



Christ Church Cathedral School News

9th May 2025



A message from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

I was very touched by the pupils' attitude towards V.E. Day. Given that this happened 80 years ago, it cannot have meant very much personally to any of the pupils. And yet almost all of them arrived, wearing red, white and blue, and in our assembly, Mr. Harrison gave a moving summary of what VE Day meant. The talk was followed by the singing of three songs which were associated with that day 80 years ago. We sang *Coming in on a Wing and a Prayer*, *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy* and *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, three songs that meant so much to the people of the time. I was very struck by the way in which our boys, so young, from so many different places in the world, sang the songs. They sang them with vigour and commitment as if they had been in Trafalgar Square in 1945. I found the whole experience very moving. All around them the boys see the fruits of that great day - democracy, a free society and a place in which families can make decisions about where they wish to live and what they wish to do.

And yet of course we must be aware that there is a war raging in Europe as we speak and so many conflicts elsewhere in the world. It is more important than ever that our pupils realise the benefits of peace and harmony, those vital and precious concepts which are so very important and which so many people died for all those years ago.

It was very good to see the photos from the national celebration at Westminster Abbey in the presence of the King and Queen. Central to the service, of course, was the Dean of Westminster, the Very Revd David Hoyle whom we welcomed to the school last term. Every term we have interesting and varied speakers who come to Cathedral Assembly on Friday mornings. Do please feel free to come to these assemblies - you are more than welcome. So many parents tell me that they love the opportunity that the services bring to have a quiet time at the end of the week and to listen to fascinating people talking about moving ideas and concepts.

There is always coffee afterwards to which all parents are invited and to which many come. It's a delightful occasion when we have the opportunity to spend time with one another. The parental body is a vital part of the school.

I have had the privilege this week of attending two IPQ presentations. We have introduced the IPQ this year, a project designed by the ISEB, the board who are responsible for the Common Pre-Test and Common Entrance. The idea is to give senior pupils the opportunity to write an extended project about a topic of their choice. Having done so they are required to give a presentation to an audience. So on Tuesday and Thursday this week, all of the boys in Form 7 spoke to a group of parents and teachers about their chosen areas of interest. I was fascinated by the variety of subjects chosen. There were projects about space, AI, town planning, trains in America, films, environmental matters, the history of language - the list goes on and on. Clearly a great deal of research has been done. I was also impressed by the confidence that the boys displayed. Many, of course, are natural public communicators, while others find it more difficult. Nonetheless, everybody spoke and everybody spoke so well. I consider the ability to communicate to be a real attribute in life and I am delighted by how the whole process went. The project will now be externally assessed and the boys will receive a qualification which we will be able to send to senior schools. I want to thank Mrs. Fairhurst for introducing and coordinating the whole thing and Mr Boarder who spent a considerable amount of time helping the boys in the preparation of their projects.

It was delightful to spend part of Wednesday afternoon over on Merton Field watching cricket. However much I admire rugby and football, there is something very special about the moment when our pupils appear in whites and we know that the cricket season is underway - the moment when Willow and leather come together and that wonderful, complex, sophisticated and civilised game starts to unfold. Do try to get down to the field this term, especially as the Pavilion comes on stream over the next few weeks.

In fact today a very moving thing happened. I was handed a set of keys by the Christ Church Clark of Works. This does not necessarily sound a particularly exciting thing, but when I tell you that they were the keys to the Pavilion, I'm sure you will understand the significance this moment - 10:30 am on 9th May. We will now be able to use the pavilion - I repeat, we will now be able to use the Pavilion! Hooray!! Await further details.

Talking about cricket whites, one of the parents told me that they had been stopped in the street when coming to school with their son clad in whites by a passer by who commented upon the all white clothing that the School seemed to have chosen as its uniform. Perhaps we should consider making cricket whites the official uniform of the school all year round! That would keep us in a summery mood, even in January!

