

# YOU MATTER



Summer 2025



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WADDESDON

*Voice*  
magazine



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## From the Headteacher

There's a story connected to the picture on the front page of this term's edition of the Waddesdon Voice.

By the time he was handed the baton for the final leg of his team's relay race on Sports Day, Lohan knew that there was no chance of him placing anywhere other than last.

But he did have a decision about how to finish the race.

Some people would have slowed down, some people may have even walked it, but Lohan didn't. Lohan ran: to the rousing applause of the student body, and even managed to raise a thumb for Mr Peck, our photographer extraordinaire, as he approached the finishing line.

He made the race matter and his performance embraced the spirit of Sports Day in a way that this amazing event often does. We could all learn something about resilience and teamwork from this story.

This story also touches on the theme of this term's newsletter, the importance of **matter**ing. Mattering goes beyond belonging: it's much more than letting someone know that they are valued, but - crucially for me - it says, if you weren't here, we wouldn't be as good as we are. **You are valued, but even more you add value to our community.**

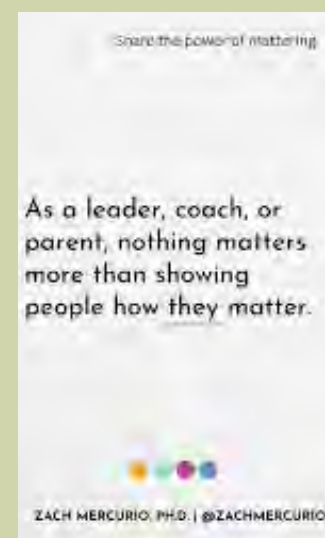


Matthew Abbott

You matter because of what you bring to Waddesdon and we are all the poorer when you are not here.

I invite you to read this edition of the Voice, therefore, through the lens of mattering. The Voice isn't just a collection of amazing activities and life-changing opportunities. It is also a record of the active participation and agency of our young people. The deep message that runs through every article and picture is that all of our students and staff matter deeply.

If we want to be true to our Bible verse of living life in "all its fullness", then the value and place of each individual within our school seems like a good place to start.



## A COLE LOAD OF Fun



Popular author Steve Cole visited the school recently and, as Year 7's Levi told us, spoke very entertainingly to our Year 7s and 8s on subjects ranging from how he became a writer to the tricks spies use...

Years 7 and 8 were lucky enough to experience a presentation in the new school auditorium by Steve Cole, published author.

He came to speak to us about his life as an author, his books and how he writes them. He's a local author of fiction for children and young adults with numerous series including *Young Bond*, *Prey Zone*, *Astrosaurs* and *Cows in Action*.

We were treated to a dynamic and interactive session where he discussed his life as an author, how he is paid to

use his imagination and how he makes up his own work schedule. He also talked about how he prefers to write his books – using pen and paper and based on real things.

Steve gave some helpful advice on how to improve sentences and engaged the whole room in an energetic game to make his sentences better.

It was an enjoyable, funny and informative session. A huge thank you to Miss Staiano, our wonderful librarian, for organising it.

From one animated author event to another... The Year 7 storytelling competition was also held in the new JR building performance space the next day, where the five finalists did a fantastic job of delivering their amazing stories. The standard was incredibly high but Leo in Year 7 was the overall winner as judged by Mr Israr and Mrs Staiano with his wonderful Roman mythology inspired story and strong stage presence. The story has been published on the Library page on the website and can be viewed by scanning the QR code.



Leo's Story





Who would come out on top as our aspiring chefs in Years 7 and 8 faced off across the kitchen worktop in a battle to produce the finest dishes, as judged by ex-student and award-winning chef, Ben Mabley?

# Menu MASTERS

## Samuel

What a fantastic experience, with some really tough competition.

My dish, char siu ramen, was inspired by South East Asia. This dish consists of pork shoulder marinated in a rich blend of the finest Chinese spices from all the districts coming together to create this ramen. The char siu is enveloped in a strong spicy broth with the bold flavours of South East Asia with homemade egg noodles topped with a half-boiled egg, spring onions and chilli oil.

It must have been tough to judge between the raspberry tart, paella, and the huge range of skills that were applied by everyone. It was a busy kitchen with no time to spare: we were cooking, cleaning down our areas, and in



More Photos



full competition mode. After a week of practice, I felt honoured to be named Master Chef Champion 2025, amongst such strong competition. It was a great experience.

Thank you, Mrs Watts, for organising, and Ben for coming to judge.

## Nat

I've really enjoyed the experience of the Master Chef competition. I've enjoyed being able to take my delicious dishes home every week and eat them. In the competition, I've learnt key skills like presentation and organisation while prepping the food.

## Andrew

I love eating and making Japanese food, so I decided to challenge myself and make a bento box for the Year 9 School Master Chef competition.

