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Trip to Morocco

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WELCOME

Since I last wrote to you, The Gryphon School community has truly been **"living life in all its fullness"** with a wide range of trips, visits, events, and fundraisers. I am so grateful to our wonderfully committed and dedicated staff, who give so much of their energy and time to provide our students with transformational opportunities to support their academic progress and personal development. Two events and one trip will live in my memory for a long time due to their scale, quality, and impact: Sister Act, the Carol Service, and our 6th form Geography trip to Morocco.



Sister Act was a privilege to watch and humbling to subsequently receive such overwhelmingly positive reviews from audience members. It was hard to believe that this was a school not a professional production. I am so grateful for the positivity, collaborative way of working, and dedication of everyone involved. I would like to acknowledge and thank the leadership and commitment of Director, Zoe Gabbidon, and Musical Director, Val Mizen – you are absolute Gryphon legends!

The Carol Service showed The Gryphon School in its very best light. It was a phenomenal event in the stunning setting of a packed Sherborne Abbey; we are so fortunate to have such talented musical performers at The Gryphon School. It was a remarkable achievement for Mr Mizen and Mr McDonald to coordinate such an incredible evening just 72 hours after Sister Act! Thank you.

The Sixth Form geography trip to Morocco was a massive success. From exploring the souks of Marrakesh to riding camels in the desert, over 40 Gryphon Geographers experienced and learnt about a completely different environment and culture. I am particularly pleased to see the return of foreign trips to our school following Covid. These trips provide such lifelong, memorable experiences for our students and I am so grateful to Mr Woodville for his considerable time and effort in planning this trip and for Mr O'Donnell, Mrs Olward and Miss Griffiths for accompanying him to Morocco during their half-term. With trips confirmed for Berlin and the battle fields in France, and others in the pipeline, it is exciting to know so many Gryphon students will be able to experience a foreign school trip in the coming years.

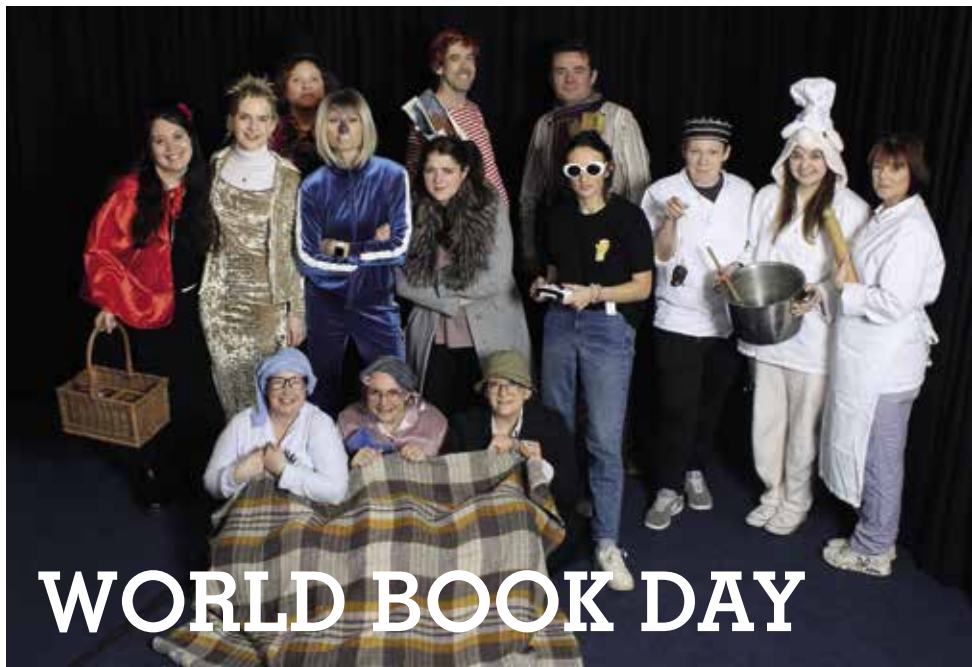
On an academic note, as I write, our Y11 and Y13 students are currently sitting their second set of pre-public exams. They have worked so hard to put themselves into a position of maximum opportunity for their futures and will continue to do so over the next few months; indeed, many of our Y11 students will be taking advantage of our Easter Holiday revision sessions that our staff are kindly providing for them. We are all so proud of our Y11 and Y13 students and wish them the very best of luck for their summer exams. We have also recently received the fantastic news that five Y13 students have been offered places at Oxbridge Universities; congratulations to George, Jen, Olympia, who have offers from Cambridge University, and Maddie and Eleanor, who have offers from Oxford University. This is a significant individual achievement for them all; thank you to Dr Otto and all the staff, who have supported them to achieve this.