Mr Murray
Headmaster



Mr Murray accepting the keys to our new Pavillion this morning

School Calendar

School Diary: Monday 12th May - Sunday 18th May

MONDAY 12

2.30 - 5.00: U12 and U13 Cricket v MCS (Home)

TUESDAY 13

2.30 - 4.30: U8 and U9 Cricket v MCS (Home)

WEDNESDAY 14

2.30 - 4.30: U12 and U13 Cricket v Bruern Abbey (Home & Away)

THURSDAY 15

12.00 - 3.00: F1 and F2 to Oxford University Museum of Natural History

FRIDAY 16

8.45: Cathedral Assembly - Speaker: Mr Andrew Shedden, Registrar of Winchester College

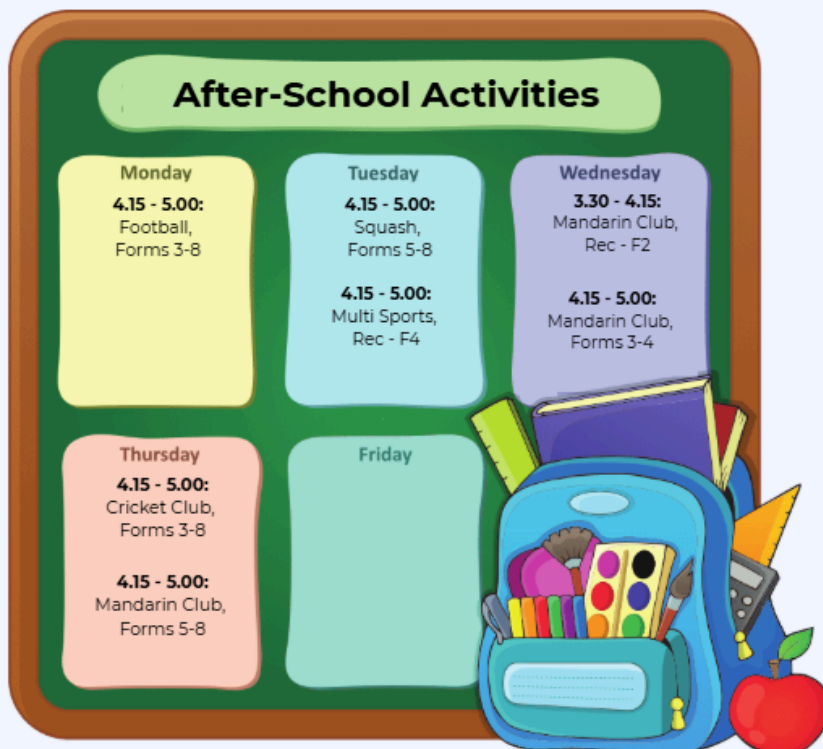
1.30 - 4.00: House Music Competition at the Cathedral

Adjudicator: Mark Wilderspin (Director of Music, St Paul's School)

CC Leave Weekend

After-School Care & Clubs

Here is a reminder of the after-school activities running this term



reminder

Please remember to book your child into After-School care in advance, by emailing schoolsecretary@cccs.org.uk so we can ensure staffing capacity.

Due to the very limited parking on Brewer Street, if you are collecting your child from Prep by car, please call us on **07719 109 433** so we can arrange for your child to meet you at the front gate, and ensure that traffic is not held up on Brewer Street.

Pre-Prep News

Mini officers reporting for duty!

During our last 'Out and About' club session, Pre-Prep were lucky enough to visit the local Police Station. Christ Church Cathedral School has a great relationship with the local police, who they have visited us before, and often help to stop the traffic for us on our way back from Woodland School!

We split into groups with two members of the police accompanying each group, which meant they were able to answer lots of our questions. We spoke about what the police do for the community beyond 'getting the baddies', such as building relationships within the community through various activities, like community meetings and educational programs. After a chat, the children had a go at trying on the different hats and looked at some of the equipment that the Police carry in their jacket, including handcuffs, a baton, pepper spray and even a taser.

