



Christ Church Cathedral School

Friday 15th November 2024

Dear Parents,

I had the great pleasure to be invited to Harrow yesterday to attend the Churchill songs. In the past many schools had a collection of songs which they sang together to foster communal spirit and to reflect upon various aspects of school life. Most schools no longer have a tradition of singing but at Harrow it continues. This is partly because of the fact that, during the Second World War, Churchill, a former pupil of Harrow, was heard singing one of the songs in his bath by another former Harrovian. Churchill was encouraged to return to his old school for the songs, which he duly did. He found the whole experience incredibly moving and he always claimed that it helped him to maintain his conviction, despite the terrible odds, that his country would stand firm in the face of tyranny. In memory of this, the songs performed at Harrow at this time of year are known as the Churchill songs. One of those songs, called 500 faces, tells of a young boy arriving for the first time at Harrow. He sees himself surrounded by the faces of all the other boys, almost all of whom are older than him. He is, of course, very nervous, but it does not take long before he realises how fortunate he is to be at the school. The song is sung by the best treble in the first year. This year the role was taken by one of our former pupils, Martin Dancer, hence why I had been invited. In front of the whole school, the whole staff, and many distinguished guests, including members of the Churchill family, he sang beautifully and with utter confidence. Many people felt that it had been one of the best performances of the song. I was a very proud former Headmaster. This was a very visible example of one of our former pupils having an impact on his senior school, but I know that in so many schools CCCS boys are playing an important role.

I am feeling rather exhausted! I have just come back from one of the most efficient leaflet drops in the history of Oxford. I help with the Community Service element of the enrichment programme and today we had a short talk from one of the staff at the Gatehouse centre, set up to give help to the many homeless in Oxford. And there is no doubt that they need help. Our speaker told us that, on average, six homeless people die on the streets of Oxford every year. We then set off for the Grandpont area, where our job was to deliver as many leaflets as possible. I have never seen so many leaflets delivered in such a short space of time. The boys were in platoons of five, running at speed between houses. Bang, bang, bang, bang bang - the leaflets shot through the letterboxes. When we got to my house, I asked who wanted to deliver the leaflet – they all did! When I return home, I suspect I will find a pile of leaflets which I will now be able to distribute amongst my neighbours. The boys are keen to go again!

I was reflecting upon what a tremendous group of staff we have at the school. Some have been here a very long time. Mr and Mrs Wilson, the string teachers, have been here longer than anyone else. One of the boys highlighted this to me at lunch. He said: "Mr Wilson has been at CCCS longer than it is possible to imagine!" Despite the decades that he has been here, I suspect that the timescale is within the sphere of human imagination! As ever, may I thank all our peripatetic music teachers who play such a vital part in maintaining our musical excellence.

I had the pleasure again of taking a Rugby team on Wednesday. It was the Form 6 B team against MCS. The opposition arrived looking as if they were part of the New Zealand Rugby Squad in their black kit. I told my team, to whom I had recently taught mediaeval history, that they should think in terms of the Battle of Agincourt – a small force of English soldiers taking on the whole might of the French army on French soil! In the event, unlike the victorious English force at Agincourt, we did not win, but we came very close, only losing by 12 tries to 8. I was very proud of the boys who kept going to the end, who tackled with determination, and who kicked, passed and ran with real commitment and success. What a "happy band of brothers!"

Mr Murray
Headmaster

Michaelmas 2024
Monday 18th - Sunday 24th November

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| MONDAY 18 | Forms 5 - 8 Football Skills Club - CANCELLED |
| 9.05 - 3.45 | Form 8 trip: Go Ape |
| 1.35 - 2.55 | Forms 5 & 6 Primary Maths Challenge |
| 2.30 | Forms 3 & 4 Play Dress Rehearsal – Pre-Prep to attend |
| TUESDAY 19 | |
| 2.30 | Forms 3 & 4 Play |
| 4.10 - 5.00 | Rec - Form 4 Multi Skills Club |
| 4.10 - 5.00 | Forms 5 - 8 Squash Club (Squash Court) |
| WEDNESDAY 20 | |
| 9.00 | Forms 3 & 4 Swimming |
| 3.30 - 4.15 | Rec - Form 8 Flu Vaccination |
| 4.10 - 5.00 | Rec - Form 2 Mandarin Club (Form 1 Classroom) |
| 5.00 | Forms 3 - 5 Mandarin Club (Form 4 Classroom) |
| THURSDAY 21 | |
| 4.10 - 5.00 | Forms 6 - 8 Mandarin Club (Form 4 Classroom) |
| FRIDAY 22 | |
| 8.30 | Cathedral Assembly, Speaker: Mrs Jane Evans, Head of Wychwood School, Oxford |
| 4.10 - 5.00 | Greek Club CC: OUT |
| SATURDAY 23 | |
| SUNDAY 24 | <i>Christ the King</i> |
| | <i>University Seventh Week</i> |
| 4.00 - 6.00 | CC: Rehearsal (WWH) |
| 5.30 | Pembroke Evensong |
| 6.00 | Worcester Evensong |

