



Christ Church Cathedral School News

7th March 2025



A message from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

Book Day is always one of my favourite occasions of the year. Right from the start of the morning, there is an excitement in the air and on Brewer Street all is different. Familiar cars disgorge unexpected passengers, not the usual CCCS pupils but Fantasy heroes or characters from popular tales. This year the playground reminded me of Jurassic Park with some magnificent inflatable dinosaurs striding the tarmac spaces. At breaktime the climbing frame was topped by a resplendent Harry Potter, almost as if he was in the middle of a Quidditch match. Meanwhile an intensely serious Sherlock Holmes was engaged in an intensive chess match while Charlie Brown, complete with baseball glove, watched close by ready to utter a memorable wise-crack.

I had challenged the boys to guess who I would be. What fascinated me was that a number of them guessed that I would appear as Sherlock Holmes. When asked why, they responded that I had been Sherlock Holmes last year. Clearly innovation is not a quality they associate with their Headmaster! "Gandalf!" responded another, imagining that someone of advanced age would have been a natural choice for me. When I appeared, therefore, in a brown rectangular box with stripes on the front, they were surprised and generally at a loss. "A biscuit?" one boy suggested, rather forgetting that a literary association was the order of the day. A bar of chocolate from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory suggested another. It was only when I pointed out that the costume had doors and that, when one opened them, a snowy scene was revealed, that people guessed correctly. I was the Wardrobe from that Oxford masterpiece, "Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," by CS Lewis. For me, this Wardrobe has always been one of the most powerful ideas in children's fiction, a plain looking, ordinary object which, when passed through, leads to another world.

It is a symbol of the process of reading a book. The cover is opened and one is transported into a different world. – a world of the imagination.

Which takes me on to the Library. One of the excitements of the near completion of the Pavilion is that we can begin work on the Library at last, as we will be able to move the equipment which has been housed in the room which will become the Library. Over the holidays we will empty and paint the room which will then mean that we can then be in touch in terms of the development of this wonderful facility. Many kind parents have said that they will help with the design and development of the room and I am very grateful to them. Certainly, judging by the excitement over reading in the school at the moment, it will be a very well-used facility.

We were honoured that the Master of Pembroke, Sir Ernest Ryder came to talk to the Prep School in the Cathedral today. Before moving to Pembroke, where many of our boys sing, Sir Ernest was a Lord Justice of Appeal, the second highest type of Judge in the country. He gave an immensely inspiring talk about the benefits of hard work (always music to a teacher's ear) and of the possibility, thereby, of achieving great things. At one point in the talk, he asked whether any of the pupils had ever thought about being a lawyer. A few boys put up their hands. At that point, he revealed that he had with him his judge's wig, made from horsehair. He allowed one of the aspirant lawyers to put it on; the boy was able to wear it for the rest of the service. It did not take much to see the boy in question sitting in splendour in front of a court in a few years time!

One of the features of visiting the Nursery or Pre-Prep is that one is always greeted with extreme excitement. No sooner did I arrive in Nursery on Wednesday when the cry went up "Look, It's Mr Merry!" Nothing is more likely to ensure that I live up to my name!

Mr Murray
Headmaster

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School Calendar



School Diary: Monday 10th March - Sunday 16th March

MONDAY 10

1.30: U12/13 Hockey v New College School at St Edward's

TUESDAY 11

1.00: U9 Football Tournament at The Oratory

WEDNESDAY 12

1.10: U11 Football Tournament at Bruern Abbey

THURSDAY 13

1.20: Forms 3-8 Cross Country at The Oratory

FRIDAY 14

8.45: Cathedral Assembly, Speaker: The Very Revd David Hoyle, Dean of Westminster

2.30: Forms 3 and 4 Concert, WWH

3.00 - 5.00: Blue Blood Pop Up Uniform Shop, Prep Playground

Dates for your Diary

Stay & Play

Wednesday 19th March

We're looking forward to welcoming families with children aged 1-4 to join us for Stay & Play.

