



INTRODUCTION

In this eventful half term, we are immensely proud of the exceptional achievements of our students in their studies and extracurricular activities. They have worked very hard and demonstrated the school's ethos of Ambition, Character, and Civic Virtue.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK 'YOUR VOICE MATTERS'

Every year, Drayton Manor celebrates Children's Mental Health Week with a series of events for students, teachers, and parents. This year's theme was 'My Voice Matters', and a number of wellbeing-focused events were organised between 5 and 9 February. Throughout the week, students engaged in various activities aimed at fostering wellbeing and amplifying their voices. They participated in Wellbeing Ambassadors Book Clubs, where they shared their thoughts about books that focused on mental health in a safe space. Students also created digital art allowing them to express themselves creatively, while mindfulness exercises taught them relaxation techniques to manage stress. Overall, they actively contributed to destigmatising mental health and advocating for their well-being.

MUSIC SHOW



On 5 February, the talented students of Years 8 and 11 performed a magical music performance for their peers and faculty. From soulful melodies to energetic beats, they captivated the audience with their talent and passion. Cllr Julian Gallant, conductor and pianist, who has experience performing around the world with ensembles including the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, Oxford Philomusica and City of London Sinfonia was at the event to share his musical expertise. He was enamoured with the performances and graciously answered all questions asked by our students about

his musical experiences. He discussed a range of topics regarding his favourite composers, artists, and classical music. Mr Gallant spoke to students about the importance of staying focused and disciplined, so that students can go above and beyond in a fruitful musical career.

DRAYTON MANOR WELCOMES HARVARD



Drayton Manor was honoured to host Mr Stuart Gordon, representing Harvard University, who graciously shared his expertise with our Year 9 and 12 students. Stuart graduated from Harvard's John F Kennedy School of Government in 1997 with a Master's In Public Administration. He sits on the Board of the Harvard Club of the UK and is responsible for co-ordinating and developing the Club's national school visits programme.



During an engaging assembly with Year 9, Mr Gordon provided invaluable advice and guidance on navigating their studies as they approach their GCSEs, offering insights to empower students in their academic journey. In the Year 12 session, Stuart delved deep into the intricate process of applying to US universities, particularly focusing on the unique opportunities awaiting at Harvard. Students were enthralled as Stuart outlined actionable steps they can take in the coming months to craft compelling applications for prestigious American institutions. From exploring student life in America to demystifying the Common App essay process and signposting pathways to accessing and calculating financial aid,

Stuart's expertise provided a roadmap for our students' aspirations, inspiring them to aim high and pursue their academic dreams with confidence.

JACK PETCHEY - SPEAK OUT CHALLENGE SPEAK OUT



A group of Year 10 students enjoyed a day of workshops delivered by Shirin from Speakers Trust in partnership with the Jack Petchey Foundation. Shirin is a Trainer for the Speakers Trust and delivers outreach programmes in secondary schools, unlocking the potential of students through dynamic workshops. The Speak Out Challenge is an opportunity for students to develop their important communication skills in a positive and supportive environment. There are three key aspects of effective communication:

- Content - What goes into the speech
- Structure - How the speech is put together
- Delivery - Bring your speech to life

Students enthusiastically contributed to a series of activities to improve their confidence on stage, as well as focusing on the top tips for effective delivery, such as keeping to time and projecting your voice. They also worked on strong starts and powerful closes, to help catch the audience's interest and leave them inspired by a positive message. After presenting their speeches, students were marked on their content, delivery, and structure. The results of the workshop were as follows:

- Winner - Hermione
- Reserve - Alfie
- Highly Commended - Daniella, Timur and Elizabeth

Hermione will go on to compete in a national digital final which will be held later in the academic year. Shirin was really impressed by the engagement of students in the session and the excellent delivery of all students' speeches.



NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

Running from the 5th to 11th February, the aim of National Apprenticeship Week is to raise awareness of the many benefits apprenticeships can offer students. Throughout the week, as part of the assembly programme, students received a presentation exploring the route of apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are available to anyone aged 16+ in over 170 industries. Typically, apprentices are employed for at least 30hrs per week, with apprenticeships taking between 1 to 4 years to complete. Apprenticeships can be at a level equivalent to GCSEs right up to master's level. Currently, there are 1500+ vacancies in the United Kingdom, with companies such as Transport for London and PwC. The latest Higher & Degree Apprenticeship Vacancy Listing can be found here. (Link) Amazing Apprenticeships have an array of resources for students, as well as parents, carers, and guardians.

