The Muse

Christmas Edition 2017

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A Message from the Chief Editors:

As Chief Editors, we would like to welcome you to the 2017 Christmas Magazine. Our team has been working diligently to produce a wide variety of articles in this termĚs edition, ranging from reviews of music and films to highlights from the Christmas term. With articles covering a wide range of topics, there is much to be read and enjoyed in this edition of ĝ*The Muse*Ě.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us in this yearĚs magazine team!

Isabelle Merralls and Jake Rodrigues, Year 12

Credits:

Editors - in - chief:

Isabelle Merralls 12 MGN and Jake Rodrigues 12RJG

Editorial board:

Adam Friedler 12 HCBn

Dlveen Dler 12 SMB

Annabella Lam 12 ACS

Samuel Masters 12 SMB

Alex von Doetchinem 12 SMB

Mia Atkins 12 ACS

Information technology chief:

Gideon Coker 12 HCB

Cover design chiefs:

Ed Baker 12 RJG and Gideon Coker 12HCB

Magazine teamĚs correspondents and other contributors:

Prity Chatterjee 12 MGN

Vincent Balladares 12 JM

Chloe Bui 12 SMB

Annabella Lam 12 AC

Regina Ruci 12 JRS

Lauren Birch 12 JM

Sammi Do 12 JM

Gabriela de Vasconcelos 12 TGB

Patrick Maslin 12 HCV

Dylan Moody 12 RJG

Johanna Espanola 12 HCB

Urte Minkeviciute 12 JRS

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the BGS magazine!

As the Autumn Term draws to a close we look back over these vital first weeks and months of the academic year. Our new Year 7 students are now settled into the life of the school and by just after half term their parents had met form tutors, attended a Music Concert involving every Year 7 student and enjoyed a BBQ here in school. Similarly, in the Sixth Form, over eighty students from many local schools joined our own students and this year made BGS history: They are the first fully IB cohort in the school, over 200 students who have quickly established themselves as a very strong Year 12 group with the potential to be the highest performing BGS cohort ever!

This is also the term where the whole recruitment process begins again; we held inspiring, vibrant and successful open events for prospective Year 7 students and a few weeks later, two similarly successful evenings for prospective Year 12 students, one for our own and one for those from other schools. As always, the overwhelmingly positive feedback is about how approachable and friendly our students and staff are đ complete strangers to the school report that those they talk to on these evenings genuinely care.

One of the most significant changes for existing students in September was the implementation of our new mobile phone policy. This has been a resounding success; the number of repeat offenders rapidly fell to single figures within days. Staff have noticed a much more positive atmosphere at break and lunch around the school; thank you, both students and parents, for your support in this beneficial change.

Last year, in this Christmas edition, I mentioned that the foundations for our new Theatre had just been laid. On 1st December this year, Miss Bethany Webster returned from her second year at university to formally open the Theatre which was completed late in the Spring. Previous Headmaster, Mr Jones (1976 - 1995), joined governors, councillors friends and many alumni to mark this happy event, beginning downstairs with refreshments in the new Sixth Form study centre. We were then treated to a lively and imaginative performance of ¡Charles DickensĚ Oliver TwistĚ. Congratulations to Mr Otley, his colleagues and the cast and crew for a thoroughly entertaining evening!

Earlier this term, an entirely student - led production of ¡Sleeping BeautyĚ, sponsored by the Mark Evison Foundation, was performed on two nights by sixth form students in the Theatre. The second and last night was prefaced with a moving introduction by Margaret Evison herself. Congratulations to all those students involved - such a tribute your commitment and energy!

Meanwhile, the the school has continued with the multitude of activities typical of what we manage to cram into a term: visits, residential trips, conferences, two ECM days, International Week and of course, a range of House events (my favourite events to judge remain the food challenges!). We have held ParentsĚ Evenings for Year 13 and Year 11. And as this magazine goes to virtual press, our Year 11 and Year 13 IB students are taking their mock examinations before a well - deserved Christmas break.

The Christmas Concert ushered in the festive season in style. Thirteen ensembles, made up of nearly 10% of the school, entertained a packed hall with everything from Mozart to Black Sabbath! Congratulations to Miss Swadkin, the music department, peripatetic teachers and our music prefects on an impressive and inspiring evening.

Finally, a huge thank you to Mrs Johnson and her committed team of students who work so hard to produce this publication. I hope you enjoy it.

Have a restful Christmas break with family and friends and may I wish you every blessing in 2018.

Mr Elphick

House Report November 2017

Since returning in September, we have had several after-school Sports competitions. For the girls, Basketball and Netball; for the boys, Football and Rugby. We have also had Mixed Table Tennis and Badminton. All events ran smoothly, thanks to the PE department who, as usual gave up their time to organise the fixtures.

House Drama was on 11th October and again all Houses produced some excellent performances. Mr Bain, Mrs Bono and Mr Otley judged the competition and remarked on how well every House had done, saying it was a shame that they had to award marks and rank the performances. Again it was good to see Year 7 and Year 8 pupils taking quite major parts in these performances. The House Captains had done an excellent job at writing scripts, running the rehearsals, sorting makeup and costumes and generally organising everything which produced good end results. Prothero gained first place, achieving full marks. There will be an opportunity to see one or two of these performances at the Annual House Showcase next March!

The Harvest Box Challenge for Years 7 đ 9 was held after school on 4th October with the results being announced in the Year 7 Harvest Assembly the following day. Prothero were the winners, producing a *Green Dragon* out of recycled materials.

Intermediate Cookery was held in November with Mr Reynolds and Mr Elphick judging the process, presentation and taste of the Chocolate Victoria Sponges that were made by all the teams; Wellman were victorious. Senior Cookery was on 1st December with the older students following a very different brief this year. As the competition coincided with the official opening of the new K10 Theatre and the Drama DepartmentĔs Christmas Production, the normal brief of ićhristmas dessert or cakeĔ, was changed to a twist on the humble mince pie, to be served to the invited guests and audience. The students produced over two hundred delicious individual pies between them; this year there were four competitors instead of two for each House due to the amount of food required. Collins House grabbed victory over Kirkman, who took second place, a very close run competition judged by Mrs Sawyer and Mr Reynolds.

