



*Becoming*  
OURSELVES

Spring 2025



[www.waddesdonschool.com](http://www.waddesdonschool.com)



WADDESDON  
*Voice*  
magazine



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## About the cover

This term's cover shows Year 8's Zaynab and Lloyd reading with a visitor from the Little Oaks Pre-school. At every stage of our lives, we can grow and become by helping others to do the same. There's more about the visit on the opposite page.



## From the Headteacher

*"A man planted a fig tree in his garden and came again and again to see if there was any fruit on it, but he was always disappointed."*

So begins one of Jesus' less well-known parables in Luke. After a rather disappointing start, it continues with good, albeit rather boring gardening advice: that the soil around the tree needs tending to, and enriching, so that the fig tree can bear fruit.

Like good gardeners, good parents know that preparing and providing the right environment yields the best growth. Time spent talking with each other, establishing boundaries, providing space and building resilience all mean that children have the chance of growing up confidently and healthily.

And so it is for education in its fullest sense.

I believe that spending time creating the right environment and providing rich and varied opportunities enable children to grow healthily through adolescence so that they can bear fruit now, and in later life. It takes careful tending, pruning and patience for young people to become self-confident and respectful young adults. But the work is worth it.

This is why the termly offering of the Waddesdon Voice brings me so much personal and professional joy. Although it only gives a slice of school life, it is always a celebration of the ways we try to enrich the environment which contributes to our young people becoming their future selves. From the article on Sixth Form student leadership to the Big Gig, or Duke of Edinburgh, the Voice highlights opportunities that our young people are offered and grow through.

After Easter, we will open the new Jacob Rothschild Sixth Form Building. This is the work of many, many people, including those of you who have donated any amount of money. Thank you again. The environment it provides for our 16-19 year olds will enhance not only their studies, but also their sense of place in the world and the positive ways they can act in it.

To return to the parable, each one of



Matthew Abbott

us has the potential to bear good fruit. Whatever your age, circumstances or challenges, I hope that you will continue to learn, reflect and grow.

Happy Easter and Eid Mubarak.



In the run up to World Book day, we were visited by pupils from the Little Oaks Pre-school, who were read to by our students in the library. They sent us this message to say thank you, along with some pictures they drew of their visits.

It is wonderful that the children of Little Oaks have the opportunity to visit the library at the school, although it can be quite daunting for them on the first visit due to the "huge" buildings and all the "big children" who are always eager to engage with the young children within our cohort, some of whom are just 2 years old.

All that being said, it does not take long for the children from both settings to find common ground, especially around their love of books. You can see the story come alive as the Year 7s or 8s share a selection of age-appropriate titles with our little ones sitting and listening in awe, all becoming animated, and sharing conversations, smiles and laughter as the little ones point out things in

the illustrations, fully immersed in the story.

Once back in pre-school, many of the children will recall their "adventure to the big school" and talk about their "new friends" whilst recalling key characters and events from the stories they have shared!

Some of the children have drawn some lovely examples of their time at the library, including "I like the rainbow book", "me reading Commotion in the Ocean", "we read a farm book", "reading monster book with the big boys" and "happy birthday story".

Many thanks to Mrs Staiano for organising and supporting our visits!







## From the Chaplain

“...whilst these subjects are foundationally important and deeply influential, they don’t, on their own, make us the person we become. My understanding of becoming includes all the choices we make.”

Who are you becoming? This term, our Chaplain, Rev Heather McCulloch, invites us to think about growing and becoming everything we can be.

In a world that is increasingly fractured and polarised, the question of who we are becoming has never been more urgent.

I’m sure you will have heard things like ‘we are what we eat’ and ‘we are shaped by what we read’. I have been hearing stories of some outstanding cooking in the food tech department, but I don’t think that any of us are gradually transforming into crème brûlée. This term there was a great assembly for World Book Day, and although I would argue we are all part of a bigger story – I wouldn’t assume that we grow to become like the characters we enjoy in great literature.

If you are a determinist, you may believe that all your actions are influenced by your biology, your chemistry, and your history. And whilst these subjects are foundationally important and deeply influential, they don’t, on their own, make us the person we become.

My understanding of becoming includes all the choices we make. The choice to explore and inhabit the furthest corners of ourselves, to stretch our being physically,

mentally, and spiritually. The choice to be open to learning about the world from one another. And the myriad tiny choices we make each day, choices about who we spend time with, what we create, what we consume, and how we respond to everything that comes at us. As a Christian, I believe that every one of us is made in the image of God, and we each reflect a unique facet of the awesome nature of the God who made us.

**“the deeply exciting thing about human beings is that when the individual is inwardly free, he chooses as the good life this process of becoming.”** – Carl Rogers

*On Becoming a Person*

Be encouraged. What I see at Waddesdon are students freely taking hold of their potential and choosing to flex it, not conforming to stereotypes or fracturing into polarized groups. It is wonderful to see the unfolding, flourishing, expanding, beauty of God in every young person here – learning how to become all that they have been made to be.



### DON'T FORGET THE QR CODES!

Many of our pages have QR codes printed on them. You can scan these to access online content that we couldn't fit in the magazine, like image galleries and videos. Don't forget to look out for them!



