



Christ Church Cathedral School News

15th May 2026



Message from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

As ever this Year's House Music Competition was a triumph and an extraordinary pleasure for those attending. Mr Dawson, the new Head of Music at Oundle School in Northamptonshire, and one of the largest schools in the country, was immensely impressed with the quality of the players. He congratulated me heartily but of course it is so many other people who more properly deserve the congratulations. I must point out the extraordinary efforts to which Miss Biddell has gone to, over the past fortnight, to hear all the auditions (which were in their hundreds) and then to work with the finalists. The fact that music is within the bricks and mortar of the buildings and in the soul of the school is also very much to do with Miss Biddell.

Mr Dawson provided a most useful commentary on the performers which combined enthusiasm with practical advice. As I mentioned in my speech, he coined the wonderful term "harmonically twisty turny" and introduced us to the concept of "music with the lean forward effect", ie which commands attention and causes listeners to bend forward to hear better. The most interesting thing of all was the distinction he made between playing notes and making music and he was at pains to tell us that the boys he had heard today were making music.

The exam season is upon us again. On two days today the downstairs corridor has been silent except for the quiet sound of people speaking and listening to French. It's as if we have ben transported to a school in Normandy. May I wish all the Form 8s all the best as they take their Common Entrance exams in the next few weeks.

We have now heard back from all our academic scholars this year and I am delighted that three of our boys obtained Academic scholarships, Ludo M-C to Abingdon and Leo R and Andrew P to Winchester. These are fabulous outcomes given the difficulty of gaining awards at these schools. Apparently over 60 pupils were selected to take the Winchester scholarship and only 14 were awarded. I am very proud of these boys and it is an unarguable sign of the fact that at Christ Church the life of the mind is fully nurtured.

I have had tea in the Pavilion on several occasions recently. It really is a fantastic building. I have often been struck by the difference between architectural plans and the buildings themselves from a practical point of view. When we were designing the Pavilion, we were trying to imagine what it would be like and how it would work and I am delighted to say that it brilliantly reflects our intentions in reality. I also find it a most harmonious building, particularly in the way it very happily sits under the surrounding trees. May I encourage you all to come and take advantage of it, particularly if it is accompanied by some Cricket watching.

I attended a lecture this week given by Sara Wheeler who has just published an autobiography of one of our former pupils Jan Morris, the famous write of place. Morris was born James Morris in 1926 – the same year as the Late Queen and one hundred years ago this year. I met Sara Wheeler afterwards and she told me that Morris had been very happy in the School, unlike at his senior school. The book is beautifully written and is worth reading, partly because Morris led such a colourful life. It was clear that CCCS made a vivid impression on the young Morris who loved singing but preferred to sit under the trees on Merton Field rather than play Cricket! For very few pupils at CCCS is that the case today. Sara Wheeler said that Morris had been an absorbing figure to write about. She ends the book with the following words: "I have often been asked whether I like Morris. It wasn't like that at all. She was human and so am I." Aren't we all!

Mr Richard Murray,
Headmaster

School Contacts



School Office: 01865 242 561 (8am - 5pm)



Prep Line: 07719 109433 (5pm to 6pm)



Mr Mirko Minibus: 07736 148199



Mr Quen Minibus: 07346 224937

School Calendar

Monday 18th - Sunday 24th May

MONDAY 18 MAY

ALL DAY: Forms 3 and 4 Residential Trip to Oxenwood

10.00am - 3.00pm: U11 Softball Cricket Festival at Manor Prep (Away)

2.15 - 4.30pm: U12 & U13 Cricket v MCS (Home)

TUESDAY 19 MAY

ALL DAY: Forms 3 and 4 Residential Trip to Oxenwood

WEDNESDAY 20 MAY

ALL DAY: LAMDA Examinations

2.15 - 5.00pm: U10/U11 Cricket V Moultsford (Away)

4.00pm: Forms 3 and 4 return from Residential Trip to Oxenwood

THURSDAY 21 MAY

4.15 - 6.00pm: LAMDA Drama Recital (WWH)

7.00pm: Informal Parent's Pub Evening at The Anchor, Oxford

FRIDAY 22 May

8.45 - 9.15am : Cathedral Assembly, Speaker, Pete Last, Headmaster at Kingham Hill School

9.15 - 9.45am: *Parents are welcome to join us in the Priory Room for coffee following the service*

10.45 - 12.30: Whole School Fun Run

4.10pm: Half Term begins

Upcoming Events

Parents' Association Informal Drinks

Thursday 21 May

The Anchor
From 7.00pm

The Parents' Association warmly invite you to join them for an informal drinks evening - the perfect way to ease into the Half term break!