Next, we went outside to have a look at a police car, also passing the unmarked police vehicles on our way. Everyone had the chance to put on the siren and lights in the car which was great fun, albeit rather noisy! We also practised putting out cones as if we were the police, facing what would be oncoming traffic and walking backwards carefully.

Lastly, we went into the CCTV room and marvelled at how many cameras were dotted around the city. We spotted cameras outside McDonalds, down the road to school, around the Cathedral and more. We asked how long they keep the footage for (31 days), how many cameras they have (181), and how the lady there was able to watch so many cameras at once (she had worked there for 21 years!).

We are so lucky to have such strong connections with our community, such as the police. They have already suggested another chance for us to visit them, this time to meet some of the police dogs...

MH-W



Pre-Prep News

Pre-Prep explore the Botanic Garden

This week, the whole of Pre-Prep, including Nursery enjoyed a wonderful sensory-filled adventure during our visit to the Botanic Gardens. The day was all about using our senses - touch, smell, sight and hearing - to explore the amazing world of plants, both familiar and exotic.

We began our journey in the rainforest house, where we were greeted by warm, damp air and towering green leaves. With our eyes closed, we paused to take in the unique feel of the space - humid and still, with the earthy scent of damp soil and growing things. Among the lush foliage, we spotted bitter oranges, coffee pods, and even tiny green bananas! We sang our banana song making links with the plant and the fruit we eat. One of our favourite activities was looking high and low to spot leaves of all shapes and sizes, from gigantic, umbrella-like fronds to tiny, delicate ones.

Our sense of smell got a good workout, too. We sniffed our way through a series of plant-based mysteries - root that smelled of vanilla and mint, turned out to be ginger! We discovered that dried cocoa pods gave off scents of raisins, dark chocolate, and coffee, and learned that some grasses, like sugarcane, have faint sweet smells because of the sugar inside. In the glass house we found coffee, oranges, cocoa, and dragon fruit - who would have guessed its cactus like appearance?

In one room, we met the world's largest flower - the Rafflesia! Though we only saw a model (as they're incredibly hard to grow), it was still exciting to see just how huge it would be. We also explored the world of grasses and cereals, discovering that everyday staples like rice and sugarcane are actually types of grass. We even touched real cotton and felt how soft and fluffy it was - perfect for making clothes.

Next, we explored the arid desert zone, where we saw plants that only need watering once a year! While many were too spiky or poisonous to touch, we were able to feel the inside of an aloe vera leaf - it was gooey, stretchy, and quite a surprise! We also met some fascinating plants, including Venus flytraps and sticky sundews.



(con't.)

Pre-Prep News

We finished off our day with a wander through the outdoor gardens. There, we breathed in the familiar smells of rosemary, lavender, and juniper, and paused to listen to the wind in the trees, birds singing, and even a distant lawnmower humming away.

This wonderful trip to the Botanic Gardens helped us to see (and smell, and feel!) the natural world in a brand-new way. A big thank you to the garden staff for guiding us through such a sensory adventure.

The Nursery children would welcome donations of plant pots or yogurt pots to keep up with their prolific planting - Thank you!

MH-W and HB



Woodland School

During Woodland School this week, Pre-Prep ventured out to discover minibeasts and create imaginary dinosaur habitats. Using gardening tools, the children foraged for woodland creatures, finding a range of beetles, worms, and centipedes, which they examined under magnifying glasses.



Using materials found in the natural environment, including snail shells, leaves, sticks, and meadow parsley, the children created volcanoes and jungles for a range of dinosaur toys. A particular highlight was discovering that snail shells make wonderful Triceratops' eggs!

We finished our afternoon with home-made shortbread biscuits and an interactive story session, before meandering back to school past the wonderful new Pavilion, beautiful Spring flowers, and our Prep boys playing cricket in the late afternoon sun on Merton Field. A truly idyllic way to end the week. MB



CCCS Noticeboard



Full time Nursery Assistant

We are looking for an energetic, enthusiastic, and adaptable **Nursery Assistant** who would enjoy playing an integral supportive role, nurturing pupils' development in our growing Montessori-inspired Nursery, which is part of our thriving Pre-Prep Department.

