



AUTUMN 2017 ISSUE 14

Et Cetera

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

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Cover shot: Bear Grylls

HEAD'S INTRODUCTION

As I sit here in my study on Sunday 19th November the afternoon light is failing, casting a golden aura on Thorpe Lodge gardens and the covers which the gardeners have placed over the lemon trees lend an air of protection, and suggest a winter yet to arrive. It is the birthday of someone I knew, now deceased, and the five year anniversary of our move into this new building. 'History is now', 'History is a pattern of timeless moments', writes T.S. Eliot in *Little Gidding*. I am wondering who else remembers what today was five years ago. No matter, for today, tomorrow is what matters except the past remains with us. This week we hosted thirteen girls from Walton Girls' School in Grantham: they came 150 miles to present a cheque for £3,003.67, money that they had raised, with others in the Diverse Academies Learning Partnership, (the CEO is the person who was our HMI Inspector in 2014) for students affected by the Grenfell disaster. I watched the girls take lunch with some of our students so affected by Grenfell and one saw all that is best in young people. The world moves at a pace and the hardest lesson for our affected and bereaved is that the rest of the world moves on, leaving them alone. Some students' lives will never be the same again. I have taken some of my colleagues to two other schools recently and what inspiration we found in Durham Sixth Form Centre and Harrogate High School. I have shared this in assemblies with students and we will continue to seek out the finest of practice and ideas that all help strengthen us. It is good, as they say, to 'get out more'. There is much of the term left as I (ahead of deadline) write this. With the choir at St. Paul's behind us, we have Fauré's Requiem to come, a performance of *My Fair Lady* and an Art Aptitude exhibition. There will be visits from Professor John Guy (Tudor historian), Dr Will Zermansky, Professor Robin Walker of Royal Holloway and all of those alongside the day to day buzz of learning. Last weekend I spent 29 hours leafing through 3,800 workbooks. I can not pretend to have read them all thoroughly but I completed the exercise late on a Sunday being in awe of how many students give us their entire attention and rise to the standards we set. I felt in awe of their overwhelming effort. It made me keen to find yet more energy and focus for the people I am so proud of. So, I am hopeful of no winter flu to arrest my joy in pushing us all to the limit to derive the most benefit from being here, now, in the moment, with life before us.



EVENSONG AT ST PAUL'S

At Holland Park, spiritual reflection usually finds its fullest expression during school assemblies, in candle light, accompanied by music, select imagery and poetry from the great canon. But this year's Choral Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral found a different (though strikingly familiar) context for our crepuscular contemplation. It was our very first experience of its kind and, we hope, part of a long tradition of twilight music-making in Wren's glorious setting. Our 50-strong choir, constituting boys and girls throughout the year groups and supported by a band of 11 teachers, led the evening's reflection with a selection of music from renaissance Europe. The setting of the canticles, Thomas Weelkes' Short Service, brought together a marvellous simplicity with some intriguing shifts in tonality and harmonic progression. Its syllabic setting of the words and its (rare) ventures into contrapuntal texture heightened

its aesthetic appeal and enriched its devotional power. Psalmody by F. G. Ousley and responses by William Smith were powerful introductions into the power of Anglican choral music. Louis Borgeois' motet 'O Gladsome Light' brought the evening's proceedings to a close. The composer, best known for his hymnody and in particular his composition of the universally celebrated work 'The Old 100th', is a master of rousing, moving homophony and delicacy and stirring passion are beautifully blended in the motet chosen for St Paul's Evensong. Usually an intimate affair, this particular evensong was attended by nearly four hundred, filling the quire and spilling over half-way down into the nave. Rather than the sound being swallowed up by the vastness of the space, the battalion of 50 singers filled the acoustics admirably and enchanted its many listeners.