MEDICAL ETHICS WORKSHOP

Throughout this term, our Year 13 Medicine and healthcare applicants have been diligently honing their interview skills in preparation for their upcoming interviews. Notably, several students participated in an insightful virtual workshop facilitated by Newcastle University. The workshop was run by Elayna, who is a member of the Outreach Team at the University. Within this session, participants delved into various MMI (Multiple Mini Interview) scenarios, actively engaging in discussions, and refining their grasp on essential medical terminology vital for successful interviews. Such proactive initiatives underscore our students' commitment to excellence and readiness to embark on their journeys towards a career in medicine.

ETHIC OF EXCELLENCE



The Ethic of Excellence Awards ceremony honoured the brightest stars among the Year 7, 8, 9, and 10 students. With certificates in hand, and smiles illuminating their faces,

these exceptional scholars were celebrated for their unwavering dedication to academic excellence. Each awardee posed proudly for a photograph, capturing the essence of their remarkable achievements. These snapshots will undoubtedly serve as cherished memories of a day filled with triumph and recognition. To mark this momentous occasion, the students were treated to a delectable spread of snacks, a fitting reward for their hard work and commitment to excellence.

CAREERS IN ART CONSERVATION WITH JOANNA SHEPARD



Our Art and Photography students from Year 11, 12, and 13 welcomed Joanna Shepard, a distinguished professional specialising in the conservation and restoration of modern and contemporary artworks, as our esteemed guest speaker. Joanna has over 25 years' experience in museums and the private sector, working on painting and selected 3D artworks in a wide range of media. During an enlightening workshop, Joanna shared her educational journey, shedding light on the diverse pathways available for aspiring conservationists and restorers. Drawing from her wealth of experience, Joanna provided a captivating glimpse into the complexities of her profession, offering fascinating insights into the daily life of someone in her role, along with captivating anecdotes from her illustrious career. The highlight of the session was undoubtedly the Q&A, where students eagerly engaged with Joanna, delving into discussions about the creative industry and seeking invaluable advice on how to embark on their own journey and accumulate valuable experience in the field. Joanna's visit left a lasting impression on our students, igniting their passion and curiosity for the world of art conservation and inspiring them to explore the boundless possibilities within the realm of creativity.

YEAR 11 PARENTS' EVENING

The parents Year 11 students logged in for parents' evening on 21 January, an

invaluable opportunity to engage with teachers and discuss their child's academic journey. Throughout the evening, meaningful conversations flourished as parents and teachers exchanged observations, insights, and aspirations for the students' future. From academic progress to personal growth, every facet of the students' development was explored, ensuring a holistic understanding of their journey through Year 11.

MATILDA REHEARSALS



The gifted and show-stopping students from the drama department are hard at work rehearsing for the upcoming school musical, "Matilda." From mastering intricate choreography to perfecting powerful vocals, they are pouring their hearts and souls into bringing this beloved story to life on stage. Stay tuned for more updates as we countdown to the big performance on 29 February. It promises to be a show-stopping extravaganza you won't want to miss!

100+ AWARD OF HOME MERITS CEREMONY



The 100+ Award of House Merits ceremony was held on Thursday, 1 February 2024. This event was a celebration of academic prowess and spirited participation, students who achieved over one hundred points in house events were recognized and rewarded with a delightful feast of paninis and refreshing squash. The 100+ Merits Awards ceremony, held with great fanfare and excitement, served as a testament to the dedication and excellence displayed by these exceptional individuals. Among the recipients were students who had excelled in a diverse array



of activities, ranging from debating and drama to music and art. Their achievements showcased not only their talents but also the collective spirit of collaboration and camaraderie fostered within the school community.

JAZZ WORKSHOP



The music department orchestrated an exciting jazz workshop, spearheaded by Mr. Sam Eastmond, a prominent figure renowned for his avant-garde ensemble, 'The Spike Orchestra'. Students explored the rich tapestry of Jazz, and its historical depth and dynamic rhythms. Under Mr. Eastmond's guidance, they delved into improvisation techniques and mastered classic melodies, gaining insights into the essence of Jazz. The workshop was infused with Mr Eastmond's distinctive musical perspective.

TABLA WORKSHOP



In a mesmerizing fusion of tradition and innovation, Year 9 students delved into the captivating world of tabla rhythms under the guidance of esteemed musician, Mr. Alok Verma. The tabla is a pair of hand drums from India dating back to the 18th century, it has been the principal percussion instrument in Indian classical music. The tabla workshop, held with great enthusiasm and curiosity, provided a unique opportunity for young minds to explore the intricate beats and melodic patterns of this ancient Indian percussion instrument. Mr. Alok Verma, a seasoned tabla maestro renowned for his mastery and passion for the art form, led the workshop with infectious energy and expertise. With years of experience, Mr. Verma

brought a wealth of knowledge and insight to the session, igniting a spark of inspiration in each participant.