The Key Stage 3 House Swimming Gala is due to take place on 18th December but at present this is how the results leaderboard stands:

224	234	211	190	243	203
Third Collins	Second Johnson	Fourth Kirkman	Sixth Mabbs	First Prothero	Fifth Wellman

This term Prothero House have been at the top of the leader board, unchallenged for quite a while. With many more competitions next term thereĔs still time for it all to change.

Jack Petchey Awards

The first three winners for this academic yearĖs Jack Petchey awards have now been chosen..

The September Award winner was chosen by Mabbs House.
Kweku Brobbey was their winner for the following reasons: Ė*He helps people with homework and helps with all the house events he can. He's kind to everyone and he always making a positive impact in everything he does along with volunteering at beavers*ė.

The October Award winner was chosen by Prothero House. Remy Preston was the winner and he was chosen for the following reasons: Ė*For running a mini marathon & doing a sponsored silence to raise funds for a children's hospice. He donated clothes to the victims of the Grenfell Tower disaster. He also helps younger students at his local tennis club. He is also a very funny and social person*ė. Remy has shared his ¢250 prize money with the school community, half going towards the Music Fundraising account to be put towards new practice rooms and the other half to the Stage and Hall for new lighting equipment.

The November Award winner was chosen by Wellman House. Paula Navarro Flores (from Kirkman House) was their chosen winner. She was nominated for the work that she has done in making costumes and writing music for the Christmas Drama production of *Oliver Twist* and for painting the mural outside the new Library, featuring many colourful characters from ChildrenĖs Literature.

We have also heard this term that our bid for a Jack Petchey Small Grant had been successful and that we had been awarded ¢500 to put towards the library and specifically the *Women and Literature* project, books both by and about women for all ages.

Mrs J Snelling

House Leader

Jack Petchey Coordinator

YEAR GROUP NEWS

YEAR 7

We have been very busy lately with lots of house competitions and eventsĜ

House Drama / Oliver Twist

In Drama, we have kicked off the year witnessing some outstanding and truly mesmerising performances in House Drama. The innate talent, passion and exuberance which our pupils displayed were clearly evident and admirable. The dramas presented a combination of humour and solemnity and we took away some incredible life lessons. Overall it was a stellar performance by all Houses and an exemplary achievement for Year 7, resulting in an enthralling and spectacular day.

The oomph and zeal in drama continues with our Christmas production of ĖOliver Twistė. A herculean effort has been undertaken by pupils and teachers over the past few months and these have been great opportunities for Year 7 to integrate and be involved in creative performances.

Sport

House Sport was a great opportunity for all students. House Football was a great experience to get to know other members of our house as we were mixed with the Year 8s. Year 7 stormed through both Girls Netball and Boys Rugby!!

Additionally, the School Rugby team is currently unbeaten, beating fierce rivals BethĔs and a strong Hurstmere side. The Boys Football Team are also progressing well, having won both of their games in the North Kent Cup and there are a number of Year 7 girls in the Girls Football Team. Keep it up with this positive start to Year 7 sport!

Year 7 Concert

One of the many events Year 7 have taken part in is the Year 7 concert. In this, a few forms partnered up to sing songs and some even sang individually! This was a massive success and was very popular - the hall was filled up!

We are enjoying our year so far and and are positive that we will always feel this way about the school! We are so happy that we have been able to settle in well and we feel as if we have been at BGS years!

(Contributions from: Ayush Mukherjee 7MPJ, Natsuki Dell 7SMK, Ben Huggett 7SMK, Daniel Austin 7JED)

MRS BOULDEN AND MR MARTIN

YEAR 8

Year 8 have had a busy start to the year! Their ECM days have focused on a charity project called First Give and PSHCE has looked at healthy living and they have also started their CAS programme.

Over to the Prefects to tell you a bit more...

PSHCE

This term, we have taken part in a taster session of Zumba and Boxercise, which was really fun. The smiles were spread throughout the classroom as we were doing our fitness session and we are beginning to look at managing stress for our age group, which I think is a really good idea!

ECM Days

We are creating presentations to try and win the ¢1000 for our selected charity. First Give offers us a chance to learn about what charities do, and how they help people. We were able to learn about smaller charities, while raising ¢1000 for them. I really enjoy working with charities as I like to make a difference to the lives of people who aren't as fortunate as us.

CAS

CAS makes sure that we get up and do something, instead of sitting idle all day. Every term, we need to do 5 hours of creativity, 5 hours of action and 5 hours of service. The Prefects have led CAS sessions which included different activities e.g. making origami. The class feedback was very positive and this was a really good idea. We learned how to communicate with our forms and lead a session.

Marie Mitambo has even tried something new because of CAS.

È*CAS gave us an opportunity to try something different in order to benefit ourselves or the community in different ways. As part of my service, I decided to do a reading in church. I have done this twice, on 1st October and 19th November and it is something I had been wanting to do but was too shy to stand up and speak in front of the whole church. Reading was not exactly new to me as I had done it before, in assemblies and productions, but the church was still different. The concept of being in a holy place with many holy people was almost like you were being judged, and it had to be perfect. It was a good experience, and I will continue doing it.*è

(Contributions from: Marie Mitambo, Maisy Spencer, Hannah Monksfield, Ben Salter, Mayukhi Panda and Nathan Fielding)

YEAR 9

MR CRAWFORD AND MRS EACOTT

Trips

So far this year we have gone on two school trips:

- We have been to Seaford on a Geography trip, where we looked at the sea defence methods and made a comparison between Seaford and Cuckmere Haven.
- We have also been to Ypres on a History trip whilst studying WW1. Although some students weren't very happy about coming to school for 6 am, the trip was amazing and the Belgian chocolate made it all worth it!

Duke of Edinburgh

Some students are currently completing the Duke of Edinburgh program with the school. On our most recent ECM day, they went outside on a map reading treasure hunt and learnt how to cook food over a fire, with the amount of success ranging massivelyĜ

Starting GCSE topics

This year is a crucial year, due to options and starting GCSE topics - lots of students this year are focusing on working hard and doing the best they possibly can - with people discussing what they want to take forward, including varieties of opinions with some still undecided about their decisions.

