



Christ Church Cathedral School News

16th May 2025



A message from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

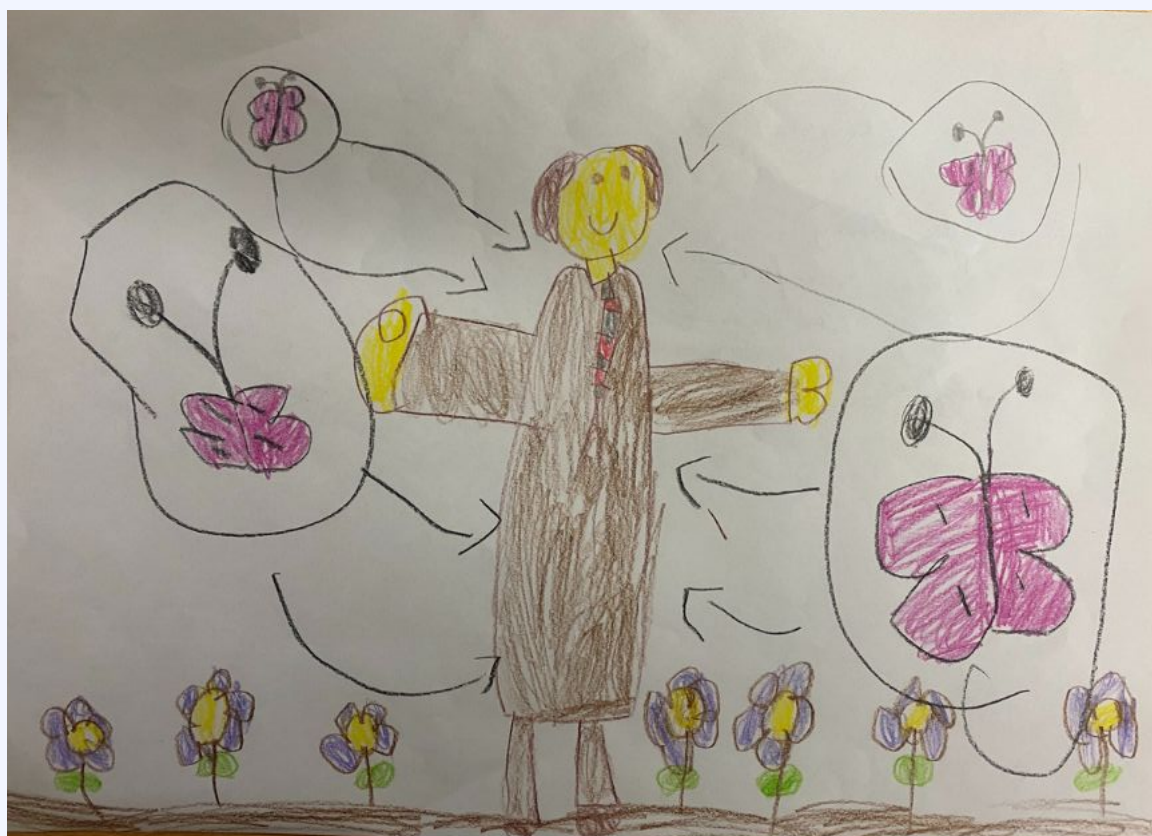
I'm still on a high! I have just spent the afternoon in the Cathedral at the House Music Competition. Our adjudicator was the excellent Mr Wilderspin, Head of Music at St Paul's School in West London. He spoke about each individual finalist with great insight, and warmth, deploying humour wonderfully. I have no doubt that the music department at St Paul's must be a flourishing place. He was deeply impressed with what he had seen and heard, saying that the quality of the music was phenomenal and he has heard very many pupils of this age group play. He went on to describe CCCS as a "classy" place. We always feel that the quality of the music here is extraordinary but it is wonderful to have that verified by someone from outside who knows exactly what they are talking about. He also addressed me directly, in front of the whole school, and said that he wanted me to know what a brilliant director of music we have at the School. How wonderful, again, to have something we all know verified externally! What a fitting start to a weekend which promises to be full of sunshine!