This full-time, permanent position is either for an immediate start in our Trinity Term, or in September 2025, depending on circumstances. We are seeking to extend our current Nursery opening hours, so flexibility around possible working hours would be desirable.

Please note that it is essential that candidates should be qualified to Early Years Educator Level 3 or above in Childcare. Candidates must have an established right to work in the UK, as well as fluent English.

For more details on the role, please [click here](#).

Young Historian of the Year 2025

Calling all budding historians!

The Historical Association has launched a competition, inviting both Primary and Secondary School pupils to think, investigate and write about a chosen topic, from local history and the modern world, to the ancient world, and British involvement in World War II.

The competition closes on 25th July, and links to both the Primary Competition and Secondary Competition are below. Good luck!

To enter the **Primary Competition**, please [click here](#).

To enter the **Secondary Competition**, please [click here](#).



Sports News

We don't like cricket... we love it!!

This week saw an exciting series of fantastic cricket fixtures across all year groups.

Forms 7 and 8 v Cothill was a competitive encounter where our boys showed great determination, and despite some consistent bowling from Cothill our students showed great resilience and persistence.

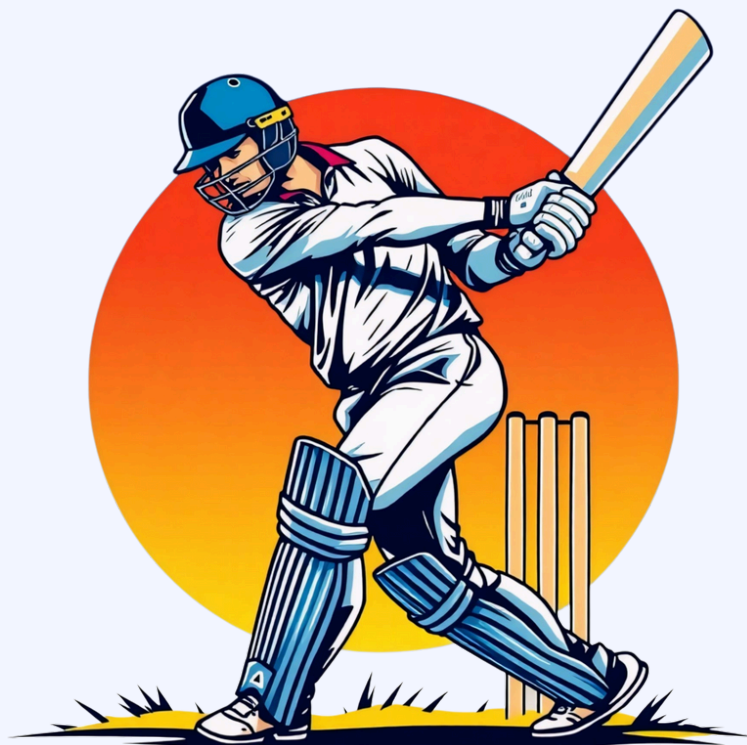
Forms 3 and 4 v New College displayed a great performance and played with a notable enthusiasm in the field.

All teams played with energy and sportsmanship, as this week all teams played a pairs game of cricket which may have been new for some. Forms 3 and 4 were lucky enough to play Chandlings at home on Thursday which was a tough game as Chandlings were consistent bowlers which made it hard for CCCS. Our bowling had dramatically improved since playing New College earlier in the week, with students stepping up and taking wickets.

This week, Forms 5 and 6 played our local rivals, Magdalen College School (MCS) at their home ground which turned out to be two tightly contested matches displaying some strong individual performances from our CCCS athletes. Excellent fielding and rapid running between the wickets kept us in the game but it wasn't enough to keep up with MCS's batting performance that made it hard for all our bowlers.