Congratulations!!

Congratulations to those who are applying the skills they have learnt in Bexley Grammar outside of school, including Oscar Weston and Daniel Baker, who, thanks to great dedication and hard effort, have managed to be included in a long-boarding film! Also congratulations to Kacey-May Smith who participated in the Kent Cross Country Race and came first in her age group for Bexley, and came nineteenth overall!

MRS HARRIS AND MISS ROBERTS

YEAR 10

Year 10 have made a fantastic start to the yearĜ

STEM genius programme

Two of our students have been selected to take part on a course that will support them from Year 10 - Year 13 with University Lectures and work experience in STEM jobs.

Sleeping Beauty

Many of our students took part in this amazing performance which raised money for both the Mark Evison Foundation and the Evelina London ChildrenĔs Hospital

The Poetry Competition

A few of us got creative and found our inner poet this term and have produced some excellent work!

Notable Achievements:

- One student travelled internationally to play squash
- One of our students took part in a nationwide competition with Mr Proddaturi and came first!
- We even have a Karate Champion in our midst!!

MR SKINNER AND MISS ASPILL

YEAR 11

What a busy start it has been for our Year 11 pupils!

They have hit the ground running and are working really well towards their GCSE exams, which seem to be approaching incredibly fast!

Thinking about the futureĜ

The Autumn Term included successful Work Experience Placements, in addition to a number of events for Parents; one of which was the IB Information Evening. It is a really exciting time for the pupils as they look ahead to their futures.

Mock Exams

The pupils have also completed their Year 11 Mock Exams. We think it is fair to say that the Year 11 pupils have a well deserved Christmas break ahead of them.

Enjoy the time off and we both look forward to seeing you all in January, well rested and ready for the challenge aheadĜ

MR MACKLE AND MISS SCOTT

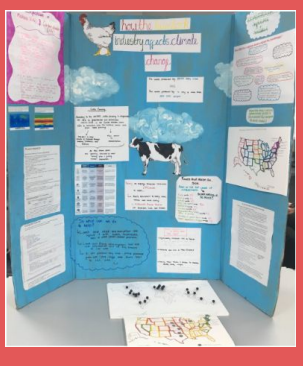
YEAR 12

What a start!

Year 12 have had a very busy start to their Sixth Form studies and have settled in tremendously well so far.

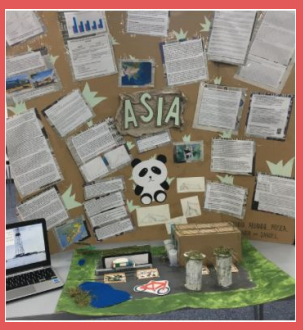
The Group 4 Project

The IB kicked off with the Group 4 project in October, where students were split into groups to focus on this yearĔs topic ĖClimate Changeė. Students worked hard on a dedicated planning day and presented their research in November. The outcome was very impressive, with many groups designing and creating technology that could combat issues arising from climate change.



CAS

Our Year 12s have also focused on their CAS (Creativity, Action and Service) this half term and they have been incredible! Students have volunteered their time at every opportunity available - from helping at parentsĔ evenings to leading after-school clubs.



NCS & The Mark Evison Foundation

We have also welcomed NCS: The Challenge and The Mark Evison Foundation for assemblies this term. NCS was very well received with nearly 70% of the current year cohort having completed The Challenge in either their Summer or October breaks. The Mark Evison Foundation has also been a hit with over 120 students in Year 12 who plan to apply for this excellent scheme - good luck to those who do!

Representing the school

Alongside all of this, our Year 12s have represented the school in Football matches, on various trips around the school, as student ambassadors and leading a variety of clinics and clubs for lower school students; we have been particularly impressed with those students who have returned to their old schools to represent BGS and the IB to current Year 11s.

What an amazing start the year group has had; well done to all and keep up the good work!

MS LEFFEN

Report by: Isabelle Merralls, Year 12

PEER MENTORS

As a peer mentor I have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to engage with the younger years in a way thatĔs not possible unless you have this responsibility. It has helped me to become a more confident leader, develop a deeper level of empathy and is greatly rewarding to resolve issues they may have, as they look to you for guidance.

Catherine Nuqui, Year 12

A Year 7 Perspective on the role of Peer Mentors:

Over the past few months,our formĔs Peer Mentors, Steph and Jacob, have helped me and the rest of 7ERR a lot with settling in at BGS.They have taken us on a scavenger hunt around the school to help us find our way around, they have taken us out in small groups to talk about anything more personal and have also given us the opportunity to talk to them about any concerns we are having. They've talked to us as a class about lots of different topics, from who the Peer Mentors are and what their job is, to Extra-Curricular clubs that we might be interested in, the Diploma Task and Anti-Bullying. I have enjoyed the PowerPoints because, for most of the sessions, we got to choose what they were about, so we were more curious and they answered some questions that we didnĔt know the answer to. I think I can safely say that 7ERR have benefitted from the advice that we have been given and that Steph and JacobĔs knowledge and efforts have assisted us tremendously in our introduction to BGS.

Lydia Walker, Year 7

Music Department

A busy fortnight for the Music department with our KS5 Showcase last week, which featured our Sixth Formers performing pieces to be recorded for their IB portfolios, and A-Level recitals. We were treated to a beautiful performance by the Chamber Choir of 'Winding Road' by Thomas Hewitt-Jones; the composer tweeted us afterwards that he was thrilled school choirs are singing his works!

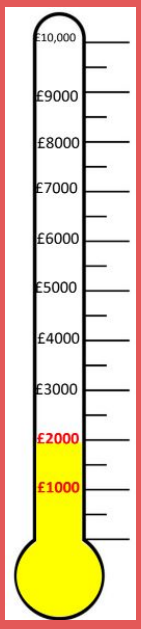
On Tuesday 5th December, we held our big Christmas Concert, which featured all thirteen of the ensembles which rehearse every week. This ranged from Junior Orchestra, Choir and Jazz to the Senior Ensembles (Symphony Orchestra, Senior Choir, Big Band), plus String Orchestra, Rock School, Chamber Choir (and Junior Chamber Choir in their debut performance), Clarinet Choir and Brass Group, playing music which ranged from Mozart's Magic flute, the Radetzky March, German Oom-pah music, to Uptown Funk, Ozzy Osborne and Bjork! The concert featured approximately 10% of the school performing, which is fantastic, and a wonderful number of Year 7s who have thrown themselves into the musical life of the school.