If you know any families who may want to join us, please let us know, or ask them to follow the link below to register.

[Click here](#) for more information and to book a place.



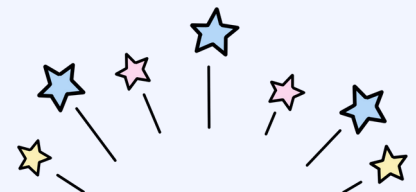
Here's a reminder of the daily after-school clubs and events taking place at school.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
4.15 - 5.00: Football, Forms 5-8	4.15 - 5.00: Squash Club, Forms 5-8	3.30 - 4.15: Mandarin Club, Rec - F2	4.15 - 5.00: Cricket, Forms 3-8	
4.15 - 5.00: Real Tennis, Forms 6-8	4.15 - 5.00: Multi Skills, Rec - F4	4.15 - 5.00: Mandarin Club, Forms 3-5	4.15 - 5.00: Mandarin Club, Forms 6-8	

World Book Day 2025 Photo Album



World Book Day 2025 Photo Album



You will find more highlights on our social media channels.

Early Years News

This week we revisited the book 'Don't Hug Doug' and Mr Murray kindly read this to us on his weekly Nursery visit. It's a great way of starting a conversation with younger children about body boundaries and keeping safe when around strangers.

We want to encourage the children to be kind and respectful to one another but also to understand that, sometimes, the other person may not want a hug, and that hugging a stranger is not a safe thing to do. It also encourages children to speak up if they don't feel comfortable about being hugged and lets them feel in control.



On Wednesday we visited Christ Church Meadow and went for a run on our school playing fields. We spotted crocuses and daffodils and talked about Springtime. We then sat together to listen to a story with Mr Berry about the arrival of Spring.

We have spent lots of time in the Nursery garden enjoying mixing soil and water, digging in the sand, playing ball games and role playing with friends. This is a perfect place to work on negotiating skills, and understanding that others may have different ideas and ways of doing things. We encourage listening to one another and finding solutions to find a resolution together, whilst providing adult support when necessary. Respecting others is a big part of the Montessori ethos and something that is encouraged throughout the school.

A lot of fun was had on World Book Day. Thank you for all your support with costumes and books. We spent the morning with Reception and Year 1, sharing books together. RD



Pre-Prep News

This week the children in Pre-Prep have been immersing themselves in the wonder of the written word. We have been exploring books of various genres, culminating in World Book Day on Thursday, and a trip to the Story Museum with the French Department today.

All year groups enjoyed presentations by our visiting author Rachel Chivers Khoo.

Thank you for providing such wonderful costumes and sending in your children's favourite books. It was brilliant to have the opportunity to share these texts, and enjoy reading them both in and out of the classroom.

As the sun shone down on us during Woodland School this week, it was super to see children quietly enjoying the tranquil setting of nature with the texts from home. MB



Pre-Prep visit the Story Museum

On Friday morning an excited group of Nursery, Reception and Form 1 children set off on their mini French trip, and the short walk just around the corner to the Story Museum for a morning of French story-telling.

With plenty of audience participation, in French of course, the children listened to stories about a green monster, a fable by de la Fontaine, and a beautiful story about a little girl called Nine, who lives in a world that has turned completely grey following the passing of a cyclone. She finds a box of crayons in a hole in the earth, plants the crayons and waters them; to her amazement the colours grow and turn everything around her into a world rich with colour, and bring joy and happiness again.