The Anchor
2 Hayfield Rd, Oxford OX2 6TT
<https://www.theanchoroxford.com>

No need to book:
Feel free to pop in any time for a drink and chat!
We look forward to seeing you there!



Save the date

The CCCS Parents' Association
invites you to our spectacular once in a lifetime

FORMAL SUMMER BALL

To be held at Christ Church Great Hall

We look forward to seeing all the parents on
the evening of

Friday, 3rd July 2026

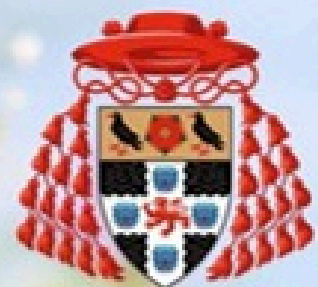
£80 per person

7:30 pm till late

Drinks Reception in the Masters' Garden

Dinner in the Great Hall

Dance in the Undercroft



Christ Church Cathedral School

DRESS CODE: BLACK TIE / FORMAL / FABULOUS!
MENU DETAILS WILL BE CIRCULATED SHORTLY.

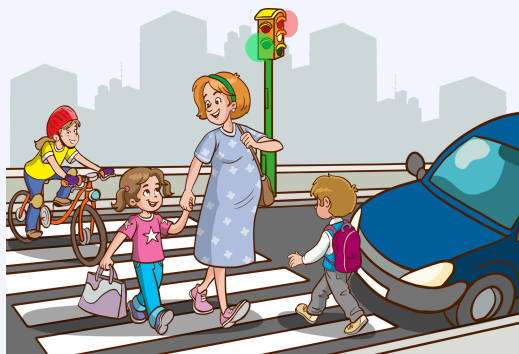
School Clubs

After School Club Timetable

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Mandarin Club Reception - Form 2 Form 1 Classroom 3.30 - 4.15pm	Multi Sports Club Reception - Form 4 School Field 4.15 - 5.00pm	Chess Club Form 2 Form 1 Classroom 3.30 - 4.30pm	Table Tennis Club Forms 3 - 8 School Playground 4.15 - 5.00pm
Cricket Club Forms 3 - 8 School Field 4.15 - 5.00pm	Chess Club Forms 3 - 6 Darwin 4.15 - 5.15pm		Mandarin Club Forms 3 - 8 Form 4 4.15 - 5.00pm
Real Tennis Forms 3 - 8 Real Tennis Court 4.15 - 5.45pm	Squash Club Forms 5 - 8 Squash Court 4.15 - 5.00pm		Little Musketeers Reception - Form 2 WWH 3.30 - 4.15pm
			Little Musketeers Forms 3 - 8 WWH 4.15 - 5.00pm

To book your child in to one of our clubs, please email schoolsecretary@cccs.org.uk and confirm your child's name and Form group.

School Pick Up & Drop Off



A friendly reminder to all to please look out for one another on School Drop Off and Pick Up.

Brewer Street is very busy so let's all make sure we get to where we need to be safely.

If you are travelling by bicycle, please find a safe spot to dismount. Drivers, please be vigilant of pedestrians and cyclists and allow enough space for them to pass by safely.

Butterflies, caterpillars & ice cream - what a week in Nursery!

As our caterpillars turn into pupae, we have begun to learn more about the lifecycle of the butterfly. There is nothing more amazing than being able to observe these transformations in 'real life', as the children tell us. We have been painting butterflies, introducing the children to the technique of painting on one side of a folded piece of paper. Their delight in their creations was one of the wow moments of week.