Overall, it was a week of exciting cricket and strong character shown across all teams. Well done to all and good luck next week!!

FL



Music News

House Music Competition 2025

It's been immensely enjoyable to hear auditions for House Music over the past few weeks, with Prep boys offering over 150 performances since the beginning of term. I've listened to some of the most ambitious and stylish repertoire imaginable, but also some entry level pieces, such as 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' and 'Hot Cross Buns'. I have been so impressed by the number of boys teaching instruments to each other - which always opens their eyes to many of the technical challenges that their own teachers tackle with them every week - and I am very proud that one hallmark of a CCCS education will be the lifelong ability to pick up any instrument and play a tune to order!

The finals of our House Music Competition will take place in the Cathedral at 1.30pm on Friday 16th May. A list of instrumental finalists has now gone up in school and you will receive an email if your son needs to perform on his instrument. Every single Prep pupil will be involved in our House choir performances at the end, singing songs chosen to reflect this year's theme: the 80th anniversary of the end of World War 2. Parents are warmly welcome to attend, but if you can't make it to the Cathedral in person, you can watch on the following link at https://youtube.com/live/Jbbj4_cNB5A?feature=share either during the live-stream or afterwards.

Please note that pupils in Forms 3 to 8 must wear their white shirts and smart school uniform to school next Friday.

I'm delighted that the Director of Music at St Paul's School in London, Mark Wilderspin, will be joining us as this year's competition adjudicator. Mr Wilderspin is a well-known composer and musician, and I am delighted that he will be giving helpful advice to our instrumentalists and singers.

I hope that many of you will be able to join us at for this very special event, which should be a magnificent afternoon of the best of CCCS boys' musicianship! SB.



Enrichment

Architecture Club

Today the Architecture Club visited the Norman crypt of St Peter-in-the-East – a mediaeval church which is now the library for St Edmund Hall. It is possible that the crypt was to be a shrine housing an important relic – perhaps a piece of the chains of St Peter (hence the name of the church).

In the gloom, we admired the close array of short 12th century columns with their individual capitals. Our visit fortunately coincided with an exhibition in the Old Library of a sample of its precious collection, including Hooke's Micrographia and Henry VIII's Great Bible. We are very grateful to St Edmund's for allowing us this privileged visit and to Emma Carter, Deputy Librarian, for giving up her time to be our genial guide.

NR



All Aboard!

Introducing our new bus route



After half term we will be launching our new **Headington bus route**. Our new bus driver, who will be joining the School next week, will be running test routes to check timings and identify suitable pick up points. In the meantime, please [contact the Registrar](#) if you would be interested in your child joining this bus service.

The new route is planned for:

- Headington
- The Slade
- Hollow Way
- Between Towns Road
- Donnington Bridge Road
- Abingdon Road

Don't worry, our current North Oxford route will still be running, covering Woodstock Road and Banbury Road, with a collection from the central Oxford train station, while the Botley Road bridge remains closed. We are also looking to add the Water Eaton Park & Ride at Oxford Parkway train station in to this route, to serve our families coming in from North Oxfordshire. Please let us know if this route would be of interest to you.

School Photobook



School Photobook



School Photobook



We don't sing their praises enough... but how lucky are we to have such a fabulous Catering team treating us to such delectable delights, every single day?!



SOMERVILLE FESTIVAL OF PIANO

A DAY OF MUSIC FEATURING
PERFORMERS FROM SOMERVILLE
COLLEGE AND ACROSS THE
UNIVERSITY

PIANO

EXTRA VAGANTRY

SHOWCASE / 8PM

PIAZZOLA

FITKIN

SAINT SAËNS

CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS

WORKS FOR TWO, FOUR,
SIX, AND EIGHT HANDS

FAMILY
CONCERT

11:30AM



saint-saëns

carnival
of the
animals



Free with a
retiring
collection



Tickets £15 (£5 students)



SAT 10TH MAY 2025
SOMERVILLE
COLLEGE CHAPEL