



Christ Church Cathedral School News

14th February 2025



A message from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

Those of you who kindly read my newsletter last week will remember that I was very concerned about what would happen when Captain Robeard and his fearsome pirate crew forced me to walk the plank. I spent the weekend practising my swimming, just in case this terrible outcome occurred. You will be relieved to hear that I managed to stay dry. I was warned on Tuesday that there were pirates about and so I proceeded with caution to the Form 1 classroom. As soon as I entered the room, I adopted a jovial piratical demeanour and shouted with abandon “Ooh arrhh, me hearties!” This was clearly a sensible move as the assembled company of buccaneers greeted me like a long-lost companion. I was kitted out with a hat and a bandanna and asked to join the crew. On no occasion did it occur to them to ask me to walk any form of plank. It was a delight to spend time amongst such a hearty crew of miscreants and it was clear to me that they had a wonderful day. Whether they ever discovered that chest full of treasure and doubloons, I shall never know.

In the Prep School, we ended this half of term with the magnificent general knowledge quiz. There were some surreal moments. The music round started with a piece of music I recognised as one of Vivaldi’s “Four Seasons” I was just congratulating myself, when Mr Richards said, “As all of you will know, this is Vivaldi. The question is... What was his first name?” There were very few questions that someone was not able to answer and the breadth of knowledge demonstrated by our pupils was quite staggering. Having said that, it is not altogether surprising. Earlier in the week, having had a busy morning with meetings, teaching and working on some complex emails, I went to lunch to refuel.

As I sat down, a couple of familiar faces appeared. "Sir! Another round of general knowledge please." Then began a lunchtime quiz. I decided that all my questions were going to be about Napoleon. I had no idea whether any of the boys present would even know who Napoleon was, but I decided to give it a go. Between the four boys they managed to answer almost all the questions including the obscure island upon which Napoleon had died. One question that they did not get was where Napoleon had been exiled to in 1813. The answer is the island of Elba just off the coast of Italy. I always enjoyed giving my pupils the following little sentence which Napoleon was supposed to have uttered when he arrived there:

Able was I ere I saw Elba

Two questions I always asked were: what is interesting about this statement and secondly why do we know that Napoleon did not say it? If you have any time over the half term break, why not ask your child these questions. The answers will appear in the newsletter after half term!

The general knowledge quiz was only the last event of a hugely busy week; the newsletter that I'm sure you will enjoy reading speaks of many of the events that have been occurring. We are so lucky that our staff are so dedicated to ensuring that our pupils have a memorable and nourishing time at the school. I want to thank them very much indeed for everything that they have done over the last couple of weeks.

I have been very impressed by the number of Form 8 pupils who have told me, when asked what they will be doing over half term, that they will be revising for their mock exams. This is music to my ears. One thing is certain, that all of them seem to know what they ought to be doing. I hope that they will find time to do some revision, to get some rest and spend some time relaxing, always the perfect combination when preparing for exams. I always enjoy half term at this time of year, as one becomes very aware of the lengthening hours of light as the early spring flowers fight their way through the solid earth, to appear resplendent above the dull ground. I very much hope that you will find time to enjoy the company of your wonderful children in the coming week.

Mr Murray
Headmaster

School Calendar



School Diary: Monday 24th February - Sunday 2nd March

All Week: F8 Mock Common Entrance Exams.

All Week: Bookswap Week - Please see separate email from Mr Farmer.