School Photos

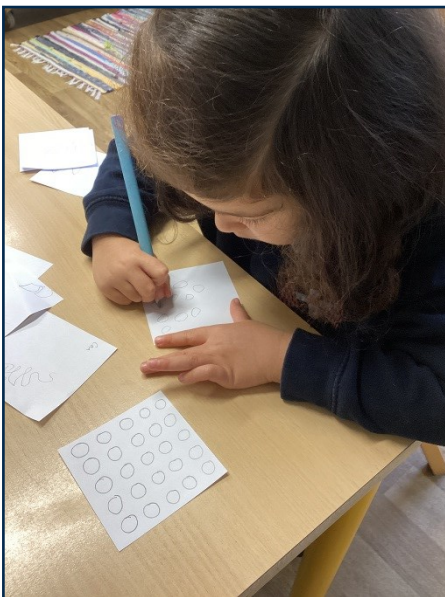
Proofs of the recent school photos should come home in school bags today, with instructions for how to purchase printed and digital copies.



Early Years News

The Early Years children are fascinated with mark making and early phonic skills. We use the Froebel rings and sticks to make pictures and experiment with creating symbols. Some of the children like creating messages in our message centre and their writing is emerging.

We had lots of new friends visiting the Nursery this week and on our weekly walk investigated shadows in the autumn sunshine, followed by collecting and jumping in big piles of leaves. What a fabulous opportunity we have being out on the Meadow, to see the leaves changing, revealing the colours that were always hidden underneath. HB

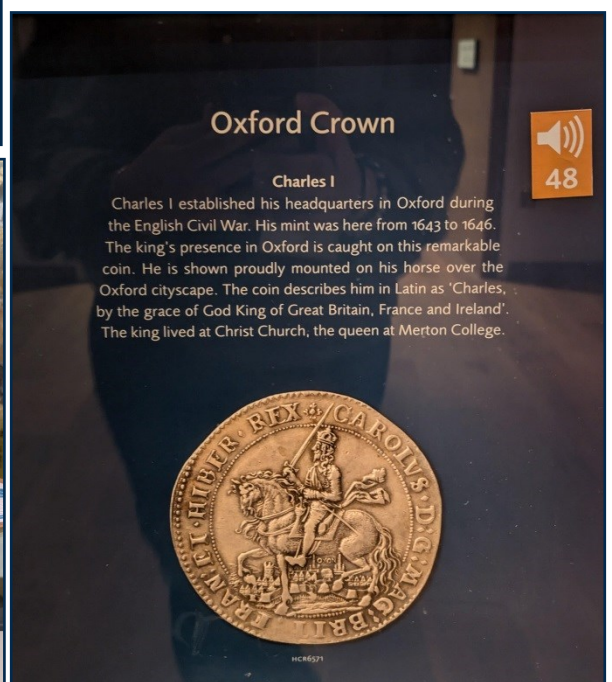


Pre-Prep News

On Tuesday, Form 1 embarked on a wonderful class trip to The Ashmolean. We have been studying 'Festivals of Fire and Light' around the world, with a focus on The Gunpowder Plot. At the museum, the children were thrilled to be able to locate Guy Fawkes' Lantern, the very same that he was carrying on that fateful day back in 1605 when the plot to blow up King James I and the Houses of Parliament was famously foiled. The children created some fabulous sight drawings of the lantern, and we reenacted the events of the plot with lots of enthusiasm and some tremendous acting! The class have learnt all of the words to the famous 'Remember, Remember the 5th of November' rhyme by heart, and they recited them with glee, huddled around the lantern.