A bento box is a Japanese style single portion meal, which is often packed in a compartmentalised container. I planned my bento box to include salmon and avocado sushi, pork gyoza and katsu chicken with golden curry sauce and jasmine rice. I practised each component in the lessons and at home in the weeks leading up to the competition and then practised how to make them all together within the time.

My classmates made a range of dishes from delicate pastries such as a raspberry tart to savoury main courses such as curry, pizza and ramen; the range of dishes was truly impressive. The Food room was a hive of activity as competitors meticulously prepared their dishes.

The judge, who was a visiting ex-student and now an award-winning chef, was impressed by the creativity and skill displayed. The event fostered teamwork, creativity, and a passion for cooking among the participants. It was a celebration of culinary excellence and a reminder of the potential of the Year 9 Food students.







## From the Chaplain

“It’s hard to feel like what we do matters in a world of global conflict and environmental challenges that feel too huge to be impacted by our efforts.”

Are we loveable? Are we good enough? In her final column for the Voice, our chaplain, Rev Heather McCulloch, examines what it means to matter. We'd like to thank Heather as she ends her time at Waddesdon and we wish her all the best for the future.

My cheeky baby daughter with ash blonde curls and the most disarming smile is leaving me – she’s 18 now (with poker straight hair) and is about to embark on her own journey - assuming all that revision paid off! I must let her go, and stop looking for her when I come home, because she will be in another city with people I’ve never met. She matters immensely, not because of her successes and talents, but because she’s my daughter.

Understanding that we matter to someone and that what we do matters, is crucial to our wellbeing. It’s not about self-importance or the need for fame, although these get mistaken for mattering. It’s a human need to have an impact on our world and the people around us, ‘Am I loveable?’ and ‘am I good enough?’ are primal questions we are born to ask. It’s hard to feel like what we do matters in a world of global conflict and environmental challenges that feel too huge to be impacted by our efforts. What can one tiny human presence possibly mean in a universe 10 billion light years wide, and what significance can we have in an uber-talented hyper-connected world? We may wonder how we can matter when we look at the enormity of our cosmos. But, in all that space, hardly anything matters to us here on earth, except that the world turns and the sun burns. It turns out that mattering depends as much on our

context as it does on our size.

Returning to our existential questions: ‘am I loveable?’ and ‘am I good enough?’ – Yes you are! I know this because every hair on your head is numbered, every tear you shed collected in a bottle, your words are heard even when they seem to fall on deaf ears, and your actions are seen even if you think you are hidden. As least that is the Christian claim – that we matter to our creator and heavenly Father, and that his plans and purposes for our lives are worth discovering because they lead to feeling fulfilled in a life that matters to God.

As you take a breath over the summer, take your time to rest and be re-created, perhaps you will reflect on your next year, or your next steps like my daughter. Whatever the next thing looks like, do not be anxious, you are meant to be here: on this earth, in this body, at this precise moment. The choices you make matter, and the person you become matters to those who share your life. But more than that, you matter to God exactly as you are. Whether you become a world leader or a stay-at-home parent makes no difference to the love He has for you. God’s intent is that you discover and enjoy every corner of your being, and flourish in it.

**1** Luke 12:7; **2** Psalm 56:8; **3** Psalm 139:11-12a; **4** Jeremiah 29:11, John 10:10



### 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!



There was a trip to Waddesdon Manor for our Year 8 English students who were researching material for a piece of historical fiction. Tilly and Isla told us a bit about the competition and their visit. Isla's story was the winner of our internal competition, and is shown in full on the following two pages.

On Tuesday 6th May, the Historical Fiction story group visited Waddesdon Manor and looked at their World War II archives to spark inspiration for our own historical fiction stories. Our writing will be entered in a national literature competition as well as an internal one with Mr Abbott, Miss Caswell and Mrs Staiano as the judges.

After leaving school at the start of lunch, we made our way down to

the Manor, before heading upstairs to where the historical documents were stored. These archives included diaries, personal interviews and photo albums about the Cedar boys and the evacuees who stayed in Waddesdon Manor during World War II.

Next, we had a brief tour of the Manor and saw the 'red room' as well as the dining room. We were then given a short writing task for which we had

to describe the dining room and imagine ourselves attending a dinner party there. There were lots of rules at dinner parties such as talking to the person on your right first and then to the person on your left.

We then returned to school and arrived back at the end of second break.







# YELLOW (*Blackbird*)

Blackbird. Yellow.

I've never seen the streets of Chilwell so exceedingly quiet. I count the blackbirds and yellow flowers, dear brother, as I walk down the hard, knobbly concrete paths, and the numbers of yellow seem to thin.

Blackbird.

The shining, black feather coat that it wore unashamedly - proudly - is harder to come by now, brother. It skits away, skimming the golden sun. It sings. I watch it.

It was nice today, brother. Warm. Golden. The feeling when the sun has finally woken up after a long, sadistic, selfish slumber. The clouds had finally parted, and had been replaced by crisp sunbeams, warming up the light breeze and fields of dirt, filled with thousands of bright, cheerful sunflowers. You would be proud of me, brother. I appreciated today. I really did.