Our Year 10 photographers were on the streets of Oxford, looking for photographic opportunities to enhance their skills and augment their portfolios. Beth told us about a day out that was both enjoyable and productive.

## STREET VIEW

On 7th February we went to Oxford, armed with our cameras, for the day!

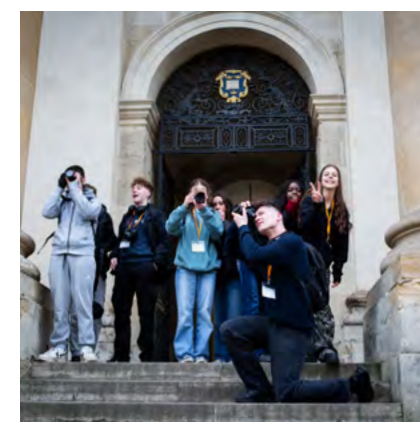
The purpose of the trip was to test our skills on a camera and use those photos for our mock exams. We had a choice of genres, such as landscape, architecture and candid street photography. Photogenic subjects included: Bridge of Sighs, Radcliffe Camera, Bodleian Library courtyard and exterior, Cornmarket Street, Covered Market, and Broad Street.

Whilst visiting Oxford, we were encouraged to take lots of shots from different angles: up high, down low. Mrs. Evans memorably called it ‘Shoot from the boots!’ We took photos of each other and candid photos of people on the streets, as well as having lots of opportunities to take photos of interesting architecture.

Back at school, we learned lots of new editing techniques such as colour pop and light leaks. For colour pop editing,

the Covered Market was best as it was full of colour and looks amazing when doing the colour pop editing technique.

To the next Year 10s who choose photography, I would recommend taking more than one photo of the same area to make sure they have good photos, and to take as many quality photos as they can for the mocks.







Darcy

**My name is Darcy** and I am super excited to be your newly appointed Head Girl! I am incredibly grateful for this opportunity and thrilled to work alongside such a dedicated team of students and staff. While I may be new to this role, I have a clear vision for the year that involves sport events, awareness campaigns and social media.

I value Waddesdon's sense of community more than anything, where every student feels valued and respected. Whether you are in the Sixth Form or in a younger year group, my goal is to help strengthen the connections between us all and

ensure you feel represented. It's about making changes for us all- including you!

Please don't hesitate to come and speak with me if you have any concerns, ideas, or simply want to have a conversation. You'll easily spot me by my bright blazer or the sound of my heels around the school. I am always happy to listen, and I'm here to help in whatever way I can.

I'm looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible!



Leonne

**Hi everyone! I am Leonne** and I'm honoured to introduce myself as Waddesdon's new Head Boy and to

have the opportunity to represent our incredible school community.

Having attended two schools prior to joining Waddesdon, I have been able to experience different school environments, each with their own strengths and challenges. In working with this committed team, I believe that we can achieve meaningful goals such as promoting open discussions about racism, sexism and anti-bullying, ensuring everyone's equal, strengthening our community further.

I believe the balance between academics and strong community is essential for a thriving school environment. School is a place where students learn as well as build connections and express themselves. By encouraging open discussions and inclusive activities such as talent shows or open mic nights, students are able to support one another and contribute to positive change. I hope to create a supportive environment where we can all grow, both academically as well as personally, leaving Waddesdon with a true sense of belonging.



Zoe

**Hello! I'm Zoe** and I'm both honoured and excited to introduce myself as your new Deputy Head Girl for the upcoming year. It truly is a privilege to have been chosen for this role, and I can't wait to work alongside such an amazing team of students and staff to make our school the best it can be for everyone.

Since joining Waddesdon in September, I've come to truly appreciate and love the strong sense of community here, and I am determined to contribute to that to make a positive impact. I am passionate about bringing fresh ideas and ensuring every voice is heard. I firmly believe in creating an environment where every student feels valued, supported and encouraged to excel, both academically and personally.

I'm excited about getting to know as many of you as possible, and I want you to feel comfortable coming to me with anything - big or small. Whether you need advice, have a concern, or just want someone to listen, I'm here for you. Don't hesitate to say 'hi' and know I'm happy to help wherever I can.



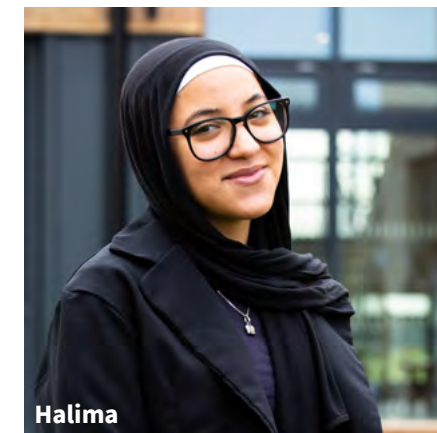
Riley

**Hello, my name is Riley**, and I am pleased to have been appointed as your Deputy Head Boy. I am thrilled to begin

this journey alongside such talented and dedicated individuals in such a welcoming community. As we embark on this chapter, I want to ensure everyone at Waddesdon can seek any sort of help from me, and that I can play a role in making sure we all gain the most out of Waddesdon.

