CO<sub>2</sub> e is added to that newspaper's greenhouse gas contribution (Berners-Lee, 2020 p.53). Now multiply that by the amount of paper used in a school and imagine the impact!

Educating our School community on the importance of recycling is imperative to reducing our impact on the planet. Ensuring that the right waste management systems are in place to make that as easy as possible for us all results in an easy win! The Student Council wanted proper recycling bins in place and so they are. All we need to do now is remember to use them properly.

*Miss S Earthrowl*



## HOUSE REPORT – AUTUMN 2022

The House competitions this year kicked off with European Languages Day in September. There were some amazing cakes baked by pupils in all the Houses, but Dover House made multiple entries, with Annabelle Watkins winning 'Best Effort' and Ethan Worthington winning Best Bake, stealing 70 points each for Dover House. Arundel House came second, with 'Best Showstopper' from Yusuf Khan. It was great to see

pupils and staff donning traditional clothing from countries around the world to celebrate their culture.

The English Department ran a competition for National Poetry Day, which this year had the theme of 'Environment'. Some masterpieces with poignant messages were entered by pupils (and staff!), but Dover came out top with pupils winning the Year 7, Year 9 and KS5 competition, resulting

in 102 points in total for Dover, 51 for both Bodiam and Carisbrooke and 21 for Arundel.

The last week of term sees multiple House competitions and events with House Christmas Singing and Girls' House Football. Those pupils in House leadership positions from years 7-13 will also be working together to win House Bowling as part of their teambuilding experience.

As the term draws to a close, Bodiam are in 4th place with 204 points, Carisbrooke in 3rd with 229 points, Arundel in 2nd with 243 points and in the lead are Dover with 366 points. Let's see what happens to the scores in the Spring term!

*Miss S Earthrowl*

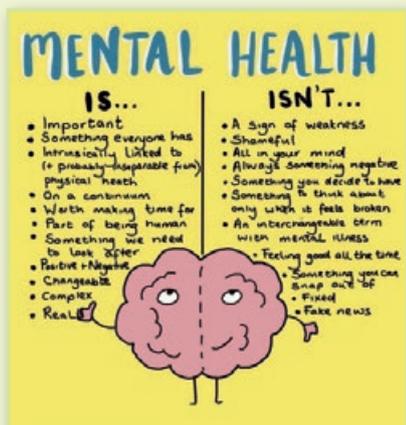


## MAT CLUB UPDATE

The Autumn term saw Old Ewellian, ex-Head Girl and the first Photography Scholar, Georgie von Grundherr return to give a fantastic motivational and encouraging speech to all the scholars in a welcome event in September. Georgie spoke confidently about her journey to becoming Head Girl and all her hard work in achieving an A\* in her scholarship subject which helped her secure a place at Reading University. Georgie praised the School on its friendly, family environment and supportive staff. It was great to see Georgie again and we wish her all the best on her educational journey!

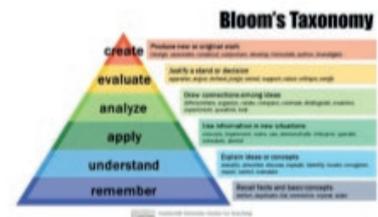
Following this, all the new and existing scholars from all disciplines enjoyed meeting each other and catching up over a fabulous afternoon tea! A big thank you to the wonderful catering staff for this spread. There will be more Scholars' Talks in the Spring term and if you are interested in delivering one, please contact d.carrick@ewellcastle.co.uk.

In the half termly More Able and Talented Club, the pupils were encouraged to consider and put into action Higher Order Thinking approaches. Benjamin Bloom was an Academic Educational Psychologist and developed a taxonomy of educational objectives that are still practised today. The objectives are used in lessons and are encouraged to formulate thinking strategies in



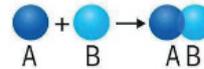
Half term 1: September & October  
2022  
Bloom's Taxonomy Question stems

- Bloom's Taxonomy is a classification of levels of intellectual behaviour important in learning. Bloom's model describes six levels of thinking, arranging these sequentially from the least complex to the most complex.
- LoT 1 – Knowledge – simple recall
- LoT 2 – Comprehension – restate what you 'know'
- LoT 3 – Application – apply what learned to another context
- HoT 4 – Analysis – study separate parts in relation to one another
- HoT 5 – Synthesis – creation of an original thought
- HoT 6 – Evaluation – judge what is analysed



## Activities you can try...where would you start?

- **Analysis:**
- Design a questionnaire to gather information (...on being a Scholar?!)
- Write an advert to sell a new product
- Make a family tree showing relationships
- **Evaluate:**
- Invent a machine to do a specific task
- Write a TV show about...
- Sell an idea
- **Create:**
- Prepare a case to present your view about...
- Prepare a list of activities you would like to see added to your school timetable
- Write a school report



school and in everyday life too. Giving pupils further opportunity to explore these is beneficial and can build up the confidence to ask others and themselves more questions.

In the second half of the term, the subject area was mental health. Thoughtful and meaningful discussions were had in a safe and respectful place.