The dim silhouette of the factory is starting to come into view now. The yellow has faded completely, replaced by dull, carbon grey, slated into the form of bricks and cement. The crows have all scattered now, brother. I am sure I am a good employee. A good worker. A determined one: I've never complained

about anything, head down, speak-when-spoken-to, always where I should be, at all times. Yes... I was. I was a good worker.

The guarded gates approach me, garrisoned by the usual uniformed men - the ones that hold their noses up and hands up higher to avoid any undertaking of manual labour. They glare at the end of the thinning string strung around my neck, dear brother, at the circular piece of dull, engraved brass hanging off it.

N.F.F. NO.6

ID: 8111

FILLING SHED. D.

A factory, an identification number, and a categorised location of work. A bland display of weak personal identity and attempted organisation. I know you can relate to this customary ethos, brother. I scrape past them to get into the munition-filled, walled box.

Yellow.

The flitting of faces, most a bright, lucid yellow; a blend of a hue consisting of the petals of marigold, daffodils, and those towering sunflowers. Their black seeds almost match the sunken skin underneath their eyes, brother. They look tired. I only presume they are the ones whose work hours are being substituted with another batch of ill-fated women. Canary girls. I remember, a long time ago, brother, before you went off, and father started losing his sanity, that he used to tell us stories. I hope you remember. About his mining days? The puffs of yellow they would bring in, in petite cages, to sing

or splutter when toxic gases deep in the underground keeled them over? Those canaries? Father said that they saved his skin more than once. A pity he never returned the favour for those ill-fated creatures -

Blackbird.

A flash of black dances past a nearby, cracked window. I stare at the dying string of light lining the ruptures. It highlights its imperfections, brother. I doubt Father would be pleased. He wasn't pleased when I left. Just sat there in his chair mumbling and mumbling to himself -

Blackbird!

I jump slightly; I wasn't expecting the sudden passerine-veined darkness to appear again, among the yellow cracks of luminosity. The worker next to me gives me a perplexed, almost pensive, look. She looks back down, continuing to pour the golden, explosive powder into the metal carcass of a shell. Then, sealing it shut. I try not to stare, brother, but her yellow fingers seem as contaminated as the fine powder.

The mixer is in the corner of the room; I can hear it. Moving, kneading and melting an oily, yellowish syrup. It looks like honey, brother. Sweet, innocent, guiltless - we all know it's far from that.

I make my way over.

Yellow.

I'm staring into its slight, almost amber translucence.

My heart is thudding in my chest now.

Why am I pitying myself?

Self-pity is such a suffocating thing, brother.

I need self-pity because I don't know where you are.

I need self-pity because of a father who doesn't recognise his own daughter.

I need self-pity because I despise the life I'm living.

I need self-pity because this is killing me.

I've realised that my eyes are squeezed shut, brother. The darkness is comforting, but each and every second I attempt to think, I see the yellow puffs of canaries - singing a warning song in my cave, telling - begging - people to run... yet nobody moves.

I open my eyes.

They are all staring at the congested conveyor belts, pouring and filling the things that will send people to their deaths: good employees. Good workers. Doing their job.

What am I to them? What is all... this to them?

Brother, what were you to them?

A piece of a child's board game, a small stick in the mud, to merely attempt to barricade our borders? Are they letting their apathy guide their hearts, and unamiable "tactics" guide their brains? As skies smoke, and cities burn to a blitz, what are we?

The good, or the bad?

The prosecutor, or the defendant?

The fox, or the chicken?

The fire, or the fuel?

The gunpowder, or its metal carcass?

The canary, or its cage?

The tiny band of metal is right there - sticking to my shaking palm like it's a

wailing newborn child clinging onto its stricken mother.

I shouldn't have let you go, brother.

I shouldn't have let you leave us.

I shouldn't be doing this-

No, No. I should. I will.

Let them remember. You were never a stick in the mud. I wasn't a yellow feather off a singing, suffocating puffball.

Let them remember that until they enter the grave.

1<sup>st</sup> July 1918. Chilwell. National Factory Six.

Do you like the date, brother?

I knew you would.

Happy birthday.

Save a spot for me, you promised you would. You're formally an adult now, you must have more significance. Surely.

The significance. They will remember it. The effect. The illogical leaders lounging their self-worth. They all look at me like I am a sun-bleached, toxified maiden in need of saving. They will remember what they forced you into. What they forced me into.

With a trembling, yellow hand, I drop the strip of metal into the container of TNT, and I am instantly covered in thick blackbird feathers, dark sunflower seeds and the sweet, melodic song of ghostly canaries.







On Monday, 2nd June, Waddesdon hosted its second educational research conference in our new Jacob Rothschild lecture theatre. Attended by 160 delegates, including Waddesdon staff, the day focused on dignity and equity in educational provision and how learners create meaning to secure long-term, deeply understood knowledge.