I hope you enjoy a relaxing and restful Easter Holidays with your families.

Jim Gower
Acting Headteacher

NURTURING

If your child is in a Key Stage 3 Nurture class, please keep an eye on your emails for the second issue of our Nurture Newsletter, full of content about your child's learning, book recommendations, hints and tips to support with emotions and behaviours, student stars and much more.



Lots of departments came in fancy dress for various books including Charlie and the Chocolate Factory which set the theme for this year's events. We arranged a giant golden ticket treasure hunt in the library which was successfully completed by 225 students from Years 7-13. We also encouraged teachers to hand out Level 2 rewards (Golden Tickets) for demonstrating literacy skills like reading aloud in front of the class or using subject specific terminology correctly. 80 students across the school received golden tickets for their efforts. There was a book swap event in the library where students exchanged their preloved books, and we started a fundraiser page to raise money for tutor copies of fiction books to encourage reading for pleasure.

YEAR 11

SURVIVAL PACKS

Mrs Peacocke and Mrs Bunting put together 250 "survival packs" for the year 11 students before their final GCSE mock exams.

The year 11s have worked so incredibly hard and are showing huge progress and determination in the run up to their GCSEs.

This was just a small gesture, to encourage and motivate them for their futures. The year 11s loved the thought and effort that went into making these packs for them.



GRYPHON STUDENTS ON THE TEDx STAGE!

Back for a second time TEDxShaftesbury Youth brought together passionate young people from a variety of backgrounds to deliver powerful talks on a range of topics from diversity in education, to why we should all learn sign language, and the creativity crisis, to why we should all love bugs.

Competition was fierce for places on this global stage, so we were delighted that five of our students secured spots. Speaking in front of a sold-out audience, the event was also livestreamed around the world, and the talks will be uploaded to the official TEDx website - we look forward to sharing these links so everyone can enjoy them.

Callum H spoke about the need for diversity in education, to ensure fair representation and inclusion for all students. Yayha P gave a thought-provoking talk entitled 'The Theatre of Global Injustice' which questioned why some conflicts garner more media and political attention than others. Toby B delivered an engaging and entertaining talk on why we should all love bugs, combatting people's fears about the more unpopular bugs such as wasps and spiders, and educating the audience on how valuable they really are.

Tom M silently opened his talk with sign language as the audience watched, before talking about why we should all be learning sign language in school. And Josie R closed the TEDx event with her impassioned speech

about the creativity crisis, talking about how the government needs to properly fund arts education in schools.

Nadia C, who spoke at the previous TEDxShaftesbury Youth event in 2022, returned to host the Lightning Stage, a platform which gave students the chance to deliver shorter 5-minute talks, and which acts as a stepping stone for TEDx speakers of the future.

The event was a huge success. Toby said after the event "I would absolutely recommend this experience. Giving a speech to a crowd of people, off by heart, is incredibly nerve-racking but after you've done it you feel so much more confident in yourself. If I managed to do this, I could do anything, it feels like!"



GRYPHON COP28

In December we invited students from across Dorset and South Somerset to join us to discuss key climate change issues. COP (Conference of the Parties) is a series of United Nations climate change conferences, which have been running since 1995, and has this year been held in Dubai. The Gryphon School decided to host our own event, and it was co-organised by Gryphon Sixth Form student Liv B, and teacher Mrs Cavallaro.