DIGITAL AWARENESS WEEK

From 5 February to 9 February, the Well-being Ambassadors and students engaged in discussions covering a range of topics vital for online safety and digital literacy. From secure passwords to navigating social media responsibly, the sessions offered practical insights and guidance. This initiative underscored the importance of Digital Awareness Week, serving as a reminder of the critical need for digital education and fostering a safer online environment for all.

BOOK SWAP CONTEST

Congratulations to all who took part in the Book Swap event on 25 January! Many students visited the library, where books were donated by students and parents, and swapped, with all thrilled by their newly chosen books. All participants gained points for their respective Houses – five points for attending and an additional point for every book they swapped. The winners of the event were Casper Wojtowicz from Year 8, Aleigha Selby, and Jai Ashby from Year 7. The winners received brand new books from the library manager, Ms Jenkins.

SAFETY FIRST DAY

During the safety-first day for Year 8 students, an array of engaging sessions unfolded, covering diverse topics aimed at fostering a culture of safety and responsibility. Students eagerly participated in workshops facilitated by esteemed services such as the London Fire Brigade, London Ambulance Service, and Metropolitan Police. These sessions provided valuable insights into emergency response, fire safety, and community policing. The dynamic interactions not only enhanced the student's understanding of these crucial subjects but also showcased their character and ambition as they actively absorbed the essential knowledge imparted by the dedicated professionals. Throughout the day, the young participants demonstrated civic virtue by actively engaging in discussions about community safety and taking part in interactive scenarios. Their enthusiasm and commitment reflected a genuine desire to contribute positively to their communities. The collaboration with these essential services not only broadened the students' perspectives but also instilled a sense of responsibility and preparedness, laying a

foundation for them to become informed and proactive citizens in matters of safety and public welfare.

YEAR 8 AND 9 UPSTANDING CITIZEN ASSEMBLY



Year 8 and 9 students gathered in the main hall for a thought-provoking assembly focused on the significance of being upstanding citizens in the community. The assembly aimed to instil in students the values of integrity, empathy, and social responsibility. Through engaging presentations and interactive discussions, students were encouraged to reflect on their roles as members of both the school and wider society. They explored topics such as kindness, respect for others, and the importance of taking positive action to make a difference in the world around them. From volunteering in their local communities to standing up against injustice, students were inspired to embrace their power as agents of positive change. As the assembly ended, students left with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to embodying the principles of good citizenship in their daily lives.

POSITIVELY YOU PROGRAMME



The Year 11 were treated to an empowering and uplifting experience through the "Positively You" program, aimed at fostering confidence, self-esteem, and resilience. The program, held in the school auditorium, provided students with valuable tools and insights to navigate the challenges of adolescence with positivity and strength. The event was led by passionate guest speaker



Positively Dave, a distinguished public speaker, who is known for his showmanship and connection with students. The program offered a dynamic blend of interactive talks and team-building activities. Students were encouraged to embrace their unique qualities, celebrate their successes, and overcome obstacles with resilience and determination. Through engaging discussions and personal anecdotes, speakers shared valuable strategies for managing stress, building healthy relationships, and cultivating a positive mindset. From practising gratitude and self-care to setting achievable goals and embracing failure as a stepping stone to success, students gained practical skills to thrive both academically and personally.

PIANO SESSIONS IN THE DINING HALL



In a harmonious celebration of creativity and mindfulness, students took centre stage in the dining hall during Mental Health Awareness Week, showcasing their piano-playing talents to promote well-being and self-expression. Amidst the hustle of school life, the piano performances served as a gentle reminder of the importance of self-care and mental well-being. As students poured their emotions into each keystroke, the music became a powerful vehicle for self-expression and catharsis, allowing both performers and listeners alike to find solace in the shared experience. The varied range of musical styles and genres showcased the individuality and creativity of each performer, highlighting the unique ways in which music can serve as a form of therapy and healing.

GO GREEN INITIATIVE

On Wednesday 17 organized a Go Green initiative aimed at raising awareness about litter and recycling. The House Captains met on the piazza to help ensure the school site remains environmentally friendly and sustainable. They enthusiastically participated in the initiative by taking to the campus grounds to tackle litter and ensure cleaner surroundings for all. Armed with gloves and rubbish bags, student volunteers embarked on

a mission to pick up litter scattered across the campus. Their dedication and commitment to making a positive impact on the environment were truly commendable.