In the garden there has been a lot of cooking, pizza making and ice creams sold, with the accompanying gross motor skills and number sense. One of the children reminded me that four ice creams would be £8, because 2 and 2 and 2 and 2 make 8. Let's hope we have some sunshine this weekend to practise our ice cream skills 'in real life'.

HB



Pre-Prep go 'Out and About' to Christ Church Cathedral

Last week, Pre-Prep enjoyed a wonderful "Out and About" Club visit to Christ Church Cathedral, where we spent the afternoon exploring the fascinating Latin Chapel and trying our hand at brass rubbing.

Armed with crayons, sugar paper, and a great deal of excitement, the children quickly became completely absorbed in searching the chapel floor for interesting patterns and hidden details. There was lots of crouching, shuffling, and the occasional dramatic "I've found another one!" as the children carefully placed their paper over the brass designs and watched the images magically appear through their colouring.



The children spotted all sorts of wonderful details, from intricate patterns and shields to animals and decorative shapes — and there was great excitement when some of the children recognised our very own school crest hidden amongst the designs. It suddenly became a bit of a treasure hunt, with children eagerly helping one another search for the next interesting discovery.

For many of the children, it was also a lovely opportunity to slow down and really look carefully at the world around them. The peaceful atmosphere of the chapel captured everyone's attention, and there were lots of thoughtful questions, curious observations, and whispered conversations about the age of the building and the stories it might hold.

We are hugely grateful to the Cathedral staff for making us feel so welcome and for giving the children the chance to explore such a special and historic building in such a hands-on and memorable way. It was a brilliant afternoon filled with creativity, curiosity, teamwork, and just the right amount of crayon-covered fingers.

MB

Form 1 capture dreams through Woodland Art

Form 1 have been working hard in Art on their Woodland art creations using twigs, feathers and wool. They will be hanging them in our woodland area. Well done Form 1, great work.
EE



History at CCCS

A funny thing happens in a place like Oxford. The past, it seems, stands still. The buildings of its skyline were built so long ago that they never seem to have been built at all, but rather form a mountain range of unlit gothic caves, crocketed spire peaks and ranks of roosting gargoyles, beneath which sprawls a subterranean warren of quads and colleges – inhabited of course, by undergrads, indistinguishable from the average denizen of the Misty Mountains. It's easy to imagine that, in a place so rich with history, understanding it would be like breathing, yet it can also be like the air: as invisible as it is ubiquitous. Having grown up and gone to school in Oxford myself, it's remarkable how a child can take this place for granted. As kind as it is of the past to stand still and give us all a chance to take a proper look, you quickly forget that it was ever moving to begin with; the four centuries and change since Christ Church's construction soon becomes another number. Six lifetimes thereabouts – I find this to be a much more intuitive way of looking at it. A lot can happen in one lifetime, let alone a half-dozen, and yet it still feels oddly fleeting that only six lives would fit in just under half of a millennium.

How at CCCS do we convey this contrast? How do we teach the boys that history was once a dynamic world far apart from ours, inhabited by lives as human as yours or mine, and yet it is also set in limestone all around us? How do we show that only from this oxymoron was our modern world born? Firstly, we use the resources which we are lucky to have upon our doorstep. For ten years now, my colleague Mr Richards has sought to impart a deeper understanding of Oxford's past through stunning architecture, running across various terms the Architecture Club, a noble cause also joined in by another extracurricular activity: Making the Most of Oxford. Oxford's architectural history is only static if you don't have someone to tell the stories behind it. Having worked here for just over a year now, the amount of historical knowledge available to anyone who would ask is extraordinary.