Students from 12 schools attended the event, with each group representing a different country from around the world, having to discuss the issues that their 'country' was facing and negotiate with the other countries represented, to come up with meaningful solutions. Students aged 10-18 years old took part, generating proposals which tackled themes such as oceans, energy, forests and food, and cities. They addressed the packed hall, and eloquently discussed the environmental challenges facing the world today.

The event saw keynote speeches delivered by Peter Littlewood from the Young People's Trust for the Environment, Doug Skinner from Greenpeace, Seb Brookes from The Eden Project Portland, and Asher Budwig from Lola's Cupcakes.

In the afternoon the event held a Sustainable Careers Fair, with universities including Exeter, Plymouth, Cardiff and Cambridge showcasing their sustainable courses, and large companies such as Jimmy's Iced Coffee, RSK, and Lush discussing green career opportunities. They were joined by Dorset Council, Footprint Architects, Sherborne Repairs Café and DeFashion Dorset to name but a few.

Mrs Cavallaro added *"It is days like this that make teaching the best and most important job in the world. Led by an 18-year-old, young people came together to discuss the complex issue of climate change. Phasing out fossil fuels is now almost a certainty, and education must keep pace to ensure our young people enter the workforce as leaders of this transition."*



BTEC ENTERPRISES

A student in Year 13 ran a social enterprise in school over two days, with the profit made being donated to RAF Community Charity. This social enterprise was the basis for his BTEC Enterprise and Entrepreneurship assessment, so he had to plan, run and review its success.

He said, "I really enjoyed it as it's a great way of providing customers with great quality products and a good way of raising money for a charity of my choice."

4. DoFE

DoFE SKILLS

As part of my Duke of Edinburgh award I have to learn a skill, so I decided to pick agility with my dog. Agility is a sport where you run around an arena, sending your dog over a course of jumps, tunnels and other equipment such as seesaws and A-frames, tyres and long jumps.

I have been doing agility with my dog for about a year and a half at my local club with my old dog, Sonny. Starting DoFE really encouraged me to extend my skills; trainers and other dog owners at the club have been helpful and I have been allowed to run different dogs. I have developed my skills and have learnt to adjust my handling and speed to their different dogs – these are different ages, breeds and levels of experience. As a result of helping others, I was awarded with a teamwork award at the annual club awards.

Most recently, I was allowed to ‘borrow’ a very experienced, grade 6, agility dog called Lily (owned by my instructor) to enter in a competition. In agility, dogs are divided by height and experience. The grades run from 1, the least experienced, to 7, most experienced. We entered two small, grade 4-7 steeplechase events (which consists of just tunnels and jumps) and two small, grade 4-7 agility events (which contains tunnels, jumps, A-frames, seesaws, weaves and a dog-walk). We won 3 rosettes overall, Lily and I had a brilliant day!

I hope I can compete Lily again at another local show and improve my skills and confidence even more. I wouldn’t have been able to have chances like these if it wasn’t for my lovely instructors and the DoFE programme.

By Charlotte M



DoFE AND MY EPQ

When choosing DoFE, one of the most daunting elements is the skills section, which are continued for 12 months for the Gold award. After previously dabbling in two instruments in Bronze and Silver, I decided to try something completely new and out of my comfort zone: blacksmithing! I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to try this for my 12-month skill section, and during the process I learnt all sorts of techniques, creating small things which at the time I was proud of. I realised when these 12 months were coming to an end that I didn’t want to just move on like I did with my other two skills, and saw the perfect opportunity to significantly develop this newfound passion for blacksmithing: EPQ.

The EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) is an additional qualification outside of A-levels which involves a self-led research project, creating an essay or an artifact. I chose the latter, and decided to create a sword, pushing my forging skills much further than I had previously. The result was a sword significantly better than I had ever hoped for, garnering praise from my peers and teachers alike.