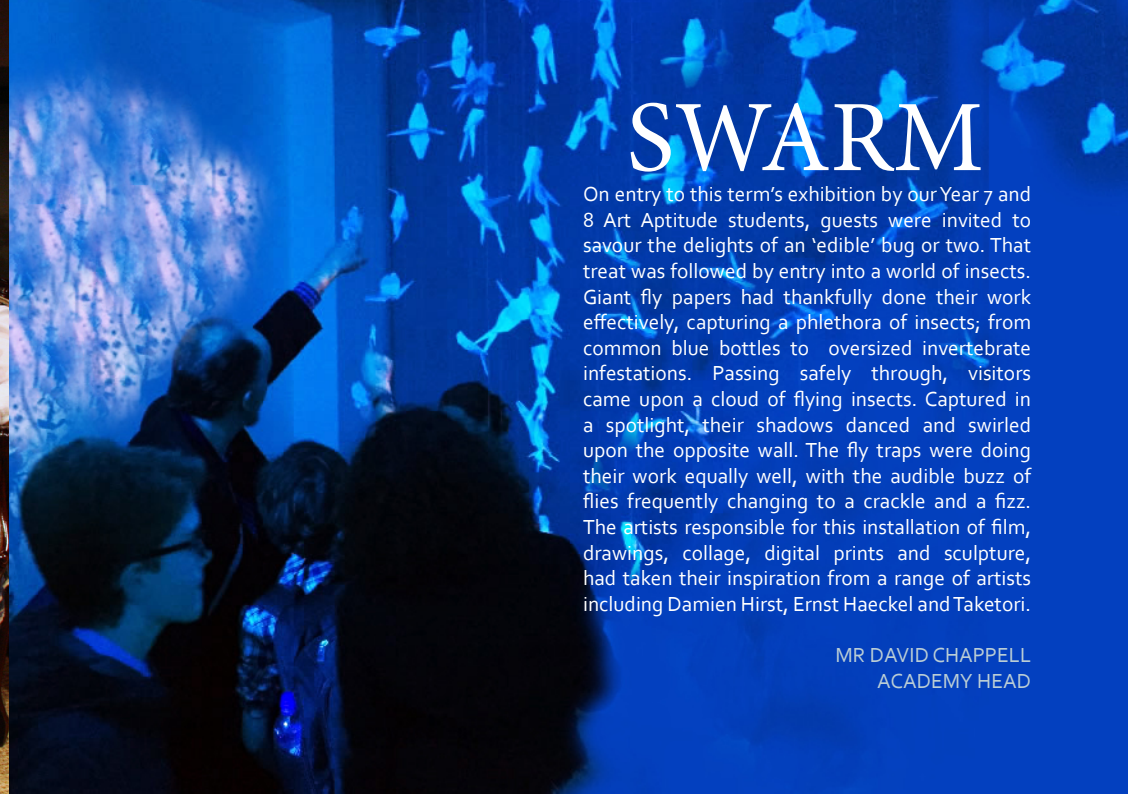


My Fair Lady

Some casting decisions are bold; others are foolhardy and risky. But the directors' decision to cast Thomas Langridge, the charismatic, quick-witted, charming and talented 12 year old, in the part of Professor Henry Higgins, for this year's production *My Fair Lady*, was a stroke of utter genius by directors Ms Naina Nightingale and Ms Vanessa Murray. Caterina Tucker's imposing (even towering) Eliza made for a striking and complex relationship with the Professor. Despite being one and a half times his age, she managed the vulnerable, the volatile and the downright vivacious with aplomb, deferring to Higgins' authority with compelling authenticity. A complex, confusing concoction of boisterousness and gracefulness, this was a lively and compelling performance of Eliza. In response, Higgins' portrayal was one of haughty, hasty hilarity. His scorn was scintillating; his dismissals were delightful. His was a part played with confidence and flair much to the audience's enjoyment. Alex Perez' Colonel Pickering was similarly characterful. Not at all stuffy or obstreperous, his dashing dressing-