The wealth of history available outside the curriculum is only half the story though. Prep schools nationwide find themselves in a predicament. British history, as taught by many senior schools, begins in 1066 and follows neatly through the Middle Ages to the Tudors, then the Stuarts and the Civil War, skips these isles during the eighteenth century in favour of their growing empire, then returns in time for the Victorians and two world wars. A great number of our students will be picking up this story in Year 9, dedicated by most schools to the twentieth century. When creating our own curriculum then, the challenge is to avoid condemning the boys to endless repetition in a few years' time by stepping on the toes of common Year 9 or GCSE topics, but also to create a clear narrative; at the heart of a child's enjoyment of history is the storytelling. To this end, the Prep School begins its study in Stone Age Britain. After a term's detour through Ancient Egypt – a period of beautiful and mysterious artefacts that lends itself perfectly to tactile exploration by those just beginning to approach history as an academic subject – the story follows Britain's succession of invaders: Celts, Romans (preceded by a module on the Ancient Greeks as Roman culture wouldn't make sense without it), Saxons, Vikings, and of course the Normans. The older boys learn about the High Middle Ages, into the Early Modern Period. Natural opportunities to look abroad are found throughout, whether it's the Crusades, the Age of Exploration, or the British Empire. By the time they leave Form 8, the hope is that the boys will be able to draw a coherent line from the Stone Age into the time periods they will be studying in Year 9. In this way, they will also be equipped to contextualise their GCSE studies should they choose to continue history beyond Key Stage 3. Common topics at this level include medicine through time, tracing the development of healthcare from Aristotle, Galen and the humours, through to Watson, Crick and DNA. Needless to say, this is easier to follow with a robust understanding of what is going on outside the hospitals. Above all else, it is this ability to contextualise that is the goal of history teaching at CCCS.

Mr Pedr Davies

English & History Teacher

Form 3 take a day trip to Rio de Janeiro

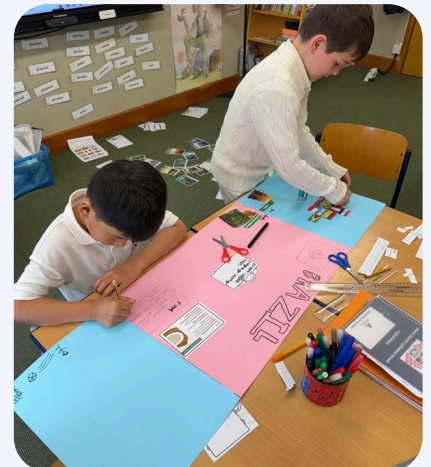


On Thursday, Form 3 was transformed into a little corner of Rio as Geography took on a distinctly Brazilian flavour. The boys embarked on an in-depth exploration of Brazil, investigating its rich culture, language, religion, cuisine, sport and music with impressive enthusiasm and scholarly curiosity.

Research findings were presented through vibrant and informative posters, showcasing both creativity and attention to detail. The classroom then moved from academia to carnival as the boys designed colourful carnival masks and embraced the rhythms of samba music with admirable energy (and varying degrees of coordination!). Culinary skills were put to the test as the boys prepared authentic Brazilian cheese bread and enjoyed sampling their creations.

A lively and memorable session which proved that Geography is best experienced not only through maps and atlases, but also through music, food and culture.

CZ



Form 5 rise to the Cheltenham Leadership Challenge



A team of eight Form 5 boys travelled to Cheltenham College to take part in their Prep Schools' Leadership Challenge day. They did eight different activities, all involving team work and communication. These included:

- Mr Bucket Head, in which Andy had a large bucket with a hole in on his head: he had to catch shuttlecocks which the other boys hit towards him
- Ravine, in which they had to work together to balance on mats and benches to cross an imaginary swamp
- Buckets, in which they had to use ropes to lift buckets of "toxic waste" across a bench
- Shapes, in which they all held onto a large rope to form particular shapes

The boys learned a great deal about listening to each other, planning and reviewing ideas – as well as having a lot of fun. After the event was over they had a delicious lunch in Cheltenham College's dining room and were particularly impressed with the hot chocolate machine and with the conveyor belt for taking plates away.

Thank you to everyone at Cheltenham College who organised the day, and we'll definitely be back next year.

AF

Micro:bit Masters at Work

In their Computing lessons, Form 6 have been programming Micro:bits to control robots, including using distance sensors. Hugo and Patrick were particularly proud of their robot, the first to be remote controlled using a second Micro:bit.