The Go Green initiative serves as a reminder of the importance of environmental stewardship and the collective responsibility we all share in safeguarding our planet.

HOUSE CHALLENGE



In a thrilling display of knowledge and teamwork, Griffin House emerged triumphant in the recent House Challenge, marking an exciting highlight of the house events calendar. Students from all houses showcased their intellect and quick thinking in a series of challenging rounds. However, it was Griffin House's exceptional performance that secured them the coveted victory, amassing an impressive 145 House Points. Following closely behind were Pegasus House with 120 House Points in second place, followed by Caladrius House with 115 House Points in third place, and Phoenix House with 95 House Points in fourth place. Led by their captain and supported by their teammates, Griffin House displayed remarkable camaraderie and determination throughout the event. As the winners, Griffin House proudly hoisted the championship trophy, celebrating their achievement and reinforcing their status as formidable contenders in future house competitions.

DIGITAL WELLBEING IN ART FORM



Vihaan, a talented Year 10 student, showcased his artistic prowess during Digital Awareness and Children's Mental Health Week with a captivating watercolour painting. His artwork eloquently illustrated the intricate connection between mental health and the digital realm. We are immensely proud of Vihaan's insightful contribution, which not only showcases his creativity but also raises awareness about important issues affecting young minds today. Through his expressive brushstrokes, Vihaan reminds us of the significance of nurturing mental well-being in the digital age. His contribution serves as a poignant reminder of the power of art to inspire and provoke meaningful conversations.

SPORTS



A select group of Year 9 girls, recognized for their exceptional behaviour and dedication to their studies, have been chosen to participate in an exciting 10-week rugby program. Led by experienced coaches, the girls delve into the world of rugby. Additionally, the program offers a safe space for the girls to address and tackle day-to-day issues they may encounter, fostering personal growth and resilience. Every Wednesday, the girls eagerly depart from the school grounds to train at Grasshopper RFC, an esteemed venue frequented by Sky Sports reporters. Here, they immerse themselves in the exhilarating atmosphere of rugby, honing their skills on the field while also experiencing the thrill of being in a professional sporting environment. The program not only promotes



physical activity but also instils confidence and teamwork among the participants. As they bond over their shared love for the sport, the girls forge lasting friendships and create cherished memories that will stay with them long after the program concludes.

FOOTBALL

In an exhilarating display of skill and determination, the U14 girls' team secured a resounding victory in their home game against Ealing Fields, triumphing with an impressive scoreline of 6-1. The girls demonstrated exceptional teamwork and prowess on the field.



Meanwhile, the Year 8 boys faced a tough match against Ark Soane, ultimately falling short with a score of 3-6. Despite the defeat, the boys displayed resilience and sportsmanship throughout the game, earning praise for their efforts. In a friendly match, the combined Year 7/8 boys' team experienced a narrow loss to Dormers Wells, with the final score standing at 2-3. Despite the outcome, the boys exhibited determination and unity on the field, setting a positive example for future matches.

On a brighter note, the Year 7 boys celebrated a well-deserved victory in Round 2 of the Ealing Cup against Dormers Wells. Their stellar performance and unwavering spirit propelled them to success, marking a memorable moment in their sporting journey.



YEAR 9 OPTIONS

Students will shortly begin preparing for their Year 10 GCSE options. There will be a range of events and activities taking place for students on site after half term starting the week commencing from 21 February.

Events for students:

- 21 February: Year 9 GCSE Options Assembly
- 23 February: Stand up to Bullying Day
- 27 February: Year 10 and 12 Brilliant Club Graduation Trip
- 29 February: Year 9 Employer Taster Day

Parents and carers please note the following dates of events:

- March 5: Year 9 Options Evening
- March 7: Year 9 Parents' Evening (4.30 to 7.00 PM)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Thank you for your support of the students and the school. We will share more exciting work with you next half term. Have a nice break!

The school will resume on Monday 19 February 2024.

Half Term Break 12 - 19 February

Important Dates after Half Term

Year 12 Parents' Evening

The Parents' Evening will be on 22 February from 4.30 PM - 7.00 PM. We are once again using an online appointment booking system called School Cloud to conduct these appointments where you will receive key information about your child's progress in each of their subject areas. The evening will focus on how your child is progressing in their subjects and we will therefore not be able to facilitate appointments with tutors at this time.