The day comprised two inspirational keynotes, the first delivered by Debra Rutley, CEO of Aspire, on the place of Love and Belonging in education, and the second by Sarah Cottingham, Research Lead at the Ambition Institute, on Ausubel's theories of learning, as well as a series of seminars on deliberate inclusion of all learners, neurodiversity and artificial intelligence.



**Our Year 8 Carnegie Shadowing Group have been reading the nominees for this year's literary prize. Phoebe tells us whether their favourites were the same as the judges'.**

The Carnegie Shadowing was great, particularly as it pushed some people outside their comfort zone, reading books they wouldn't normally choose. We were able to explore many different genres and styles of writing.

Every session was fun as we got to listen to people talk about the books they had been reading - whilst also eating biscuits, the best food for

book brains! The last session with the results was the most fun and we got to see if our favourite book would win. Our winner was 'King of Nothing' and the winning book chosen by the national judges was 'Glasgow Boys'.

Overall, it was a really good experience and I'm happy I was a part of it.

#### **King of Nothing Review by Dexter**



The book that I think is the best is King of Nothing. I like how the story is set around about our year and some of the things that happen are quite ordinary and are things that could happen in a normal school day.

I also like how Anton comes to terms with what his life should be like and how he should live it. Overall, I like how Anton changes throughout the story. I would recommend this book to ages 11-15.

#### **Glasgow Boys Review by Elysa**



I really enjoyed this book. I found myself almost tearing up at some moments, and laughing so much that it hurt at others. I was able to relate to some of this book, which made the emotions feel so much more real.

I would strongly recommend Glasgow Boys to teenagers - specifically 13/14 year olds.



# BUILDING *for* TOMORROW



We were delighted to open our new Sixth Form Building at the end of April. Dame Hannah Rothschild DBE, together with our Head Girl, Sophia, Michael Jarrett MBE (Service Director for Education, Buckinghamshire Council) and Mr Abbott marked the event with speeches, followed by a showcase of students' work on a range of projects connected to the Manor, Estate and Art History Link Up.

This remarkable building realises the vision, dedication and energetic work of a group of highly skilled and committed people. Thanks to their work, the building will enable generations of young people to develop into well-educated, principled and thoughtful members of society.

We are exceptionally grateful to the Rothschild Foundation, its Trustees and the Local Authority for their

generous contributions and expertise; the support we have received has been second-to-none. We are also thankful to the wider Waddesdon community for their support, including the local council, multiple partners in Waddesdon village, parents and families and our alumni. We are confident that this investment in the future will yield remarkable possibilities and successes for many young people.



Ben Crowther



Ben Crowther



Ben Crowther



Ben Crowther



Good morning everyone,

I am delighted to welcome you all here today as we celebrate the opening of the Lord Rothschild Sixth Form Building. It is an absolute privilege to stand before you as we venture into this new chapter.

At Waddesdon, we take pride in our ethos of dignity and respect. These values shape the way we treat each other and learn. The Lord Rothschild Building will be a place where these values continue to thrive and promote the strong sense of family here at Waddesdon. Our community will be enriched by this new space as we continue to grow together.

The Sixth Form is an important stepping stone in personal

development as we prepare for the exciting future ahead of us. This partnership with Waddesdon Manor will grant us new opportunities and support to take our learning further.

On behalf of the student body, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who has worked tirelessly to make this vision a reality. Your dedication has gifted us an environment to flourish in. We hope that with this space and growing support around us, we can reflect your ambition and kindness.

The Lord Rothschild building is more than bricks and mortar, it is a reflection of the trust and investment placed in us, the students, as we prepare for the next stage in our lives."



**Sophia, Head Girl**



Ben Crowther



Ben Crowther







**A group of our Year 9 Drama students travelled to London's West End to see a stage adaptation of Stranger Things. Oscar and Max told us how they were blown away by this hi-tech, immersive production.**

**Oscar:** 'Stranger Things: The First Shadow' was truly an immersive and enjoyable experience.

Previously, I had only seen a few West End productions, all of which were musicals, so this allowed me to open my scope of potential shows to watch. In particular, the visual effects used were the most stunning feature of the play, using advanced LED lighting and animatronics to create supernatural and surreal sights, making it feel

very involved with the series it's based on.

Using a prequel format to the show, it explored the origins of the apocalyptic dimension of the 'upside down'. Following genres of horror and comedy, not widely used in theatre, it felt far more compatible to the stage than I believed it would have been.

## STRANGE DAYS

Watching this will allow me to have further insight into what West End theatre should be like, and it will aid me in the devising/developing of drama by allowing me to use ideas or techniques they used to enhance their piece. For those involved in theatre, or wanting to get started, I fully recommend using this as great introduction.