While this experience of the EPQ was fantastic, it all stemmed from DoFE and pushing myself to do something unknown to me. This has proven to me just how beneficial it can be if truly taken advantage of, creating a hopefully lifelong passion that I never would have otherwise dreamed of doing. Rather than just getting through DoFE with something easy that you can drop afterwards, the experience is much more fulfilling if it is genuinely embraced. Many of the elements of DoFE require you to do things you would never normally do, and the sections can be this too. My only regret is not realising how beneficial this experience could be sooner and waiting until Gold to really leave my comfort zone. The whole experience of DoFE and EPQ has opened my eyes to a career path I had never once considered, and for that I will be ever grateful. I would urge anyone taking DoFE to embrace the potential that every aspect of it offers, rather than simply taking the easy route, and maybe you will discover a lifelong passion as well.

By Ewan M



SHERBORNE CIVIC DAY

We were delighted to have two Gryphon students invited to speak at Sherborne Civic Day where Mayors and Chairs of other towns and parishes in the area were invited to visit Sherborne. Liv and Hannah spoke about the work of the Youth Council plus the fantastic COP28 event last year. They shared the work they had done alongside the Youth Council and other staff and students and the links we have made with members of the local community.

Many of the Mayors and leaders were inspired by their words and are keen to start their own initiatives in their towns and parishes.



NORTH DORSET CAREERS FAIR

Fifty Year 8 students had a fantastic morning on a visit to the North Dorset Careers Fair at The Exchange in Sturminster Newton.

The students were able to hear from employers, apprenticeship, and training providers, as well as local education organisations. It was great to see so many meaningful conversations taking place. Some great discussions on their futures were taking place.

YEAR 8 OPTIONS

On the last day of term in February the whole of Year 8 attended a Choices and Options talk put on by an exciting drama group called Enact Solutions which was a dynamic and exciting exploration on how we choose things and what choices there are.

The aim was to help students realise for themselves the importance of choosing their options and making the most of their choices. Knowing where to go and who to talk to for help, guidance and support and also to understand the decisions they make now really can affect their future.



YEAR 8 FIRST AID



All Year 8 students took part in an hour of First Aid training from Mr Cooke and Ms Reeve this term which equipped them with some amazing lifesaving skills. Students learnt about CPR and were able to use the resuscitation mannequins to practise these skills.

MOROCCO

Our recent A-Level Geography field trip to Morocco was an exhilarating adventure filled with diverse experiences, from bustling markets to ancient temples.

Arriving in Marrakesh, we were greeted by a different world. The sunbathed city in golden hues, and the warmth enveloped us. Our hotel welcomed us with a lively meet-and-greet, complete with a taste of local delicacies: goat’s milk and dates. After checking into our rooms, we set out to explore the vibrant local area.

Marrakesh unfolded before us like a captivating story. We wandered through bustling markets, hidden alleys, and secret gardens. The city’s Islamic heritage came alive as we visited historic locations. Despite the rain’s persistence, our spirits remained unyielding. Lunch was a welcome respite from the wet weather. From our vantage point, we enjoyed a stunning view of the city while savouring a variety of local dishes and desserts.

The next day, our desert adventure awaited. Along winding roads, we reached the famous waterfalls. Although not as blue as we had imagined, they held a unique charm – the rain had washed away mountain mud, creating a chocolate-like effect.

But the real stars of the show? The playful monkeys that entertained us and became instant Instagram celebrities.

In local marketplaces, we met street sellers who shared stories of their wares. Our journey continued to the land of the dinosaurs. Here, we marvelled at real-life footprints, remnants of ancient creatures.

We then ventured deeper into the heart of Morocco. The Atlas Mountains awaited us, their peaks reaching for the sky. As we travelled, we marvelled at the rugged beauty surrounding us – the very essence of geography coming alive. The desert stretched before us, seemingly infinite. We passed countless camels, and eventually, we reached our oasis where our camels awaited, ready to carry us deeper into the dunes. Our tents appeared like mirages in the desert. Simple yet luxurious, they stood in splendid isolation.