gown, his copper-rimmed spectacles and his dignified disposition made his removed sensitivity a delicious complement to Higgins' hyperactivity. And what other skills there were in the cast! Omar Ait El Caid's Alfie Doolittle had stunning poise and a delectable young voice, playing the trio with Harry (Will Gove) and Jamie (Jacob Riley) with punch and panache; Victoria Romaniv's Mrs Higgins was austere and forthright; Freddy Eynesford-Hill (Jonah McLeod) delivered the show-stopping 'On the Street Where you Live' with passion and charm; Tanya Tahan's performance of Mrs Eynesford-Hill was executing with droll derision. And the music was remarkable. With only three adult musicians in the band, the Holland Park Pit Orchestra brought fizz and chutzpa to the evening's entertainment. A challenging and complex score, it was easefully performed and joyously received by the audience. Ms Amy Chapman's direction from the trumpet (unorthodox, but highly effective) alongside Mr James Clements' expertly interweaved incidental music and Mr Harry Castle's talent on the flute made for a powerful musical trio and a highly professional final product.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON
ASSOCIATE HEAD



SWARM

On entry to this term's exhibition by our Year 7 and 8 Art Aptitude students, guests were invited to savour the delights of an 'edible' bug or two. That treat was followed by entry into a world of insects. Giant fly papers had thankfully done their work effectively, capturing a plethora of insects; from common blue bottles to oversized invertebrate infestations. Passing safely through, visitors came upon a cloud of flying insects. Captured in a spotlight, their shadows danced and swirled upon the opposite wall. The fly traps were doing their work equally well, with the audible buzz of flies frequently changing to a crackle and a fizz. The artists responsible for this installation of film, drawings, collage, digital prints and sculpture, had taken their inspiration from a range of artists including Damien Hirst, Ernst Haeckel and Taketori.

MR DAVID CHAPPELL
ACADEMY HEAD

MAKE OF IT WHAT YOU WILL

As the blue lights came up on The Shaw Theatre's stage, the cast were bathed in a thalassic hue. The shipwreck, wreaking confusion, danger and chaos, was the starting point of Ms Naina Nightingale's production of *Twelfth Night*, and with it the dark themes that underlie the plot's comedy. Yet, this was not to be a production characterised by gloom and complexity; rather these lurked ominously beneath the surface, while the joy of the plot, its wit, its farce and its raucous good humour, showcased some of the school's powerful talent as part of our work with the Shakespeare Schools Foundation. So many of the cast performed their roles with aplomb and skill, but worthy of particular mention was the comic physicality of Tiboc Klajic and Jamie Morrison (Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek), the haughty superciliousness of Ed Wilkinson (Malvolio), and the yearningly beautiful portrayals of love by Ujebien Osmani (Orsino), Tamira Erdenebulgan (Viola), Anastasia Kipiani (Olivia) and Alex Perez (Sebastian). Ebullient, effervescent and exhilarating, Ms Nightingale's production was a delightful Friday evening treat and a wonderful moment to treasure.



REQUIEM

Gabriel Fauré

According to tradition, Fauré composed his Requiem, not out of a deep religious faith, but out of profound boredom. As organist of the Madeleine church in Paris, his duties were somewhat humdrum and repetitive. He wrote in 1902 "I had been playing the organ at funeral services for so long! I was completely sick of it. I wanted to do something different." How extraordinary, then, that an agnostic can construct a work of such tremendous and potent beauty – for the purposes primarily of amusement and entertainment! How fascinating that tedium can turn to triumph. And what a work of majesty it is. The *Pie Jesu* and the *In Paradisum* are sublime and with only a day's worth of rehearsal for many of the singers (students had been given a little head start with some preparation in the preceding weeks!), the soaring sounds of the sopranos resounded resplendently in Our Lady of Victories in each of these movements. Rebecca Hardwick's soprano solo, *Pie Jesu* (a text urging the heavens to give rest to the souls of the departed)