And talking of sunshine, I happily enjoyed a great deal of it on Monday afternoon when I watched the 1st XI take on MCS on Merton Field, in front of the new Pavilion. Having said that, as I walked out towards the pitches, I saw a brilliant flash of lightning fork from the sky, followed swiftly afterwards by a colossal explosion. As I neared the fields, I saw boys running at speed towards the Pavilion in which they took shelter. Though I was disappointed that boys were leaving the pitch just as I was arriving to watch, I was delighted that the Pavilion, on its very first day of use, was already proving its usefulness. It was then that I had a terrible thought. The Pavilion will be struck by a ferocious bolt of lightning and destroyed in front of my eyes on the very first day of its use. That would be the ultimate irony. Fortunately the lightning chose to strike elsewhere and the Pavilion escaped untouched.

Shortly afterwards, the boys re-emerged onto the pitch, dry because of the shelter that the building had afforded them, and proceeded to play an exhilarating match, winning on the second to last ball. I understand that the team were also able to defeat Bruern Abbey on Wednesday so things really are going from strength to strength. Barring a lightning strike or another act of God, we will open the Pavilion on Sports Day. Jonny Searle, MBE, one of Christ Church's most well-known and successful sportsman has kindly agreed to perform the ceremony. For any of you understandably smarting at the annihilation of the Oxford Blue Boat by Cambridge on the Thames this year, Mr Searle took part in three boat races for Oxford, winning them all! On the last of these occasions he was President of the Oxford University Boat Club. He went on, though, to gain international fame by winning a gold medal at the Barcelona Olympics with his brother Greg. Please make sure the 14th June is in your diary.

It is always good to remember that children tend to notice much more than one realises. Earlier in the week I had a short conversation with some pupils about butterflies. This morning, I was handed a beautiful drawing composed by one of the Pre-Prep children. On it are four purple butterflies all with arrows pointing towards a human figure beaming with excitement, his tie carefully tucked into his jacket. Clumps of brown hair fringe a gleaming yellow head while the figure has his arms outstretched in a moment of exquisite joy. I rather imagine that the vibrant yellow colour of the face is a mark of extreme excitement rather than of jaundice. On the other side of the painting, a message reads: "This is Mr Murray; he likes butterflies! He thinks lots about butterflies." In the words of the great American playwright, Arthur Miller "He was fully known!" I'm sure you'll be able to anticipate what I'll be thinking about this weekend! Enjoy the sun and, of course, the butterflies, though given that I think about them a lot, I should warn you that most butterflies appear in the summer! Let me know if you see any!

Mr Murray
Headmaster



School Calendar

School Diary: Monday 19th May - Sunday 25th May

MONDAY 19

All day: U11 Softball Cricket Festival at Manor Prep School
2.00: U12 and U13 Cricket v d'Overbroeck's (Home)

TUESDAY 20

2.30 - 4.30: U9 Cricket v The Manor Prep School

WEDNESDAY 21

9.30 - 10.30: CCCS Fun Swimming Gala – Parents invited
2.30 - 4.30: U10 and U11 Cricket v The Manor (Home)

THURSDAY 22

FRIDAY 23

8.45: Cathedral Assembly - Speaker: The Revd Canon Peter Moger, Sub Dean
2.00 - 4.00: CCCS Summer Fun Run
4.10: Half Term begins: Return on Monday 2 June
CC: Half Term begins after Evensong
5.00: The Parents Association Social Meet-Up at The Victoria Arms

Please note, that there will be **no after-school care for Pre-Prep on Friday 23 May**. Prep and the school minibus will run as usual for the older pupils.

Dates for your diary



Parents & families informal social meet-up

Friday 23 May 2025 from 5pm at The Victoria Arms, Marston

To celebrate the end of half term, we'd love you to come with your children and better halves straight after school to get together and unwind at [The Victoria Arms](#) in Marston.

The Victoria Arms has a very large riverside garden for running around in, and of course a wide range of food and drink.

Please feel free to come any time from 5pm onwards to play/drink/eat.



Early Years News

Discovering nature on our doorstep

The children have been busy planting seeds this week. As the coriander seeds rolled into my palm, one of the Lower Nursery exclaimed, "they are globe shaped!" They really did look like miniature worlds in my palm. "Ooh Miss Helen, I can see two," circling his finger above them, "and I can see three." Then he pauses. "I think I can see five seeds,' giving a big grin.

There are so many opportunities for independent planting for the children, learning the steps of the process. Many of the children love 'writing' what they are growing on a lolly stick to mark what they have planted in a pot. It's a milestone recognising why we need to write a label to identify the seeds. It is rewarding to see some of the older children writing the letters beautifully, copying from the seed packet. All fabulous life skills.