Under a star-studded sky, we gathered around the campfire. Our guides shared local legends, and we sang karaoke classics – students and staff alike.

The memories of Morocco—of Souks, haggling, camel rides and the desert—will forever be etched in our hearts.



.5 Excitando iter!

Or ‘exciting trip’ for a small group of Year 7 and 8 students to experience the amazing Roman Villa at The Newt in Somerset.

The immersive experience included hands on activities such as weaving real wool, making their own mosaic and an exploration of the recreated Villa itself.



MFL

This term Year 9 Spanish students at the Gryphon have learned about children’s rights and researched facts about Latin American Spanish speaking countries.

The project has started mixing the vision of the film “Voces Inocentes” in the original language, with specific language lessons to enable students to understand and focus on specific key vocabulary on children’s rights. In groups, students have then moved onto researching different Latin American countries and presenting key aspects about each country to the rest of the class.

The conclusion of the project will be in the next couple of weeks when we will look at “Fairtrade”, what the organisation does, which Spanish speaking countries (and products) are impacted, as well as what can we do as consumers here in Britain to support farmers and producers from all over the world.



SCHOOL EXCHANGE

Year 8 Gryphon students Heidi and Olivia joined Martha and Sophia from U4 as part of the Sherborne Girls / Gryphon exchange for Year 8 students this week. Heidi and Olivia spent the day at Sherborne Girls and then Martha and Sophia visited their exchange partners up at the Gryphon. Heidi and Olivia will experience what life is like in a boarding house and the U4 timetable, and Sophia and Martha will get to experience life as a day student when they visit the Gryphon School. This exchange has been going on for 10 years and is a very valuable experience for all students involved.



BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD

Recently 11 Biology students in Year 12 were given the opportunity to participate in the Biology Olympiad. This is a national competition involving Biology content from both years 12 and 13 as well as external knowledge. They undertook the preparation with gusto; some attending extra revision sessions and doing extensive research to enable them to access content which was primarily geared at students one year older and further in their studies.

Following the rigorous examinations some exceptional results were achieved. All of them had passed, a feat in itself, however it is worth

noting that among them 3 students – Kitty B, Poppy M and Josie R achieved Highly Commended, 2 students – Emillie-Grace W and Callum M achieved Bronze, and 2 students – Oliver C and Victor V achieved Silver. These are exceptional results. Achieving a Silver award places Ollie and Victor in the top 15% of the 15,000 students who participated across the country. Victor was also extremely close to a Gold (by 0.8%!) which puts him just outside of the top 5% nationally. All of the students who took part should be incredibly proud of their hard work and as a Biology department, we are very proud of them too!

CHEMISTRY SYMPOSIUM

This term the Sixth Form chemists have again enjoyed being part of a half termly Chemistry Symposium with a range of schools in the area. In the January symposium Leya and Ashwin talked about the chemistry behind nuclear fusion and its potential as an energy source. In the March symposium The Gryphon fielded two presentations, one by Victor and Ollie on the role of the xanthophyll cycle, which included some interesting detail about the chemistry of pigmentation, and one by Evie on exoplanets and how spectroscopy could be used to identify planets with atmospheres that might support life. The students' research into some fascinating topics has been excellent, and presenting to an audience of over 100 chemists from other schools has been a fantastic way to develop new skills and push themselves out of their comfort zone.



"If you were an engineer, what would you do?"

This was the question posed to a group of Year 7 and 8 students as they took part in a nationwide engineering competition. The competition, which is run by 'The Leaders Award' required students to come up with a new invention, and submit a detailed design and letter to a professional engineer. All entries will be looked at and if successful the winning student design will be built. As part of the competition process, students took part in a live webinar with Chris van der Kuyl, whose company 4J Studios were responsible for the creation of Minecraft.