MONDAY 24

2.15: U12/U13 Hockey v Bloxham (aWAY)

2.00: Jeneba Kanneh-Mason Masterclass

3.30: Informal concert in the WWH, open to parents

CC: Rehearsals resume

TUESDAY 25

8.30 - 10.00: Parents' Association Coffee Morning - all parents welcome

2.15 - 4.00: U8/U9 Football v Cothill (Home)

WEDNESDAY 26

2.30 - 4.15: U10/U11 Football v Oratory Prep (Away)

FRIDAY 28

8.45: Cathedral Assembly, speaker: The Revd Stephanie Burette, Chaplain, Corpus Christ College, Oxford

CC: OUT

Kanneh-Mason Masterclass on Monday 24th February

Parents are warmly invited to attend a performance by Jeneba Kanneh-Mason along with some of our own pianists in the Walton Hall at 3.30pm on 24th February. Jeneba is a wonderful communicator and a busy soloist, having won the Iris Dyer Piano Prize at the Royal Academy of Music and being named one of Classic FM's 'rising stars' among many other accolades. Jeneba will be working with some of our pianists during the afternoon, and I am thrilled that she will be visiting CCCS to share her skills with our pianists. This promises to be an extraordinary musical afternoon for the boys, so please do join us if you can! SB

Dates for your diary

Reminder of daily clubs & events.

TUESDAY

4.15 - 5.00: Squash Club, Forms 5-8

4.15 - 5.00: Multi Skills, Rec-F4

WEDNESDAY

3.30 - 4.15: Mandarin Club, Rec-F2

4.15 - 5.00: Mandarin Club, Forms 3-5

THURSDAY

4.15 - 5.00: Mandarin Club, Forms 6-8

Come to our Open Morning

Our next Open Morning takes place on Tuesday 4th March, 9.30 - 12.00.

Please feel free to share this with family or friends who may wish to visit us.

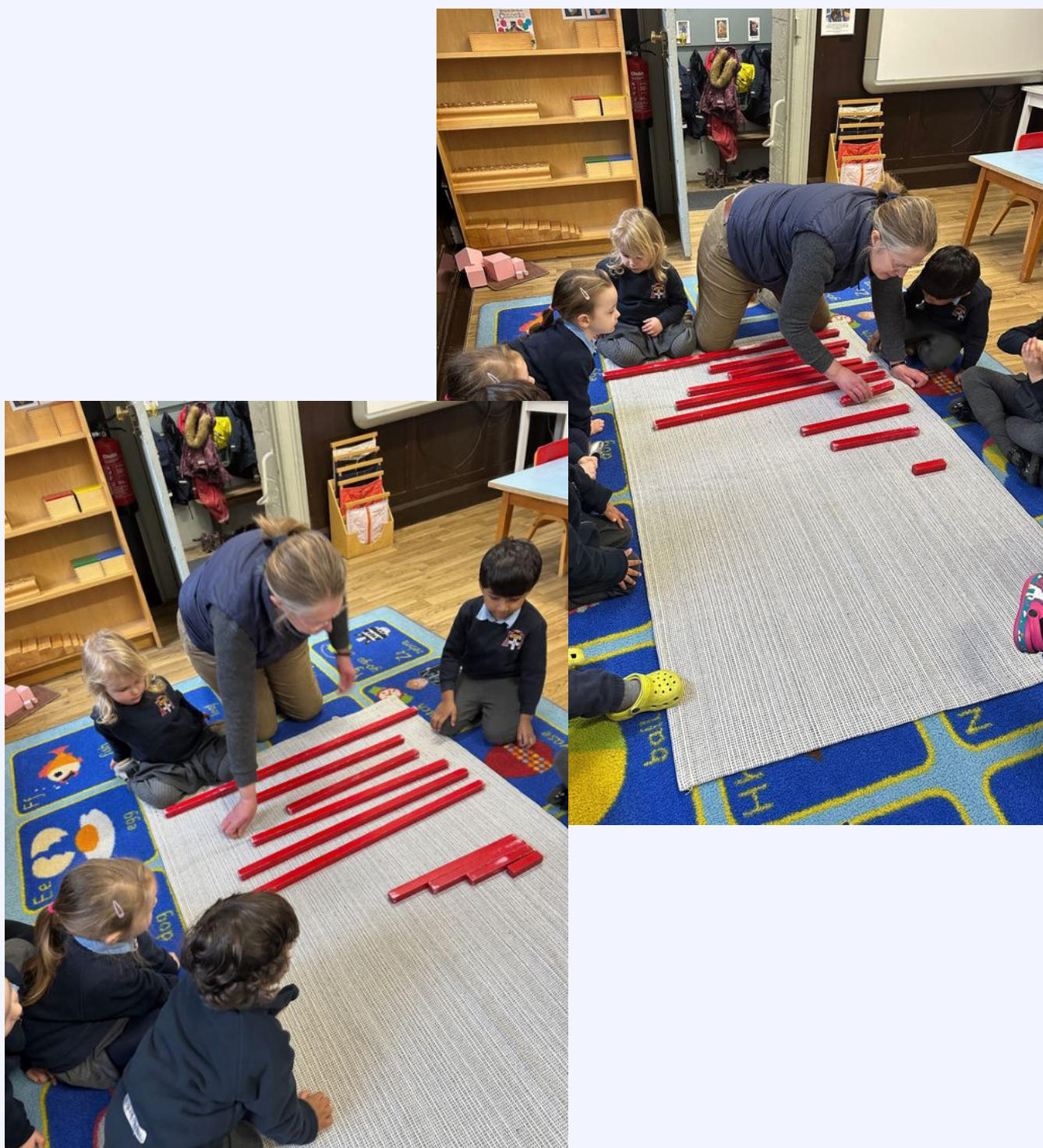
To attend, please contact our Registrar at registrar@cccs.org.uk