Thank you to Mr Laing, Mrs Eacott, Miss Radzvilaite, Mr Ross and Mrs Snelling for their enthusiasm and commitment this term in our extra-curricular activities. A particular thank you must go to our Music Prefects who did a sterling job in supporting the department yesterday; they were all brilliant but Teshan Karunasekera, Eddie Stocker and Sophie Papworth from Year 13 deserve a special mention, accompanying a number of groups on keys, bass, guitar and drums for the various choir performances, all of which sounded more professional for their contribution.

BGS does Band Aid!

Our Year 13 A-Level and IB Musicians have produced a wonderful video to celebrate Christmas, which features the song 'Do They Know It's Christmas' (which was also the finale to our concert on Tuesday). The video was made in school, but entirely independently by the students, and somehow they managed to keep it a secret until the video was finished! It is superb to see our KS5 students just having so much fun making music together; we are also pleased to see our A-Level Music Technology students putting their skills and knowledge to good practical use. They are keen to raise money for those less fortunate than ourselves, and I hope that some of you will be moved to donate to a charity of your choice this Christmas.

Arranged and directed by Teshan Karunasekera, the video features Francesca Bird, Lizzie Combes, Sascha Dodd, Heather Goodchild, Jacob Mills, Emily Miu, Luke Montgomery, Eris Nishku, Sophie Papworth, Eddie Stocker, and George Ross.
To see the video itself, please visit the link below: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dNaJgfp-Fs&t=1s



Fundraising campaign!

This December we are launching a campaign to raise ¢10,000 to buy two music practice room ępodsĚ. These are entirely soundproof, and so can go anywhere in the school (where there is space!). This will have a big impact on both our classroom teaching (enabling us to use current practice rooms for rehearsal space during lessons), and provide better quality teaching spaces for our instrumental teachers. So far, since July, we have raised nearly ¢1000 from the Jazz Evening, Year 7 Concert, and KS5 Showcase, and were very touched to receive an extremely generous donation of ¢1000 by the parents of a departing Year 13 student at the end of last year, so our campaign is off to a brilliant startĜ

Please support the campaign by coming to our Quiz Night on Saturday 3rd February. These are traditionally great fun, with quiz rounds written by our Sixth Form Music students, and live musical entertainment in between rounds. Tables are for 8 people, and you can buy individual tickets or a complete table of 8 if you have a team ready! Reserve tickets at: https://yourboxoffice.co.uk/bexley-grammar-school/255-music-dept-quiz-night

At the Concert on Tuesday, donations from audience members as they left totalled ¢250, of which ¢125 will go to our Practice Rooms campaign, and the other ¢125 to Save the ChildrenĚs Syria campaign.

Year 7 Concert

On Wednesday 1st November, the whole of Year 7 came together to perform in their very own concert, run by the Music Department. Each class performed their own song, as well as singing together as an entire year group for two songs. Lydia Walker in 7ERR said:

"This was my first experience of a concert at BGS. I was nervous at first đ yet once I started to perform I really enjoyed it. There was a diverse range of different songs, with instrumental pieces in between that kept the audience leaning on the edge of their seats! From classical to contemporary, there was a taste of everything. There were lots of family members there and the feedback I heard was that they thought there was an immense abundance of talent there!"

Thank you to all of the students for their hard work over the past half term đ and in particular to our brave soloists who performed to an audience of around 500 people! Very well done to all of you.Mrs R Eacott, Music Department (Edited by Samuel Masters,Year 12)

Geography Department

This year the Geography Department has been very active with many events taking place. The Year 12 Geography Prefects are helping the Geography Department diligently , with support being given to the Year 11 G.C.S.E students. During the Academic Monitoring period on Thursdays, the Year 12 Prefects carry out one on one sessions with the G.C.S.E students to give support and find out what students need help with. They can then work on strengthening their knowledge in that area and improve on their Geography as a whole. The one to one sessions seem to be helping with studentsĖ motivation towards Geography too, showing the skills of the Prefects improving. These sessions are a great learning opportunity for everyone involved, as the Prefects and students gain a lot of experience and knowledge.
There is also a Geography Club that takes place after school on Mondays. The Geography Club is there to offer more support to any Geography student from any year. It is a great opportunity for students to improve their skills.

Furthermore, this past term has been packed with various Geography trips! On the 27th November, the Year 10 Geography students travelled to Kew Gardens, to the west of London.

Ė*The trip to Kew Gardens is great if you want to relax and enjoy the beautiful landscape and scenery it has to offer. We took the DLR and Tube to get there and an Oyster wasn't required as everything had been planned and paid for before! The first place that we went to in the Royal Botanic Gardens was the treetop walkway. It's a bridge that spans across the top of several trees at 18m high. Many people were frightened as there were holes on the path, allowing people to see the through to the bottom. The floor occasionally shook due to the wind which scared a lot of people (including myself). After the walkway, we went to see The Hive, which is a structure that was built to represent what it was like to be inside a beehive. Unfortunately, we weren't able to go inside as it was raining, which made the floor slippery. We then went to the Palm House, a large building which recreates a rainforest climate. It was very humid and smelt funny. Again, there was a walkway which towered over the trees, only this time it didn't shake and was much sturdier. Finally, we were given free time to eat our lunch and explore wherever we wanted to. Some of us went to the gift shop and checked out what they sold. The entire shop was a bit steep as there was a strange looking bag for ¢100! Overall, the trip was very enjoyable and I would definitely recommend it to anyone even if you don't do Geography.é*

Jay Tran, Year 10

Ė*The Treetop walk was exhilarating. It was high enough that we were well above the ground and the see - through floor grills allowed us to get a good feel for the forest top.é*

Divine Izuchukwu, Year 10

Kew Gardens definitely seems like a good tourist site for anyone who wants to enjoy the scenery.

