

Newsletter

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will see from this newsletter the end of a busy two terms is almost us, and it is pleasing to note how well our new Year 7 students have settled in. Despite Covid still presenting us with some staffing issues, we have managed to cram lots of events into these last two terms, Year 9 Geography trips to Canterbury, Year 8 RP trip to Canterbury, Year 8 Trip to the Globe in London, a Drama trip to see Life of Pi, an RP trip to London to visit a Hindu Temple and St Pauls, a reward trip for Year 10 to the Panto, not to mention lots of sporting fixtures which students have competed in.

The Year 11 mocks went well, and the students are to be congratulated on the way they conducted themselves during exam fortnight, hopefully the mocks should have provided useful practice for students for the real thing in the summer.

Year 13 Mocks commence on our return after the Christmas break!

Christmas Jumper Day took place on Friday 9th December and coincided with Christmas dinner; it was lovely to see so many festive jumpers on display and so many children enjoying Christmas dinner together.

School will close for the Christmas break on Friday 16th December and students in Years 7-10 will finish at 2.10pm and Years 11-13 at 1.30pm.

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HOUSE DRAMA 2022; A STITCH IN TIME

It was SO good, after 3 years, to return to an entire day of house drama performances, with full audiences and a proper awards ceremony.

Congratulations to all who took part; such a lot of hard work and juggling people's other commitments etc.

I was joined, this year, by my two experienced actor/director friends who have adjudicated here before; Peter Such and Sheila Burke. I had been concerned that we would all hold different opinions with no Shirley Ballas to give the deciding vote, but actually our decision making was most cordial and united.

BEST PROGRAMME This year's programmes varied in style from the home-made look to the professional. The few minor errors of spelling and omissions could be dealt with via thorough proof-reading. TS took programme design and content to another level with an amazing cover and individual resumés of the cast, so this award went to TS "A Stitch in Time"

BEST BACKSTAGE All Houses had mostly mastered quick scene-changes and had good backstage crews in place. Be careful of sound levels. I don't like having to sit there with my hands over my ears and then be unable to hear dialogue as they're still ringing! But it was great to be back with full lights and sound and we were impressed that KH used their own technicians, so this award went to KH; Kara Hendrick and Evie Ottaway

BEST SUPPORTING JUNIOR ACTOR There were so many lovely cameo performances by lower school students, it was difficult to choose between them, and I kept writing down names. Lucie Hall, Esther Johnson, and Matthew Gough should particularly be commended. But when a certain year 8 appeared as Bojo, complete with scruffy blond wig, we were unanimous in our admiration... I didn't even recognise who the actor was! So, this award went to RP's Finley Munson

BEST SUPPORTING SENIOR ACTOR I don't think I've ever given an award to a turtle before, let alone one called Graham, but MS' Graham Pearson thoroughly deserved this award.

BEST JUNIOR ACTOR There weren't actually any lower school students in the leading roles, but TS' Ruben Lanciaprima gave such a well-timed and humorous performance as Shakespeare, that this award went to him.

BEST SENIOR ACTOR This was such a hard award to judge. We have SO many talented students here, many of whom weren't even in their house dramas (where were you? Your Houses need you!), but plenty who were. Apollo Stocker and Bobby Pearse were so competent in the TS production; they worked well together, had a good sense of timing, projected clearly, and good, subtle characterisations. Lola Walton should also be commended for her portrayal of an evil queen. Jed Silk, as usual, gave an assured, larger than life performance, commanding the stage throughout, but the award went to his co-star, RP's Joshua Raisbeck for his zany characterisation of Back to the Future's Doc.

BEST SCRIPT We had four very different interpretations of A Stitch in Time. All were ingenious, but sometimes became over-complicated, and, as I said last year, we need a good plot arc; a beginning, significant middle, and a clear end. If you're trying to make a point, it must be consistent and well-argued, without recourse to lecturing us! Using an established story and re-working it can work well, and there was much to commend in RP's spin on Back to the Future. But TS had such an ingenious idea, with the stitch actually being part of the longest piece of knitting I've ever seen... and the plot was clear throughout, had some brilliant comic moments (we particularly loved the Shakespeare scene), and a definite, strong end. Well done to Lauren Kirby and her co-writers: TS won the best script trophy.

