

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER 1 DECEMBER 2017

Important Dates Week Commencing Monday 4th December is **Week 1**

- 05 12 17 Year 10 Oxford Brookes Trip
- 05 12 17 Dance Disability held at SWR
- 07 12 17 Y11 Parents Evening 16-00-19-00/ A Level Biology Trip
- 08 12 17 Y9 Passport Day to Bucks New University

Letters Home

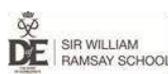
NB: It is important that all parents and carers please ensure we have an up to date email address in order to ensure effective communication of vital information between school and home.

News from the following Departments:

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- Page 3, 4 & 5 Performing Arts
- Page 6 Maths
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- Page 9 Year 9
- Page 10 & 11 Year 10
- Page 12 & 13 Sixth Form

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NEWS FROM TECHNOLOGY



In Design & Technology we are introducing a rewards and recognition initiative where each teacher will name their Designer or Chef of the fortnight across all of their KS3 classes. The nominated students each fortnight will receive a bespoke ruler, pencil, key tag or spatula engraved with the achievement engraved.

The nominations could be for an outstanding piece of work, consistent effort or general all round achievement in that fortnight. Please keep an eye out for them to see if your son or daughter is one of the chosen few!

Mr P Rodgers

News from Performing Arts

Open Mic Success

On Sunday 5th November Taylor France-Benfield took to the stage in Reading as part of Open Mic UK. Taylor blew the audience away with a tremendous and mature performance of her very own song. Not only did Taylor blow the audience away, she impressed the judges so much that she has managed to get through to the next stage of the competition. A massive well done to Taylor and best of luck for this weekend! – It's the Area Finals.



Shakespeare Schools Festival.

The cast of Romeo and Juliet have completed their fantastic performance at this year's Shakespeare Festival. On Monday 20th November the cast members went to the Wycombe Town Hall where they carried out a full technical rehearsal ahead of their performance in the evening. In the performance the cast was fully committed and were highly

praised for their 'avant-garde' performance which centralised on the casts ensemble nature. The festival coordinator commended the students involved for their mature approach to one of Shakespeare's most recognised plays. Elizabeth Dunlop said, 'Rehearsals for the Shakespeare Festival have been really hard but rewarding and we are so pleased that we were able to successfully showcase our talent on Monday. I just can't wait for next year'. The cast members have worked tirelessly as part of the process and managed to have a collective sense of achievement backstage just after their performance.



Massive congratulations to all the cast involved. (Romeo and Juliet Cast were from year 8 -11).



Samba workshop



On Thursday 16th November many of the year 9 students took part in a Samba drumming workshop. As part of their lessons in Music this term, the students are focusing on Samba drumming. Therefore this was an excellent opportunity to develop their knowledge and practical skills.

Mr Maxwell said 'It was fantastic to see so many of our year 9's fully committed and enjoying the Samba drumming sessions. I know that they will be able to bring this enjoyment and passion to all of their music lessons.'



Rehearsals for Starry Starry Night.

The SWR Jazz band have been busy rehearsing every Tuesday night since September to develop and rehearse a repertoire ready for Starry Starry Night. They have been busy preparing songs from 'Tracks of My Tears' to 'Everybody Needs Somebody'. You should book your tickets for Starry Starry Night to hear this group, they really are brilliant.



Not only are the Jazz band rehearsing for Starry Starry Night but a huge array of talented students are busy preparing themselves for the big night. Like Ellie Seedel-Tripp in year 8. Ellie started singing lessons at school last term and is already busy preparing her version of 'Heaven' for Starry Starry Night. Ellie said 'I really like my lessons with Charlotte. They are lots of fun and Charlotte is really kind and supportive.' Ellie also said that she is really pleased that she has been doing singing lessons as it has helped her to expand her vocal range.

The dancers from the after-school dance clubs are also busy preparing their dance pieces for Starry Starry Night. We just can't wait!

If you wanted to have your own music lessons, then please collect a letter from the Performing Arts Office. (N.B. Lessons are for Singing, Piano, Drums, Guitar, Flute, Clarinet.)

The dancers from the after-school dance clubs are also busy preparing their dance pieces for Starry Starry Night. We just can't wait!



Tickets for Starry Starry Night.

Tickets are now available for our Music event 'Starry, Starry Night.' This event will take place on Thursday 14th December at 7pm in the Main Hall. This event will be a tremendous evening where we can showcase our talented students. The student performances will range from Dance, Music and even a sneak peek at the work for Little Shop of Horrors. If you would like to attend Starry Starry Night, then please book your tickets on ParentPay. Tickets are £5 for Adults, £3 for concessions and Students.