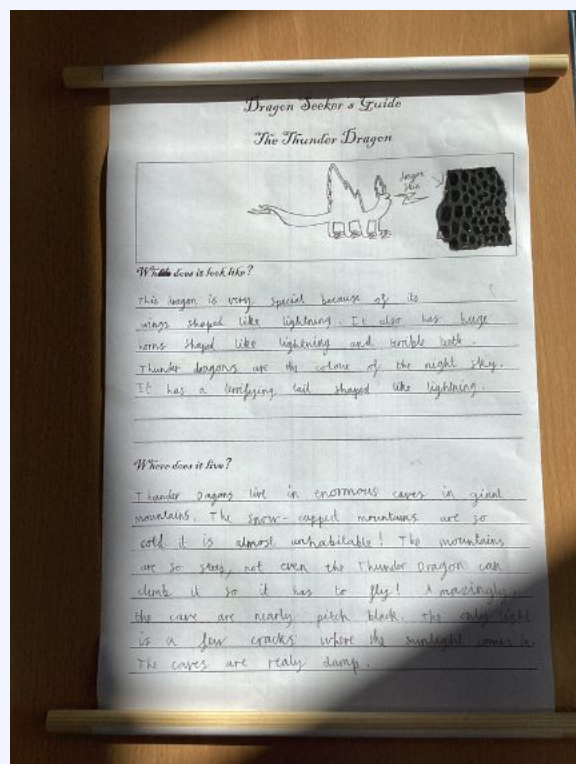
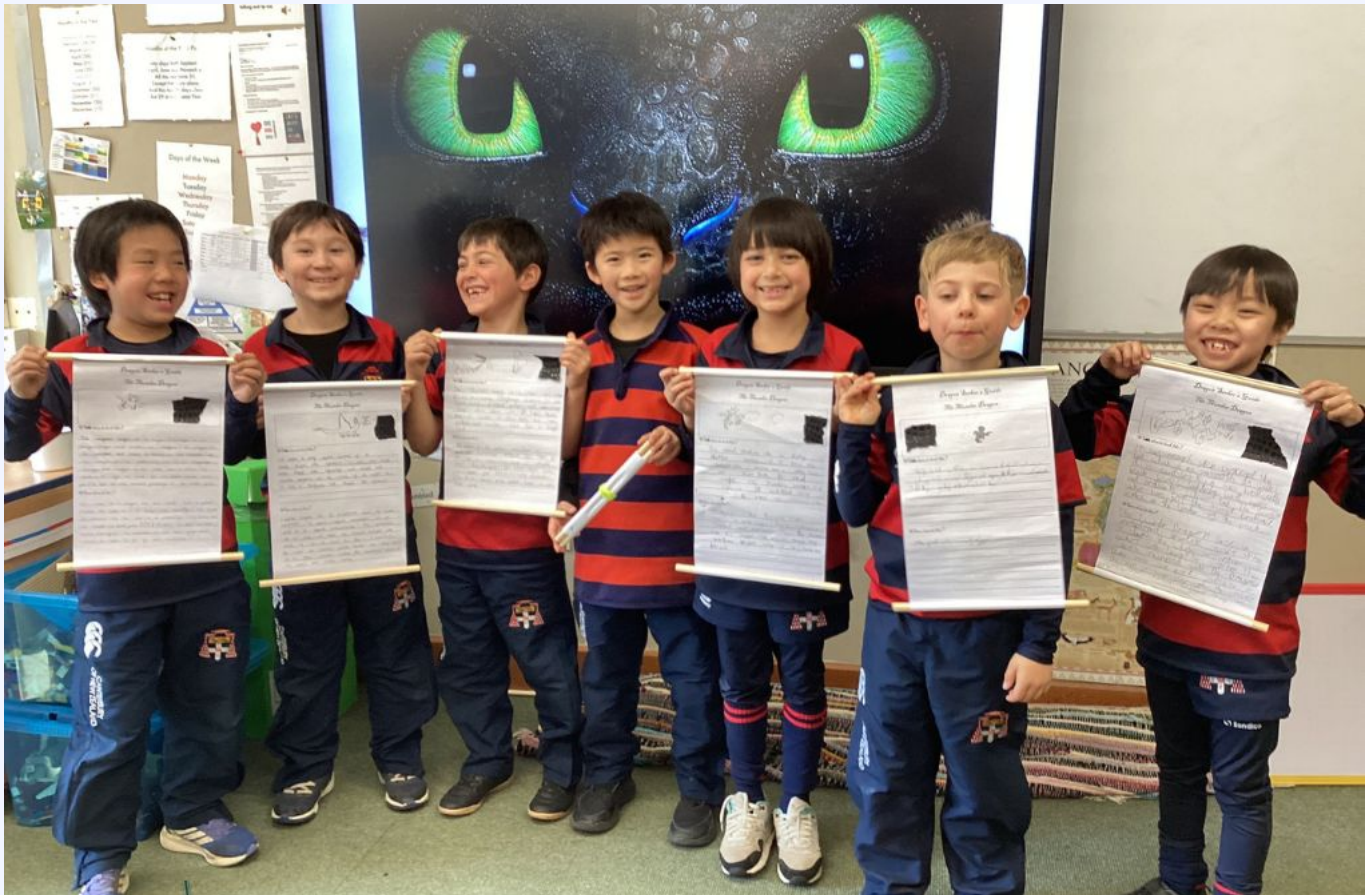
As well as practising their French listening and speaking skills, the children were busy with a craft activity, had time to play, jump on an enormous bed, dress up and explore, until all too soon the time came around to step out of the magical world and walk back to school again....