BEST DIRECTOR Congratulations to all the directors... it can be a thankless task and particularly frustrating when cast members fail to turn up, or drop out etc. It's always difficult directing a play you're also appearing in, although it can be done if you're careful. But you do need to watch the scenes from the audience's point of view and check that everyone can be heard (we lost so many lines this year), and seen. A narrator should always be at the front, (normally at the side unless interacting with the cast) and, although it's perfectly acceptable to read the narration, we need to see the narrator's face. It's crucial that narration is heard clearly. Make sure, as well, that actors aren't hiding others (especially those who are speaking), and don't get them standing in full profile ("cheat the feet"!). We felt that the one director who had overcome all these potential hazards was TS' Laruen Kirby

OVERALL To win overall, we want evidence of real team-work... that all the cast and crew are working together and are fully committed. The inclusion of students from all years is important, as is giving them all enough meaningful roles. This isn't really the place for a one or two person show; we want to see lots of emerging talent. And we really do need to be able to hear all the lines clearly. Unfortunately, we are made to place all the plays. But please, think of 4th as 4th not last... Taking everything into account, the placings were:

1. TS 2. RP 3. MS 4. KH

Thank you, and congratulations to everyone who took part; it's always such a pleasure watching your performances.

We are already looking forward to next year, when the theme will be "Actions Speak Louder Than Words"





Shakespeare for Schools: Much Ado About Nothing

Following a year (2020) of only being able to film our production (The Tempest) for the annual Shakespeare Schools Foundation (SSF) Festival (although we were very proud of the result!), and another year (2021) when circumstances combined to make any production impossible, Mrs Gregory and I were delighted to be able to return to a fully staged performance IN a theatre this year.

We chose Much Ado About Nothing; a play that most of our current students have studied/are studying. With all the public theatres (but the too small Sarah Thorne) closing, we were given the opportunity to perform at the Gulbenkian Theatre in Canterbury (part of the University of Kent). SSF provide the scripts which use only language from the play yet fit the entire play into half-an-hour! This year we arranged auditions in March so that we could start rehearsing in the summer term. We had a good response, and the high standard made it hard to cast! Because of the early start, we only had to rehearse once a week, and most of the cast were committed and came each time, losing only a few stragglers on the way... We were delighted to be joined by Year 13 Bobby Pearse as a student director.

By September most of the cast had learnt their lines and moves, and we could focus more on the details. In mid-October a member of the SSF team came and delivered a workshop in the hall, with the entire cast. This was a fun afternoon, and also constructive in that she made some excellent suggestions for a strong opening.

By the time of the performance, on Tuesday November 22nd, we had not had as many full run-throughs as we would have liked, and we knew scene-changes were going to be a problem. Due to school trips, we were also unable to rehearse the day before, and our last rehearsal in school was on the Thursday! But that had been long and thorough, and we were working with such a good cast...

We set off in two minibuses at 9am on the Tuesday, and arrived at the Gulbenkian in plenty of time to unload all our props and change into costumes etc before our tech and dress rehearsals at 10.30. Most of the cast never having been to the Gulbenkian before, and having to adapt to an apron stage, full lighting and surround sound, we had foreseen a few problems. The tech was overlong and rather scrappy, but then techs often are! And the dress rehearsal was so good! I've never been a believer in the old adage of poor dress = good performance, so we were relieved that they did so well. We'd been allowed to film the dress, and are very grateful to our newest fan/mini-bus driver and cinematographer, Mr Adelsberg, for organising this. Our only problem was that we were 5 minutes over time, which might not seem much... but we were threatened with the show being stopped at the half-hour mark!

We spent the rest of the day on campus, and our 24 students behaved impeccably. We were given a tour of the university, in three groups, and then ate lunch in the dining hall. Concerned about our over-running, we discussed ways we could shorten it. We knew we could shave seconds off each scene-change, and we wondered if we could cut part of the opening and finale. By now it was almost dark, so we gathered under a lit canopy outside, and tried a speed run... I have rarely seen anything so funny and we looked on in amazement as they said their lines and moved SO quickly they did the whole thing in 14 minutes. It actually did help with scene-changes, and with their lines/cues, and relieved a lot of tension too! We were sure we could now manage to fit it sensibly into 30 minutes with no real cuts.

