

THE SUNDAY TIMES COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL OF THE YEAR

It was an incredible thrill for one and all at The Cotswold School when it was announced we had been named The Sunday Times' Comprehensive School of the Year 2015/16.

Superb results, the school's steady climb up the league tables over the last 4 years, a fourth consecutive 'Outstanding' Ofsted inspection which rated the school 'Outstanding' across all categories, as well as the school's reputation for excellent extra-curricular provision and facilities all contributed to The Cotswold School achieving this accolade.

In addition to the coveted 'School of the Year' title, The Cotswold School has climbed the ranks on The Sunday Times' league tables. Following its outstanding results at both GCSE and A Level, the school made it into the Sunday Times Top 20 Comprehensives last year (ranked 18th) and has, this year, climbed yet further to 12th amongst the country's comprehensives. This follows The Daily Telegraph's ranking of our Sixth Form: 14th in the country for A level results achieved in August 2015.

For the second year running, the school's Sixth Form ranked 1st in Gloucestershire, according to The Daily Telegraph, and currently outranks comprehensive Sixth Forms in Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. The Department for Education has recently highlighted that statistically, there is no better

performing school within 75 miles.

Mr Morgan puts the school's success down to: 'Happy



students and staff ... and a lot of hard work. The only way we can achieve what we do is through hard work – and that's from all of us. Teaching and non-teaching staff, students and Governors are all committed to our pupils excelling as individuals. And our parents and carers show that commitment too. We do not work hard in isolation. We work hard as a team.'

Mr Morgan added: 'To receive such national recognition by The Sunday Times is even more gratifying considering the ongoing changes to the national curriculum, the more robust exam requirements and the increasing need for schools like ours to produce

more and more with decreasing funding.'

'I have had the privilege of leading The Cotswold School since 2011 and I said at the time, it was like getting the opportunity to captain the sports team that you have backed all your life! This holds just as true today. I am extraordinarily lucky. There is a warm and welcoming ethos here and it's a place where everyone, whatever their background or abilities can shine. Being a Welshman in The Cotswold School, I have seen this first hand!'

Calling Coach Palmer!

Congratulations to Sixth Former Alex Palmer who was nominated by the Director of South West England Basketball for the 2015 4-day National Talent Camp to be held at Loughborough University in mid-December.

The National Talent Camp is a unique four day residential experience which brings together 350 of the most talented young athletes, coaches and officials from various sports.

The National Governing Body of Sport England selected Alex as 1 of only 6 Basketball Coaches from across the UK. This is a particularly remarkable achievement for Alex and the South West – a region that does not receive the basketball resources (manpower or funding) that the large cities do.

Alex is currently Assistant Coach to the local Gloster Jets Boys U14 team based in Cirencester and also to the South West England Girls U16 team, which involves international matches and events.

Alex's selection for the National Talent Camp is a reflection of the terrific commitment and effort he has shown with his coaching. *Well done!*



Mudrun Fun!

On Wednesday 9th December, Year 13 braved the wintry conditions and got stuck in - the mud! This annual tradition sees members of the Sixth Form hurling themselves round a rather wet and muddy assault course. Judging by these pictures, they had a great time!



Cheltenham Festival LabLive Christmas Science Lectures

Thirty Year 8 and 9 students got into the festive spirit as they attended the 6th Annual LabLive Christmas Science Lectures at Cheltenham's Bacon Theatre.

Presenter Jamie Gallagher guided the students through the increasing influence of nanotechnology on everyday life in his lecture entitled: Nano Invasion! Large explosions, flying balls and a roving quadcopter all ensured high audience participation levels. The juggling and balancing skills of James Soper then came to the fore with a lecture on the Science of the Circus. Various demonstrations of forces were shown with Robert Dobson ending up as a volunteer on stage. The event aimed to spark pupils' excitement about science, technology, engineering and

maths (STEM) and provided them with a good opportunity to see how they could exploit their STEM skills in future careers.

The event was kindly sponsored by The Honourable Company of Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire Community Foundation, Hitchins Family Trust, Renishaw, Zyex, GET, Royal Society of Chemistry and IFIS.

With many thanks to Mrs Clarke who supervised the students on the trip.



Hitchins Family Trust



Cross-Country Runners

Our girls Cross-Country teams have run fantastically this term taking several 1st places, both individually and as a team, as you can see below:

District Minor Girls (Yr7)

Lauren Farley - 2nd place
Team result - 3rd place

Junior Girls (Yr8/9)

Alexandra Scrivener - 1st place, Bethan Powell - 2nd place, Isabel Kiey-Thomas - 3rd place
Team result - 1st place

Intermediate Girls (Yr10/11)

Niamh Powell - 1st place, Rosie Mutsaars - 4th place

Huge congratulations to all the cross-country runners who took part!