was sweet and sensitive, its upper register ambrosial in tone and tenor. Philip Tebb's *Libera Me* was the perfect complement: with all its brimstone, its pleading to be spared 'that day of wrath', a sense of fear and awe was palpable, the richness of Tebb's bass granting the movement all of its gravity and grandeur. With such stunning soloists, the chorus stood up remarkably well, capturing all the restfulness and rapture of paradise. Goaded by Colin Hall, in jest of course, that the Requiem was 'a mere trifle' compared to Mozart's, the programme was extended also to feature Fauré's beautiful *Cantique de Jean Racine* as well as two secular vocal works performed by each of the soloists. Joined by some 300 or so of the school community (students, teachers, parents, governors, friends and former students), this was an evening of wonderful celebration of the talent of the school community! This new annual tradition provides, as Colin Hall said in his warm thank you, it was, 'a moment to be transported'.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON
ASSOCIATE HEAD



TALKING HEAD

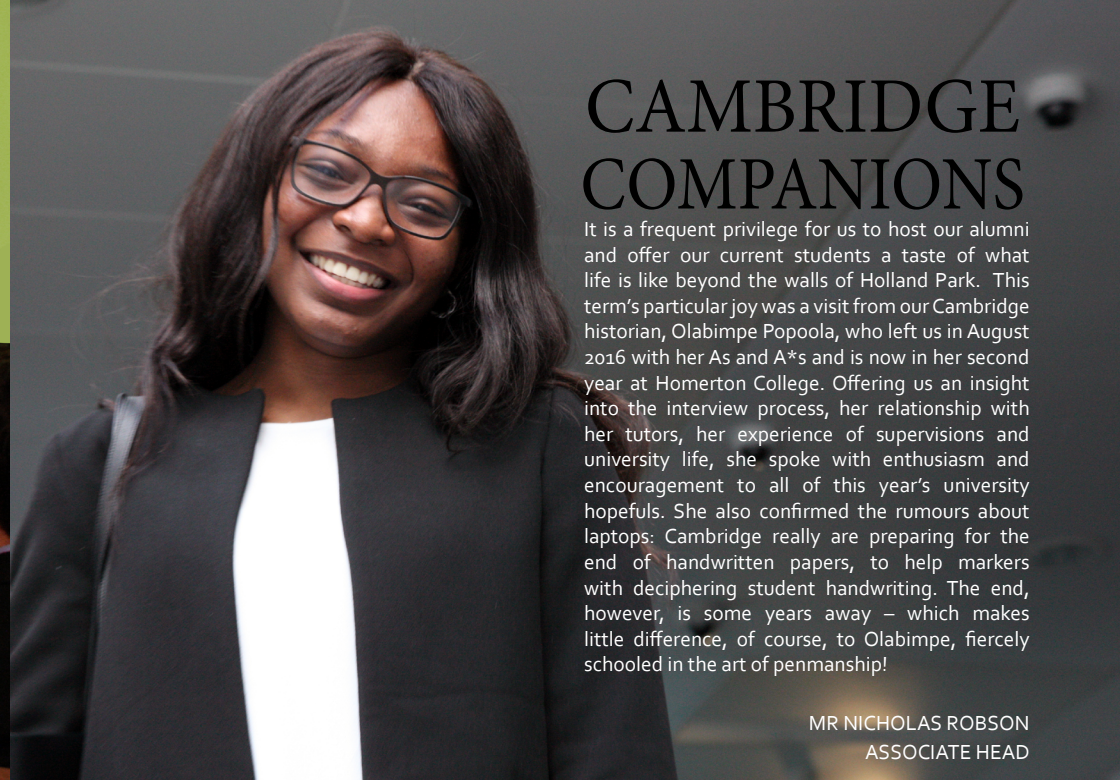


TALKING HEAD(S)