We were back in the theatre at 6 and joined the other two schools performing that evening for a warm-up. The performance began at 7, and we were able to watch Palm Bay Junior's lovely "Midsummer Night's Dream", produced with a real sense of fun, and Goodwin Academy's Hamlet. This had some good ideas but was often difficult to hear (which helped our students realise how loud they needed to be!). They also left about 30 chairs in the tiny wings which our students had to stack!

Our performance was a fitting end to the evening. This is what team work is all about; **EVERYONE** pulled out all the stops and gave it everything. They looked good (simple but effective costumes), they sounded good (clear good projection, all the right emphases, pauses, emotions (I.e. they really understood all they were saying) and they moved well (keeping in character, remembering all the correct entrances, exits and props, etc). There is huge talent amongst the whole cast, and we had no weak links. We were delighted that almost all the students had family and/or friends there to support them, and were pleased to see Mrs Cackett there too. It has truly been a real delight to have been part of this, and we are really looking forward to next year...

Mrs Myhill

Asst Director	Bobby Pearse	13TSb
Leonato	Joanna Attwell	13TSa
Beatrice	Maisie Chambers	13KHb
Don John	Kirsty Clapham	13KHb
Hero	Lauren Kirby	13TSa
Borachio	Levin Bell	12TS3
Benedick	Erin Gardner	11KHG
Don Pedro	Maddy Sales	11KHG
Claudio	Harriet Tyman	11KHG
Friar Francis	Petra Gillick	11KHG
Conrade	Kirianne Willis	11MSG
Ursula	Edith Bell	11KHG
Margaret	Dhriti Patel	11KHG
Dogberry	Apollo Stocker	10TSG
1st Watchman	Sebastian Stone	10RPB
Antonio	Jairus Kuriakose	10MSB
A Sexton (an officer)	Dakota Debling	10RPG
Guests/villagers etc	Ruby Beasley	10RPG
Verges	Edith Jeffries	9KHG
2nd Watchman	Benji Sydenham	9MSB
Guests/villagers etc	Ava Mackie	9KHG
A Messenger	Ruth Bell	8KHG
Balthasar	Elikem Debre	8RPG
Guests/villagers etc	Sonny Johnson	8RPB



Canterbury Festival Young Musician of the Year Bursary Competition 2022

In June, Thomas Hall was shortlisted as a finalist for the Canterbury Festival young musician's bursary award competition on the trombone, after a competitive round of auditions. The finalists' concert was held on Monday 19th October at the St Gregory's Centre in Canterbury, where the standard was incredibly high with performers in each category presenting challenging and virtuosic performances. The panel of judges collaborated and announced Thomas as the overall winner of the bursary award. He also gains the title of 'Ambassador of the Canterbury Festival' and in that capacity will perform in various concerts and events throughout the course of the coming year. Well done, Tom!



Bake-Off

After a very long morning, smelling nothing but cakes baking and chocolate melting, we finally have our winners this year for the Bake-Off.

Thank you as always to everyone that came in and our judge for tasting all the amazing entries this year.

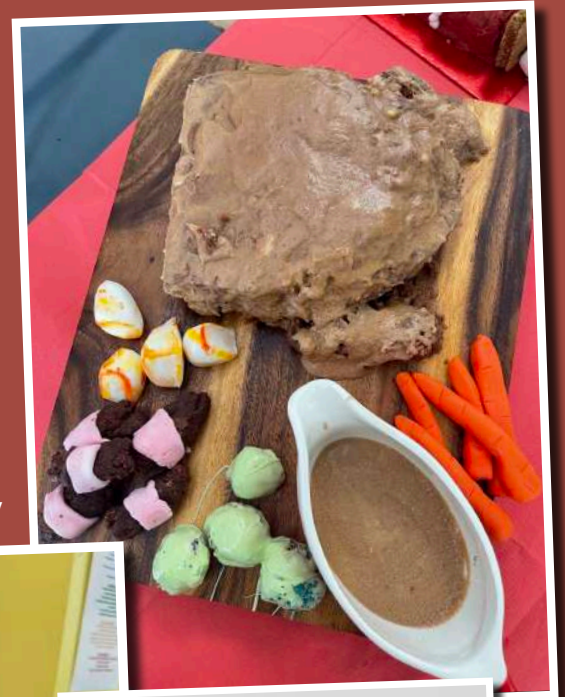
Our winners this year were:

1st Prize was Lois Baisley 8RPG for Christmas Turkey dinner cake.