Report by Annabella Lam and Sammi Do, Year 12

International Week

During the International Day celebrations at Bexley Grammar, students and teachers alike represented nationalities the world over, dressing in cultural attire from a country of their choosing. As part of the day, Years 7 - 10 took part in a range of inspired, interesting lessons.

Here is what Year 9 got up to:

Chinese Perfume Pouch Sewing - we sewed little bags with colourful silk cloth, filled the bags with cotton, and then strung them with silk threads; traditionally, they are said to ward off evil.
Human Rights Talks - we explored the refugee crisis in the Middle-East and Africa, creating Google slide presentations in groups on the topic.
Salsa Dancing - we mastered the steps to the salsa, each pair performing to the class at the end of the lesson.
Moroccan Biscuits Baking - aprons on and hands washed, we attempted to bake these gloriously golden Moroccan biscuits.

All of these amazing lessons were really enjoyable, while taking a more serious stance during the human rights talks. Meanwhile, during lunch and after school, students could take part in lots of different cultural games and activities such as card games and food tasting. In the school canteen the lines were crowded in anticipation for the international lunch that the canteen staff had organised.

I believe that international day was a very enjoyable, educational experience for the students at Bexley Grammar where we celebrated and embraced diversity and cultural differences. As a school, we have succeeded in showing the students alternate ways of life and different vantage points and I can definitely say that we will continue to do so for the years to come. Thank you to all those who organised it.

GodĚsFavour Oluwanusin, Year 9

International Bake Off

On Thursday 28th September, students from Years 7 - 11 took part in Bexley GrammarĚs second ever éInternational Bake OffĚ event. For the competition, students were required to bring in a bake based on an international recipe, which could be sweet or savoury, and were judged by our expert panel of judges: Mrs Meyer, Mr Reynolds, and Mr Elphick!

Once again the judges were thrilled by the variety of bakes entered by our students. Famous bakes such as Tiramisu and Profiteroles were well represented, and appeared alongside exotic and lesser well - known recipes such as Russian dumplings! The quality of all entries this year was extremely high, and it was tricky for our judges to come up with a final list of prize winners.

In the end, this yearĚs winners were:

Best Tasting Bake: Bethany Baker 7MPJ - American Key Lime Pie
Best Looking Bake: Adam Bagshaw 9ACR - Australian Lamingtons
Weird and Wonderful: Joint Winners Max Jansen 7MPJ - Dutch Apple Cake & Ugne Stanzyte 9ACR - Russian dumplings
Star Baker: Kacey - May Smith 9ACR - Japanese Strawberry Shortcake

Well done to the winners and to all those involved for making the bake off such a successful (and tasty) part of International Week!

Mr Gallimore Modern Foreign Languages Department

Japanese Daikagura Jugglers and a Yose - moji Calligrapher visit BGS

On 25th September, during International week, we had a few special guests who were Japanese professional performers. This event was organized and supported by the Japan Society and actually Ms Potter OBE, CEO of this society joined the event. The performers gave Japanese students a wonderful and valuable experience. Daika - gura has its roots in the ceremonial music and dance performed in Shinto shrines. During the Edo period (17 th đ 19 th centuries), these shrine rituals developed into a set of performing arts including dance, juggling, music and Yose comic theatre. Yose - moji means calligraphy used in Yose comic theatre which is equivalent to stand - up comedy here. It has a particular style different from standard calligraphy. Our students produced wonderful pieces of art during the Yose - moji workshop and enjoyed it very much. We felt very lucky and would like to express a special thank you to the Japan Society.

Mrs Everett, Modern Foreign Languages Department

Japan Day

All the students that were attending the Japan Day trip first met at Charing Cross Station so that Mrs Everett (our Japanese teacher) could guide us to SOAS University of London. We walked the whole journey from Charing Cross Station to SOAS University and it was a long walk but still enjoyable.

When we arrived at SOAS, we were given badges with our names on them, as they would allow us to move through the security to get to our different workshops. The badges were also colour coded to signify what groups we were in because all the groups had a different combination of workshops that they would do. After our school was registered and we had all pinned our badges on, we went into a lecture theatre to be given an introduction and briefing on the timetabled day ahead of us.

We were briefed on what would be happening throughout the day and what they hoped to help us achieve; to have a clear idea on whether to study Japanese at university. We were then sorted into our groups and sent on our way to our first workshops. The first workshop that I went to was the sumi - e workshop. Sumi - e is a traditional Japanese way of painting. It involves painting with ink with special types of brushes - made from goat hair, or horsehair or more commonly from sheep wool. It was a wonderful experience as we learnt a new way to create art, which is something I enjoy a lot!

After the first workshop, we went straight onto another one. The second workshop was the manga workshop. Manga was described to us as Japanese comics. Our instructor was a Manga artist and she taught us about the history of Manga and gave us a demo on how to draw a Manga character.

Next, we went back to the lecture theatre where we were given lectures by people who had gone onto work closely with Japanese involvement. The first studied Japanese at university and now worked for a company that

imports Japanese food into the UK. The second man was a university professor, but not for Japanese. He had a close friend who was Japanese and learnt a lot of morals and life lessons from him and wanted to share them.

We then had one last workshop and lecture. The last workshop I took part in was for a Japanese dance called Yosakoi. The instructor was a woman who lived in Japan for a few years due to the Jet program. The JET program allows English speakers to teach English in Japan. She now works for the Japanese embassy in the UK. Whilst she lived in Japan she learnt how to dance Yosakoi, so she came to teach us how to dance a little Yosakoi too. It was an interesting and fun experience.

The last lecture before we went home was given to us by two Soas university students. They gave us an insight on what it was like to study Japanese there. It seemed to be a challenging but enriching experience.

To conclude, the day was very helpful in giving an insight to what studying Japanese is like at university level. It was a lovely taster of Japanese culture too and really inspired some people on what they wanted to do in the future. If anyone was to get a chance to go to Japan Day, they should definitely have a go.