I've been to too many school assemblies, in many schools, as a keen and attentive observer, and as the presenter. But not until earlier this term, have I witnessed an assembly delivered from the foot-plates of a cross-trainer. And let's remember, assembly at Holland Park has a duration of 30 minutes! Still, in response to the theme (we have a different one every week) INTENSE, undaunted, Mr Hall delivered a monologue that was a combination of awe and endurance. "Why?", he said, "waste precious time going to the gym, when the gym can come to us. Why do one thing at a time, when you can do two!" An average size person will burn about 240 calories in 30 minutes on a cross-trainer. That's an impressive 1200 calorie burn in a week - probably also a first! The importance of resilience, determination and self-belief ran through the disquisition, as our students reflected on the tale of a young man from Durham, travelling 12 hours a week to get to and from school, working 25 hours a week in a restaurant and occupied as the primary carer at home for his disabled mother - and that's

before he has stepped foot in a lesson or completed his independent study - and he still managed to achieve four grade As in his AS exams this summer. And then there was Mr Hall's neighbour, who, at 103 years of age, has just redecorated her house! Assemblies are serious business at Holland Park. Members of the Leadership Team plan them carefully, keen to ensure that they set a reflective mood for the day. Over the course of this term children have been treated to the tale of Mr Chappell's alleged summer holiday star trek into space on Voyager 1, to Mr Robson's public admission that the music of Britney Spears is a private favourite, nestled alongside his lifelong love of Renaissance classics! We return in January to Mr Wilson leading on the theme Artistry; given his utter contempt for the Arts, we can't wait!