Form 5 storm the French runway!

What a delight it was to see our Form 5 boys on the CCCS catwalk! The Pre-Prep audience was delighted to see their older peers wearing cool outfits, sunglasses and caps, and tick them off their French vocabulary lists.

It was wonderful to hear Form 5 describe their outfits in beautiful French. Next year, we'll be on the news for sure!
SL



Scholarship Spotlight

It's that time of year, when we prepare ourselves to say farewell to our formidable Form 8 boys, before they embark on their Senior School adventures.

The School is incredibly proud of all of the boys, and we hope that their new schools know just how lucky they are to have them!

To start our Scholarship Season, we are delighted to announce the first three boys who have been awarded scholarships at their senior schools.



Andrew and Leo have both been awarded **Winchester Election Academic Scholarships** to Winchester College - a remarkable achievement given that only 14 scholarships were available. To have one pupil achieve this distinction would be exceptional, but to see two of our boys awarded places in the same year is truly extraordinary.

Please also join us in congratulating Ludo who has won an academic scholarship to Abingdon School! Again, we are incredibly proud of Ludo, and we are delighted that Abingdon School see the wonderful young man he is and the great future that lies ahead of him.

Huge congratulations to Andrew, Leo and Ludo!



Everyone loves the Ashmolean!

Young Art Oxford



Forms 3 and 4 visited the Ashmolean Museum today along with the Form 5-8 exhibitors to view the Young Art Oxford exhibition. It was wonderful to see their pieces in the gallery! Well done boys.

EE

Ashmolean In Bloom

I very much recommend the In Bloom exhibition at the Ashmolean. It is a marvel of odd and extraordinary pictures and paintings; it has also a range of smells and life-like plants to look at and to explore.

And it's free for under-12s!

Eaton DB



Audition for NCO 2027 Now!



This year, we celebrated 3 of our boys winning places in the NCO
...could you be next?

Click [here](#) to find out more



ESO Youth / Rugby School - Woodwind, Brass & Percussion Day

Our musicians have been invited to attend a music day at Rugby School on Sunday 17th May 2026, 9.30am-4.00pm.

Attendance is free.

For more information and to sign up, please click [here](#).



THE | OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE SINGING SCHOOL

The Singing School was established in 2013 to provide children with the opportunity to sing great classical music with world class coaches in a relaxed and fun environment and to develop their confidence and ability in singing and performing.

This summer at Somerville College, we will be learning some beautiful seasonal music, and, as always on our courses, we will be giving sessions on vocal technique, music theory, music appreciation and history.

To join our mailing list and for more information on our courses, please see www.oxbridgesingingschool.com or email oxbridgess@gmail.com

21 -23 July 2026

also 21 & 22 December 2026

Courses for those aged 7-13 who love to sing

www.oxbridgesingingschool.com
www.oxbridgesingingschool.com

Sports News

Cricket Chronicles

d'Overbroeck's v CCCS

On Monday, the 1st XI team played against a determined d'Overbroeck's side. The boys decided to bowl first, but a lack of concentration at the start of the innings meant CCCS conceded more runs than they should have done.



However, there were some great spells of bowling, and some positive encouragement on the field. Bowling accuracy is something that we need to focus on in the coming weeks. Between innings, the boys switched their mindset and were determined to chase d'Overbroeck's total of 114 from 20 overs. With a great performance from our captain Navraj, scoring a total of 32*, retired, and a solid partnership between Milan and Ray, the boys chased their total in only 15 overs whilst only conceding 4 wickets. With a lot of Cricket ahead, and multiple training sessions, these boys will be able to work on all aspects of their cricketing skills to improve their game not only as individuals but also as a team! It was great to get a first win of the season and look forward to future fixtures with a bit of confidence.

