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SPRING 2025



World Book Day

Trips this Term

Sporting Success

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SCHOOLS ACHIEVING SUCCESS TOGETHER



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WELCOME



As we approach the end of the spring term, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible efforts of our students, staff, and wider school community over the past few months. It has been a term filled with dedication, hard work, and a commitment to excellence; values that truly embody The Gryphon School's vision of living life in all its fullness.

A particular highlight has been the tireless preparation of our students for their upcoming public examinations. Our Year 11, Year 12, and Year 13 students have faced their mock exams with determination, and we are incredibly proud of their resilience and effort. None of this would have been possible without our dedicated staff, who have worked so hard to prepare and support them. I also want to extend my thanks to the parents who took part in our Year 11 Parent Forum, where over 80 parents sat an exam themselves. This experience helped deepen our collective understanding of how best to support our students during this crucial time.

Beyond the classroom, our students have embraced opportunities to develop their learning and skills through a wealth of trips, activities, and competitions. Highlights have included visiting the Imperial War Museum, Bristol, The Globe Theatre and Lanzarote. The Intermediate Maths Challenge gave our students the opportunity to compete and shine at a national level, with three students achieving a gold award.

Jim Gower
Headteacher

TALENT SHOW

On February 27th, 'Next Up: The Gryphon School Talent Show' took place. This wonderful event was the idea of two Year 12 students; Joshua E and Hussain M who wanted to raise money for Young Minds; a children's mental health charity.

After a process of very exciting auditions, the judges (Josh, Hussain, and Miss Knight) chose twelve incredible acts to perform. The standard was incredibly high and included dancing, singing and piano recitals. After a tense audience voting process, the winner was Grace R (Year 10) who sang a stunning version of Stay by Rhianna. A very close second were The Flights who gave an energetic performance of Where is my Mind by The Pixies. Third was Michelle B (Year 7) who gave a beautiful performance of a traditional Indian dance. Mariella M was awarded the judges prize for a wonderful performance.

The evening was a huge success, and we are so proud of the incredible performances of all of the students. It was a joy to watch and a huge £566.25 was raised. We would like to say a huge thank you to Josh, Huss, Miss Knight, Mr McDonald and Josie M for their judging and technical expertise.

Mrs Oxford - Head of Year 12



A NOTE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN

This year for our Lent Challenge we are raising money for The Leprosy Mission. Many might think that Leprosy is a disease just associated with the days of ancient times; Jesus is of course known for healing someone with Leprosy, but unfortunately this debilitating illness still exists today. The Leprosy Mission works in some of the poorest and most marginalised communities in our world to provide medical and practical support to those with Leprosy and their families. At the Gryphon we have been asked to support a particular project called Revive (<https://stories.leprosymission.org.uk/revive/index.html>) which works in the region of Odisha in Eastern India. So watch this space for fundraising opportunities...

The Gryphon Foundation

The Gryphon Foundation has three core purposes: assisting in the provision of facilities and special benefits for the education of students at The Gryphon School, funding prizes at Prize Giving and Celebration of Achievement events, and providing grants to present and past students, up to the age of 25. This academic year, The Gryphon Foundation has supported the school and our students with various donations totally nearly £17,000. This has included supporting students to participate in overseas residential trips to Berlin, Rome and Barcelona, providing financial support for The Addams Family show and resources for DofE, and financing a leadership course for Sixth Form students. The Gryphon Foundation aims to benefit from future investments, gifts, and legacies so we can continue to enhance the outstanding opportunities and facilities at The Gryphon School. If you would like to apply for a grant or donate to the foundation, please visit our website or scan the QR code.



POETRY BY HEART YEAR 7 COMPETITION

Poetry by Heart is a national, award-winning competition that aims to raise the profile of poetry by encouraging young people to learn a poem by heart, and to possibly win a chance to perform at The Globe Theatre in July.