Annabella Lam, Year 12

EUROPA TOWN

From 20 - 24 November, BGS invited primary schools to ĖEuropa Townė, an entirely French or Spanish - speaking town, created in the school hall. During their time in Europa Town, the primary school students bought various items from the stalls, which were run by Sixth Formers learning either French or Spanish, as well as Language Prefects. The visiting children were able to buy things in French or Spanish using their Ėcredit cardsė, gaining stamps on their Ėpassportsė for good use of the respective language, and also using real money for the real food on offer. Over the course of the week, all the sessions were coordinated efficiently by Mr Gallimore.

As both a student studying Higher French and a French Language Prefect, naturally I participated in the French Europa Town sessions. On my first day, I took the position of narrator in the French puppet show, alongside three others doing the actual actions of the puppets with the necessary, comedic sound effects! The 10 - minute - long play proved to be extremely popular with the children and, once I was back in the town after the show, some repeatedly asked me if they could watch it for a second time! During the show, I had to emphasise certain words, like cognates or those correlating to a part of the show, that would help the children understand the story, which was revealed at the end as the French version of Goldilocks and the Three Bears.

On my second day in Europa Town, I started at Passport Control, where children would hand in their passports to enter Europa Town. We asked them a simple question each, like their name or age, so they would be able to come into the town and visit the stalls, receiving a shopping bag upon entry. I also had the opportunity of running one of the stalls, rather than participating in the show. In fact, I took the role of the doctor at the medical stall, which was ironic as I had a heavy cold at the time and many of the children found it very funny indeed! During the session, I created a small surgery and I tried to engage in a French conversation with the children coming to the surgery as patients, where they managed to speak for a decent amount of time, with some prompts from some other Sixth Formers and myself to help the conversation flow. A large number of the complaints from my

Ėpatientsė were as a result of them eating their ice creams too quickly and subsequently getting a case of brain freeze!

All in all, I really enjoyed the experience, as I felt that it was a fantastic opportunity to help spread my love of French to other students, in turn (hopefully) helping them to feel more confident when speaking the language. Over the course of the two days that I took part in Europa Town, it was evident that the majority of the visiting children, if not all of them, had a lot of fun in every aspect of the town. It was without doubt a resounding success and we would all like to thank Mr Gallimore for the opportunity to participate in the event.

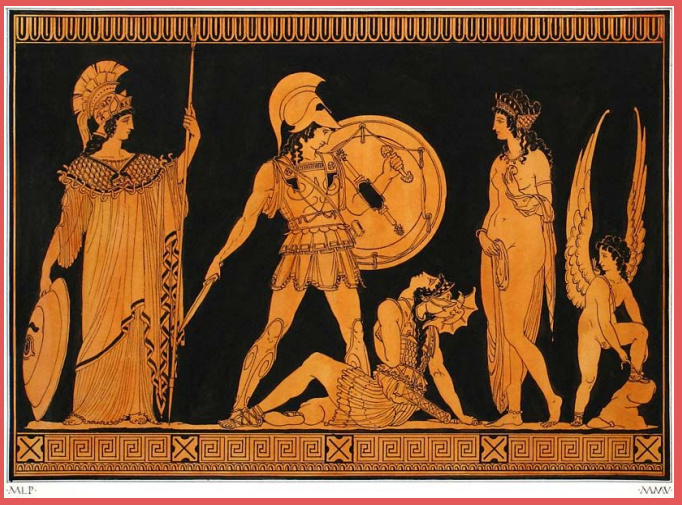
Jake Rodrigues, Year 12

CLASSICS CLUB

Learning Ancient Greek

I really enjoyed learning about the Ancient Greeks. We learnt a little of their history, but mainly we were learning the language, which was new and was something I had never done before. It was very interesting to see how similar Latin and Greek - the basis of our modern language, English - are.

To start, we learnt the alphabet. It was more complicated than any I have seen before, with some letters appearing twice, and with all of them having special names instead of just being a sound. Then we put that new information into practice by translating some simple words.



At another time, we started with an activity about connecting Latin, English and Greek words to find out the meanings of each one in each language. Then we learnt the numbers from 1-10, and so I can now count in 6 different languages!

Overall, I loved learning Greek as it was new for me, and I like trying new things. It was challenging at times but was made fun by Miss Fisher. I would recommend that people try out a bit of Greek; it is definitely out of your comfort zone but you will gain a feeling of achievement whenever you complete a task!

Rachel Smith, Year 8

FBCS Write for Rights 2018

ĖIt is better to light a candle than curse the darkness.é Chinese Proverb.

As in every year in December, our Year 8s have taken part in Amnesty InternationalĚs Write for Rights campaign. This consists of writing letters of support to activists around the world who have been jailed for speaking out against injustices, or to people who are campaigning for an important human rights issue.

The students have crafted some really stunning cards, containing messages of hope aimed at encouraging and sustaining the recipients in their struggle. One of the students (Jason Gurung, 8OTF) also made a lovely origami activity to pass the time to send to the activist his group was supporting (see picture!). The Year 8s will also write appeal letters to heads of state or authority figures in the countries in question (ranging from Finland and Turkey to Jamaica, China and Madagascar, amongst others) to demand justice for the person or issue in question (e.g. releasing political prisoners, recognising certain rights etc.).

This campaign has always been very successful, with so many success stories showing how a quite simple action can go a long way in making the world a fairer and safer place. If you want to get involved, here is the link: https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/write-for-rights/ .

It is so rewarding to see such a strong display of solidarity coming from young students, and especially heartwarming in these trying times. Well done Year 8s, you are the hope of the world! **Miss Contini, FBCS**

English Department National Poetry Day

Engli

This year, to celebrate National Poetry Day on the 28th September, our school ran its own poetry competition for all year groups.