I joined Waddesdon at the start of the year, and although it may not seem that I have been here long, I feel that I have already developed as a student and become a better person in general. As I am a new student, I can provide a fresh outlook on school life, allowing me to have a positive input into school decisions to make sure all our days at Waddesdon run smoothly.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you see me around school, to ask any questions, or even just for a chat. I am excited to see how my peers and I can help to make a positive impact on the school!

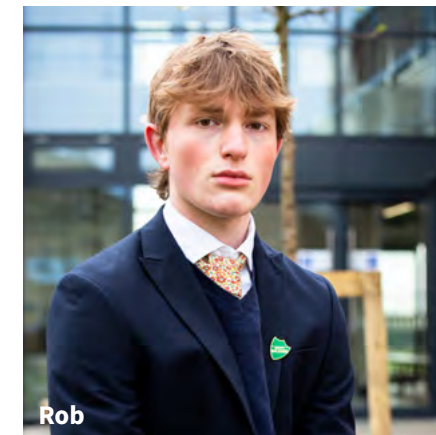


Halima

**Hello Waddesdon! I'm Halima** and you'll probably hear me before you see me—whether it's my loud voice or a wave of chatter. I am truly honoured to have been appointed as your new Deputy Head Girl! I'm thrilled to work alongside such a talented and dedicated team of students and staff. As I step into this role, my teammates and I already have plenty of exciting ideas in store, including new opportunities and fun activities for everyone to enjoy.

Although I'm new to this school, I've been warmly welcomed into the community, and I'm eager to give back by collaborating with the incredible and vibrant students here. Together, we'll continue striving for improvement and success, even if it's just a small step forward—every bit counts.

I aim to be a support system for all of you, helping to create an environment where everyone's voice is heard. I'm committed to fostering opportunities for both academic and personal growth, where we can share our passions and work together in harmony. I'm really looking forward to the year ahead with all of you!



Rob

**Hello! I'm Rob** and I will be your Deputy Head Boy. My aim is to challenge myself in this role and live up to my chosen virtues whenever possible. I think I could be very influential with this opportunity I have been given, and I would love to help promote the ideas of my fellow Heads of School further.

I believe that we use the benefit of our community to help those around us and make Waddesdon not just a school, but a haven and provider to everybody. I'm going to put a lot of effort into improving our student experiences at school and fuel their drive to succeed. I want to extract as much confidence and talent out of anyone who ever struggles to see their value. We spend a very large portion of our teenage lives at school, so if both your home life and school life aren't enjoyable, then what is going to give you hope and the energy to do great things?

We can make a massive difference by keeping just one of these environments supportive. We will all experience tough times in our lives. My passion, and something that drives me, is having a positive influence and a touching impact on the lives of others. If I can make even one student's life more comfortable, then I've succeeded. You can always come to me if you have any ideas or concerns. I look forward to being your new Deputy Head Boy!



There was a trip to the Science Museum in London for our Year 9 students. Erin was inspired by the ways in which STEM has shaped the world we live in.

We went to the Science Museum in February to support our learning in STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

STEM plays a pivotal role in driving innovation, economic growth and progress in society. The inclusion of STEM into education and industry has transformed the way we live, work and interact with our environment. STEM innovations have led to improved healthcare, more efficient transport and better communication technologies.

Through Engineering and Technology, systems have been created that reduce waste, conserve energy and protect natural resources, ensuring a healthier planet for the future. The rapid pace of technological progress in areas like AI, biotechnology and robotics shows the continuous development in STEM.

STEM influences every aspect of our life.

Our visit ranged across a number of floors with different displays, from rockets, to marvellous medicine and the power of mathematics. The third floor was my favourite as it included the WonderLab where we could see lightning strike before our very eyes...



# GLORIOUS FOOD

On Saturday 18th January two Year 10 Food and Nutrition students, Vinnie and Joe, went to Kingsbrook School to take part in the area heats of the Rotary Club Young Chef Competition 2025.

Despite technical issues with gas and pans, the students performed exceptionally well and presented two outstanding dishes for the judges. There was tough competition from other local schools and both boys did exceptionally well. Vinnie was first runner up and Joe was highly commended.

## Vinnie writes:

“I enjoyed competing in the Rotary Young Chef Competition, and meeting Daniel from Hartwell House who was the main judge. Despite a couple of hiccups in the kitchen, I managed to present both dishes on time, which earned me 2nd place overall and a voucher for a family meal at The Woolpack.

Since then, I have been volunteering in the kitchen at Hartwell House, helping to prepare everything needed for service and learning how to make the different elements that take dishes to the next level. I am pleased I took part in the competition, especially now I have the opportunity to work with the great chefs at Hartwell House.





**Our Year 8 students took part in a range of activities designed to get them thinking about artificial intelligence and how it works. Could Isla, Tiffany and Harry beat the bots?**

# MACHINE Learning



In January, Year 8 had the pleasure to experience a 'STEM Day' at Waddesdon school which was run by the Computing Department and guests Dr Sarah Howcutt and Mr Russell Sinclair from Oxford Brookes University. We were split into three groups and taken off to participate in three different activities over a couple of hours.