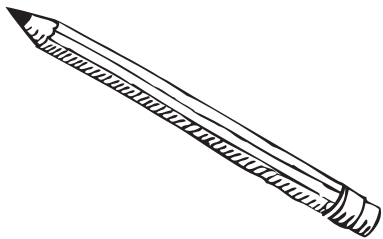
Year 7 have an opportunity to enter the freestyle component of the competition, which is designed to celebrate the spoken word, encouraging students to interpret ideas creatively and to have fun whilst doing it.

As part of the English year 7 curriculum, students learn a range of poems and practise reading them aloud to explore sound and meaning. They are then guided to select a poem that they will perform aloud, in class, for their assessment. From there, top performing class winners, both groups and individuals, are selected, who compete in heats to win a place in the year competition.

This year's competition was a fabulous showcase of creative and thoughtful interpretation, with nine individuals and pairs of students performing, from memory, ambitious poetry. The students' choice of poems ranged from traditional poets such as Shakespeare to modern poets like Wendy Cope.

Receiving Honourable Mentions were Declan H and Tristan C with their energetic delivery of Elouise Greenfield's 'Harriet Tubman' and Pip S-G with a word-perfect rendition of 'The Witch' by Mary Elizabeth Coleridge.

However, the top three scoring students, who won over our judges with their creative, resonating performances, were Florence R with Molly H, Sam M and Rufus G. These students will now film their performances which will be sent to the judges of the national competition. Good luck to them all!



AUTHOR VISIT

Thirty-six Year 8 students were invited to Sherborne Preparatory School for a talk from Monique Turner, the author of 'The Island of Influencers'. The students learnt about the hidden realities of social media and what life is like for fiction writers. Students were also offered the chance to buy signed copies of the dystopian adventure novel.



FROM GRYPHON TO LANZAROTE

During half term a group of 29 students in Years 10 and 11, led by three members of staff (Mr Launo, Mr O'Donnell and Miss Mills) visited the beautiful island of Lanzarote and immersed themselves in the local Spanish culture.

They started by visiting the local beach in Playa del Carmen, learning about the volcanic coast and enjoying a little stroll and exploration before going to bed. The second day the group had an excursion to the south of the island. Highlights of this day have been learning and "touching" firsthand the heat of volcanic soil at the Timanfaya National Park, a UNESCO heritage site. Different volcanic eruptions and magmatic activity throughout history turned this land into what we see today.

Two other sites visited on the day were The Green Lagoon and the Salinas de Janubio. The green lagoon is a very contrasting landscape where you can see a lagoon inside a volcano crater! It produces a magnificent variety of colours depending on the position of the sun. In the Salinas de Janubio students saw salt flats 9 kilometres (5.6 mi) long.

The following day, it was time to explore the geographical gems of the North: First stop was the Cueva de Los Verdes (Green



WORLD BOOK DAY

For this year's World Book Day celebrations, Year 7 were invited to dress up as their favourite book characters and the costumes were incredible. The theme this year was the Wizard of Oz and KS3 and Sixth Form students took part in a treasure hunt around the library that encouraged them to discover the original texts that inspired famous films and TV shows. Several staff members also got involved and showed the students how it's done!

Year 7 Trip to The Newt

In February, a small group of our Year 7 students visited the Roman Villas at The Newt in Somerset. The students were given the opportunity to practise their archaeology skills and tried to rebuild pots, they used a pestle and mortar to ground up lovely smelling herbs and made some mosaics. The students were very engaged and asked lots of great questions.

Caves): Cueva de Los Verdes is part of a 6km-long Volcanic tube formed some 21,000 years ago during the eruptions of the nearby La Corona Volcano. It is a unique mythological-looking cave, full of legends and extraordinary landscape and beauty.

Los Jameos del Agua is a volcanic cave where it is impossible not to be affected by the quiet, almost magical atmosphere. Its natural lake, within the cave itself, is slightly illuminated by the sun and is home to albino crabs, unique in the world. They also visited 'The Volcano House' - originally César Manrique's house, which then had been used as a seat for his Foundation. This building, constructed on five volcanic bubbles, since converted into rooms, is an example of the artist's own style of architecture. Students taking A-Level Spanish study the artist and his work, so experiencing in person his work, vision and ideas was a real highlight.