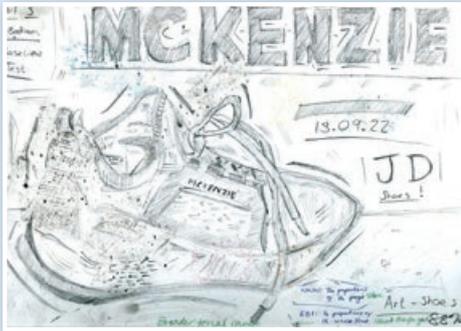
Although all Scholars are advised to attend, this is an open club for all students. This academic year the year groups have merged so there is more interaction and opportunity to build friendships and connections. This is also a chance to hear other's viewpoints and to stretch pupils'

thoughts and opinions.

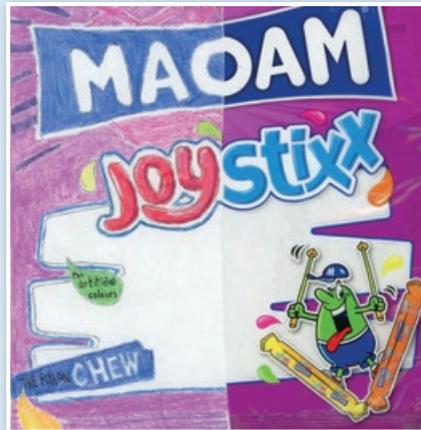
In the new year, the Academic Mentoring group will start again for the remaining two terms – this is invite only and parents/guardians will be notified by letter. Aspects of Building Learning Power will be discussed such as 'Reviewing' where the importance of peer and self-assessment will be discussed.

*Ms D Carrick*

## ARTISTS OF THE AUTUMN TERM



Avi Shanmughan - Year 7



Hailey Lai - Year 8



Neve Gardner - Year 9



Iris de Monchy - Year 10



Faye Sanders - Year 11



Matthew McLeod - Sixth Form

## REVIEW OF RAPHAEL'S EXHIBITION AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY

I recently visited the Raphael Credit Suisse Exhibition at the National Gallery and previously attended exhibitions at Tate Britain and by Durer, so I was eager to visit Raphael's exhibition.

I was not sure what I expected but I was pleasantly surprised when walking into the room, I was greeted by a colossal, religious masterpiece of the 'Christ upon a cross'. The Christ, clad in a red robe covering the lower half of his body, was accompanied by two, seemingly symmetrical angels with



black wings - one dressed in a flowing, teal dress and the other a replica however in a peach dress. At the bottom left and right of the painting, the kneeling figures of John the Evangelist and the Virgin Mary can be seen with Mary Magdalene and Francis of Assisi standing upright. This artwork is titled the 'Mond crucifixion' and is an oil on poplar panel and was part of a series of three other panels, all of which exist - one located in the National Gallery (see below), one at the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Portugal and one in the North Carolina Museum of Art.

Another of his artworks that I found myself fascinated by, yet again of a religious theme which seems to be consistent through all his artworks, was 'The Tempi Madonna' which shows the Virgin Mary pressing her cheek against Christ's face and holding his back while looking at him with maternal love. This beautiful painting was created in 1508 for the Tempi family and the medium was oil on wood. The skin of the Christ and Madonna looks almost porcelain with a gentle blush adorning the Christ's and the Virgin's cheeks. This blush is complimented by the same



delicate hue of pink and a darker teal in the Virgin's dress and robe.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed this exhibition and was enamoured by Raphael's magnificent paintings and his immaculate skill at manipulating the shading in his artwork to create such realistic clothing, as can be seen in the robes of the Madonna.

**Maya Boneva, Year 13**

## ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Our very own Artist in Residence, Kieran, very kindly produced a wonderful painting for our new Sixth Form hub in Fitzalan House. Kieran has been painting since he was aged 2, after being inspired by his grandmother, who is an artist. He still regularly paints at her art studio and sells pieces to the public occasionally through her Instagram account. It was his grandmother who influenced him, and she has continuously encouraged him.

Kieran is an Art Scholar and really enjoys the variety of art opportunities given to him at Ewell Castle. The piece he's produced for Fitzalan House is called 'The Way of the World', an abstract piece in acrylic, ink and pastel which illustrates that life is never easy and we have to work



to overcome our problems. He used a previous painting as his inspiration for this piece, which is much larger than any he has completed before and had its challenges.

As an Art Scholar, Kieran attends the weekly Art Club, MAT Club, exhibits

in the Scholar's Art Exhibition and enjoys weekly workshops where he can try out new and different artistic techniques. We look forward to seeing Kieran continue and develop his artistic skills as he progresses through the School.

## RUGBY

The Champions! Following on from the success of the School's first rugby trophy in 20 years last season, the squad have continued to impress by winning the Jonny Wilkinson Cup! Huge congratulations.



For match reports, refer to SOCS

## NATIONAL TEAM CALL UP!

Congratulations to Spike who has been recently selected by the England FA to travel to Spain and Turkey with the England Men's U16 Football Squad. Exciting times for this talented young man!



# THE WIZ