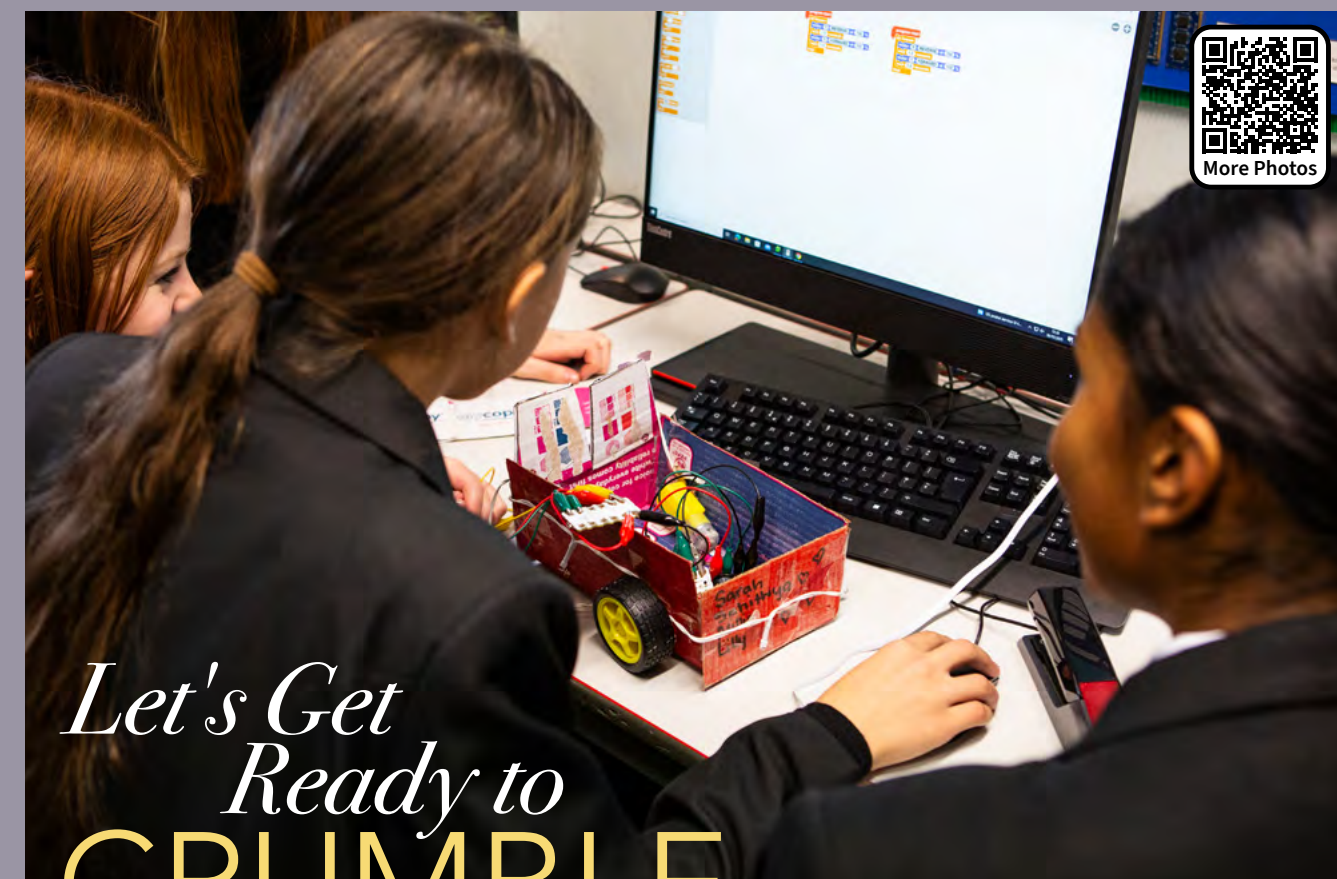
One of the activities was to use BodySwap, which entailed communicating with an AI avatar designed to simulate an irritable patient in a hospital waiting room. Our job was to reply to the AI's comments, to calm it down and not antagonise it further! Our progress was recorded by a bar near the bottom of the screen measuring the model's happiness with our responses, and whether they helped resolve the issue.

The second activity was battling a game of Tic-Tac-Toe against AI. We had to enable our predictive abilities to try and anticipate its next move. Everyone was given paper and pencil to out a game plan to try and win against it. But the thing was, the AI could never lose; it would only win or draw.

The third activity was writing a story using a system that consisted of writing a sentence, then passing it back in rows until completed or, in other words, the game of consequences, as our parents would have known it in school. It helped generate thoughts about the process of AI chatbots, famously Chat GPT, when generating stories or asking questions. Did you know that Chat GPT creates 8.4 tons of pollution each time you ask it a question?

To round up the amazing day, the three groups met up back in the main hall during period 5 and were given task sheets to design our very own AI apps. This was a logic task and so we had to choose a topic and think of 5 questions we might be asked about. We then had to deconstruct this further by thinking of five different ways we may get asked as every person's response would be different.

Overall, it was an amazing experience and a fantastic day which helped inform us about AI while still having fun.



## Let's Get Ready to CRUMBLE

**Design Tech students in Year 8 combined coding and design to build self-driving cars using Crumble kits. Sarah, Zach and Imogen gave us their steer on how it went.**

During our Computing and Technology lessons, we created model cars using a Crumble kit

which was both fun and interesting. Half of us were designing the car, and the other half were coding and programming.