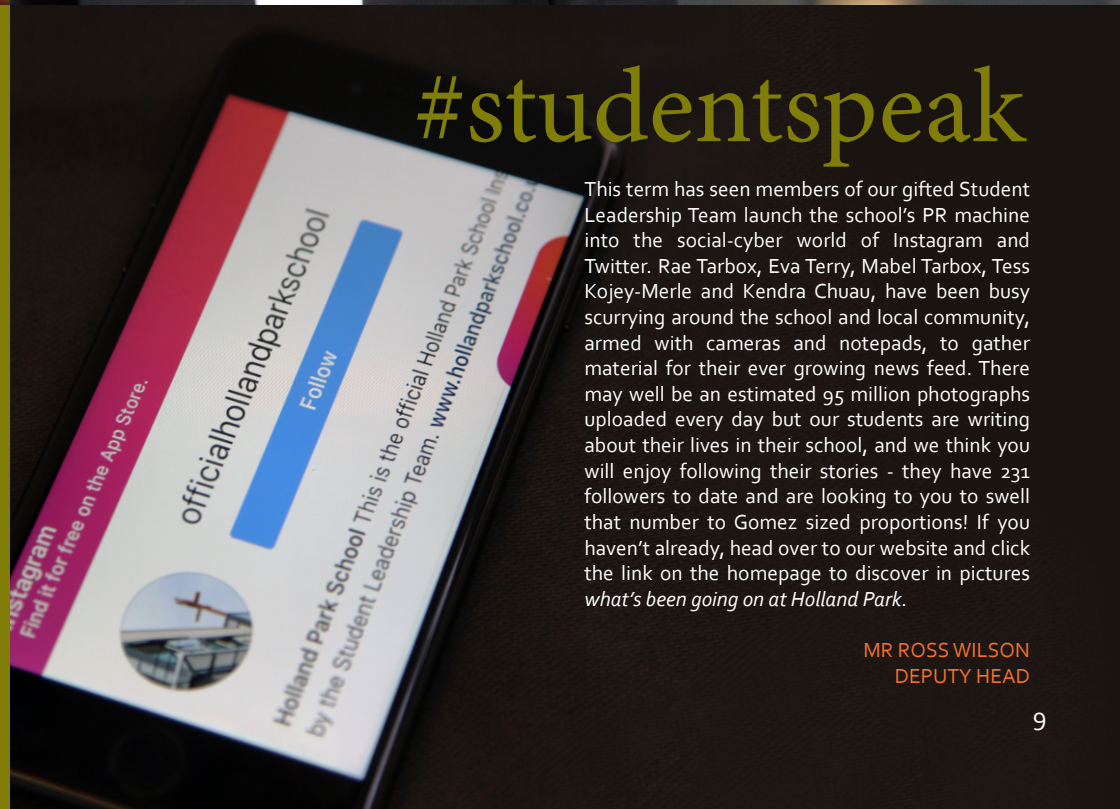
MR DAVID CHAPPELL
ACADEMY HEAD



CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

It is a frequent privilege for us to host our alumni and offer our current students a taste of what life is like beyond the walls of Holland Park. This term's particular joy was a visit from our Cambridge historian, Olabimpe Popoola, who left us in August 2016 with her As and A*s and is now in her second year at Homerton College. Offering us an insight into the interview process, her relationship with her tutors, her experience of supervisions and university life, she spoke with enthusiasm and encouragement to all of this year's university hopefuls. She also confirmed the rumours about laptops: Cambridge really are preparing for the end of handwritten papers, to help markers with deciphering student handwriting. The end, however, is some years away - which makes little difference, of course, to Olabimpe, fiercely schooled in the art of penmanship!

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON
ASSOCIATE HEAD



#studentspeak

This term has seen members of our gifted Student Leadership Team launch the school's PR machine into the social-cyber world of Instagram and Twitter. Rae Tarbox, Eva Terry, Mabel Tarbox, Tess Kojey-Merle and Kendra Chuau, have been busy scurrying around the school and local community, armed with cameras and notepads, to gather material for their ever growing news feed. There may well be an estimated 95 million photographs uploaded every day but our students are writing about their lives in their school, and we think you will enjoy following their stories - they have 231 followers to date and are looking to you to swell that number to Gomez sized proportions! If you haven't already, head over to our website and click the link on the homepage to discover in pictures *what's been going on at Holland Park.*

MR ROSS WILSON
DEPUTY HEAD



YOU'VE GOT TO PICK A POCKET OR TWO

As Year 7 were corralled into the hall by Fagin, students needed to have their wits about them as the Artful Dodger was on the loose, weaving and wheedling his way through the audience, intent on pilfering anything he could get his sticky hands on. The leader of Fagin's gang of pick-pocketing urchins was skillfully performed by Ms Murray, as she and the rest of the English Team, treated Year 7 to a wonderful introduction to Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. As the tale of Oliver, born and raised into a life of poverty and misfortune in a workhouse, unfolded, students enjoyed a rollercoaster of emotions. They gasped at the murder of Nancy, throttled by the hands of the most vicious Bill Sikes: a guest appearance by the ever formidable actor, Mr Seed, every bit the *'stoutly-built fellow of about five-and-thirty...a dirty belcher handkerchief round his neck: with the long frayed ends of which he smeared the beer from his face as he spoke. He disclosed a broad heavy countenance with a beard of three weeks' growth, and two scowling eyes; one of which displayed various parti-coloured symptoms of having been recently damaged by a blow'*. Gruel

was served and Oliver, played skilfully by Mr Gore, dared, as he always does, to ask for more. Readings from the novel by Ms Nightingale, drew the students deeper into the story and this, alongside consummately acted scenes, was interspersed with song, taken straight from the 1968 motion picture. What Dickens presents is a tale of good versus evil, with evil continually trying to corrupt and exploit good, but good winning out in the end. The novel is also a shot through social class, which draws the reader's attention to the stark injustice of Oliver's world. When the half-starved child dares to ask for more, the men who punish him are bloated and overweight. This narrative may reside in 1837 but its themes are as relevant today as they were in Dickens' time of writing and the English team ensured that they excited our students and drew them into the weave of the story before they begin the task of reading and studying this complex and poignant book.