Students enjoyed hearing about the inspirations behind one of the world's most played videogame and what sorts of challenges Chris and his team had to overcome. There were approximately 72 schools watching the live event and hundreds of questions being posed to Chris – two of the Gryphon students' questions got answered during the live interview! Students produced some exceptional inventions including a self-cleaning shoe system, a robot stray-pet rescuer, an automatic car de-icing system and many more. It was fantastic to see so many students enthused and excited about engineering and technology.

REWILDING

In January, The Gryphon School's Eco Club started a Rewilding Course developed by Operation Future Hope. They have been learning about some really exciting aspects of rewilding such as, how rewilding can be done alongside food production, the impact of re-introducing species such as beavers, and how we can continue rewilding our school grounds. As spring makes an appearance, this course will become more practical with students planning rewilding projects of their own.



CHALLENGE PLUS

More able students from Years 7-10 have begun their Challenge Plus lessons of the year. Their first session involved some high-energy, high-intensity, highly concentrated logic puzzle breaking and escape room races!

Students were so focused. Well done to all those involved – super impressed! The rest of the year's sessions will be no doubt as challenging in a variety of ways.

ART

Here is a small sampling of the outcomes from KS3 projects. Year 7 worked with nets to create their own piece of architecture after studying the work of Frank Gehry, Friedensreich Hunterwasser, Anthoni Gaudi and Sir Christopher Wren. Year 8 have completed a scene for the set design project. Students looked at their favourite settings from real life, film, TV and theatre. They were very inventive with their use of materials. Year 9 learned about facial proportions and developed their own characters. The students gained skills and experience with plinths, pliers, wire, papier mâché and air-drying clay.

Year 7s in Fine Art have been focusing on colour theory this term, creating beautiful sketchbook pages of colour schemes. Students take great pride in their studies, showing outstanding presentation and carefully controlled application of colour.



HE PLUS GROUP:

15 year 12 students have started on their face to face HE plus program run from the university of Cambridge, to engage and inspire students to apply to the university. Students were taken to a launch event at Kings of Wessex School where they were engaged in a multitude of activities to inspire and stretch their thinking, as well as find out about the university early entry application process.

Fundraising

Just before Christmas students in the Sixth Form helped to organise and run a fundraising bingo evening attended by families in the school and local community. Prizes on the evening were donated by students and local businesses, and the generosity from Sherborne Turf, Folke Christmas Trees, Matthews Opticians, Oxley Sports Centre, Café D'urberville, Sherborne Castle and Else Butchers was truly wonderful and helped make the evening a fantastic success. We raised £500 for our chosen charity Countrymen UK, a group based at Future Roots in Holnest, supporting older gentlemen and their families with respite and an opportunity to socialise and interact in farm-based activities, despite struggling with their health.



CAREERS FAIR

Students got the opportunity to attend a wonderful careers and degree apprenticeship fair hosted at the Gryphon earlier this half term. The range of exhibitors was fantastic allowing students to explore the numerous options and avenues open to them in the future. It was also wonderful to see so many of our Sixth Form alumni returning as representatives of the numerous companies that supported the event.

Year 12 Thinkers group:

Every Thursday, early entry Oxbridge, medic and veterinary students have been meeting in conjunction with their counterparts from SBS and SGS to discuss, present and work through problems and key topics of interest in their faculty groups. Discussions and ideas have flown superbly and students are busy working towards their presentation evening in May where they will present a talk on a topic of their choice in an academic conference style evening event.



Student Opportunities

At the end of February, a group of Year 12 students participated in a two-day course which will enable them to Teach English as a Foreign Language in the future.

"Our TEFL experience helped us to gain perspective and insight into potential future careers to do with languages as well as ways to further, not only our own futures, but also the futures of those we may get to teach. The course was wonderfully led by Iona, who was endlessly supportive and encouraging. We were able to prepare and present a lesson to our peers that allowed us to gain confidence and practice the skills she had taught us. We improved our understanding of the English language and acquired a variety of teaching skills. We are definitely considering careers in teaching and even hope to learn another language, which this course helped us to appreciate the importance of. We recommend this course to anyone who has the opportunity to take it."