The design team were on the floor, trying to create our car of choice using paper, tape and a lot of cardboard, making something that was sturdy yet aerodynamic - it was quite stressful, to be honest! The other half of the team were coding the Crumbles which were easy to use

and very understandable. However, with the additional components of wheels and motors that we had to code to run simultaneously, it definitely stretched us as we had never done anything like this before.

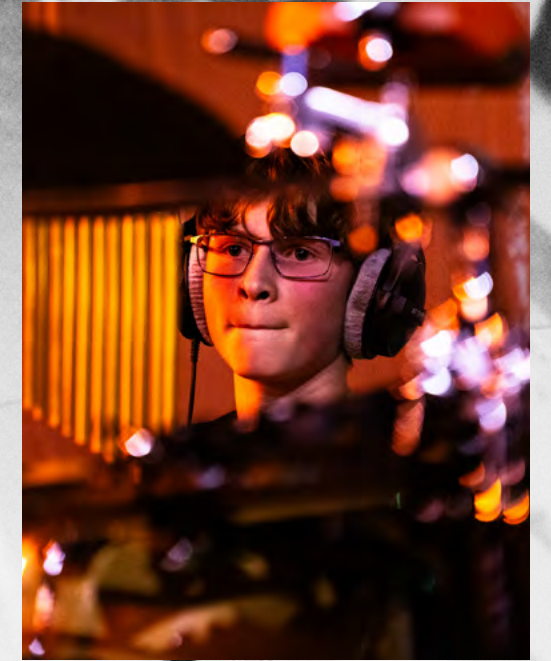
It was an amazing experience, and every time I walked into Tech, I knew it was going to be fun. In the end, we were all able to create some fantastic cars, concluding in judging, races and, of course, battles between them!







The lights shone and the floor shook at the Big Gig in February as our best musicians took to the stage and gave it everything. Year 12's Saffron told us about the excitement of taking part in one of the highlights of the Waddesdon year for the first time.



As a new Sixth Former to Waddesdon School, I was very excited when I first heard about the Big Gig. I was looking forward to watching others perform, let alone leading my own song. So, when it came to the lead up to the Big Gig, I became overwhelmed with anticipation.

In the weeks leading up to the Big Gig, all the talented performers had to decide on, and prepare, their songs. Bands were formed within classes. Funk Band, Jazz Band and Choir rehearsed extensively. We all started performing for each other to refine and perfect our performance. All our musicians approached the gig with professionalism and dedication.

The night of the Big Gig, everyone was buzzing. Back stage was full to the brim with instruments. Every seat and every bench

was full. The performers were ready to give it their all. As the music began, everyone sang along, cheered, clapped and whistled. There was no silence that night. The air was full of anticipation and excitement. All the performers gave their best, and every act was thoroughly enjoyed.

My personal highlights from the Big Gig were the Funk Band performances, as they had everybody on their feet, standing on benches, dancing and singing along.

Mr Dimond's saxophone solo was also a personal favourite as I had never seen him so full of joy!

This was a great opportunity for all the amazing, talented musicians, and I can't wait for the next one!

# LIVE AND KICKING







Seventeen dedicated students have successfully completed the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at both the Silver and Bronze levels. Award Leader Miss Caswell presented the students with their certificates, and Mr Abbott awarded the students their lapel badges, symbolising the significant personal growth and achievements of each participant.

Those students who successfully completed their award are:

**Silver:** Darcy, Archie, and Josh J.

**Bronze:** Emily, Josh B, Beth, Rory, Lily, Lana, Josh C, Annie, Rylee, Phoebe, Nadia, Torin, Hannah and Lucy.

A student commented "The program challenged me to develop new skills

and give back to the community. Receiving this award was testament to the hard work and dedication we all put in."

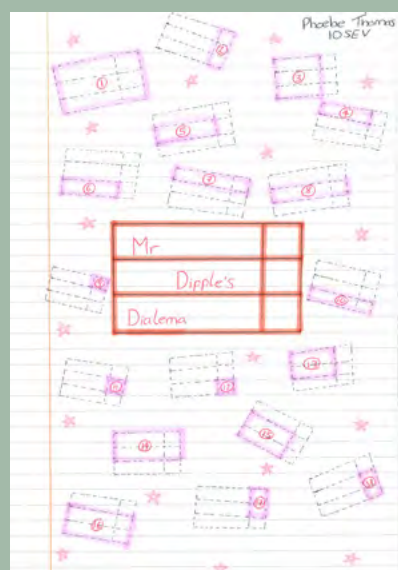
So, what next? Onto the next level and the prospect of a future trip to St James' Palace by Royal Appointment to meet the Duke himself.



Last time, I asked you to work out how many rectangles were in the diagram.

I received loads of entries, especially from staff, and I'm pleased to report that student entries were generally more accurate than those from the grown ups. I'm counting that as a win for the Waddesdon Maths Department. I was delighted to hear that this sparked a few discussions

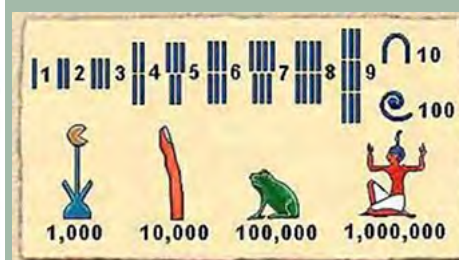
amongst you, including in my house over Christmas. The correct answer is 18 as shown by this term's winner, Year 10's Phoebe:



Well done, Phoebe! Collect your chocolatey prize from me at your leisure.