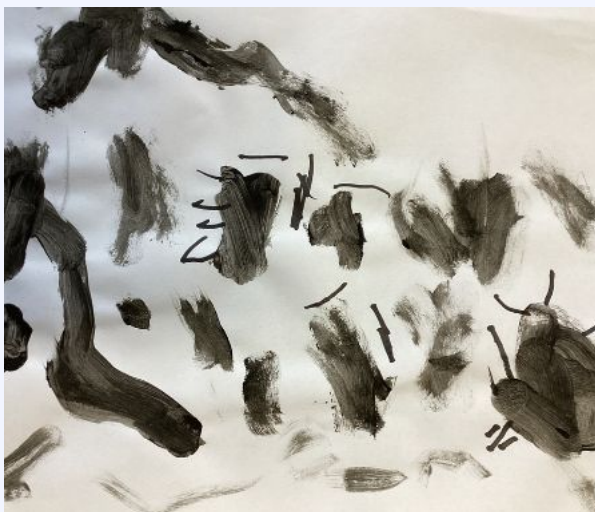
We have discovered caterpillars and woodlice in the front and back gardens of the Nursery. The woodlice were the result of us leaving a woodpile in the garden, and we discussed the importance of lazy gardening to make room for nature. The scuttling woodlice have inspired observational drawings. "There are so many!" exclaimed one of the children.

The box caterpillars have caused the deforestation of one of the box trees to the front of Nursery. There are so many of them, but what we have observed is that they only seem to be interested in the box, rather than our flowers and vegetables growing below.

It is lovely to see our new starters settled and happily engrossed in Early Years games alongside their peers. Who wouldn't want to feed a dinosaur in the sunshine with their new friends?

Maybe we won't tell Mr Mirko that she was feeding it sand from the sandpit!

HB



Pre-Prep News

Natural History Museum

Forms 1 and 2 enjoyed a fantastic trip to the Oxford University Museum of Natural History.

Following a lovely picnic lunch outside, we were ushered into a special classroom, where our 'Expert Animal Guide' taught the children all about the different animal groups and how we could classify them. The children were lucky enough to get hands-on with some incredible specimens, from frogs and newts, to snakes, butterflies, piranhas, birds of prey, hares, and even a watchful cheetah!

We had the opportunity to sort animals into groups using different criteria, and the children rose to the task, correctly identifying mammals, amphibians, reptiles, birds, fish, and invertebrates with aplomb.

A highlight of the talk was finding out some of the colloquial names used in regions of the UK for the common woodlouse. These included, 'chiggy wigs', 'chucky pigs', 'monkey peas', 'cheesy bugs', 'dandy postmen', 'Billy bakers', 'grandad gravies', and 'flumps'!

After our exciting interactive session in the museum classroom, we had an opportunity to explore the myriad of exhibits on display in the central hall (a selection of the seven million specimens held by the museum). The children were captivated by the variety of animal life showcased and returned to school brimming with wonderful facts about everything that we had seen. Well done to all our budding Pre-Prep Naturalists! TR



Out and About Club

A walk through history at Christ Church Cathedral

As part of our 'Out and About' club, we were lucky enough to explore Christ Church Cathedral and College, an adventure packed with history, legends, hidden animals, and even a little magic.

Our visit began inside the stunning Cathedral, where the stained glass windows told their own stories. We played a game of spot-the-creature and were surprised to find ducks, a tiny dog hidden on a tree, a bee, parrots, and all sorts of flowers cleverly worked into the glass.

One of the most fascinating places we visited was the Latin Chapel, dedicated to St Frideswide, the patron saint of Oxford. We learned about her incredible story: a princess who didn't want to marry a king, so she fled into the woods, hid in a pigsty, took a boat, and lived in a forest for three years. Eventually, she returned to Oxford, but the king was still searching for her. A bolt of lightning from God blinded him, and Frideswide promised to cure him if he agreed to leave her alone. He did, and she built a church (now the Cathedral) as a safe place. We walked around the shrine to find images in the stained glass, telling parts of Frideswide's story, such as the King being struck by lightning.

We saw old stone tombs with carved figures lying on top. This prompted one of the children to ask if people really turned to stone when they died! The staff quickly explained these were just stone effigies to remember them. As we walked through the Cathedral, a surprise came when we spotted our own school's coat of arms carved into one of the tombs.



Out and About Club

We moved to the altar, and the guide pointed out a throne and asked the children who they thought gets to sit on it. One child said, "Mr. Murray!" To solve the mystery, our tallest club member tried on a purple and gold cape, a ring, a special white hat, and held a shepherd's crook. We learned the throne is for the Bishop, who is seen as a shepherd guiding the people, much like a flock of sheep.