By Emelia S and Ronel B

EPQ Presentation Evening

Year 13 students showcased their work and completed the presentation element of their extended project qualification during an evening this half term. The variety of the projects was particularly broad this year and students' passions for their areas of expertise shone through. Students presented their findings and fielded questions from their project supervisors, peers and parents/ guardians.

Lara S in Year 13 said "Throughout my EPQ, I have really enjoyed researching and completing a topic on something I was fascinated with outside of my studies and sharing my topic at the presentation evening felt really rewarding. I now feel more prepared for the academic work I will face at university as my EPQ really helped me develop my writing and presenting skills".

SAFE DRIVE STAY ALIVE

Year 12 students participated in a PSHE session focused on safe driving led by Dorst Emergency services. The focus of the session was on the impact a driver's decisions have on themselves and other road users, particularly the effects of alcohol and drug use in relation to driving.

Kitty B in Year 12 said "The Safe Drive Stay Alive talk informed me of the main dangers of driving recklessly. I am fully aware of the negative repercussions of driving under the influence, driving when distracted and driving without a seatbelt. The talk showed me that driving can cause serious and life-threatening injuries that would now make me think twice when getting in a car that I may not feel comfortable in. The depth and live speakers enabled me to truly understand the extent to which our actions have consequences".



UCAS

It has been a busy UCAS application window for our year 13 students, 126 of our students have now applied to universities across the country, and it is fantastic to see so many of them already receiving offers from them. Included within this, we have received 5 offers from Oxford and Cambridge universities. Olympia to study Medicine, George to study Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology, Maddie to study Biomedical Sciences, Eleanor to study Spanish and Arabic, and Jen to study Human, Social and Political Sciences. This is a fantastic achievement, testament to their determination and ability. We look forward to hearing more great outcomes for all of our students over the next few months.

8. P.E.



ESFA Hotshots Competition:

This year, The Gryphon School has yet again entered the ESFA Hotshots School campaign. This campaign is aimed towards encouraging students to get more involved in playing football across extra-curricular clubs, lunchtimes and in lessons. To try and encourage this, the PE department has hosted assemblies for Years 7 and 8, and we've also introduced the #findyourselffriday on the Gryphon PE Instagram page.

#findyourselffriday is an initiative we've brought in to try and get students to look out for their faces in the photos we've taken whilst they're playing football. If they spot themselves, they come to the PE office on Monday and receive an award!

We're keeping up this initiative for the remainder of the year, so if anyone sees themselves on the Instagram, or comes up with anything they think might help, feel free to come and see either Mr Bull or Mr Barton.

Leaders:

Our Year 9s and 10s have continued to showcase their leadership skills for lower school and primary school events recently. In particular, the Year 10 girls have completed their Your Time Programme, during which they have engaged in online e-learning modules and organised a successful netball event to develop younger students' netball skills and empower them to enjoy and further participate in sport. In addition to lots more primary school events coming up, we are also taking a group of Year 8s to Weymouth in April to attend the Dorset Step into Sport Inclusive Youth Leadership training event so they can further develop their confidence, communication and organisational skills whilst learning to deliver an inclusive sporting event themed around a major sports event. We can't wait to see them put all of their skills into action!

Extra-Curricular clubs:

Girls Football:

Girls football has been fantastic this year. Since November we have had U13 girls qualify for Dorset School Games 7 a-side finals! U15s win a 7 a-side tournament in a dramatic penalty shoot-out. But most

impressively, both the U13s and U15s through to the 3rd round of the National cup (story to be continued).