On the final day, there was time for one more activity: a submarine safari experience in which the group went down to 30 metres below the sea, seeing sea life, including an octopus, barracuda and manta ray! An experience of a lifetime! Students' behaviour was impeccable, praised by the local hotel and Gryphon staff, a real credit to our school.

IRIS SCIENCE PROJECTS

We are excited to be working on some cutting-edge science with The Institute for Research in Schools (IRIS). IRIS aims to change the culture of UK education so that every young person can take part in authentic research and innovation while at school. The Gryphon are trialling some projects this year with the hope that we will roll out to full projects next year. Twenty-eight students across Years 10, 11 and 12 are taking part, studying one of three different projects. Within DNA Origami students are learning to computer program virtual models of DNA. This project lends itself to future application within the medical industry designing drug delivery. In Cosmic Mining students are using real world data from the Spitzer Telescope to map stars that might not have been mapped before, and in Future Flight students are beginning to design planes that can safely carry hydrogen fuel cells for carbon free flight.

Mr Ives and Mrs Clark are working with the students and are so impressed with their enthusiasm and drive, particularly as they are learning alongside them! From September we plan to involve the same students as well as others, in designing scientific posters to present at the IRIS conference next year.

BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD

We were delighted to have students again compete in the Biology Olympiad. This year all of our Year 12 students, as well as one Year 13 student who hadn't been able to take part last year, sat the papers; two, extremely challenging multiple choice assessments pulling content from wide areas of biology both across the syllabus and within current biological research and knowledge.

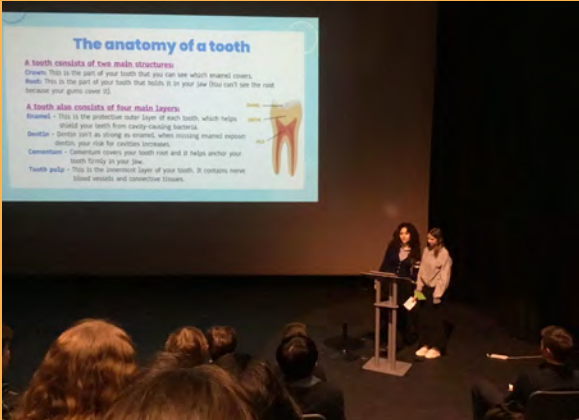
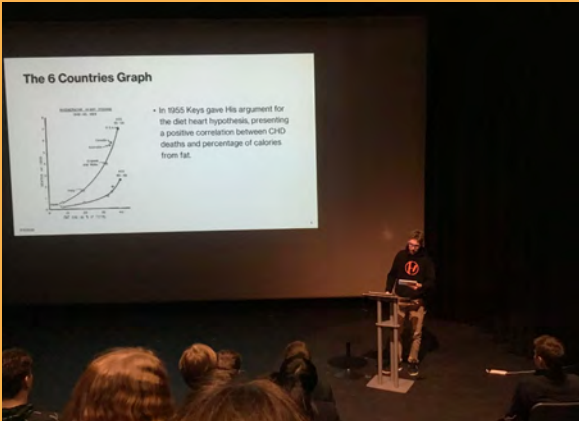
18,533 students from 1,053 schools participated this year and we are extremely proud of all of our students who gave it their best shot. In Year 12 Melissa P-H, Isla H, Isabella B, Yasmin B and Lydia B all achieved highly commended putting them within the top 45% of students, and Teo S achieved Bronze, putting her in the top 30% of students. Our Year 13 student, Toby B, achieved a Gold award. This is a phenomenal achievement putting Toby in the top 5% of all students who sat the exam nationally and has qualified him for entry into the next round with the possibility of achieving a place in the International Biology Olympiad. We are so proud of all our students and wish Toby the very best of luck with the next round!