**Max:** Going to see 'Stranger Things: The First Shadow' was a very surreal experience.

Everything stood out as each scene told an interesting narrative that had twists and turns and many unexpected endings for the characters. Each act left the audience literally on the edge of their seats with the amazing prop design, an interesting plot and acting that made you feel like you were part of the action.

I'd really like to thank Ms Olaley and all of the teachers who helped plan this trip as, without them, we wouldn't have been able to see such an outstanding piece of theatre. I would definitely recommend this performance to people who have a keen liking for horror, sci-fi and mystery as it has the perfect combination of all genres listed with an out-of-this-world narrative.



**As we unveil the Waddesdon Blueprint, a partnership between Waddesdon Manor and our school, the Manor's School Partnership Manager, Hannah Rayner, explains how our students will benefit from this collaboration.**

Further to the opening of the wonderful Jacob Rothschild Sixth Form Building, I wanted to give you a quick update on the work we have been doing to create a lasting partnership between Waddesdon School and Waddesdon Manor. This is a partnership rooted in education and opportunity, so that Waddesdon students gain the knowledge and confidence to think critically and to tackle tomorrow's challenges.

Over the past three months, we have been mapping out our partnership education programme for the new school year starting in September.

This is the start of our aim for all Waddesdon students to visit Waddesdon Manor and to have a moment of pause, an opportunity to experience something that adds to and even transcends their curriculum learning.

### Curriculum Enrichment

In October, we will be hosting a National Gallery Articulation Discovery Day at Waddesdon Manor for Waddesdon A Level Art students, based on Ferdinand de Rothschild's incredible collection of French seventeenth- and eighteenth- century decorative art and French and British paintings. We will subsequently be

mentoring those students who go on to take part in the prestigious Articulation public speaking competition.

To enable the Art History HPQ to become incorporated into the school curriculum, we will also be teaching and mentoring students (in partnership with Art History Link Up) using the Manor's treasure-cabinet wonders.

The collection will be further





used as inspiration and to develop understanding of ideas and movements for Year 10 students in their study of the GCSE *Power and Conflict* anthology – Blake with his revolutionary vision and his poem *London* where the whole of humanity exists under the chains of oppression; Browning and his exploration of the power of art and identity in *My Last Duchess*.

Year 8 Historians and budding writers who are entering the Historical Association Historical Fiction Prize, will be visiting the Archive to examine the documents on the Cedar boys and evacuee children and to experiment with the crafting of an opening to a short story. The A level Historians' visit to the Archive as part of their study into anti-Semitism will also be incorporated into the curriculum. We have also put in place a study into architecture, using

observational techniques and archival material.

Year 7 students, studying the French Revolution will be looking at the power of portraiture (life size portrait of Louis XVI) and comparing this to contemporary revolutionary prints from the *Tableaux de la Révolution*. The *Flights of Fancy* Year 7 Art study will also be incorporated into the curriculum.

In October, Waddesdon student musicians and singers will start to record music for the Waddesdon Manor public Christmas display, *Songs of the Season*, in the Coach House. This will include a new piece of music composed by one of the students.

#### And for the future...

We are currently exploring how A

Level Business students taking the marketing module can benefit by using Waddesdon Manor as a case study and how they can add their own research-based ideas on ethical and environmental influences on marketing decisions.

In addition, we are exploring the possibility of offering A level students the opportunity to gain a Level 3 certificate in Sustainability. This is a qualification which will not only enhance their job and university applications, but ignite their passion for sustainability and give them the skills to create a better future.

Finally, none of this would be possible without the incredible generosity of spirit of the Rothschild Foundation and its staff.

### Year 10's Phoebe told us how we have already started exploring the Manor's Art History Link-up.

This term, a group of Year 10 students were given the opportunity to take part in an HPQ (Higher Project Qualification) course run by Art History Link-Up in partnership with Waddesdon Manor. The course offered a unique chance to explore art history and dive deeper into the meanings of artwork and their interpretations.

The main focus of the course was to help us learn how to understand and analyse artworks, both visually and through writing. It also encouraged creative thinking and personal responses to different works of art. Weekly meetings included everything from paintings to ceramics, and we learned how to connect themes across different pieces, spot hidden meanings, and place artworks in a wider historical context.

One of the most exciting parts of the course was the main project: creating a "cabinet of curiosities". We were able to choose objects either from Waddesdon Manor, or from those shown in the

sessions, based around a theme of our choice. These were then put together in a virtual exhibition using the platform Art Steps. This allowed everyone to express their ideas in a creative and personal way, while also developing research and presentation skills.

One task during the course was to draft a version of our projects. This could be physically or via PowerPoint presentation. I chose to refurbish my old dolls' house so that it was styled as a National Trust property. This not only challenged my research skills, but also planning and creative skills.

Overall, the course was well organised and supported by a friendly and encouraging team. It gave us the chance to explore a subject we might not have chosen otherwise and helped build skills such as analysis, critical thinking, creativity, and independent research.