Boys Football:

Year 11 Football:

For some of the boys in the Year 11 Football team this will be their last chance to represent the school in sport. The players have worked tirelessly all year and the competition for places on the team is fierce! It is great to see all the boys playing football outside of school for clubs and gaining places in academies. This shows that the hard work they put in over the years really pays off. The highlight this year came from a great game against Huish where 11 goals were scored in the match. Max won the golden boot for the school with 5 goals to his name. An incredible effort for his debut as striker! Best of luck to all the boys whether they stay on in the sixth form or move on to other colleges.

Sixth Form Football:

The Sixth Form Football team have made great strides in their performances on the pitch. It is always difficult to get a new group of players together and learn how to play as a cohesive unit. They work hard both on and off the pitch and always come back for more each and every game. It is great to see the Year 12 players mixing with the Year 13's and they always represent the school with a real thirst for success. Some of the players will leave the school knowing they have had a great 7 years or 2 years of playing a great game and in brilliant spirit. We wish them all the best in their future careers.

Girls Netball:

A really busy few weeks for Year 7 and U13 netballers with friendlies against Gillingham, league fixtures versus KA and Bucklers Mead and Dorset tournaments coming up against some tough private schools in the area. The team have been excellent and full of enthusiasm, coming away with 3 wins and a big wish list for upcoming game snacks! We have over 30 students wanting to represent in this year group which is amazing and looking forward to the potential for the future!

Year 8 netball:

The year 8 netballers have had lots of opportunities this term to participate in both friendlies and league games. This has allowed them to experiment with different combinations, including with the year 7s for the league games. A strong starting performance against Stanchester puts them in a great position in the league, with games against Buckler's Mead, Sexey's and King Arthur's still to be played. Fingers crossed for a place in the final!

Year 9 and 10 Netball:

In a first we have created combined year 9 and 10 Netball teams to take on the local schools. We have had a number of league and friendly games, which the team have taken in their stride and finished with excellent results. The group of players have worked hard on combinations with their new teammates, and this is getting better every game we play. The group have one more game to play before they find out if they are in the finals, so fingers and toes crossed!

Year 11:

The year 11 netballers had a fantastic finish to their Gryphon journey in the schools league this year. With some hard-fought games throughout the tournament the girls showcased their flair and skill within the brilliantly cohesive team they have become over the last 5 years. After finishing second in their pool, they faced a tough Westfield side in the semi-finals where they narrowly lost by two goals. An overall result of 4th in the county out of 8 schools was a brilliant end to the competitive Netball season for what has been a wonderful team over the last 5 years.

Sixth form Netball:

The sixth form netball team is having a fantastic run of games since Christmas resulting in lots of wins and one loss. With a number of changes within the team each game, the girls have taken a variety of roles within the team and played in different combinations and still come away with the win. The group have 2 final games this year before we say goodbye to our year 13 players, so we wish them luck!

Trips:

Empowering Women in Sport Trip:

Later in March, a group of year 10 girls will be attending a Sport Summit at Bryanston School, focused on empowering women and girls through sport. During this, they will have the opportunity to meet industry-leading women from across sports media, coaching, business and wellbeing and will hopefully be inspired as the next generation of women in sport!

Netball Trip:

On Friday 1st March, we took a lovely group of girls to watch a super league netball game between Team Bath and Severn Stars. Although Bath didn't win, the girls had a fantastic time, getting their faces painted, buying souvenirs, and cheering nice and loudly to show their support towards Bath for every goal they scored. They certainly did us proud and we can't wait to take them on similar trips in years to come.

Equestrian Team

We have four students representing The Gryphon School in the National Schools Equestrian Association. They have competed 3 times so far, and today they qualified as a team for the Hickstead National Championships in May in the Eventers Challenge (link below with details) which is a huge achievement. They won the 70cms class and were 2nd in the 80cms class. 3 of them have also qualified as individuals - Tilly T 3rd at Pontispool, Tabby S 2nd at Bicton Arena and Nell G 4th at Kings Sedgemoor.

The team are:

Tabby S (Year 7)

Alice L (Year 7)

Tilly T (Year 7)

Nell G (Year 10)