AE-W



Form 3 News

Form 3 have been learning about non-chronological reports in English this week. They have created their very own dragon seeker scrolls for Professor D. Scales (Head of the Association of Dragonologists) about the Thunder Dragon! Look out for dragons flying in Form 3! SG



Dragon Seeker's Guide

The Thunder Dragon



What does it look like?

This dragon is very special because of its wings shaped like lightning. It also has large horns shaped like lightning and terrible teeth. Thunder dragons are the colour of the night sky. It has a forked tail shaped like lightning.

Where does it live?

Thunder dragons live in enormous caves in giant mountains. The snow-capped mountains are so cold it is almost uninhabitable! The mountains are so steep, not even the Thunder Dragon can climb it so it has to fly! Amazingly, the caves are nearly pitch black. The only light is a few cracks where the sunlight comes in. The caves are really damp.

Form 6 News

On Wednesday morning, Form 6, Mrs Fairhurst, Ms Hajar and Miss Browne set off on an exciting walk to the river, as we have been learning about the River Thames in our Geography lessons. We learned that our city got its name during Saxon times, as it was an area where the river was shallow (a ford) and therefore it was easy for the oxen to cross the river.

We visited two locks; one on the Oxford Canal, where the manmade waterway joins the River Thames, and the second was Osney lock, which was converted to a hydroelectric operation in 1970. The boys had great fun operating the manual lock on the canal, with the help of Mrs Fairhurst's windlass key! HB



Music News

Welcome Back Ms Biddell!

On Wednesday, the Cathedral Choristers welcomed Ms Biddell back to the boarding house following a period of absence. During the time of her absence, not a night went by where at least one boy didn't ask me, "when will Ms Biddell be back". In marking her return, John B-E composed a celebratory anthem for which he and the senior choristers went to great lengths to organize secret rehearsals. On the night of the 'surprise premier', Mr Boarder skillfully distracted Ms Biddell just long enough for boys to change into formal white shirts and cassocks and assume their concert positions.



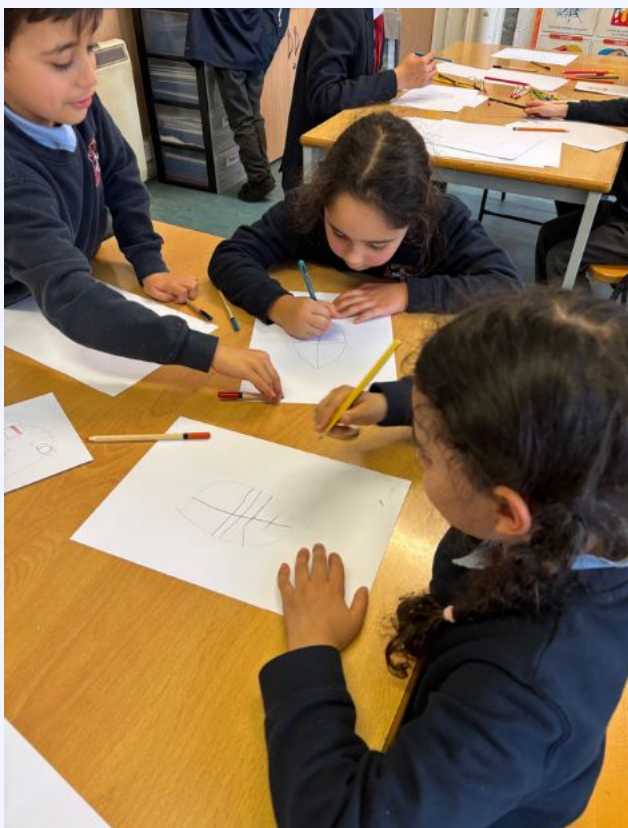
On behalf of all the boarding house team, I want to thank John B-E for his wonderful and inspiring gift and many congratulations to the boys.