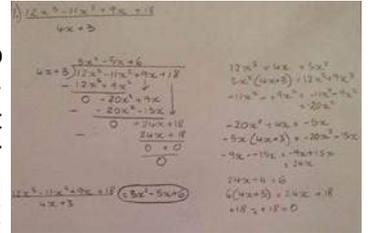
Please note that we are trialling something different this year, we will not be physically issuing tickets but will have records on the door of what has been purchased on ParentPay.

Further Maths



Further Maths is for Year 10 students who are predicted a grade 7 or 8 in Maths, students who have a passion for Maths and students who enjoy pushing themselves further. It is graded A* with Distinction to C, which encourages us to challenge ourselves. Every week we learn AS Level topics which extends our knowledge by going into more depth and it gives us a taste of what 6th form Maths is like.

The sessions are on every week on a Wednesday after-school with Mrs Mullins, who has devoted her time to teach us. I personally love Maths, it's one of my favourite subjects, which is why I was delighted to be offered the chance to do Further Maths to get an extra GCSE (equivalent) and I look forward to attending it every week. Further Maths also helps me in GCSE Maths because it develops the key skills that are there in GCSE Maths. I am determined to take maths in the 6th form, where it will help me as I will already have a base of knowledge of the AS level topics we will learn, which shows dedication.



The image shows handwritten mathematical work on a piece of paper. On the left, there is a long division problem: $12x^3 - 11x^2 + 9x + 18$ divided by $4x + 3$. The work shows the steps of polynomial long division, resulting in a quotient of $3x^2 - 5x + 6$ and a remainder of 0 . On the right, there is an expansion of $(4x+3)(3x^2-5x+6)$ which results in $12x^3 - 11x^2 + 9x + 18$, matching the original polynomial. The final answer $(3x^2 - 5x + 6)$ is circled.

A normal lesson consists of a new topic learned each week from the unit we are learning. Right now we are doing Algebra, so last week we learned about dividing polynomials, which was very interesting. An example of a question would be: divide $12x^3 - 11x^2 + 9x + 18$ by $4x + 3$. At first this looked very daunting but, by the end of the lesson, we all knew the complex steps involved in solving this, which was:

- Step 1: Make sure the polynomial is written in descending order. If any terms are missing, use a zero to fill in the missing term (this will help with the spacing).
- Step 2: Divide the first term inside the division by the first term outside the division symbol.
- Step 3: Multiply (or distribute) the answer obtained in the previous step by the polynomial in front of the division symbol.
- Step 4: Subtract and bring down the next term.
- Step 5: Repeat Steps 2, 3, and 4 until there are no more terms to bring down.
- Step 6: Write the final answer. So following these steps the final answer to the question above should be, $3x^2 - 5x + 6$

Other examples of units we will be learning are: Calculus, Co-ordinating Geometry and Matrix Transformations. All of these will give us a higher knowledge of mathematical principles.

I find algebra very easy because, once you know the basic rules of it, you can stretch it to get more complicated topics, which I enjoy to discover and learn. I also love probability because you don't have to simplify your fractions for once! I particularly struggle with exam style questions because, even when you know the skills, you need to know how to apply them to questions that are worded in a different way to what you are used to, which is why it's important to practise lots of exam style questions to get used to the style of it.

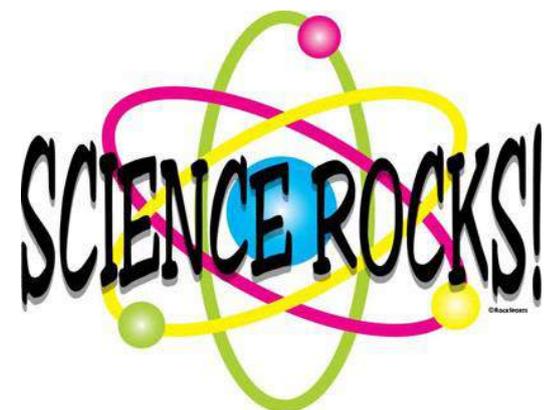
I personally achieve well in Maths because of my dedication to not get past any topic until I fully understand it, I revise for 10 minutes everyday, even if it's just reading what I learnt in lesson to consolidate it so I don't forget it, or doing more questions that are harder to extend my knowledge..

Govinder Singh Toor

SCIENCE NEWS

Work has been produced by Lewis Embury in year 9 in Science for his homework. He made the model of a atom (boron) and the model of a bacteria cell.

Model of a Bacteria Cell



Model of an Atom (Boron)

Year 7 History re-enactment of the Battle of Hastings



Students in year 7 have been learning about how William the Conqueror invaded England in 1066 and defeated Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings. They spent their time in lessons learning about the different Army's, weapons and military tactics in order to decide who should have won. For homework the students were required to make a shield, sword or helmet ready for the re-enactment. Many students went to the battle dressed in full armour including many with a cardboard spear as well as carrying bow and arrows. The students looked fantastic!