Young scientists have been hard at work...

BP Virtual Reality

STEM Club continues to develop and provide interesting and rewarding activities for its pupils.

We were once again delighted that Chris Sedgwick, a parent of one of our pupils, gave up his valuable time to come and talk to our pupils about his career, his role at BP and renewable energy.

He provided our pupils with a Virtual Reality experience via some BP headsets that was both entertaining and enjoyable. This opened pupils' eyes to careers in energy, programming and technological advances as well as the wider STEM community.

We extend our warmest thanks to Chris for providing our pupils with this opportunity.



Simon Watt – Ready Steady Science

We were once again privileged to be treated to a STEM show by the award winning Biologist Simon Watt.

Simon delivered two talks: firstly to Year 8 and 9 pupils and then to Years 10 and 11. The engaging and exciting talks had our pupils mesmerised and wanting to find out more about the science that makes up our food. From the molecular level to the brain chemistry and the history behind the science, Simon was able to demonstrate how much of what is learnt in Science lessons can be seen in real life, every day, by the food choices we make and how our bodies react to and process them.

Simon was full of praise for how engaged and intuitive our pupils are and hopefully he will be back again next year with some of his other amazing shows. Our thanks go to Miss Clarke for organising the day.



Year 7 Lunchtime Science Club

Over forty students have participated in lunchtime Science Club this term, enthusiastically tackling activities ranging from marshmallow tower building, bouncy custard balls, foam fountains, slippery slime and crisp packing challenges.

Activities are open to all Year 7's on Wednesday lunchtimes in the Science Department.

News from STEM Club

STEM Club continues to go from strength to strength, with the passion and dedication of Miss Clarke and Dr Major developing new projects and experiences for our pupils.

This term they have enjoyed building lighthouses, water rockets, CAD, slime, bangs and pops, BP Virtual Reality, drones, disaster relief and motorised vehicles. They have also taken part in talks by Simon Watt, the National Grid Challenge Day and going to the Christmas Science Lectures.



The National Grid get Year 10 in a Spin

The National Grid kindly sponsored a STEM event for 50 of our Year 10 pupils on 16th November. The main activity challenged the pupils to make a wind turbine to generate the highest voltage. The pupils were in a spin from the start but with some excellent team work, some great solutions were being generated.

Individuals came up with some fantastic gear box designs and ways of mounting them on the turbines. The higher they were able to build their tower, the faster the wind speed they were allowed at judging. Pupils had to work to a budget and justify their solutions at the board presentation.

The Cotswold School pupils really stood out in their ability, team work and effort. The final testing revealed the winning team of Emma Franklin, Emma Parker, Ladan Saidi, Tom Woolcock and Harry Lear who had generated the highest voltage output for their expenditure.

Five pupils from various teams impressed the representatives from The Smallpeice Trust and Emma Franklin, Romy Welstead, Brooke Maskell, Tom Woolcock and Ben Sedgwick won a week's residential work experience in July. Huge congratulations to all pupils who took part, on the quality of their work.



I'm a Scientist... Get Me Out of Here!

Year 7 students have been participating in a project involving online question and answer sessions with a range of professional scientists.

This has enabled them to engage with a range of working scientists and see the wide diversity of potential STEM careers available to them.

They then voted for the scientist they felt was the most effective communicator, with Dr Hughes from Gothenburg University, who studies protein structure, being voted the winner!



Bouncy Custard & Buzz Wires

STEM Club is increasingly popular... but why? Year 9 student journalist Jess Gainford explains.

Ever since Christmas 2008 when I somehow managed to acquire my older brother's new slime laboratory kit, I have enjoyed science. As the years went on my interest in the subject grew, so when I enrolled at The Cotswold School I was extremely pleased to find out that there was a Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Club.



A typical afternoon in STEM begins when we arrive at DT3, have a snack and then find out what will be happening that day. Ranging from bouncy custard to a make-your-own buzz wire game we definitely do a wide variety of activities. When I joined I was amazed at how much I learned whilst what felt like just messing around with my mates.

'So, what does this have to do with me?' I hear you ask. Well, it means that you can enjoy science in a relaxed and hands on way with no pressure of homework or tests; just fun.

Spirit of Christmas at Gloucester Cathedral

With the weather so warm it has been difficult to get the Christmas spirit going but this was rectified with the aptly named Spirit of Christmas concert at Gloucester Cathedral on Wednesday 2nd December. The pupils performed a complex and varied programme of music, including performances from our whole school choir, Chamber choir, wind group and orchestra.

Yet again we teamed up with Muscular Dystrophy UK to raise money for research and support for individuals and families affected by the condition. We took 62 pupils to perform and joined forces for three choir numbers with pupils from Innesworth Junior School and Shurdington CofE Primary.