Mr Gordon

On Monday the Form 8B's hosted d'Overbroeck's. We lost the toss and were put into bat. We had a strong opening partnership by William and Robin which gave us a great start. Our final batting pair, Gerard and Leo were also amazing, hitting numerous boundaries. They hit fours for fun and scored 44 runs between them, which led to us getting a batting total of 95, very solid! Our bowling was also decent, with a shoutout to Andrew whose spin bowling managed to bowl a batsman out with an unplayable ball. I was also impressed with how we concentrated in the field, preventing d'Overbroeck's from scoring a lot more runs. In the end we just lost the game by 5 runs with d'Overbroeck's getting a total of 99, however the Form 8Bs are improving very quickly and should look forward to their next fixture.

Mr Morgan

CCCS v MCS

On Tuesday, the Form 4 cricket team played a match of softball pairs against MCS. Our boys showed a strong sense of engagement and energy during the warm-up, taking this strongly through their bowling innings. With a decent start, taking wickets and limiting the run rate, CCCS showed some impressive fielding efforts. MCS continued to make a solid 239, an outstanding total. With a determined mindset, the boys were unfortunately beaten by a strong bowling outfit, scoring a total of 193. Despite the loss, the outstanding encouragement and support of their peers (and parents) shows a lot about the character of these boys and their enjoyment of their cricketing journey in the future!

Mr Gordon

Form 3 hosted MCS at home and despite the weather turning slightly miserable and cold, the boy's effort did not drop the whole game. It was a very close game with our team just losing by 6 runs! Man of the match went too Edward who gave 100% with batting, bowling and fielding, where he took a screamer of a catch! It has been excellent to see the improvements that the boys have made over the past few weeks with their understanding of the sport and their ability with bat and ball. Well done.

Mr Morgan.

Sports Spotlight

Chess Champions

This year both Arlo and Qiheng have represented Oxfordshire in the Under 9 chess team, gaining invaluable experience at national level.

After the team finished third out of twenty two in the Zonal Qualifier of the English Primary Schools Chess Association championship, on 25th April, Arlo and Qiheng travelled to Coventry to represent Oxfordshire in the Major Final. They both delivered creditable results for the team, and Oxfordshire finished fifth amongst the strongest twelve county teams from across the country

It was a thoroughly positive experience for Oxfordshire - qualifying strongly, competing bravely in the final, and demonstrating the depth of emerging junior talent within the county. A proud moment for all involved, and an excellent stepping stone for Arlo, Qiheng, and their teammates as they continue their chess journeys.

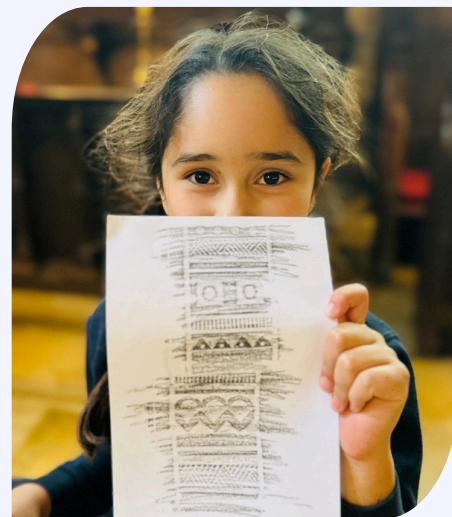


Photo and article courtesy of Mrs Yeo

School Photobook



Out & About
Club visit Christ
Church
Cathedral



School Photobook

Form 3 take a trip to Brazil



School Photobook

More from
Young Art
Oxford



Friday
Fun in
Pre-Prep!



School Photobook

Form 1 Science Experiment - Paper Towel Rainbow

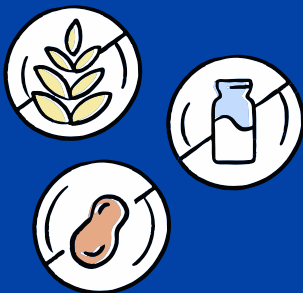
Using food colouring to represent capillary action, with water seemingly defying gravity as the colour walked along the paper towel.



Pre-prep spend time at Woodland School



Help us keep the school community safe



If your child has an upcoming birthday and would like to celebrate with their CCCS friends, please place a cake order with our Chef, giving at least three days' notice. You can email Chef Peter directly at franks@cccs.org.uk
Please do not bring any outside food into the School.