SIXTH FORM CHEMISTRY SYMPOSIUM

This term's Chemistry Symposium at Sherborne School saw two fantastic presentations by Gryphon students. They presented to an audience of sixth form chemists from six schools and took follow up questions from the audience.

Jasmine and Mariam in Year 12 presented on "The Chemistry of Dentistry". They looked at the key active ingredients in toothpaste and whitening products, their chemical structures and how they work. This covered a wide range of chemistry, from crystal structure and solubility of fluoride containing compounds, to the action of surfactants, and then to the mechanism of bleaching by hydrogen peroxide.

Dan in Year 13 presented on "The Diet Heart Hypothesis". He re-evaluated the data used to justify the proposed link between fat intake and coronary heart disease, then looked at the difference between saturated and unsaturated fats and how unsaturated fats are oxidised in the body through a radical reaction pathway, producing highly reactive species. Both presentations were very impressive, showcasing really detailed research and depth of knowledge.



STEM @ The Gryphon

This term students from across the school have been busy showcasing their skills and creativity in a series of exciting STEM events, highlighting their innovation, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.

TWIN SCIENCE - STEM FOR SUSTAINABILITY COMPETITION
A group of talented Year 7 students recently participated in the *Twin Science - STEM for Sustainability* competition. Competing against schools from around the world, they chose to develop products to help sustain clean water and reduce waste. Students used a variety of resources including electronic components and Lego to build their prototypes. They then coded their solutions to activate sensors and other features. A special congratulations to *The Brain Busters team (Darshan, Eric, Rufus and Oscar)*, who received an Honourable Mention for their impressive project. Well done to everyone involved!

YEAR 7 LEGO ROBOTICS WORKSHOPS WITH THALES
Every Year 7 student had the opportunity to take part in an engaging robotics workshop led by engineers from Thales. Students built and coded Lego robots before putting them to the test in an exciting final race! This fun, hands-on experience allowed students to develop key skills in teamwork, computer science and engineering. Thank you to staff from Thales for delivering the workshops.



YEAR 12 ROBOTICS TEAM – FIRST TECH CHALLENGE
Our Year 12 Robotics Team is making great strides as they prepare for the regional qualifying championships of the UK *First Tech Robotics Challenge*. With their robot nearly complete, the team recently welcomed engineers from sponsors Eaton, who provided invaluable guidance and support. Good luck to the team who compete against fifteen other south west schools in April this year!

I BELONG IN TECH DAY
Eleven Year 8 students recently attended the 'I Belong in Tech Day' at Battlelabs in Wool. They heard an inspiring talk from Bournemouth School for Girls students who had competed in a global robotics competition. The students then participated in a Microbit challenge, explored STEM careers and created an autonomous car using Twin Science kits. The event was attended by schools across the Southwest and it was great to see so many students show interest and excitement about computing and STEM.



SERVICES TRIP

Gryphon students from families associated with the armed forces had a fantastic day out at Bovington Tank Museum this term. The school receives funds to support services students, and this year we have worked with students to decide what activities they would like to participate in.

The Tank Museum provided a fantastic opportunity to learn about the British military past and present. One workshop focused on advancements in medicine on the front lines during WWI. The students enthusiastically took part in role play, including a dramatic re-enactment of a leg amputation (no children were harmed on the trip!). Seeing the Trenches Exhibition was a highlight for many of the students, as were the team building activities. Of particular note was the excellent building of 'Ernie the Tank' that all students got involved with and completed in record time.

As our first trip, this was a brilliant opportunity to strengthen the connections between staff and students within our Gryphon armed forces community, and we look forward to more exciting activities during the year.

HISTORY LECTURE

We were delighted to welcome Russell Group Lecturer Dr. John Pearce from King's College London, who recently visited our A-Level students to share insights from his latest research. His work is currently on display at the Dorset Museum and Art Gallery in Dorchester under the exhibition title 'Gladiators of Britain'.