2nd Nola Greenan 8RPG for her Christmas fireplace cake

3rd Evie Johnson 7KHG for her Christmas tree and snowmen cake.

Congratulations to all involved.



Mathematical Olympiad for Girls 2022

Six of our talented mathematicians took part in this challenge which is aimed at girls and young women across the UK and consists of five challenging problems. The girls had 2.5 hours to tackle these problems without the use of a calculator and had to produce clear, logical solutions. Congratulations to Lola Walton and Jaan Richards who achieved a certificate of distinction, awarded to top scorers nationally. Hattie Tames and Margaret Murdoch achieved a certificate of Merit and Evie Haycock and June Chandler achieved a certificate of participation.

Well done, we are very proud of you!



KS5 Biology Rat Dissection

Sixth Form Biology pupils were given the opportunity to participate in a very interesting extra-curricular practical- a rat dissection!

20 rats were available, and pupils were offered places on 2 different days to attempt to correctly dissect the rodents, either individually or in pairs. Over 30 pupils participated over the 2 days!

Carefully supervised by Miss Heard and Mrs Hermitage, pupils were instructed on how to secure the rodents, correctly open them without damaging the organs underneath, identify the different organs, and remove certain parts such as the ribcage, heart, lungs, and parts of the digestive system.

Everyone involved enjoyed the experience and were able to go away with new knowledge and practical skills associated with this exciting opportunity. The Biology department hopes that this is the first year of many that pupils will have the opportunity to complete this different and interesting practical outside of their normal A level Biology studies. This would particularly benefit anyone who is interested in studying medicine at university.

Year 12 Geography students take part in the Gresham Oracy Competition

Four of our Year 12 geography students have taken part in the Gresham Oracy Competition this year, with the key focus being on environment and sustainability. The competition is designed to promote the art of communicating complex information in a clear, concise, and compelling way. Our students were each able to choose from one of the 5 sub-topics provided, tailoring their understanding and thoughts surrounding environmental geography and climate change into a speech, which had a focus on their generation. The students wrote, presented, and recorded their speeches in their free time. The geography department would like to congratulate Harry Cory, Luke Tyler, Jefferson Harwood and Isobella McAuley for their exceptional hard work and effort that was put into their application. We wish them the best of luck in this competition and feel proud of our young climate activists. Shortlisted entries will be invited to present in London to top academics and professors in the environmental field.



Year 12 Geography students learn about trade through taste

At the end of November, Year 12 Geography students were able to sample high-quality banana bread (made by Mrs Stoner's own children) as part of their study of the World trade of a food commodity. The bananas used to make the cakes were sourced from Columbia, and students enjoyed learning about the journey of the banana ingredient, with a focus on production, supply, distribution, and consumption.



When learning about fairtrade, the students were able to sample different brands of chocolate with the wrapping/packaging removed. The students then had to make assumptions on which chocolates were fairtrade and which were not based on their taste. The aim of the task was to introduce the idea of fair trade and to investigate whether the 'label effect' had a real outcome on taste of fair-trade chocolate, compared to conventional chocolate.



Prestigious Quality Mark for Chatham & Clarendon Grammar School

Chatham & Clarendon Grammar School is celebrating being awarded the prestigious Quality Mark from the Geographical Association for their teaching of Secondary Geography. The Quality Mark award is the result of 12 months of professional reflection, adaptation, implementation, and review by the geography department to meet the 22 rigorous indicators set out by the GA. The award is in recognition of the departments' ability to provide high quality teaching and learning, enabling all students to apply their geographical knowledge and skills effectively and consequently to achieve well.