#### This term's puzzle:

Ancient Egyptians were pretty smart mathematicians. Like us, they had a base-10 numbering system. Here are some of their symbols:



On the inside of an ancient Egyptian tomb, archaeologists found scribed on the wall the smallest number divisible by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

#### What is this number?

I'll leave the formatting up to you...



**Interform** was a really wonderful week for all year groups to demonstrate their skills in netball and football in a healthy interform competition. Interform sports is not just about the competition- it's about fostering leadership, teamwork and confidence.

Congratulations to all the forms who have been placed, and huge congratulations to the winners for each competition.

At Waddesdon we pride ourselves on creating opportunities for as many students as possible to take part in sport and competitive matches whilst developing the talent of our top athletes. We couldn't be prouder of all our students who have been committed and taken up all the opportunities on offer. We are also starting to see record numbers of students playing for external clubs, continuing their passion and developing their talents to the next level.

#### Netball

The netball season has seen 12 wonderful teams playing over 80 matches in the Aylesbury Schools District Netball League. The

commitment from all of our players has been fantastic and therefore we were able to enter more teams than any other school into the league. It has been another successful season with many positive results. We are hoping to match that success in the end of season tournaments over the next couple of weeks. The standout moments from this season have come from our Year 7 netball teams who have both won their respective leagues and will be promoted next season. Congratulations to those players on their first successful season at Waddesdon School.

#### Girls' Football

Women's football is the fastest growing sport in the UK and Waddesdon School are keeping up! We have been training hard and have played in the District League for the first time this year. We have had a lot of fun and all the girls have really improved throughout the season. They have shown great determination and have achieved great success, with the U13s finishing 3rd in their league. The U15s have shown resilience and motivation to improve in all of their matches. Well done to all the girls who have taken up this amazing new opportunity and

#### INTERFORM RESULTS

Year 7	1	2	3
<b>Football</b>	EHA/VH	JBR	SB/VB
<b>Netball</b>	ADE	AR/AL & JBR	
<b>OVERALL</b>	JBR	EHA/VH	AR/AL & ADE
Year 8	1	2	3
<b>Football</b>	SC	RR/ROL	CSP
<b>Netball</b>	SC	KT	CSP
<b>OVERALL</b>	SC	CSP & KT	
Year 9	1	2	3
<b>Football</b>	JSM	ELH	MJB
<b>Netball</b>	MJB	JSM	ELH
<b>OVERALL</b>	JSM	MJB	ELH
Year 10	1	2	3
<b>Football</b>	JDA	IOG	SK
<b>Netball</b>	IOG	SEV/ADI	ELH
<b>OVERALL</b>	IOG	JDA	SEV/ADI
Year 11	1	2	3
<b>Football</b>	TN	DMC	CAR
<b>Netball</b>	BJU	JCo/HD	DMC
<b>OVERALL</b>	DMC	JCo/HD & BJU & TN	

have got involved this season. We look forward to continuing to grow girls football at Waddesdon School next year.

#### Boys' Football

It has been a fantastic season for football with all year groups being entered into the North League. Year 7, 8 and 9 all came 4th in their leagues. Year 10 finished 2nd in their league, leading to a semi-final against Aylesbury Grammar School, which they won 3-1 to make it to the final and potentially U15 District Champions! We all wish them the best of luck in the final. The U18s have had an outstanding season, winning their County League B and have been promoted to League A next season. Unfortunately, the U18s were knocked out of the County Cup competition in the quarter final with a 3-2 defeat against Royal Latin who scored a last-minute goal to win the game, although still showcasing their outstanding footballing ability. We would like to congratulate all players on their determination this season.



# POWER TRIPPING

Our A level physicists travelled to Oxford to see a machine that makes energy in the same way as the sun. Year 12's Emily told us about the bright future of power generation.



A group of Year 12 and 13 physicists were fortunate enough to attend a school trip to a National Fusion Laboratory in Oxford. This trip allowed us to gain insight into having a career in the science industry, specifically in the nuclear and energy sector, as well as letting us improve our understanding of certain ideas in physics by seeing them put into practical use.

Nuclear fusion itself is a way of producing large amounts of energy by effectively “fusing” two nuclei together; this is what the sun does to produce energy. However, to recreate this on earth we need immense amounts of energy and some very strong electromagnets. But it is possible and has been done at the laboratory in Oxford, even if only for a few seconds!

On site, there are 2 main fusion facilities: JET and MAST Upgrade. JET is the original experiment, which has been running for almost 40 years and was able to reach temperatures that were 15 times the temperature of the sun. However, it has now been decommissioned to allow scientists to look at the damage caused to it over time. As it is the first experiment of its kind to be dismantled and researched, it will provide a lot of new information and results that will allow scientists to help build better machines in the future.

One of these machines is MAST Upgrade, which is based on the MAST experiment which ran from 2000 to 2013, but is being rebuilt to improve its performance. The data gained by dismantling JET will help hugely with rebuilding MAST.

On our tour of the site, we were able to see the outside of JET, look into one of the spare parts built for the machine and watch a video showing the first time they ran JET and what was visible in the machine. We were also able to learn about how they design and use robots to provide maintenance to the inside of the machine, as the inside is too radioactive to send a human inside, due to the use of tritium.