MR DAVID CHAPPELL
ACADEMY HEAD



HOWLER MONKEYS AND VOLCANIC CRATERS

On Saturday 4th November 2017, our 25 challengers attended the World Challenge expedition training weekend at Braid Wood Scout Camp, Buckinghamshire, in preparation for their two week expedition to Nicaragua in July 2018. After months of fundraising the weekend focused on students beginning to develop some of the key skills they will need on their expedition. Students were put to the test by developing their ability to work together in teams, exploring various leadership roles, learning how to remain healthy on expedition, preparing camp food successfully on a budget of £3 per person and understanding camp craft awareness and safety equipment familiarisation. Despite the chilly November conditions students demonstrated their strength and resilience ahead of the trip and all found it a worthwhile preparation weekend. The 14 day adventure will begin with students acclimatising to the heat and the tropical climate in the colonial city

of León. Here students will take part in chocolate and coffee making workshops and begin practising their spoken Spanish. This will be followed by the project phase of the visit. This is expected to be the most rewarding aspect of the expedition. The students will work with rural communities in the city of Granada, both renovating and teaching in local schools. During this phase students will be immersed in the community and will pitch their tents close to the school. Following the project work students will be given the opportunity for some rest and relaxation and they will take their pick from zip wiring through a coffee plantation to volcano boarding down Cerro Negro. Nicaragua is a fascinating place and working with the local people will allow students to become familiar with their way of life and the problems they face. It is still a developing country, and poor compared to many of its neighbours. We will keep you updated as this adventure unfolds.

MS MARISA PILLING
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



DR WILL ZERMANSKY

How do you respond if a patient tells you they are under attack from the Russians? How are doctors expected to act when their patient's ailment seems a little self-constructed? Dr Will Zermansky (friend of the school and one time student of Mr Hall in the late 1980s) delivered a two-day course on essential skills for the hopeful medical applicants which addressed these complex professional issues as well as some potentially practical ones. In a day of great activity and penetrating discussion, ten Sixth Form students learned how to stitch and suture a patient with ruptured skin (some of them very delicately, I might add); they handled a range of medical implements to play the game: guess the purpose; they had masterclasses with Mr Max Horowitz, a Consultant Hand Surgeon at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital and booster courses on applications with Dr Zoe Hook, a foundation Doctor and North Middlesex Hospital, London. This was a fabulous opportunity for students and a very generous offering from Dr Zermansky and friends!

MS FAYE MULHOLLAND
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



A BORN SURVIVOR

On the first frosty morning in late September, our Student Leadership Team welcomed British adventurer, Bear Grylls, to the school. After a chocolate biscuit and a cup of tea (a change from the usual snake and leech infested water), he spoke to a hall full of students about his adventures and his thoughts on human kind. Humble and reflective, he encouraged our students to consider aiming high, avoiding the 'dream-stealers', and never giving up. Above all he encouraged students to be 'kind' - to each other and people they are yet to meet. "When we fall down, we get up. When we feel tired, we keep going. And if someone is struggling, we help them." Bear spoke openly about his own failure at school and how any success he was enjoying now was the result of determination and belief, encouraging students to grasp every opportunity that comes their way, and take it to the "max". When asked about his greatest adventure and his favourite place, his answer was "coming home; coming back to the place you know, your family and your friends".

MR DAVID CHAPPELL
ACADEMY HEAD



IN THE EYE OF A STORM

In late October, as storm Ophelia had just torn through Ireland and was making its way across the Irish Sea to Northern Wales, twenty one intrepid Year 12 and 13 students were embarking on their Duke of Edinburgh Gold practice and assessed expeditions in Snowdonia National Park. The wind raged across the mountains and rain battered students from all directions. A torrential first day did its best to dampen morale but students persisted and were able to continue through the following days with aplomb. The penultimate day involved the much talked about summiting of Snowdon, where the students would reach an elevation of 1085m above sea level. The rain was constant and the fog proved testing for all students. Working alongside Mountain Leaders, students put their skills into practice, as map reading and navigation became ever more challenging as the

conditions worsened. By midday, exhausted, students reached the summit and a short time later were relieved to hike back down the mountain into relatively 'pleasant' conditions. A final 2km walk out of the campsite on the last morning led all students to pass their respective expeditions successfully. The Duke of Edinburgh award is all about students 'going the extra mile', gaining new skills, pushing themselves physically, whilst helping others and exploring new territories. At the same time, they build new friendships, experiences and memories that will last a lifetime. This particular expedition certainly ticked all those boxes!