Dr. Pearce's illuminating lecture provided students with a unique opportunity to engage with university-level analysis of ancient sources, including the renowned Vindolanda Tablets. With around 45 students in attendance, the event fostered lively discussions and allowed many to showcase their analytical skills while deepening their understanding of Roman Britain and the Ancient World.



VISIT TO THE HOLOCAUST EXHIBITION

In March, sixty of our Year 9 students embarked on a profoundly moving and educational trip to the Imperial War Museum in London. The focus of the visit was the museum's renowned Holocaust Exhibition, a powerful and thought-provoking display that chronicles one of history's darkest chapters.

The exhibition provided our students with an opportunity to engage deeply with the stories of individuals and families affected by the Holocaust. Through artifacts, photographs and personal testimonies, they were able to gain a deeper understanding of the human impact of prejudice, discrimination and genocide. The experience was both sobering and enlightening, fostering important discussions about the value of tolerance, empathy and the need to stand against injustice in all its forms.

For many students, the visit was a chance to connect their classroom learning with real-world history. It brought to life the lessons they've been studying, offering a tangible reminder of the importance of remembering the past to build a better future. We are incredibly proud of how our students approached this experience—with respect, curiosity and a willingness to reflect on difficult topics. We hope this visit will leave a lasting impression, inspiring them to be thoughtful and compassionate global citizens.



TRIP TO SHEPTON MALLET PRISON



At the beginning of February, students in Year 12 studying Psychology, Criminology, Sociology and Law visited Shepton Mallet Prison for the day. On a guided tour, students learned about the conditions prisoners were kept in, the jobs and punishments prisoners were given, and even some stories on the very few inmates who managed to escape in the past.

In the afternoon, the prison ran a workshop for our students in which they learned about the Kray twins, who spent some time in Shepton Mallet Prison themselves. There were discussions about the connections the Kray twins likely made in the prison, as well as how they were, and still are, portrayed by media.

The highlight of the day, however, were the escape rooms! Students were locked in a cell in groups of 4 or 5, with an hour to try to escape. Some opted for the added challenge of starting the challenge in the dark, hand-cuffed with bags over their heads, very Zimbardo-like!



GATEWAY

As part of our ongoing work in Gateway, students have been immersing themselves into a wide range of vocational activities including horticulture, cooking and community-based projects. Led by the incredible Ian Hiron, students are progressing well with their "Nature Garden" project. With most of the clearing work completed, efforts now turn to creating some raised beds, finishing the compost container and planting some small shrubs. In addition to this, students have recently been potting some "Sweet Peas" and have also created some DIY bird feeders; even making their own bird food, using seeds and grains.

Mrs Parfitt has been leading some targeted cooking lessons, on a one-to-one / small group basis. Students have been making use of our newly refurbished Bistro, creating delicious dishes and treats, including sausage rolls, scotch eggs and apple turnovers. Students have engaged exceptionally well and are thriving in the therapeutically minded environment. Selected gateway students have also been helping over at the "Forget Me Not Nursery" nature garden, supervised by Gateway Lead, Mr Wake. We have assisted with the creation of a small nature pond, repurposed a broken garden shed and planted some seasonal shrubs. Students have been able to showcase their skills in an inclusive and nurturing environment, which has significantly improved their self-esteem and well-being. We plan to collaborate with other local businesses, with some exciting meetings coming up in the coming weeks.



CAREERS FAIR

Our 8th Degree Apprenticeship and Careers Fair had a wide range of employers and education providers attending, including first time attendees Jaguar, Dorset Police, Farnfields Solicitors, Potter House Care Home, and Footprint Architects, amongst many other excellent companies and education providers.

Student were taken on a journey around the two main halls in the school and some of the stands had some really engaging presentations such as radiography on the Somerset NHS stand, aviation equipment on the Eaton stand, and engaging hands-on experiences at the 3 Armed forces stand.



Students from Years 10 to 13 visited the event, and we were joined by students from local schools including King Arthurs School and Sherborne School. It was an excellent event and we thank the local companies who supported this event.