The department has been recognised for its clear, shared, and high expectations resulting from a curriculum which shares vision and rationale. As a result, students demonstrate they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in their next stage of education, training, or employment and for their adult life.

Mrs Stoner, who led the department to gaining this prestigious award shared "Engaging in the Quality Mark process was extremely insightful into the elements of our teaching at CCGS. We were able to review our current teaching and learning, celebrate areas of outstanding practice, and improve upon areas that required adaptation. With the use of student voice, we were able to make successful changes and we know that our curriculum is highly engaging as a result. Our use of the outside environment continues to be outstanding, and we have been able to add further opportunities for fieldwork that continue to secure the high-quality geographical learning that takes place at CCGS."

Mrs March, Head of Geography, shared "The feedback from the Geographical Association reinforced the hard work that our team put into the award and stated that the evidence supplied promotes appropriate discussion about the subject matter, stimulates curiosity and makes learning memorable. It also highlighted the specialist and up-to-date subject knowledge of our staff, which they use to plan and teach effective lessons with focus on geographical learning. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the geography department for their outstanding contributions to this award, and Mrs Stoner for leading the application."

The prestigious Quality Mark celebrates and rewards geographical teaching and learning, and CCGS are currently the only school in Kent to hold this award.



Christmas Jumper Day

Friday 9th December was Christmas Jumper Day and again this year, we decided as a school, that we would ask for donations to our local food bank rather than a monetary donation.

We were absolutely overwhelmed at how our school community came together as the amount of donations far exceeded our expectations.

The following was sent through by a representative from Priory Children's Centre:

'On behalf of Priory Children's Centre, I would like to say a very big thank you to all your staff & pupils for your generous donations given to the family food bank. It will help many struggling families across Thanet in the current situation.'

There are also some photos of some of our staff and students in their Christmas Jumpers and enjoying their Christmas lunch.

Thank you everyone! Your support once again has been fantastic.



Reverse Advent Calendar

What can I say - you're all stars for donating to the Reverse Advent Calendar 2022. As you can see, the collection is bigger than ever before.

Thank you to those who helped fill my car with everything, it's now been delivered to the Salvation Army - it's been a tough year and we are the only ones who have donated anything Christmassy.

Volunteers were busy preparing for their Christmas present appeal - they'll now be able to make up festive hampers as well as pop a treat or two in the bags prepped by the food bank.

I cannot tell you how grateful they are for your kindness and generosity.

Mrs Hignett



Talented Year 9 Student, Leon, drew this picture of St George's from the school grounds with flag at half mast after the Queen's death earlier this year.

SOS

Support Our School

New Year Auction

We will be holding an online auction in March 2023 to support our school with much needed funding. If you have any item, service or event you are willing to donate to us please email me with the details at shurrell@ccgrammarschool.co.uk as soon as possible and no later than 20th January. I will send out a reminder next term.

CCGS Friends

As it now appears that the pandemic restrictions are mainly behind us we will be reinstating the Friends starting with an Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 25th January at 7pm in the Chatham Site Dining Hall. I will send out further details and reminders next term.

What are the CCGS Friends?

The Friends is an important link between the parents, teachers and Governors at the School. Holding a number of fund raising and social activities during the school year as well as provide refreshments at school productions and concerts, with all the proceeds used specifically for the benefit of the students.

50/50 Club

Whilst the existing members (thank you) have been continuing to pay into the Club the administration has been on hold (members please note years 2020/21 and 2021/22 are currently being processed) due to the pandemic we will be relaunching the 50/50 Club next term and I will send out further details then.

What is the CCGS 50/50 Club?

WINNINGS 50% 50% FOR FUNDS

50% of the money paid in will be paid out to 50 winners during the year with the other 50% going to School Funds to improve school life for all students.

Donations

THE OLD RUYMIANS (ORs) very kindly donated money for the purchase of new tents for the Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions and items of kit, for the Combined Cadet Force.

The ORs welcomes current Sixth Formers, past students of Chatham House Grammar School, Clarendon House Grammar School and Chatham & Clarendon Grammar School to join them.

The Club make regular donations to the School and organise events including golf days and the annual Dinner held at the Chatham Site.