For anyone interested in history, art, or simply trying something new, the course was a brilliant opportunity. It wasn't just about learning facts, but about seeing things differently and discovering the hidden stories behind what we see in museums and galleries.



44 of our Year 8 students recently returned from an exciting and enriching visit to France, packed with cultural experiences, culinary adventures, and language practice. The visit offered a unique opportunity to explore French life beyond the classroom.

One of the highlights was a visit to a local snail farm. Students learned about how snails are bred and prepared as a delicacy in French cuisine. Some were even brave enough to try tasting them - an experience that will not be forgotten any time soon!

Perhaps the most memorable part of the visit was the visit to a traditional French bakery. Here, students took part in a hands-on workshop, learning how to make croissants under the guidance of a French baker.

Overall, the visit was a wonderful blend of learning, adventure and fun. It brought French culture to life and left students with lasting memories.

C'est Formidable!

Tiffany and Sahithiya told us about fun, friendship and an experience to remember:

“

La France est super!

The Year 8 French trip was a highlight of the term for me. It was a fun and great experience with friends

- old and newly formed - surrounded by French culture and people. From the chocolate factory, with its amazing chocolate, to the aquarium, and its wonderful sea life, we enjoyed everything in equal measure.

There was delicious, interesting food served in pleasant, informal restaurants or even supermarkets! And also, not forgetting the calming views, gorgeous beaches and fantastic shops to spend all our Euros... If this isn't enough to tell you what fun the French trip was, you might just have to go yourself to find out!

The Opal Coast trip was the most enjoyable 3 days this year! We went to so many different places, eating in multiple restaurants, exploring an aquarium, playing on a beach, doing laser tag games, and visiting a chocolate factory. I learned so many things on the way like the beautiful accents of the friendly French people who welcomed us. I enjoyed every moment of it; the trip was definitely a highlight of my year!"







# ROAD Rage

After a long winter spent planning, designing and engineering, our GreenPower team were ready to take it to the track for their first race of the year, at Bedford Autodrome. Year 9's Harry tells us what the team learned during the winter, and during the race.

On a cool and rather windy Sunday in June, Waddesdon GreenPower team took part in the Bedford heat in competition for a spot in the finals at Goodwood in mid-October later this year.

We had to be ready for scrutineering at 7:15am, followed by a 90-minute warm up race to give each driver a chance to get to know the track. Then at 10:45am, once we had swapped all the batteries over and made last minute fixes, we lined up our 3 cars on the start line for race 1.

There were a few technical difficulties, but each team just about made it to the

finish line! Some of the problems that we had were with the batteries and the gears which were not at the correct ratio so. Although we drove the fastest lap time (28mph), the batteries did run out quickly so it was quite slow towards the finish.

We then had 3 hours to refuel and grab some lunch before we were back out at 3.15pm for race 2. Overall, combining each of the scores of our 3 cars, we came approximately 25th, 11th in our category. Not our best result but there is always room for improvement at Dunsfold Park heat in September...



In addition to racing, one of the most exciting achievements this year has been building a brand-new car in school using an aluminium frame. The frame was constructed using lightweight aluminium tubing which we cut and shaped ourselves. To join the parts, we used custom-designed 3D printed connectors. We modelled these parts using CAD software and printed them using our school's 3D printers. This made the car light but strong, and it was really satisfying to see something we designed actually work on the track.

Two of our cars have also been upgraded to use five-point harnesses instead of the older lap belts. While this made our pit stops slower when

switching drivers, it opens up the possibility of adjusting the seat angle in future races to make the car more streamlined. A lower, reclined seating position will help reduce drag, which we hope will increase our speed and efficiency over a race distance.

Even though the result at Bedford wasn't our best, everyone agreed it was a valuable learning experience. Working as a team under pressure, solving technical problems, and actually seeing our ideas come to life on the track made it all worthwhile. We're already thinking about what we can improve before Dunsfold in September. Whether it's adjusting gear ratios, improving battery efficiency, refining our aerodynamic design, or just getting faster in the pits, we're all committed to pushing the team forward.

As ever, we couldn't have got to where we are without the help of Mr Iveson and Mr Weaver to whom we all owe our thanks for another thrilling day out.





# CHESS CLUB



**Our Year 10 Geographers were up to their knees in it as they carried out an investigation of the River Chess. Rhiannon told us how things measured up.**

As part of our Geography GCSE course, Year 10 went to the River Chess to carry out an investigation for our fieldwork section of the GCSE. We went to 3 sites: Chesham Moor, Sarra Mill and Scotsbridge Mill. Our aim was to determine whether the River

Chess follows the Bradshaw Model.

The Bradshaw Model is a geographical model that describes how a river's characteristics change as it flows from its source to its mouth. We took measurements of the width and depth of the river, as well as a reading of the average velocity and average bed load (pebbles on the riverbed) size at each of our sites.