Outside in the Cathedral gardens, we found the very tree that inspired the "Jabberwocky tree" from Alice in Wonderland. It's a fascinating, magical-looking ornamental Plane tree with curly branches that twist in and out of the trunk. We also heard about a cat who used to climb up the tree and disappear, just like the Cheshire Cat!

We ended our visit in the grand Dining Hall, which can seat 320 people. It inspired the Hogwarts dining room in the Harry Potter films! Portraits lined the walls, including Cardinal Wolsey, Queen Elizabeth I, and Henry VIII. We learned that Lewis Carroll, who wrote Alice in Wonderland, based his characters on real people he knew - like the Dean who always rushed about with a pocket watch (sound familiar?), and Alice herself, who was the Dean's daughter.

It was a fantastic tour - full of stories, symbols, and the Christ Church crest dotted around every corner.

MH-W



CCCS Noticeboard



New Meal Menus for Trinity Term

Our new meal menus for the Trinity term are available on our website.

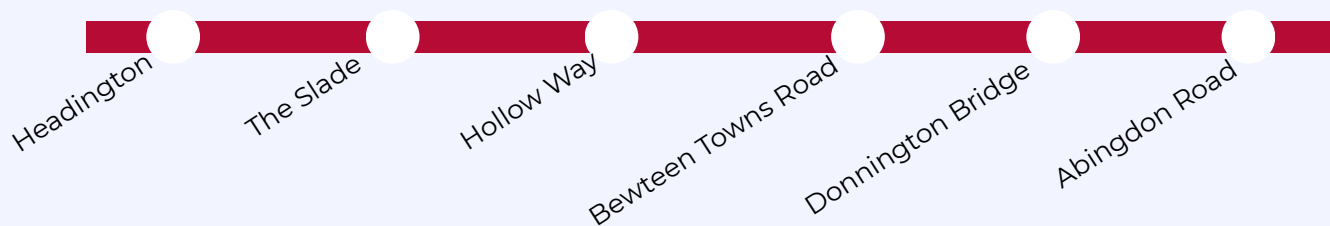
To view the menus, please [click here](#), kindly noting that on Monday 19 May we will be enjoying the delicious delights from the Week 2 Lunch Menu.



New Headington Bus Route

We are delighted to announce our new minibus driver, Mr Drury started with us this week. He is busy navigating the roads, checking run times and locating the best pick up points on our proposed Headington bus route.

As a reminder, our proposed route will stop at:



If you would like to register your interest in this route, please contact our Registrar [here](#).

Form 4 News

Visit to the Mosque

Last week, Form 4 concluded their study of Islam with a visit to The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.



Our guide, Caroline, was very informative, and talked to the boys about everything from the history of Islam and the centre itself, to a huge and exquisite Kiswah, a brocade cloth that once covered the sacred Kaaba in Mecca, and the exterior and interior features of the mosque itself.

It was a fascinating morning, rounded off with a return walk through Oxford and Christ Church Meadow in the beautiful sunshine.
EP



Sports News

Batting and bowling brilliance storms CCCS to victory

This week has been another very busy one in the games department, with numerous cricket fixtures. The glorious weather has meant that everyone has really enjoyed being out on the field improving their batting, bowling and fielding.

Matches against MCS and Bruern Abbey have yielded a range of results from some very impressive and ridiculously close victories, to some defeats, where we have learnt a lot and showed huge improvements from previous matches.

The 1st XI took part in matches, playing MCS U13 B team on Monday for their very first match of the season. CCCS bowled first, working hard to keep the opposition down to 100 runs. Rain and lightening tried to stop play, but after a short break, it was our turn to bat.

Some fantastic batting performances by Ivan and Troy saw us edge ever closer to the total. In the end it was Patrick who hit the winning runs, with CCCS winning by 1 run with 1 ball remaining in the match.

On Wednesday, the 1st XI was in action again, this time away to Bruern Abbey, always a tough fixture. CCCS elected to bat first hoping to set a solid total that would unnerve the opposition. This is exactly what happened with huge performances from Troy and Navraj. Ivan was the standout batsmen once again, carrying his bat and finishing with a total of 32 not out. With CCCS setting an imposing 147 runs for Bruern Abbey to reach, we were certainly in the ascendency. Bruern batted extremely well and we bowled nervously with wides and no balls contributing to their score. Bruern Abbey couldn't reach our total and finished on 134. The stand out bowler being Patrick taking several late wickets.