We are all delighted to welcome Ms Biddell back to her signature Wednesdays in the Boarding House. JR



Art News

Form 8 and Form 1 were drawing portraits of each other in Art today. Form 8 were teaching Form 1 the proportions of the face. They all did some fantastic work.



Sports News

Football News

On Wednesday afternoon, we welcomed four teams from The Dragon for our final Form 7/8 football fixtures of the season. It certainly felt spring-like as we headed over to Merton Field, sun shining, birds chirping and a warmth in the air which we haven't felt in what feels like decades! I haven't seen our three Australian gap students look quite so happy and at home since arriving in the UK back in January.

All four games were played in excellent spirit, as is pretty much always the case, with all the boys enjoying being outside and competing on such a beautiful afternoon.

Our A team was aiming to complete their season unbeaten and therefore had a lot to play for. The game started brightly with Christ Church in total control of the ball, launching attack after attack without seriously testing the Dragon goalkeeper. The breakthrough did finally come when a move down the right hand side led to a low cross being tapped home by Patrick. This angered the Dragon, who fought bravely and created a couple of chances of their own, but Ivan stood firm in the home goal and didn't let anything past. Half time, 1-0.

Elsewhere around the other pitches, CCCS teams were also aiming to put the Dragon to the sword. The B Team, managed by Mr Withers, were involved in a tight match which could have swung either way. With some inspired goalkeeping from Hugo and some brilliant finishing from Milan, the boys ran out 2-0 winners.

The other two teams were engaged in some fierce battles in which the Dragon sadly came out on top on this occasion. A special shout out for Trust, who scored all three goals in a hard fought 4-3 defeat.

Back on the A-team pitch, the second half took even more of a one-sided look, with the pressure from CCCS leading to a flurry of goals. The final result was 7-0, and the unbeaten season is complete!

A huge shout out to all the boys who have played so well and made such huge improvements during the football season. DP



More Sports News

Cross Country at Thorngrove School

On Monday we took 12 of our boys to Thorngrove for a cross country relay competition.

Despite the boggy conditions, all of the boys battled hard within their age categories against tough opposition. Form 3/4 finished third, Form 5/6 finished fourth and Form 7/8 finished second.

Overall, an excellent afternoon for the boys representing the school.

FB



You're invited!

The Parents' Association warmly invites you to join us for a social gathering on Wednesday, March 19th.

Time: From 7:00 PM

Location: The Oxford Wine Tavern, South Parade, Summertown.

We look forward to seeing you there!

DONATIONS NEEDED



Please donate any cricket whites your child has outgrown
as we will be holding a second-hand sale of this shortly.

Thank you!



Be a Chorister for an Afternoon

On Saturday 3rd May, we are hosting our 'Be a Chorister for an Afternoon' event, for boys in Years 2-4.

If your son or a family friend would like a taste of chorister life, then please click the button below to find out more and register a place.



Join us for our
MUSICAL CONCERT



Please join us for an hour of afternoon of
instrumental and vocal performances by the boys in
Forms 3 and 4.

Friday 14th March
2.30pm
Walton Hall