Overall, this greatly supported our learning by allowing us to see the theory we had learnt about practically and in use. The trip also gave us a chance to ask the experts questions we had about nuclear fusion and about working in the nuclear and energy sector.

But most importantly, we all had fun and enjoyed the day immensely.







# Message in a BOTTLE

**It wouldn't be March without the worldwide celebration of World Book Day. Did you know that World Book Day has been celebrated for thirty years now? As Year 8's Thea told us, Mrs. Staiano helped us all mark the occasion with an amazing event.**

The day started with an assembly in which Mrs. Staiano, Izzy, Tamara and Rob showed a video they had made about the favourite books of the teachers, which was highly amusing. A highlight included Mr. Dangana's discussions of his favourite book: The Bible!

The stakes were high when the whole school began to compete in Mrs. Staiano's literary quiz. It was too close to call: the winner was finally determined by a flip of the coin. To close assembly, we read a quote from Kate Bush. Did you know that she wrote a famous song called 'Wuthering

Heights'? It just shows how books can be an inspiration to all of us.

The fun continued during lunchtime: we had lots of activities prepared for us. For example, we got to find out about new books, and we had the opportunity to do a quiz on books, which was my personal favourite. There was also a shredded book in a jar which we had fun guessing. I won't give it away, but the words 'Zoe' and 'rat' might help you

guess the title yourself...

In the afternoon, Year 7s read to younger children from Little Oaks, who were dressed as their favourite book character. The little ones got to choose a book. It was wonderful to see them read together and have fun.

I had lots of fun and hope that next year will be just as good!



Our Year 9 legal eagles represented Waddesdon in a mock trial - and ended up winning a famous legal victory! Toby and Archer summed up for us.

# JUDGEMENT in FAVOUR



On 8th March we had an amazing opportunity to learn about, and experience how the legal system works in the UK. This opportunity was to compete in a mock magistrates' court trial. The event took place at High Wycombe magistrates' courthouse where we competed inside actual courtrooms to get a true sense of what a real trial is like.

Prior to the event itself, there was a lot of preparation work to be done. We were first given the details of the case we would be carrying out. Once we were familiar with the details and evidence provided, roles and responsibilities were allocated based on which jobs each of us were interested in. For some, that was a lawyer or legal adviser, and for others it was a witness or usher. After all the roles were allocated, we each began work on our individual tasks to prepare for the upcoming trial. The preparation involved lots of hard work from everyone, but we made it through with the help of each other and our teacher Mrs Hull. Once we had finished our individual preparation tasks, we started to come together and fine-tune the whole process when we would run through the case between the prosecuting and defence team.

Then it was time for the big day of the competition. We met outside the courthouse before going and having a quick tour of the courtroom. We then all did our final preparations just before the competition began. The competition formally opened with some speeches from the Mayor of Wycombe, the High Sheriff and the Lord Lieutenant, as well as the event organisers. It was then time to put our preparation into practice and we started the trials against the other schools.

First of all, we defended against Stewards Academy, with Archer as the defendant, Samuel and Dylan defence lawyers, Ryan as the defence witness, Will H as the usher, and George, Amy, and Lara as magistrates. The defendant was accused of possession of a dangerous weapon (a broken bottle) at a football match. After a hard-fought battle, the defendant was found not guilty, and the lead magistrate informed us of the consequences if the defendant had been found guilty. Afterwards, we were escorted out to find out our next opponent. Our team for the second trial against Beaconsfield High School consisted of Toby and Amy as prosecution witnesses, Lara as the legal advisor, Will B as the prosecutor,

Archer as the court artist, and George, Dylan and Samuel as magistrates.

After the trial was complete, we had a talk with an actual magistrate who explained how the trial would have played out had it been a real charge. We worked incredibly well as a team such that we were announced the heat winners at the awards ceremony. We later found out we were the overall winners in Buckinghamshire!

Overall, it was a truly enlightening experience to see how the legal system works and experience it first-hand.





# TIME FOR



# REFLECTION

Our Year 10 artists went seeking inspiration and exploration in the world of modern art at the Tate Britain. Emily tells us what it was like to see such work at first hand, and about seeing this year's Turner Prize nominations.

On Wednesday 12th February, we visited the Tate Britain Art Gallery to get some inspiration for our Art projects, as recently we have all been picking themes that we want to follow. In addition, we went to research the Turner Prize, which is a prestigious award given to a British artist for an outstanding contribution to British art.

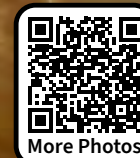
When we arrived at the museum, we were given some time to explore the gallery and find pieces of work which

inspired us, and artist examples which we could use in our sketchbooks. I found it fascinating, especially in the modern art section, that some of the 'art' was actually considered art - such as a singular green square!

We had booked tickets to see the Turner Prize section of the gallery, which was particularly interesting to see in real life, as we had all been researching it for a while. Four artists had been nominated for the Turner Prize this year, and they

each had a room which displayed their works.

Finally, we purchased postcards and booklets in the gift shop, which we will use in our sketchbook pages. Overall, I found the day very interesting, as not only did I find some work which fitted well with my theme, but I also enjoyed looking at the Turner Prize and reading the stories behind the works.