We began the concert with a section by candle light, setting the tone for the event (although making it decidedly tricky to see our music!) The wind group played four pieces ranging from the more traditional *The Call of the Angelus* to an arrangement of *Tumbalalaika* by the group's leader, Rosie Meyrick. The sound they created was clear and ethereal, allowing the acoustics of the building to work at their best. Chamber Choir performed two pieces led by Gemma Fifield. The complexity of the harmonies were particularly intense in *Blest Mary Wanders through the Thorn*, an unaccompanied Baroque influenced work, showing the skills and purity of the pupils voices.

The main school choir performed *Softly* by Will Todd. This was my personal favourite, with bulging phrases and crafted dynamics telling the Christmas story as if in a lullaby to a child.

The orchestra closed the concert in their debut for Gloucester Cathedral. This lively program of pieces conducted by Miss Thomas brought us from the Baroque period in the form of Correlli's *Christmas Concerto*, through a skilfully performed *Dance of the Reed Pipe Fairies* by Tchaikovsky to the uplifting *Sleigh Ride* by Anderson.

This was an accomplished programme that left me feel incredibly proud of all the performers. A huge thank you to all of you that performed: I hope you enjoyed this special event.

Thank you too to all of you that joined us at this special event. I hope to see as many if not more of you at our Christmas Concert in Bourton Church on Wednesday 16th December.

- Ms Buckley, Head of Music



Year 5/6 Primary Science Events

Over fifty students from 12 different primary schools have attended the two after-school Primary Science sessions held this term.

They have had an amazing time investigating reflection, convection currents and combustion. Many thanks go to Mrs Madgwick for delivering the entertaining sessions, whilst George Lockett, Zoe Lenihan, Callum Neale and Paige Duester acted as great science ambassadors at these events, with Mrs Neale deputising as an able scientific assistant.

The next sessions will be held on Monday 8th February 2016.

Science and Engineering



Senior Citizens Party

Over 65 senior citizens were welcomed by Year 11 students to celebrate Christmas at our annual Senior Citizens Party.

Year 11 students worked extremely hard preparing food, decorating the hall, organising a raffle and entertaining guests. Guests were served tea, coffee, quiches, smoked salmon pin wheels, jelly and festive mince pies.

We were joined by some very special guests: Mrs A Holland, Mr D Thomas, Mr Cox and Mr Hanagarth. One of our guests said this was her first visit to the party. *'I have had a lovely time, the students have done very well. I would definitely like to come again next year'*. Ben Twyman, on behalf of his year group added: *'It was great to see so many smiling faces. We all enjoyed chatting to the guests'*.

Entertainment included extracts from the Year 10 Christmas showcase. We were even treated to Mr Thomas's famous rendition of jelly on a plate!

- Miss Franklin, D&T Department



Catering Assistant Vacancy

We are currently looking to appoint a part-time Catering Assistant to join our outstanding Catering team in the school Canteen. If you would like more information, please visit the Vacancies section of the school website: www.cotswold.gloucs.sch.uk/vacancies/ or contact the school on 01451 820554.

News from the Music Department...

Year 10 Christmas Showcase

This term, the Year 10 drama groups (35 students) are working towards the Silver Arts Award. This involves performing and taking leadership roles in the Arts. To achieve this they have staged a Christmas Showcase. On Thursday 10th December they entertained an audience of family and friends with drama, music and dance.

Performances included 'Cinderella', Jack and the Beanstalk', 'Scrooge' and 'Oh What a Lovely War'. The pupils took responsibility for all aspects of the show- ticketing, publicity, directing, costumes, sound and lighting and everything else! The performances were absolutely fantastic and the whole evening was a brilliant, festive occasion. Father Christmas even made an appearance!

We hope this is the start of a new Cotswold School tradition.

- Mrs Monk



Oliver!

This year's school production of 'Oliver!' runs from 3rd-6th February. Due to popular demand, for the first time ever, we are staging a Saturday matinee, on 6th February at 2pm.

Tickets will go on sale after Christmas. Bring your friends and family!

Governors' Corner

Firstly we would like to record our thanks to Mrs Lisa Cartlidge and to Mr Martin Read who have stepped down from the Governing Body recently.

We are currently looking into adopting a new co-opted governor to take over from Mr Read. In the election held to fill Mrs Cartlidge's place as a parent governor on the board we were pleased that **four** candidates stood from whom Mr Andrew Parker emerged victorious.

Mr Parker has two children at school and already has many years of experience as a governor at primary school. A qualified accountant, his

two areas of expertise are finance and project managing building projects, including the revamp of the Royal Shakespeare Company Theatre at Stratford - upon - Avon.

There will be another election in January as the term of one of our current parent governors is up for renewal and we will send out details in due course.