Next, the children turned their talents to a 'team mission' to complete a scavenger hunt that took us through the length and breadth of the museum, with lots of challenges and discussion points en route. The children had huge amounts of fun engaging with everything from coins of King Charles I's reign in Oxford, when he was actually based at Christ Church, to medieval tools and weaponry, to beautiful art and fabric from across the world.

The trip was a great opportunity for the class to work as a team and share their considerable combined knowledge to 'wow' one another and their teachers, with a plethora of historical and cultural facts. What an incredibly brainy bunch of children we have in our Pre-Prep! TR

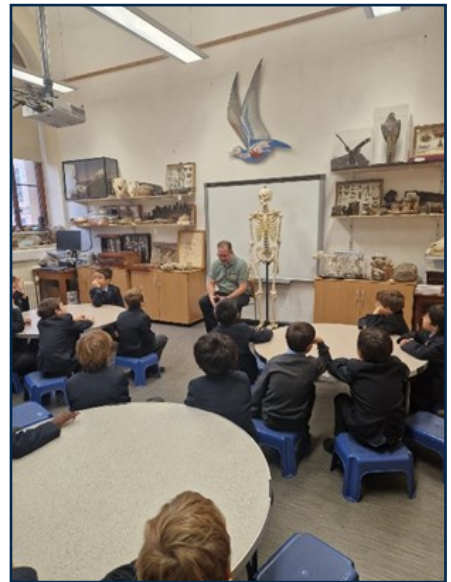
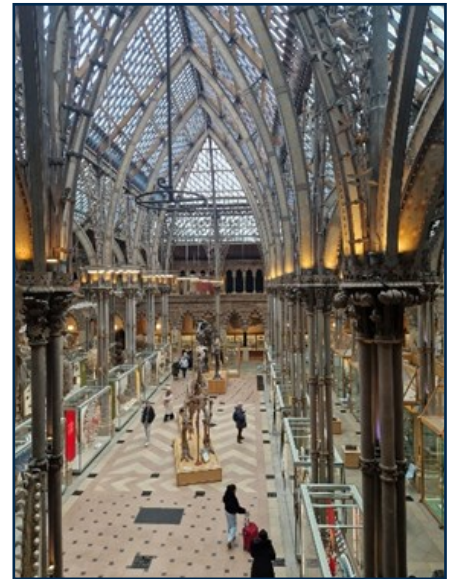


Forms 3 & 4 News

Visit to the Museum of Natural History

This morning Forms 3 and 4 visited the Oxford Museum of Natural History. They took part in a fantastic workshop entitled 'Skeleton Crew' where they discovered lots about endoskeletons, exoskeletons and hydrostatic skeletons. They also had the opportunity to examine a variety of exhibits, including the skull of a lion!

They then explored the museum and enjoyed the many exhibits. Many thanks to our expert workshop leader Chris, who was extremely informative and entertaining. Another very special thanks to Flynn's dad Mr Pouget who kindly provided us with delicious hot chocolate and dinosaur biscuits in the museum café! The boys had a super morning, and I was very impressed with how they behaved and the knowledge they were able to share. CS



MFL News


On a grey and chilly November morning the thought of having a hot chocolate and a viennoiserie could not have been more welcoming for the gaggle of CCCS children making their way up St Aldates.

Knowing that a tasty treat was waiting for them certainly quickened their steps. However, there was a catch! Once settled into their comfy seats, the children had to put their language skills to the test and ask for their order in French. Luckily, this caused no problem at all and they spoke beautifully - bravo! On the way back to school the chat was all about croissants and pains au chocolat and everybody agreed that they had had a lovely morning and that the chocolat chaud had been the best ever!

Well done, Forms 1 & 2 – your family will be in safe hands when you order breakfast at a café in France! AE-W

On Friday morning, my class went to a French Café. It was really fun! First, we put our coats on. Then we lined up quietly, and we walked to Café Paul. I sat down next to my friend Ashwith. I asked for un croissant s'il vous plait and un chocolat chaud. The croissant was very delicious. Finally we walked back to school. I had an amazing time!

Beautiful work Hamia.



Sports News

It has been a fantastic Rugby season at CCCS. The boys have worked so hard this year to improve their ability and teamwork and we have seen fantastic results.

This week we have had our final matches against other schools, with Years 3 and 4 going to the Dragon, Years 5 and 6 playing against MCS and Years 7 and 8 travelling to Cokethorpe. All the boys involved played with spirit and determination and came away with some fantastic results.