Early Years News

This week we have been exploring the Montessori long rods. Working as a team, the children explored the concept of length and the language associated with it. The children particularly enjoyed building the maze from the smallest to the largest rods.

The Early Years team want to wish everyone a wonderful Half Term. HB



Pre-Prep Computing News

During our recent trip to Science Oxford, the children gravitated to using a Montessori-inspired robot called 'Cubetto'. This wonderful device blends together storytelling with simple programming techniques; the first step in understanding coding. There is a control board used to position different blocks, which helps the children to visualise the program which they then remotely send to the robot.



On return from our trip, we invested in a new device, which Reception and Form 1 got to 'unbox' and explore this week. We have named our own Cubetto 'Prodo' (inspired by Lord of the Rings!).

The device is suitable for use throughout the EYFS and Pre-Prep, so all of our children will have the opportunity to explore, play, and learn with this fantastic new investment. MB



Pre-Prep Visit Woodland School

Pre-Prep enjoyed a fabulous (and exceedingly chilly) afternoon at Woodland School.

The children made use of our new tools to dig for treasure, with lots of wonderful discoveries made, from shiny rocks, to a myriad of mini-beasts.

The swing was also in constant use, with children leaping on and swinging freely, whilst happily singing sea shanties! Outside of one of the dens, they independently built a seesaw, which they delighted in balancing on.

A hot chocolate to warm the cockles brought another lovely afternoon in the 'Great Outdoors' to a fitting close.

TR



Form 1 News

This week, Form 1 hosted our feverishly-anticipated 'Pirates Theme Day'.

The fearsome Christ Church Crew arrived in school overflowing with vim and vigour, resplendent in magnificent piratic regalia, with costumes designed to match the pirate names that they had given themselves. A special shout-out should go to 'Englebert Lobster Legs', accessorised with a giant lobster claw as a formidable weapon, and 'cutting a dash' in bespoke lobster footwear! When Captain Robeard and his parrot Squawks appeared, it was all aboard 'The Jolly Christ Church', the majestic galleon that the children had lovingly made in their Art lessons.

With hearty sea shanties drifting on the salty sea air, the crew embarked on an action-packed day of interactive adventures and daring missions. We were even treated to a visit from the highly-decorated and infamous pirate chief, Captain 'Aaaarggh' Murray, who swore the oath of the 'Piratic Code' and jumped aboard our vessel, bound for the Cathedral! TR



Form 2 News

This week in Form 2, we learnt all about the Great Wall of China, which started being built over 2000 years ago and took over 1000 years to build! We looked on maps to see where the Great Wall of China was built, including pointing out that it goes across the Yellow River. We talked about fortresses and what these were used for, including that there were over 7000 fortresses.