The 1st team is currently unbeaten and with another match of Monday at d'Overbroeck's, let's hope they can continue this fine form!

The games team have been really impressed with the attitude, sportsmanship and progress we have seen from all the boys over the past few weeks.

A huge well done to all the boys who have taken part in the fixtures this week.

NH & DP



CCCS Sporting Stars

Oxfordshire Chess Champion!

Jing, in Form 4, was selected to represent the Oxfordshire Junior Chess Club in a standard play team event hosted by Maidenhead Junior Chess Club on Saturday 10th May, alongside four other regional teams.

We are very excited to share that Jing and his team performed exceptionally well, so much so that they emerged as the winners!!

Hugh congratulations to Jing and his team mates on their incredible win!



Swimming to victory!

You may remember that earlier in the year, we shared news of Kailuo's (Form 6) triumphs on behalf of the City of Oxford Swimming Club and that his 200m Butterfly qualified for the U-12 South-eastern Regional Championship.

Well, last Saturday, Kailuo headed to Winchester for the Swim England South East Summer 2025 Championships where he competed in the U12 200m Butterfly event.

We are delighted to share that despite being the youngest competitor in the event, Kailuo came 17th in the event.

Now his performance ranks 6th in South East 11 Years Age Group!

Congratulations Kailuo!!

It is always great to see our boys compete in extra-curricular activities and be able to share in their achievements.



Town and Gown 2025



Courses for causes

On Sunday we saw 32 pupils, staff and parents take part in the Oxford Town and Gown 3k and 10k races. Thank you to all who took part and came to support the CCCS team! The sun was shining and it's always a fantastic event to be involved with. It was lovely to see past CCCS pupils, including Edward Hare who came 3rd overall, a fantastic achievement.

Three of our current boys placed within the top 100 (there were over 500 participants!) with remarkable times: Leo (F7, 12:10), Henry (F8, 12:33) and Teghena (F8, 12:41).

This was swiftly followed by the 10K race, which saw several members of staff as well as parents participate. Congratulations to our newly appointed English Teacher, Mr Davies, who crossed the finish line in under 42 minutes. Huge congratulations to everyone who took part.

Next year we are aiming for even more entries so please put the date in your diary!
NH



Music News

House Music Competition 2025

Today, the school community gathered at Christ Church Cathedral for an epic afternoon of Music. "Utterly enthralled, all afternoon" was the comment made by Mark Wilderspin, Director of Music at St Paul's School, who kindly accepted our invitation to adjudicate this year's school House Music Competition when speaking about the audience in attendance.

We started with solo performances in three categories: Junior Class, Intermediate Class and Senior Class, followed by the fiercely-contended House Singing Competition.

Our Soloist Winners:

Junior Class

Alexey P (Piano)

Andy T (Violin)

Runner up - Ntiamoah (Horn)



Intermediate Class

Alexander S (Piano)

Runner up - John B-E (Piano)



Senior Class

Patrick D-D (Oboe)

Runner up - Trust T (Flute)

Russell X (Cello)

Our House Competition Winners:

Best Conductor: Splendour, 'A Wing and a Prayer' (Sayers)

Best Song: Carroll, 'Keep the Home Fires Burning'

House Winners: Carroll



In case you couldn't make the event, you can stream it [here](#) anytime.

CCCS Alumni News

Reconnecting with our Old Boys Community

It has been lovely to reconnect with some of our Old Boys recently, and even welcome a couple back to CCCS to visit their old school.

We are delighted to invite our Old Boys to attend our upcoming Sports Day and OBA Cricket Match on 14 June, a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with the school community and spend time with our current pupils, especially our Form 8 boys as they prepare to move on to their senior schools at the end of the summer term.



From left to right: Henry, Quintin, Roddy, Andrew, Simon.

Many thanks to Andrew Horn, who very kindly shared the above photo with us. This photo was taken in January 2024 when five former CCCS pupils got together over dinner to celebrate 50 years of friendship!

Quintin and Andrew started at CCCS in September 1973, Simon Williamson and Roderick Williams joined in January 1974, and Henry Wickham joined a bit later.

We hope that our current CCCS pupils enjoy friendships with the same longevity.

School Photobook



School Photobook



School Photobook



HAPPY
BIRTHDAY

We've celebrated lots of birthdays this week, including this special lady's...



Daisy turned 4 this week! Happy Birthday Daisy!



School Photobook