Headed by Miss Gabriel of the English department, the competition appealed to various talented writers across the school. All that the students had to do was write a poem on the theme of ¡School Days: the best days of our livesĚ and email it to Miss Gabriel đ who proudly claimed ĖI received an entry from every year group which was good!ė

What intrigued me most was the various different approaches to the theme: while some students represented school through metaphorical images, others gave more emotional responses on how they feel about their school. I love seeing such diverse, talented minds in our schoolĚs writers; it so beautifully sums up the values of our school. Yet there could only be one winning poemĜ

Firstly, Miss Gabriel along with the English Prefects selected their favourite four entries. Then, the vote was given to the forms. Every student voted for their favourite poem of the four, and the elected winning poem appeared: ¡*School Days đ the Best Days of Your Life*Ě. Its poet đ who wishes to remain anonymous đ was awarded an Amazon voucher. Below is the full poem:

School days: the best of your life,
Look past perceived torment, the trials, and strife,
You grow as you learn, and you learn how to grow,
Make ripples and splashes; be seen in the flow;
Be well; excel; discover yourself;
Grow and expand, because knowledge is wealth;
The best days of your life, they don't have to be bliss.
Be glad while you have them, their absence you'll miss.

Samuel Masters, Year 12

Trinity Schools Book Award Library News

This term, a reading group of 16 Year Sevens at Bexley Grammar have been busy preparing for the Trinity Schools Book Award. Originally only open to a select group of private schools, this year the annual award system was made open to all schools. It requires students to read seven set books of a particular theme; select a winning book; and participate in various other competitive activities. The winning book is to be announced at a ceremony on 1st March 2018, along with the individual student winners of the sub-competitions.

The theme for 2018 is ¡A New WorldĚ, covering various historical and dystopian texts. With the school librarian, Mrs Carey, the Key Stage Three book club has so far read through four of the seven set books. While interviewing Mrs Carey about these, I was astonished at the diversity of both the form and content of these books: they range from a picture book depicting a horrific historical migration story, to a poetic blank verse account of a Polish immigrant to England. Each bookĚs uniqueness is emphasized through its memorable (and often somewhat eerie) title đ see the list below. The reading group would like to give a big ¡thank youĚ to the Parents Association, for funding enough copies of each book. Once they have read all of them, they will vote for this schoolĚs favourite. They will not know if this text wins until they attend the ceremony in March.

By the end of November, the group had read:

- *¡The ArrivalĚ đ Shaun Tan*
- *¡The Weight of WaterĚ đ Sarah Crossman*
- *¡The DeclarationĚ đ Gemma Malley*
- *¡The TerritoryĚ đ Sarah Govett*

They have yet to read:

- *¡Ghost HawkĚ đ Susan Cooper*
- *¡Welcome to NowhereĚ đ Elizabeth Laird*
- *¡RailheadĚ đ Philip Reeve*

Besides simply reading the books and voting for their favourite, the sixteen students have also greatly enjoyed participating in the individual competitions. For this there are two categories: review, and creative response. The former is self-explanatory: students entering must write a review on one of these books. Yet the latter can be taken in various ways đ past entries have covered drawing; writing; baking; and even musical composition! As with the main award, the winners for both these sub-competitions will be announced on 1st March. Across all the entering schools, there will only be one winner and one runner-up per sub-competition. The prize is a ¢20 book token.

I am sure all sixteen students are looking forward to this event in March. Besides seeing the awards announced (and having an extra day out of school) the students will also have the chance to meet the writers of four out of their seven books. Good luck to those entering the individual competitions đ we look forward to hearing how you do in March!

Samuel Masters Year 12

Oliver Twist

With Christmas coming right around the corner, Bexley GrammarĚs Christmas production really did open the door to December with four amazing shows in 3 days. The cast really did bring ¡Oliver TwistĚ to life with help from the marvellous directors, set designers, stage hands and tech team. The efforts of the entire cast and crew put on an incredible show that we can all be proud of, and there is no better way to officially open the new Drama Theatre at BGS, which will be the home to many more brilliant displays of this schoolĚs effort, passion, and incredible love for the arts. Congratulations everyone, it really was a spectacular show!

Urte Minkeviciute Year 12

Commerzbank Report

Last year, two of our Year 13 Business Studies students applied for trainee positions at Commerzbank, a German Investment bank in the City of London. Shania Dodd and Rebecca Notcutt visited the bank during their time in the Sixth Form to learn about the bank and the different functions and career paths available to school leavers. During one session, they were coached on CV writing and interview technique, which obviously paid dividends as they were offered jobs last Summer. IĚve asked two of our students to write down their thoughts about an alternative path to university.

Mr. J. Joe

Head of Economics & Business Management

From Left to right:

Kate Raggett,
Commerzbank Human Resources
Cameron Chahal
Henry Pearson
Leah Cann
Liam Latham
Oscar Ayliffe
Adam Ritson
Isobel Spanton
Katie McGinn
Ijaz Fayaz
Beatrice Thabet
Chelsey Goodrich

Earlier this year, 12 of us were selected to go on our second visit to Commerzbank. The focus was on students who were interested in school leaversĚ or graduate programmes. It helped clarify what to do if you wanted to get onto the Commerzbank programme specifically, but more importantly, it highlighted what is expected and required of you when you leave Sixth Form and go straight into the world of work. There is a significant leap between the level of independence that is needed in our Sixth Form compared to the level you need to achieve when in full-time work. Although it is challenging, it can be extremely rewarding; which is probably why the few places on offer are so competitive.

Most people only really know about the university route, as this is the path which most people choose to take when they leave our school. However, Higher Level Apprenticeship schemes can be just as educationally

beneficial - with the added advantage of on-the-job experience. With the introduction of the apprenticeship levy, more and more professions are opening up different routes into sought-after careers. There is quite a stigma associated with apprenticeships, in that they are educationally inferior to university, a sentiment which is entirely false. Apprenticeships offer a different experience, and most Higher Level Apprenticeships award a qualification, some even just offer straight degree qualifications; the only difference is you study alongside work. Therefore, you just need to ensure you maintain the correct work/study balance - something that will be personal and unique to every different person. A very enticing element of apprenticeships is the fact that not only are you not paying to study, you are actually being paid to work.