January also sees the end of Mr Ben Edward's term as a staff governor and the staff will be voting for someone to take over from him. Many thanks to Mr Edwards for his contribution over the 4 years especially on the Teaching and Learning committee.

We used an online method of voting this year which was available to the first priority parent/carer by linking into the email we have on our records. The second parent still had to use a traditional ballot paper as sometimes families use grandparents or neighbours who are not entitled to vote as their second priority contact but we hope to change our systems in the future to allow electronic voting for all as it most definitely increased the voting. The paper option will of course still be there for anyone who prefers to use it though.

On behalf of the governors can I send you all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

- Mrs Hudson, Clerk to Governors

Gorge-ous Cheddar!

Year seven students all took part in a visit to Cheddar Gorge with the Geography Department on the 30th November and 1st December. We looked at the key features of limestone landscapes, went into caves to see stalactites and stalagmites and even got to see the remains of previous cave dwelling civilisations!

Mrs Edie did a fantastic job of organising the two day trips and the students have had a really useful and entertaining look at the features we are going on to look at in our next unit of work.



Cotswold take part in the mock UNCCC

Mrs Johnstone took a band of delegates to the InterClimate UNCCC mock United Nations Climate conference at Cheltenham Council Chambers on 7th December, mirroring the real life event currently taking place in Paris.

Students represented Russia and Japan, with Luke Milner and Liam Gullis being asked to take the role of official observers. The discussions produced interesting alliances and all delegates enjoyed a key note address from Julie Girling MEP for SW England.

The students involved in the conference managed to reach an agreement by the end of the session and we hope that the politicians involved in the actual conference, currently being held in Paris, can reach an agreement with the maturity and determination observed in the chambers by all of the students involved!

English Civil War Day

In November Year 8 had an outside speaker in to carry out a workshop for the English Civil War. The English Civil War is studied in History because it is a unique event in British history.

The History Department invites an outside speaker in as it brings the topic to life for the students and they gain a deeper understanding about the type of warfare and the impact this had on the country. Students particularly enjoyed the musket being fired and acting as volunteers to wear the uniforms of the Royalists and Parliamentarians.

Our visitor, Kevin Hicks, is from the company 'Squaducation', who are a professional historical interpretation company. This workshop is for Year 8 and is timed within their study of the English Civil War in their history lessons.

- Mrs Tupper, History Department



NEWS from the Languages Department

International Education Week

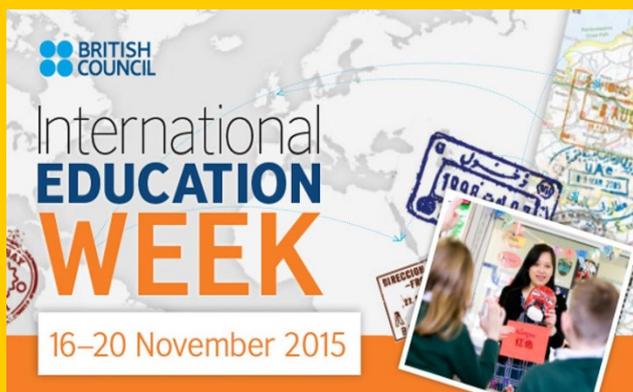
In order to mark International Education Week, Years 7 and 8 were given an opportunity homework, where they could choose from 20 possible tasks. Finding the A-Z of countries proved to be the most popular choice. However, stand-out choices in Year 7 were Louis Moss 7CW, who researched and recorded Dutch phrases to use with his family in Holland, and Amelia Dunn 7KC who brought in some French cake and recorded a Skype conversation with a friend abroad.

Year 8 proved to be very creative with their model interpretations of French monuments and Ben Killackey 8SKG, showed his film producer skills in the making with a video about the Eiffel Tower. Year 8's culinary skills were also evident with Lucy Pomeroy 8IT making a video of her Paris-Brest cake, which went down very well in class! Laura Heming 8NH made some cookies with French facts about the Eiffel Tower in them. Other delights included a Spanish salad made by Mariola Prosser and many more cakes. Mairin Smyth 8SKG remarkably completed all 20 tasks, including giving her parents a Japanese taster lesson!

Year 9 also got in on the act with Nina Terroba 9RM, making a fantastic Eiffel Tower model and Jake Pugsley 9CHT, Beatrice Tweedie 9CLA, Grace Foakes 9AE and Alex Martin 9VM making cakes representing Francophone countries.

Well done to all of you, and those not mentioned in this report, who gave in this extra homework- some well-deserved merits are on their way to you.

- Mrs Kelman, MFL Department



Thank you and Welcome!

The MFL department would like to thank Mrs Van Dam for all of her hard work and dedication over the last term as maternity cover. Both staff and students will be sad to see her go, and we wish her well.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome and introduce Mrs Pryce who has just joined us in the department and hope that she enjoys her time working with us.