After this, we got to work building our own Great Wall of China (on a mini scale).

We used multilink cubes and sugar cubes, carefully balancing them with a steady hand.

There were even some cable cars built alongside the wall as we learnt that cable cars carry people up to see it.

Everyone worked together to build it up, even adding in some of the twists and turns like in the real version. Great teamwork everyone!
MH-W

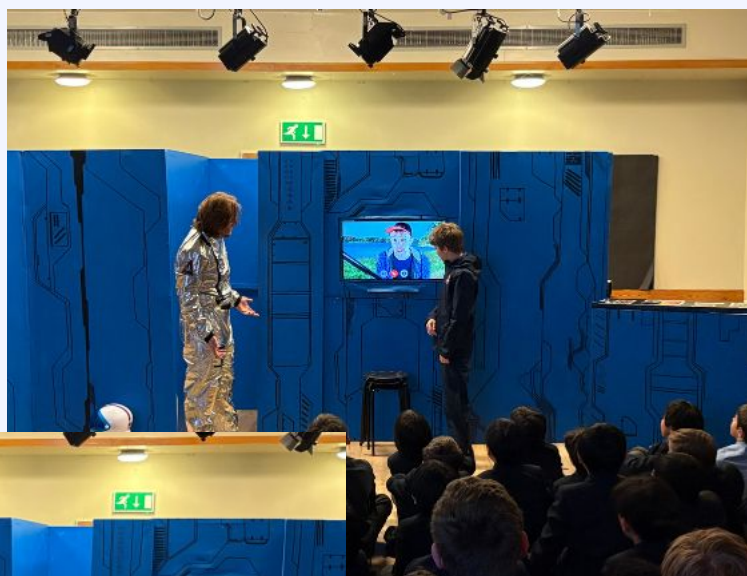
Prep News

All Things French

Boys in Forms 3-8 enjoyed watching a French play... Why don't you ask them about the boy called Jack who won first prize?

His prize is a trip on a space rocket, a French space rocket. Jack will be on the space craft with another person who also won – she is French and speaks little English. All the instruments on the spaceship are in French and mission control only communicates in French. Soon after take-off there is a malfunction and they are sent 65,000,000 miles out into space!

Much laughter was heard and many boys were keen to volunteer to help the actors with some translation. Bravo! SL



Forms 3 & 4 News

Japanese Workshop

Forms 3 and 4 were visited by some Japanese students from Hertford College on Thursday.

They held 2 workshops, teaching the children the colours, numbers and directions in Japanese. The students were charming and full of enthusiasm, and the boys learnt lots of vocabulary really quickly. We very much hope that they will visit us again next year.

Arigatou to our friends from Hertford College. EP



Form 5 News

Form 5 enjoyed baking a traditional French cake. The yogurt cake was incredibly popular amongst the boys. Some decided to add food colouring, others discovered that eggs left unattended on a table could roll...and crack on the floor! All good fun given the level of excitement in the Dining Hall. SL

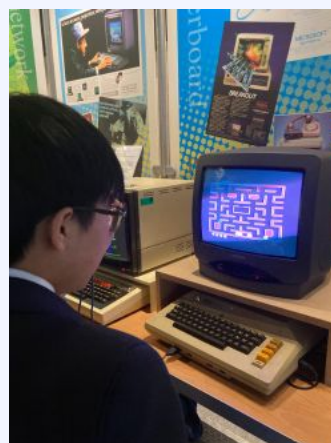


Form 8 News

On Tuesday, Form 8 visited the National Museum of Computing at Bletchley Park. We could tell it was going to be an unusual sort of trip because the boys were encouraged to bring in and use their mobile devices! After a discussion and debate about robots and AI, we had our first taste of what computers used to be, in an IT room made up entirely of BBC Micros from the 1980s. We all had a go at coding in Basic, creating a game of Snake – it wasn't easy but it was very satisfying once we achieved it.