If your mind is set on university, then there are some really great firms that offer sponsored degrees, especially within the business sector. These involve attending university at no cost, with the implication that you work for the particular firm in your holidays/after the degree has been completed. Overall, it is worth considering apprenticeships as viable alternatives to university; however, you donĔt need to pick one or the other; you can apply for everything (for you have nothing to lose) and then select your favourite based on whichever suits you best. WeĔd recommend speaking to subject teachers if apprenticeships sound like something you could be interested in.

Chelsey Goodrich and Ijaz Fayaz, Year 13

YOUNG ENTERPRISE

Trip to Disney Headquarters
By Roisin Beard 12ACS

On Monday the 6th November, myself and another member of the Young Enterprise team headed up to Disney Headquarters in Hammersmith. After admiring the offices and chatting to other students in the same position as ourselves, we attended an extremely informative talk from prestigious members of the world famous company. They each discussed key elements contributing to business success, particularly in regard to marketing. This was highly engaging, and I found myself noting down more of their expertise than I had expected! Once the talk ended, we were taken through to a lobby area where refreshments were provided and we had a chance to speak to those who gave the talks, who were just as lovely as expected. Overall it was a greatly enjoyable experience, which helped to further my knowledge and that I believe will benefit our team a lot!

Isabelle Merralls, Year 12

Science Department
Operating Theatre Live

When the opportunity to participate in the ëOperating Theatre LiveĚ arose, I was extremely excited. It promised to give a hands-on anatomical experience in a clinical environment whilst gaining an understanding of the major organ systems in our bodies.

The day began with a reality shock: we were made aware that only 1 in every 10 students will be successful in their medical application. As an aspiring medical student, this motivated me to be that 10%. Samuel Piri, the organiser of this event, gave us a scenario: tell a mother and father that their daughter has died. How could you convey that in a compassionate and empathetic way? This question taught me that Medicine isnĚt all about scientific knowledge, itĚs also about communication skills and being personable.

After this sombre start, we went on to learn about anaesthetics and how they work. General anesthetics work in three parts: induction (going to sleep), maintenance (staying asleep), and emergence (waking up). After learning the theory, we had to calculate the dosage of general anaesthetic to give to our patient. We talked Ms L. West through the procedure (even though she was a dummy) to develop our communication skills. We were made aware that the slightest rounding up of figures would induce a coma in our patient.

Later on, we were given some knowledge on the anatomy of the brain and eyes. They gave us a pig's head, cut along the medial line and told us to scoop the brains out with our fingers. I had the opportunity to pull off the meninges which contained all of the blood vessels. A few people were squeamish but on the whole everyone participated enthusiastically. The best part was when we had to pull the eyeballs out of the pig's head. It was surprisingly hard, and took nearly 15 minutes with three of us snipping at the recti holding the eyeball in place. When it finally popped out, we squashed the eyeball and cut into it. This released a thick, black liquid that oozed onto our hands.

Even more interestingly was when we cut into the heart only to find a post-mortem clot. It fell out of the ventricles and onto the table and floor - which the teachers werenĚt too pleased about! We found that our pig had a nodule on his lungs, which we were allowed to cut out and hold. I felt like a proper surgeon whilst cutting out this nodule (except it wasnĚt as neat as it should have been). Over time, hopefully this will improve (for the sake of the patients!)

After the event finished, we were all hungry for lunch. After experiencing body parts we never thought we would have the opportunity of seeing, and smelling smells we wished we never had the opportunity of smelling, we were more prepared for the future in any health career. And we definitely have much stronger stomachs after this enthralling experience!

Corinna Dunzendorfer, Year 12

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
BIOLOGY IN ACTION

The Biology in Action Lecture happens annually in London, catering to the needs and interests of G.C.S.E, I.B and A - Level students (mostly A - Level and I.B, as some of the language and themes are a bit advanced). Us I.B students were told to pay close attention: some of the lectures could spark potential Extended Essay ideas!

Students were expected to get there on their own punctually, but that itself is usually smooth - sailing. The lecture took place inside what I like to think is a modern church building, working both as a church and a conference space. The hall was already decked out and had the first slide up and ready (right).

The first speaker was Mark Lynas, a former anti - G.M.O (G.M.O meaning ¡Genetically Modified OrganismĚ) activist turned pro - science author. He spoke about the wonders and benefits of G.M.Os and how society makes them out to be horrible, ghastly things that ought to never be consumed and have a huge environmental impact, when in reality they are the complete opposite. He began stating he once narrowly avoided arrest whilst cutting G.M crops with a machete at midnight - catching our attention immediately. Moving on to the serious stuff, he spoke about how G.M.O crops could change the lives of small - sustenance farmers and small - commercial farmers in third - world countries, being modified to withstand any disaster and thereby being produced worry - free - vastly improving farmersĚ lives. He explained how people have a natural fear of science, leading them to be against things like G.M crops. For example, nuclear power has a lower mortality rate than solar power, but most believe the former to be more dangerous. Overall a lovely first lecture!

Then, Nessa CareyĚs talk on epigenetics challenged our acceptance of the Darwinian evolution theory, shining a light on how our environment can alter our D.N.A. Her work on epigenetic phenomena seemed to oppose what we knew, especially when she told us how identical mice kept under identical conditions could still have different characteristics.

After a short break for lunch, on came Mr. Darren Logan, who spoke mainly of a very underrated sense: smell. He spoke about how our sense of smell is in charge of all of our decisions and our instincts. He worked with mice to prove his hypothesis, and can strongly relate it to how humans work as well. Guess our underrated noses serve more of a purpose than we thought! A surprising fact that he told us was that elephants have 1,948 types of olfactory receptors compared to the mere 396 that humans have, which we can use to detect around a trillion odours. His team are currently studying a technique by which olfactory neurons can be used as a diagnostic tool for ParkinsonĚs disease.

For many, the most interesting talk of the day was by Tim Underwood, a surgeon specialising in oesophageal cancer. Not only did he make us aware of the complexities surrounding the treatment of this specific type of cancer; he also showed us a video of a keyhole surgery he routinely performs. It was incredible to see his work in action, and even more intriguing was a preview into a revolutionary technology he is developing that can find the best treatment plan for his patients, by identifying the role of specific cells in the cancer. It was a very inspiring lecture, and who doesnĚt like a little bit of gore?