From this data, we determined that the River Chess partially

follows the Bradshaw Model and any deviation from the theory was caused by human interference and river defence strategies.



The number  $1^1 \times 2^2 \times 3^3 \times 4^4 \times 5^5 \times 6^6 \times 7^7 \times 8^8 \times 9^9$  is written out in full. How many zeros are there at the end of the number?

The key to this problem is to look for an elegant solution. Attempting to write the number out in full will prove to be futile!

As always, entries from students, parents and staff are all welcome. Speed of entry is not as important as elegance of approach. Enjoy!



More Photos

**Our Year 10 and 12 senior drama students were the first to put on a production in our new auditorium, performing Dennis Kelly's chilling play DNA. Year 12's Elsie had a starring role and she told us about how quickly the production came together.**



# GENETHERAPY

To be part of Waddesdon's first student play in the Jacob Rothschild auditorium was an absolute honour! Having around 23 hours of rehearsals in total, a cast of fourteen students from Years 10 and 12 came together to bring life to Dennis Kelly's 'DNA'.

As a collective, we knew from the start that this was not going to be an easy process so we were determined to put in the hard work, in order to make this a success. This project really stood out to me as it wasn't like anything I had ever done before. To be part of a cast so open to creativity and who were

prepared to throw themselves in at the deep end was a pleasure and an experience I'll never forget.

I have definitely learnt a lot from doing this play, seeing how people interpret scenes or creative choices, but also learning about my fellow cast members and seeing how amazing they all are. One of the biggest challenges, personally, was learning so many lines in such a short period of time. However, the whole cast were really good at helping one another to remember their lines, even if it was a last minute cram on the day!

Performing in the new auditorium was very special, making the whole production feel profoundly professional.

Lastly, none of this would have been possible without our incredible director, Miss Turner! On behalf of all the cast, thank you. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to make theatre and let us work with you, as well as giving us so many joyful memories to take away with us. I'm sure there will be many more incredible plays in this stunning new space.







## FAITH Our students attended to a Diocesan conference, where they were able to explore questions around faith and its place in our society.

### *in the Future*

It was an honour and a privilege to accompany a group of our Year 10 and Year 12 students along with Mr Judson and Ms McCulloch, to a recent Diocesan Christian Conference, where they were invited to share their perspectives and engage directly with clergy and church leaders. The aim of the event was to amplify the voices of young people in conversations about the role of faith and the Church in today's world - and our students did not disappoint.

Throughout the day, our students spoke with clarity, maturity, and thoughtfulness on a wide range of issues affecting young people today, from mental health and social media pressures to questions of identity, belonging, and the importance of hope. Their ability to articulate how the Church already plays a supportive role in their lives, while also offering constructive and compassionate ideas for how the Church community could be even more inclusive, accessible, and relevant to their generation, was genuinely inspiring.

One particularly powerful area of

discussion centred on interfaith dialogue. Our students spoke passionately about the need for greater understanding and unity across different faiths - especially in light of the current global context of war, division and the media's frequent emphasis on religious and cultural differences. They expressed a deep desire for the Church to take a more active role in highlighting the common values that unite different faith traditions: peace, compassion, justice and love. Their reflections were a strong call to focus less on what divides and more on what connects us all.

It was particularly moving to hear our students speak about the importance of safe spaces, non-judgemental listening, and authentic relationships with adults of faith. They called for more opportunities for intergenerational and interfaith dialogue, and highlighted the power of the Church when it acts as a place of welcome and understanding for all young people, regardless of background or belief.

Reverend Caroline Wainman kindly passed on a message from some of her colleagues who organised the event, which truly captures the spirit of the day: "The Waddesdon students were amazing yesterday. Lovely band and excellent music. The students were so articulate and theologically astute in our discussions afterwards. They were a real credit to the school and gave me reason to have hope for the future of the church!" The feedback we received from conference organisers and Diocesan leaders was overwhelmingly positive, with many praising the confidence, sensitivity and insightfulness with which our students spoke. They truly represented Waddesdon CE School with professionalism, warmth and a strong sense of purpose.

In addition to this, the music which was performed by our very own Waddesdon students, was truly an unforgettable experience. Their talent and passion added a joyful, reflective atmosphere to the day and many attendees commented on how their performance brought people together in a spirit of celebration and unity.

For me personally, this experience was profoundly meaningful. To witness my students stepping into a space of leadership and speaking so powerfully about matters of faith, society and the future, was not only a proud moment as Head of Religious Studies, but also a deeply hopeful one for the future of the Church.

We are incredibly proud of our students, and grateful to the Diocese for providing a platform where young voices could be heard and truly listened to.



## Our Year 9 Beacon Group students travelled to Croydon Crown Court for the Mock Trial competition. Amy, Erin and Toby briefed us on their verdict.