After lunch we had a tour of the museum, starting with a code-breaking challenge around the cryptographical methods used at Bletchley in the Second World War. The boys became quite quick with Morse Code but realised how very much more difficult it was to decode a message when you don't know the cipher. Decoding a message using a replica Enigma machine was fascinating. We were then guided through the history of computers from the large, valve-driven machines of the late 1940s, through the world's oldest working computer from 1952 and the beginnings of information storage (a hard disk nearly a metre across!) to the first personal computers, finishing up by playing games on desktop computers of the late 1980s and 1990s. As one boy put it, "All these years of development to end up with this football game!"

The boys showed great interest throughout the day, and our guide praised them for having much more knowledge than similar school groups. They have now developed a stronger understanding of how computers work and where the machines they use every day have come from. AF



House Competitions

Sports News

This week saw all the boys from Forms 3-8 compete in the annual House Football competition.

There were a number of football-based challenges followed by the fixtures between houses. I can report that the boys played with incredible effort, striving to win for their houses.

There were some great goals, incredible saves and crunching tackles, with boys showcasing all the skills we have worked on in games lessons over the past few months.

All the scores were tallied up, giving the final results of:

1st - Sayers

2nd - Carrol

3rd - Wolsey

Well done to all the boys for their efforts on the football pitch this term.

DP



House Quiz

Today, the boys took part in the hotly anticipated House Quiz.

Carrol, Sayers and Wolsey pitted their wits against each other in the hope of being crowned Victors! Covering topics such as nature, sport, history, music and science, the boys impressed us all with their knowledge. Ultimately, it was Sayers who were crowned champions this time. Well done everyone and a special thank you to Mr Richards for organising and hosting the event. MM





FREE FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY!
MOST SUITABLE FOR 5-16 YRS

SCIENCE BAZAAR BEYOND

Saturday 1 March 2025

9:30am – 11:30am Relaxed autism-friendly early opening
11:30am – 4pm Open to all

Fun activities, hands-on workshops, experiments, talks, shows, competitions and cafe



BOOK
TICKETS



www.brookes.ac.uk/science-bazaar
sciencebazaar@brookes.ac.uk

✕ @obuengagement #BrookesBazaar25
f @OxfordBrookesPublicEngagementResearch
@oburesearchpublicengagement

Oxford Brookes University, Clerici Building, Headington Campus,
Gipsy Lane, Headington, OX3 0BP

NO PARKING ON SITE EXCEPT FOR ACCESS NEEDS



Dear Parent / Carer

Finally, the days are getting longer and hopefully the weather will soon begin to improve. Either way, hopefully in next week's half term, you and your children will be able to spend some time outdoors.

Half term would be a great chance for you to use our Footsteps programme to begin to support your children in their journey to becoming safer, independent pedestrians and road users.

Our Footsteps guide will give you some ideas of how to begin to support your child in developing the decision-making skills that will help them become a pedestrian able to keep themselves safer when they eventually walk to school or a friend's home independently.

If they are ill-prepared, children are more likely to be killed or injured in a road traffic incident, as seen by the fact that the number of child pedestrians injured rises significantly around 10 -12 years of age – the time at which they begin to go out unaccompanied by adults.

The Footsteps programme is simple to use as it can be carried out in normal everyday situations such as walking to school or to the local shops. Rather than telling children what to do, you are encouraged to ask lots of open questions to make the children think about the decisions they are making. Making these decisions safely, while in the company of a supporting adult, will mean they will be better prepared for dealing with roads and traffic once they begin going out on their own.

Learning to cope with traffic is a practical skill, which can't be learnt in the classroom. As parents / carers, you are the best people to help your child develop this knowledge as you spend the most time out and about with them.

It is never too early to start talking to your child about road safety as, having a good understanding of road safety skills, could one day save their life.

Please follow the link to the Footsteps guide [Footsteps](#) and start giving your children the skills and knowledge they will need to stay safer on our roads.

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service Road Safety Team
Oxfordshire County Council