MR TOM MITCHELL
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

A CHILLI START

It's not every Friday morning at 5:30am that you will find the entire Leadership Team, located in the basement kitchen, collectively in tears. The reason for this particular episode was not a 'no notice' visit from Her Majesty's Inspectors, but something rather more sinister. Seventy eight onions, in the throes of being chopped, to be precise. Why? Well because at the end of our first week into the new academic year, we decided it would be a good idea to cook chilli for our 240 new Year 7 students. So, following a colossal shopping trip the night before, off to work we set: chopping, slicing, boiling, tasting (lots of), with the deadline of getting Mr Hall into position in assembly at 8:25am - not covered in the remnants of a thousand chopped tomatoes. Under the skilful direction of head chef Simon Griffiths, one of our culinary parents, sixty pans of steaming hot chilli, together with pitta bread, cheese and crème fraîche, were delivered at lunchtime to our hungry (and exhausted) students. Everything was quickly devoured and much enjoyed. That just left us the washing up: still, the last pan was dried and popped in the cupboard by 9:00pm!

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Bringing History to life in a primary school might be about dressing up and bringing in some medieval food. For A Level students, a journey to the National Archives on 17th November proved to be an extraordinarily (and unexpectedly) spiritual experience. Sitting in the same building as the Magna Carta, the Domesday Book, the Act of Supremacy and the American Declaration of Independence our Year 13 historians were astonished at their proximity to worlds that lay centuries away. Amongst all of this, they witnessed the very ink from Elizabeth I's pen and held documents to which fair Oriana herself gave the royal seal. George Offenbach wrote 'Being able to read, touch and discuss Elizabeth's letters was a wonderful experience. It provided a strange perspective of time when one sits with an irreplaceable document imagining the thoughts and hand behind it.' One might not, therefore, imagine that an archivist enjoys an experience of vibrance and vivacity, but our experience was quite the reverse: this was history at its most intimate.

POTENTIA

Loosely translated, the Latin word 'potentia' means potential or capacity, although it is also associated with 'power' or 'force.' Potential and power are both apt qualities to describe those students identified as possessing the right combination of passion and aptitude to make them suitable candidates for study at prestigious institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge in the future. Newly launched, 'Potentia' is our programme for Years 9-12 which seeks to identify students early in their school careers and provide them with extra-curricular support and enhancement to develop their cultural awareness, oracy, personal confidence and an ability to analyse critically. More broadly, it seeks to cultivate a passion for education and nurture subject specific interests in greater depth. This year students will be offered: a series of seminars spanning topics as diverse as Archaeology and Marine Biology; visits to London's vast collections of museums and sites; monthly essay and project competitions as part of our 'Cultural Capital' initiative; debating sessions; a visit to Cambridge university in the Spring term; opportunities to study for a CREST award in STEM subjects or engage in the Chemistry Olympiad; and, for some students, the opportunity to undertake the Extended Project Level 3 Qualification a year early.

SWIMMING GALA

In mid-November students from across each year group participated in the first swimming gala of the year. Students competed across multiple disciplines including, 25m and 50m freestyle, breast-stroke, back-stroke and butterfly. Competition was fierce as each heat saw students clamber back onto the diving platforms to position themselves ready for the next event. Although students initially competed in year groups, the younger swimmers were keen to take on and challenge the older students. Charlotte Thomas (Bennett 09) took the overall Year 7 award, Betsy Griffiths (Baker 06) won in Year 8 and Alisa Bulanova (Chappell 06) won the KS4 title. Students will be returning to the lanes in February for our second in the series of galas.

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HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL



Swarm (a detail) | Art Aptitude students | 2017