Caterering

YEAR 9 COOKERY CLUB

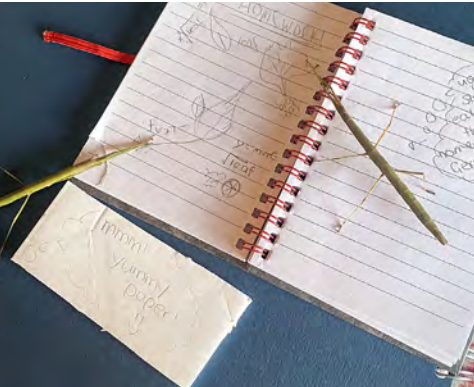
The Year 9 Cookery Club has taken place afterschool on Thursdays since September and has been an excellent success. The students have made scones, a baked risotto, fairy cakes, a jam Swiss roll, mince pies, cheese straws, stuffed peppers and Easter biscuits. Just before Christmas the students planned in groups to make dishes associated with a movie. We had creations from Elf, The Grinch, Shrek, Wallace and Gromit and Wreck it Ralph. The students are very much looking forward to the Easter competition coming up on the 27th March 2025.



Year 11

As the term wraps up, Year 11 students have just completed their second set of mock exams brilliantly and are putting in serious effort as they get ready for the big exams ahead. Looking ahead, we have Easter revision sessions planned. A huge thank you to all the teachers who are giving up their holiday time to make these sessions possible.

Year 11, keep being amazing and achieving all the incredible things you've been doing. Miss Hetherington and Mr Thomas are super proud of the effort and hard work you've shown, keep going strong - you're doing amazing!



Year 12 English Trip

On Monday the 3rd of February, English Literature students were invited to participate in an educational guided tour of the The Globe Theatre followed by an interactive and engaging Othello workshop. During the workshop, we had the opportunity to engage in theatrical tasks in order to develop their body language skills. Students also had the opportunity to learn about the plot and key characters of the play, as well as exploring their psychologies and motivations.

After the workshop, students were given the fantastic opportunity to visit the British Library. During their visit, they explored the treasury exhibits as well as soaking in the scholarly environment.

For the English Language side of the trip we visited Dr Samuel Johnsons house. This linked to our 'attitudes towards language change' unit as he was the writer of the first modern English dictionary. This trip allowed us to explore how Johnson recorded and attempted to standardise language change, as in 1900 his house was turned into a museum where, instead of trying to replicate the period Johnson lived there, curators focus on informing guests about Johnson's life and the development of English language and literature during the 17th and 18th century.

This trip helped to put the language change we learn about in the classroom into the context of the society it occurred in and the wider knowledge we gained has enriched our understanding of the topic.

Imogen A. and Isobel S. (Year 12)

Photography Competition

The Gryphon School Photography Department is proud to announce the winners of the "Pets do Homework" competition. Students and staff were invited to take fun and creative pictures of their pets doing homework. Mr White, Director of Photography said "We had students submit everything from a chicken tearing up homework, to stick insects, to guinea pigs and rats, even some fish having a go! The variety of entries was amazing with students from every year group taking part. Thank you to Miss Hayman and Mrs Ward for helping me judge the entries, it took us ages to decide on the favourites! Gryphon students are so talented when it comes to creative competitions it was hard to pick the winner".

- First place - Felicity F (Angry cat!)
- Second Place - Ellie D (Stick insects)
- Third Place - Jackie B (Dog gone homework)
- Most Creative - Daisy H (Squirrelling away)

Sixth Form

CIPHER CHALLENGE

At the beginning of October, a group of students competed as a team in the Cipher Challenge organised by the University of Southampton and GCHQ. Toby, Andonis, John, Josh and Isaac joined over 3,500 teams who entered the competition which ran for 10 weeks. Each week, they were given 2 codes to decipher and a week to complete the tasks. Completed tasks were given scores and at the end of the competition, the top 200 teams were invited to Bletchley Park for a prize giving event. This was the first time our students have entered this competition, and the group have set the bar high. Aided by Mr Harris, they finished a very creditable 208th, with only 145 teams completing all 20 challenges.