Next week the boys will contest their House Rugby matches, with Forms 5-8 playing on Wednesday afternoon and Forms 3 & 4 playing on Thursday afternoon. Parents are welcome to come along to support.

We will then be swapping mouth guards for shin pads, as the football season begins! DP



Music News

Simon Arnold visits CCCS

We were delighted to host Simon Arnold in school on Tuesday; a talented musician and keyboard player who attended CCCS in the 1960s. He was Head Chorister of Exeter Chapel Choir, but also sang at Worcester for a year, so he takes a keen interest in the singing that is done by our current boys. Mr Arnold very kindly sponsors piano lessons for a number of our Pembroke and Worcester choristers, so it was very special for him to be able to hear some of them play and sing in the afternoon. Mr Arnold has a huge number of stories about life as a chorister and the school as a whole, even managing to find himself depicted in one of the archive photos in our meeting room! It is always a pleasure to see former choristers visiting the school, no matter how long ago they left, and it thoroughly demonstrates the impact that choristership has on boys' lives. We hope that he will visit again next year. SB



Primary Singing Outreach with Brize Norton Primary School

"This is the funnest school trip I've ever been on!" was the overheard verdict from a Brize Norton pupil who came to one of our Outreach workshops with other Year 3 children this week. The visitors met George G, Eaton and Splendour, who talked about cathedral chorister life and explained why they have such a love for singing. A rehearsal with Miss Biddell was followed by a trip to Christ Church (on surely the sunniest November day imaginable), where they sang several pieces and listened to some solo Handel performed by Splendour. It seemed that several children had made up their minds to apply to become choristers by the end of the morning... I certainly hope so! SB



Luqman's Solo Performance in Reading

Luqman (Form 7) gave a very accomplished rendition of the Pie Jesu from Fauré's Requiem on Friday at a high-profile performance given by Bracknell Choral Society. The concert was held at Greyfriar's Church in Reading, and included a 'War Cantata', with the composer in the audience. I am very grateful to Mr Hallam, who directs the Choral Society, for organising this - and of course very proud of Luqman for representing CCCS music so professionally. Luqman writes:



'It was my pleasure to join the Bracknell Choral Society for the Remembrance Concert. I thoroughly enjoyed being part of the concert and am grateful to Mr Hallam as well as Ms Biddell for providing me with such a wonderful opportunity.'

Boarding House News

Last Saturday, the Cathedral Choristers and their families came to the Meadows after Evensong for our annual Fireworks display. We are very grateful to Mr Branderhorst and Maurits Branderhorst for all their help in providing the display. JR





Please join us for the...

INFORMAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT 2024

William Walton Hall, 4.30pm Wednesday 4th December



Featuring solos by senior boys, and festive performances by:

Guitar Group • Lower Strings Ensemble • String Orchestra
String Trio • Double Reeds Ensemble • Jazz Band
Senior Orchestra • Pre Prep Instrumental Groups





THE ORATORY

CROSS COUNTRY



SATURDAY 23 NOVEMBER

We're delighted to be hosting a cross country race on Saturday 23 November for children in Years 1–6 from any prep or primary school.

Approximate Race Timings:

- Year 1 – 9.00am
- Year 2 – 9.15am
- Year 3 – 9.30am
- Year 4 – 9.45am
- Year 5 – 10.00am
- Year 6 – 10.15am

Please arrive **at least** 15 minutes before your race starts.



Please note that by competing in the race, you give consent for your child to be photographed and shared on social media and in any associated press coverage.

The Oratory Senior School
Woodcote
Oxfordshire
RG8 0PJ

- Car parking and start line will be signposted.
- Refreshments available throughout the morning.
- No need to pre-register, we look forward to welcoming you on the day!

FOR ANY QUERIES, PLEASE EMAIL S.TOMLINSON@ORATORY.CO.UK

Photography Competition



Waters of the Cotswolds



SUBMISSION: Chose up to 2 themes : Submit 1 photo per theme

THEMES:

- Wildlife
- Reflections
- Troubled Waters
- Portraits by the River
- Historical Perspectives

Free to
Enter

PRIZES:

Prizes for winners and runners-up

CATEGORIES:

- Under 11's
- 11-16 year-olds
- Open (16+)

DEADLINE:

Sunday 5th January 2025

CONTACT:

Evenlode@cotswolds-nl.org.uk



**Cotswolds
National
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