On the field the class were then split into two teams and the leaders of the Army's were elected to co-ordinate their groups. William's Army was positioned at the bottom of the hill and Harold's at the top. Three times William's Army ran up the hill in order to encourage Harold's men down. By the third attempt Harold took the bait and ran down the hill where the students attempted to show the military skills and tactics that they had learnt in lessons.



The students really enjoyed themselves and said that they felt that they now fully understood how and why William won. Well done year 7!

Archie Mace Year 9 Student

Archie finished 11th in the British and LGM championships with 45 drivers competing in both. These championships are world renowned with kids from many different countries competing. It was competitive and at times aggressive.

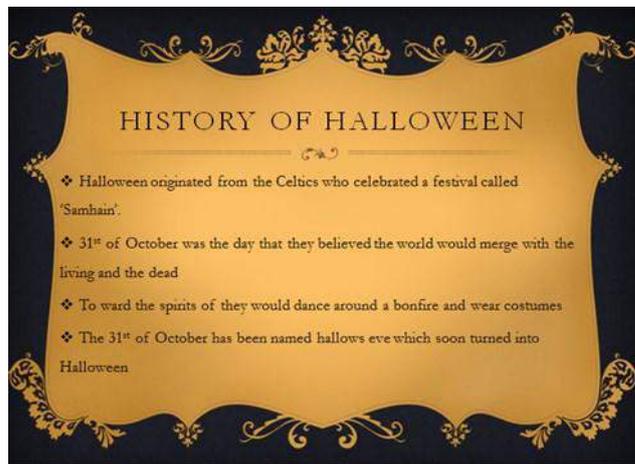
Archie had some bad luck this year missing one round, having power and mechanical issues but he still finished 11th in the championships.

He has now moved up into the Junior X30 class and is already showing great pace against more experienced and older drivers and looks forward to a better 2018!



10GR Halloween Assembly.

On Tuesday 31st October, 10GR hosted a Halloween themed assembly in which they performed to the rest of the year group. They greeted the year group with 'Thriller' music and a darkened room decked with glow in the dark decorations and 'DO NOT ENTER' signs. The assembly included facts about Halloween, the history of it and a fun apple-bobbing competition. One person from each form volunteered to be a part of this and had to catch all the apples before the others; with the chance to win sweets at stake, it was a closely fought competition. It was an enjoyable assembly for both the people taking part and the people watching. Lots of sweets and prizes were given away and everyone learnt something about Halloween other than trick or treat!



Did you know?

Halloween was originally referred to as "Cabbage Night".

Ireland is typically believed to be the place where Halloween started.

Halloween is also known as Samhain (pronounced Sow-In) a festival to mark the end of the harvest season and the start of 'the darker half' of the year.

Year 10 News - Our House Theatre trip

On Thursday 23rd November, a group of Year 10 students went to see the 'Olivier award-winning smash hit' Our House. The musical is based around the music from Madness such as 'It Must Be Love,' 'Baggy Trousers' and of course 'Our House.' It tells the story of a young boy who commits a petty crime in order to impress the girl of his dreams. The musical takes an interesting twist as we see how his life will turn out if he were to take two different paths. A very interesting musical that deals with wider issues looking at the consequences of your actions.

All of the students had a brilliant time and thoroughly enjoyed the musical. It was a humorous and uplifting musical which had Mrs Thomas and Mr Latchem singing and dancing along to the popular songs, which added to the humour for the students.



Year 10 History trip to the Globe Theatre

On Friday 24th November and Monday 27th November the History Department (Mrs Charlesworth, Mr Hughes and Mrs Adams) took 42 students to the Globe Theatre in London.

As part of their G.C.S.E studies students are required to study a specified historic site in depth that will further enrich their understanding of Elizabethan England.

Whilst touring the site of the Globe and the Rose theatre students were able to bring learning to life and make connections to the wider Tudor context.

We were fortunate, on both days, with the weather and students were able to make the most of the outside area. Our guides gave structured, witty and relevant information that will no doubt be of great benefit to Year 10 in their future studies.

It was a real pleasure to take such a delightful group of students out; they were engaged, polite and positive about the experience. A highlight was watching Chloe be selected to dress up as Ophelia, from Shakespeare's Hamlet. Students were able to see the detail in the clothing and watch Chloe experience the limitations of movement whilst confined in the various layers of costuming.