Mr Harris who entered individually too, just crept into the top 200 and so was invited to Bletchley Park. After a tour of the site, there were talks by a member of GCHQ "Nick" (name not given as it was so top secret!) and from the author Alex Bellos, who writes Mathematical Books as well as weekly Maths puzzles in The Guardian.

Why choose a TEFL course?

By Yomcebo

As a person who is pursuing a career in Art and Business, I saw the TEFL course as a distinguished opportunity to use it as a steppingstone to fuel my ambition to work at a global level. TEFL allows travel and work abroad, which appealed to me considering that I want to work in the global art scene. It also strengthens public speaking, leadership and adaptability-essential for business and networking in the art world. If travelling, cultural exposure, experiencing different cultures can inspire my artistic work and spark business ideas. And lastly it is flexible as it can be done online giving adaptability for other pursuits.

Sixth Form Competitions

This year we have launched some new competitions across the Sixth Form to give students the opportunity to explore and celebrate their creative passions outside of their academic studies. The first competition had a focus on photography, where students had to submit a photograph, they felt captured the theme of giving, togetherness and community. The winner was Moh in Year 13 who received a voucher worth £20.

This term the focus is on creative writing, students are to submit no more than 300 words in a form of their choice, from poems to a short story or anything in between. It has been wonderful to read the numerous entries so far, the creative flair, meticulous flow and detailed narratives our students have created is truly impressive.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID.

It has been wonderful to welcome Year 12 students to take the opportunity to complete a qualification in Mental Health First Aid. Students are developing an understanding of what mental health looks like day to day for different people, why they might experience changes to their mental health and also tools and strategies for supporting others and themselves to improve or manage their mental health. We hope so see these students take on some roles as mental health student ambassadors, supporting other students in the school community to develop and use those tools and strategies for themselves. The fluctuation in young peoples' mental health is constantly changing so the more we can do to raise awareness, or continue to prevent the stigma remains a key focus in the sixth form and wider school community.



OXFORD UNIVERSITY VISIT

Prospective year 12 Oxbridge students visited Merton College, Oxford University as part of the Sixth form Oxbridge programme. The students undertook Q&A with current Oxford undergraduate students, and received workshops on the application process and interview questions from the current outreach officer at Merton. Moreover, they toured the college, sat around 'Tolkien's Table' and walked the city to soak up the Oxford vibe. The students were a credit to the school and engaged thoughtfully and attentively in discussions and asked searching questions. Many as a result will look to put in competitive applications in the current cycle.



MEDICS

Year 12 prospective medic students attended an experience day at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital this term. They had the opportunity to hear from consultants in a range of different fields of medicine, including cardiology, anaesthetics and paediatrics. Moreover, they experienced suturing and venepuncture with professional demonstrations. The students were a credit to the Gryphon School throughout and asked pertinent and searching questions. They undoubtedly received excellent career advice going forward!

8. P.E.



Girls Rugby

The Gryphon School's U16 girls' rugby team put in a spirited performance against a well-drilled Colfox side. Despite facing a more experienced opposition, the team showed great determination and teamwork throughout the match. While the final score didn't go in Gryphon's favour, the players gained valuable experience and demonstrated real potential for future fixtures. Well done to all involved! The U14s and U15s are a hugely talented group who are all playing club rugby and this determination and experience is proving invaluable on the pitch as they are having huge success against local schools, as well as travelling to Taunton and Bridgwater in order to play at a higher level! The future of girls rugby at The Gryphon looks very bright!