The Club's website can be found at: www.olderuymians.co.uk and if anyone would like to join or has any questions please contact either Mike Tyrrell – Hon. Chairman Home – 01843 600169 or John Copeland – Hon. Secretary Home – 01843 603142

Messages from the Headteacher

Uniform reminder

Could I please remind you to adhere to our uniform policy when replacing items of uniform, this can be found in the student planner. Shoes must be traditional and formal in style and not of a trainer type. Ear Piercings – students should only wear one stud in each earlobe, earrings are not permitted in any other part of the ear and students will be told to remove them. The school kilt should not be rolled, nor should it be shortened. Students who have their skirt shortened will be asked to either purchase a new one, or wear trousers instead. Just a reminder that the Schoolwear shop in Margate now sells second hand items of our uniform.

Staff Workload

Can I remind you of school policy with regard to emails to staff, which I have written to you about in previous newsletters: It has become commonplace for parents to email staff directly and expect a response by return, this is neither sustainable nor practicable. All teachers have a significant teaching and marking workload, therefore in line with some other workplaces I do not expect them to check their emails after 5.30pm or before 8.30am in the morning, nor do I expect staff to respond to emails at the weekend or during school holidays. Please be mindful that staff who only work part time may take longer to respond to emails. We will prioritise all electronic communication in the same way as incoming letters or telephone calls. Rest assured that we will respond as soon as is practicable, but please be aware that more urgent matters may take priority and your patience is therefore appreciated.

Could I also take this opportunity to remind you that if you wish to see a member of staff in person, it is always better to ring first and make an appointment. Form tutors and Heads of House all have a significant teaching commitment and therefore we cannot guarantee that they will be available to see you without prior appointment.

Christmas Concerts

Our annual Christmas Concerts took place on 13th & 14th December in the Chatham Assembly Hall. The packed audience was entertained by a range and variety of both traditional and very modern vocal performances, from Gaudete to a Daft Punk Medley arranged by Pentatonix.

The Jazz Band, amazed us with three numbers, culminating in 'I Will Survive', with fabulous vocals from Carys Weedon and Zaia Zaman.

The Senior Wind Band wowed us with two numbers including a tribute to the Harry Potter Films.

The Joint Choir finished the evening with Baba Yetu, with outstanding solos from Edmund Rudland, Mathew Gough and Molly Jones.

A massive well done to all our performers!

This was a thoroughly entertaining evening showcasing the vast number of talented students we have in the school which is why the school has such an excellent reputation not only in Thanet but further afield, for producing high quality music. My thanks as always goes to Ms Hollman, Mrs Gibbons, Mr Gibbons, and all the peripatetic teachers not only for their hard work but for supporting our children in developing their various talents.

Messages from the Headteacher continued

Support Groups/Charities

Please be aware a number of support groups and charities supporting mental health will be running at different hours over the festive period, please check their websites before contacting them to make sure you get the support you need in a timely fashion.

Financial Support

I would like to thank all those parents who make a one off or regular donation to the school, your support is much appreciated. These are still testing times financially for schools, Covid has meant many of our fundraising events to contribute towards the cost of things like the school production, purchasing new musical instruments and sheet music or the running of the school minibuses, have been affected by Covid restrictions over the past three academic years. If you would like to make a regular donation to the school, no matter how small, it will be gratefully received.

Staff leaving

Mrs Hewett our Cover Manager is retiring after 15 years at the school, She has one of the trickiest jobs in the school making sure that staff absences are covered every day and it is fair to say that Covid has made her job even trickier over the past couple of years! We wish her a long and happy retirement.

Mrs Harris – English, is leaving us after 10 years for a change of direction, teaching dance at a local high school, we wish her every success in her new role.

Mrs Norman – Health and Social Care, is leaving us after 7 years at the school to take up a post in a school closer to where she lives, we wish her every success in her new school.

Mrs Rimmer- Cover supervisor, is leaving after 13 years, to take up a similar role, but in a Primary School, we wish her every success in her new job.

I want to thank all those leaving for their hard work, dedication and loyalty to both the school and to the students.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very restful Christmas break and a Happy New Year, school will recommence on Tuesday 3rd January 2023 at 8.40am.

Debra Liddicoat

Headteacher

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