# TECHNICALLY *Speaking*

Our school technicians are often behind the scenes but the work they do is essential to the running of the school. In time for national Techognition day, we asked them to tell us a bit more about themselves.



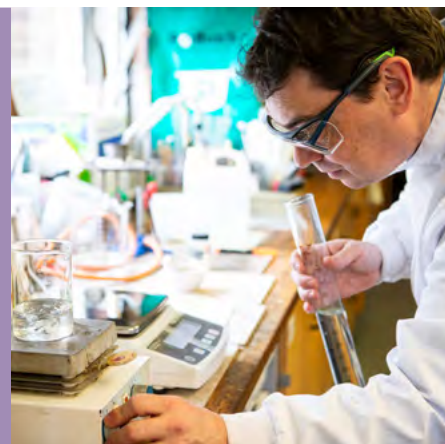
More Photos

## **Mrs Chapman Creative Technician**

No two days are the same in my role. There are always paint brushes to clean, art spaces to tidy, admin tasks to be done, but I could also be filling the kiln with clay masks, supporting a painting lesson, exhibiting artwork and updating our social media. Or I might be setting up a photography shoot, or helping students with their exhibitions. My favourite part of my job is working in such a creative environment and supporting students as they explore their own creative practice.

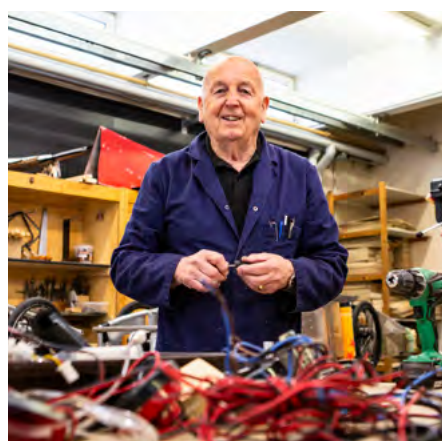
## **Mr Ewart Senior Science Technician**

I make sure the prep-room runs smoothly. This varies widely but includes ordering resources, balancing the books, keeping an eye on health and safety, as well as practical preparations for class. My favourite thing about the role is the students and the enjoyment they get from their practicals.



## **Mrs Richardson Food Technician**

Helping students learn to cook and develop long-term life skills to carry forward to the future. No two days are the same, with a very broad selection of world dishes cooked.



## **Mr Weaver DT Technician**

My role is to help students with their GCSE and A Level projects, making sure that all students are working safely. GreenPower is my pet project because I love stripping down and rebuilding the cars and passing on my skills and experience to the students.

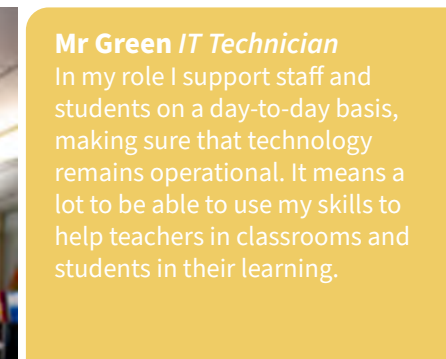
## **Miss Atack Science Technician**

My role involves trialling and the setting up of experiments, and also maintaining equipment, amongst many other things. I enjoy all of the sciences but I think helping Year 7s dissect eyes and fixing equipment are probably my favourite parts.



## **Mrs Baker Science Technician**

My role involves trialling practicals, setting up equipment and making chemicals for use in science lessons. My favourite subject is chemistry and I enjoy preparing the experiments, especially for 'A' level. I also love any practical that involves setting things on fire!



## **Mr Green IT Technician**

In my role I support staff and students on a day-to-day basis, making sure that technology remains operational. It means a lot to be able to use my skills to help teachers in classrooms and students in their learning.



## **Mr Peck Repro/Internal Media**

My work includes printing, photographing events around the school and designing posters, literature, booklets and signs - as well as the Voice! I love my job because I can be creative and I'm always making something.



A visit to historic Somerville College in Oxford was on offer for our Year 8 Beacon Group students. Imogen and Martha told us about a fascinating day among Oxford's dreaming spires.

# SOMER School

On 31st January, the Year 8 Beacon Group were given the opportunity to visit Somerville College in Oxford. Somerville College is a constituent college of the University of Oxford.

It was founded in 1879 and was one of the University's first women's colleges. Men were later able to enrol in 1994. Margaret Thatcher attended Somerville College, alongside other successful females such as Philippa

Foot, Iris Murdoch .... and even Imogen's great-great-grandmother!

During the campus tour, we were shown the dining hall, library and chapel. The library is one of Oxford's largest college libraries. We were told about the social events which are often held on the college's green spaces, including picnics, live music and karaoke.

After touring the campus, we then went into a classroom to discuss questions such as 'Are robots human?' and 'Which is better, real-life friends or online friends?' We finished the day by taking a 5-minute walk down the road to explore the Natural History Museum.

It was a fantastic trip which we are very grateful to have been a part of.





Join us as we **celebrate** the work  
of our GCSE & A Level students

# SUMMER EXHIBITION 2025

Wednesday 4th June  
4pm to 7pm

Art & Design  
Graphic Design  
Media Studies  
Photography

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