English Literature A Level Seminar- Year 12

On Monday 13th November, 9 year 12 English Literature students attended an AS Level training day run by AQA. We had 4 seminars throughout the day and they were delivered by the Chief Examiner, a director from the Royal Shakespeare Company and an English Literature lecturer from the University of Warwick. They spoke about the units we study on the AS course, all under the umbrella heading of: Love Through the Ages. Here are some comments our year group had to make about the speakers:

"One of the speakers of the day was an English Literature University Lecturer. He explored the different concepts and ideas of love, focusing on the novels *The Great Gatsby* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. We are studying *The Great Gatsby* for A Level and therefore it was very useful and interesting. He explored concepts that I had never thought of before and it widened my thoughts about how many types of love there are and the reasons behind 'falling in love'".

Ella Byrne, Year12.

"The special guest speaker was Carol Ann Duffy. She read out her famous poems and read with deep emotion and showed us as an audience the importance of the way a poem should be read. Her background of writing inspired us and we learned about keeping our creative work interesting and engaging in the process - we were very impressed"

Paige Evans, Year 12.

"The first speaker of the day was John Rich, an examiner for AQA's A Level Literature. He was very enthusiastic and helpful in providing us with an insight into an examiner's mind. His expertise and wisdom was very much appreciated, and he was very engaging because it was evident that he knew exactly what make a top band answer and what bores examiners; more importantly he told us exactly what candidates should refrain from doing! He made me personally understand what an examiner wants to see, for example his motto was: "The examiner is on your side!"; the examiners want to award us marks and see us do well. On the whole I really benefitted from the experience and I now have numerous ideas on how to tackle the exams."

Hamnah Khan, Year 12

"I especially enjoyed listening to an expert from the RSC as he explored various genres and how they all impact the notion of love. He made references to the play *Bent* by Martin Sherman, which clearly depicts a untraditional concept of love. He continued to explain the importance of stage craft and how candidates can underestimate the power of the stage. I walked away knowing that I should not overlook any stage directions, props or gestures implied. He linked in themes of violence and drama to the motif of love, and how love itself can elicit these powerful and ugly emotions."

Taylor Frances-Benfield, Year 12

We were particularly moved by the notion of soul mates and exploring some theories surrounding who our soul mates are, and whether they even exist. One theory suggested that our soul mates do exist, but we may never meet them as they are elsewhere and it is all dependent upon our attitude towards Love and soul mates. Love in early literature obviously relies on tangible exchanges of wealth, material or business and Romantic love may not be the reason to marry or enter a relationship.



SIXTH FORM NEWS

Our very own superstar!

On Sunday 5th November, Taylor France-Benfield competed in a regional open mic singing competition with representatives from Sony, Universal and Warner Bros as the judges. She came in the top 5 so is now through to area finals in December. She has received incredibly positive feedback from the judges which read: "We love your silky vocals and you gave one of our judges goosebumps!" Taylor is currently working on her song and vocals in preparation for her next big event. If she is successful, she will go through to the national finals! Mr Latchem, Miss Quelch, Mr Khan and Miss Ullah all went to support Taylor and cannot say enough about how incredible she was.

Taylor herself has said "I entered the competition as a chance of getting my name out there as an artist and as I progressed through the rounds, I realised that I have the ability to achieve so much. My support system has been fantastic and I am honoured to be a part of it."

We would like to congratulate Taylor on this fantastic achievement and wish her the very best of luck in the area finals.

6th Form Open Evening

Thank you to all the parents and students who attended our 6th Form Open Evening a couple of weeks ago. We are pleased so far with all of the application forms starting to come in. Don't forget that the application deadline is Friday 15th December 2017. For any queries, please contact Miss E Le Count (Head of Sixth Form) at elecount@swr.school or via the usual school number 01494 815211.

Sir William Ramsay School Presents

Starry Starry Night

A Christmas Concert

*Thursday 14th December at 7pm
Sir William Ramsay School in M31*

*Tickets are £5, £3 for concessions and are available
on Parent Pay & in the Performing Arts Office*

BBC THE MIND SET

BBC's The Mind Set is the UK's first national peer-to-peer coaching network for GCSE and Nationals students. Through a series of short films, a team of students offer practical and wellbeing advice on a variety of topics.

BBC looking for PARENTS of 16-18 year olds for The Mind Set 2018 campaign

- Has your son/daughter taken their GCSEs or Nationals exams in the past two years?
- Whatever grades they got, did they manage to achieve their full potential?
- Do you think you could advise parents with children coming up to their exams?
- Do you think you would be good on Live TV or Radio?

If so, we want to hear from you. If you have some sound advice and the ability to get it across, get in touch! You can find info on last years coaches and the previous films here: [The Mind Set 2017](#)

How to get involved:

1. Email us at themindset@grainmedia.co.uk
2. Tell us when and where your son/daughter took their exams and what grades were achieved.
3. Tell us what would be your best piece of advice to pass on to parents with children taking their exams.
4. In less than 100 words, tell us why you would make a great mentor to next year's parents.

The deadline for getting in touch is Monday 4th December 2017.