Eager to represent the school, the Year 7 netball team have had an outstanding season so far, winning all of their matches. The Year 8 netball team has had a solid season, winning their games against King Arthurs, Wadham, Preston, and Sexeys. However, they faced a tough defeat against Westfield, but their determination and resilience have been evident throughout. Additionally, the team participated in the U13 North Dorset Netball Tournament at Leweston. Although they didn't qualify for the next round, the experience was valuable, and the team enjoyed the opportunity to compete at a higher level. The Year 9 netball team has had a strong performance this season, securing victories against Bucklers Mead, Wadham and Holyrood. Despite their success, they also faced a tough loss against Westfield, which tested their abilities. Nevertheless, they remain focused on improving and building on their strengths in preparation for the area finals.

The Year 10 netball team has shown fantastic flair this year, with victories over Wadham, Preston and Stanchester. Similar to the Year 8s and 9s, they experienced a tough defeat against Westfield however they have demonstrated excellent commitment and sportsmanship throughout the season and will look to build on their positive results in the upcoming area finals. Although they haven't had any fixtures this year, the Year 11s look to finish their Gryphon journey in the area tournament at Westfield in March. We wish you all the success and hope that you will continue playing in sixth form! With the addition of some new players, the sixth form team have continued their success of Year 11 on this year, experiencing fantastic triumphs against Sexeys and Huish. They also competed at the U19 North Dorset at Bryanston, where they won against Gillingham and drew with Clayesmore. Unfortunately, we now say goodbye to our Year 13 players who have been with us since Year 7. We wish them all the best for the future and hope to hear of them continuing to play netball.



Volleyball

The Year 10 boys volleyball team played their first fixtures for a number of years against Colfox. In the home match, Gryphon put up a strong fight but fell short against a well-organised Colfox side. However, they showed great improvement in the away fixture, securing a well-earned 3-1 victory. A fantastic achievement for the team, demonstrating resilience, teamwork, and plenty of potential for the future – we look forward to more volleyball fixtures in the coming terms!



Girls' Football: A Season of Success and Growth

This season has been an exciting one for our girls' football teams, with plenty of thrilling matches and tournaments that have shown just how much talent and determination our players have. Our Under 15s team had an impressive run, particularly in the tournament held at Gillingham School. Competing against some of the best teams in the region, they played with incredible skill and teamwork, finishing strong and earning well-deserved recognition for their performance. Our seconds team also made an impressive mark in the Gillingham tournament, finishing in an admirable third place, just missing out on second position due to goal difference. Their speed, precision and determination were

on full display, and their third-place finish reflects their impressive effort and growth this season. What has been especially inspiring is the way some of our Year 7 players have stepped up in both tournaments and friendlies. Despite being the youngest on the team, they've shown incredible maturity and skill, contributing to the team's success in ways beyond their years. As we look ahead to the remainder of the season, it's clear that our girls' football programme is going from strength to strength. We're incredibly proud of how far they've come, especially with the contributions from our younger players, and we're excited for the next opportunities to see them shine!

COUNTY CUP FOOTBALL:

Our County Cup football teams have enjoyed significant success over the years and this year is no different. We are extremely lucky to have such a fantastic set of talented individuals. The students' achievements have been marked by consistent victories and standout performances in the County Cup this year, with the Year 8 boys reaching the final after an incredibly tense penalty shootout, and both the Year 11 boys and Year 10 girls preparing for semifinals before Easter! This would be the first time that more than one Gryphon team will have reached a final in the same year. The success of our County Cup teams is often attributed to the students' commitment, hard work and the ability to play as a team at all times and it was great to see a large number of Year 8 students supporting their peers in the recent match.

GILLINGHAM ASTRO:

The annual football tournament saw the start of the main football season in the school and gave pupils an opportunity to shine on the pitch ready for all the games in the Spring term. Pupils across the school battled it out for places in the team and competition was fierce. Each year group play in a pool format against 4 other schools. Following the groups stages, the top two teams then go through to the finals against the winners and runner-ups from the other group. With some fantastic football on show, the results each week were a real rollercoaster of ups and downs:
Year 7 – 4th | Year 8 – 3rd | Year 9 – 2nd
Year 10 – 5th | Year 11 – 5th

A great set of performances all round and we look forward to getting more players involved in representing the school.