On Saturday 14th June, a group of Year 9s went to East Croydon Crown Court to compete in the regional finals of the Mock Trial competition. It is a competition that many different schools participate in to learn all about our court system. Throughout the day we participated in a variety of legal roles for a designated case, including magistrates, legal advisors, prosecution lawyers, defence lawyers, and witnesses.

We set off from Aylesbury train station

at 7 o'clock in the morning. From there we took the trains and tubes to travel across London to East Croydon. Once we arrived, we had to enter through security and then head upstairs to one of the courtrooms for a briefing about the day and what was going to happen. Each of the schools had to participate in two court trials as a defence and prosecution team. We were told which courtrooms to go to and who we were competing against.

In the first round we did extremely well in answering the questions and also in asking questions of the opposing school. It was quite different in comparison to the mock trial we had won before, but after the first round we started to feel more comfortable. The case was about bikes stolen from

inside a residential property. It was a tricky case to prove, with a lot of circumstantial evidence.

Once the first round was finished, we congratulated the opposing school and this was followed by a truly fascinating Q&A session with HMCTS employees. With us in this Q&A was a court clerk who provided us with key information about how our courts function in Britain. This gave us a huge insight into the justice system in the UK. We were allowed to sit in the jury seats and the judges chairs and discuss what happens on a regular basis in court. They had a wide range of knowledge about the legal system and the laws of our country to share with us.

After lunch we took part in round two with Lord Ponsonby, Lead Magistrate, joining us for the session. Prior to entering the courtroom he had asked us about our experience of the competition. It was definitely a challenge, but we were able to stay relaxed and perform at a high standard. After the second round had come to an end, all of the schools then made their way to the courtroom. This was where the competition winners were announced, and certificates and awards were handed out.

Although we did not win the regional finals on this occasion, we were all extremely proud of the work we had undertaken. This whole experience was very interesting and truly memorable. We are grateful to have been given this opportunity to participate and to be part of Waddesdon Beacon Group.



This year's Sports Day took place in sweltering heat, the programme even having to be adapted to avoid the hottest conditions. Nevertheless, our athletes showed their admirable Waddesdon spirit and commitment.

# SPORTING Spirit

Sports Day 2025 arrived bathed in glorious sunshine, gracing us with some of the hottest temperatures we've experienced all year. From the outset, we knew this was going to be a day to remember, filled with excitement, joy, and the occasional challenge brought on by the sizzling conditions. With ample shade thoughtfully arranged and the schedule adjusted to allow for extra rest and hydration, we were perfectly poised for a truly electrifying day of athletic achievement.

Every year, we are filled with admiration

for the unwavering determination, sportsmanship, and camaraderie shown by our students, and this year was no exception. From the very first beat of music to the final triumphant cheer, the atmosphere was electric. Students pushed themselves to their limits, not just physically but mentally, showing resilience, passion, and unrelenting drive.

We witnessed incredible performances throughout the day, with a host of school records being triumphantly broken:

**Year 7**  
Girls 4x100m Relay: 7EHA/VHU, 61.52 seconds

**Year 8**  
Girls 1500m: Tilly Brookes broke both the school and Sports Day records at the District Athletics competition with a phenomenal time of 5:39. Although the event did not take place during Sports Day itself, her achievement was rightfully recognised as a new Sports Day record.

**Year 9**  
Boys 200m: Eugen Douglas, 25.10 seconds

**Year 10**  
Girls 200m: Thandi Mthombeni, 28.60 seconds

Girls 800m: Eleni Brown, 2:48.97

Girls 4x100m Relay: 10JDA, 60.47 seconds

Boys 400m: Jack Hancocks, 59.56 seconds

Boys 4x100m Relay: 10JDA, 51.33 seconds



While all of these record-breaking performances were awe-inspiring, one event continues to shine as the true highlight of the day: the Optional Distance Relay. Involving every single member of each form, this race is a celebration of unity and shared effort. Watching the baton make its way around the track, carried with pride by every participant, is a moment of pure magic.

This year's champions in the Optional Distance Relay were:

7EHA/VHU – Girls and Boys  
8FTU – Girls and Boys  
9MJB – Girls  
9ELH – Boys  
10JDA – Girls  
10SEV/ADI – Boys  
12MKH – Mixed

A final and heartfelt congratulations must go to the exceptional form groups who emerged as overall winners in their year, and to the remarkable individuals who stood out as the top-performing students in each cohort. Their outstanding commitment, resilience, and sheer athletic brilliance deserve the highest praise.

**Year 7**  
Form Winners: 7EHA/VHU

Top Performing Students: Emily Cook & James Mohammed



**Year 8**  
Form Winners: 8KT

Top Performing Students: Tilly Brookes & Carter Melton

**Year 9**  
Form Winners: 9MJB

Top Performing Students: Holly Clements & Saul Beck

**Year 10**  
Form Winners: 10SW/SR

Top Performing Students: Thandi Mthombeni & Winston Sarpong

**Year 12**  
Form Winners: 12AGE/JRB

Top Performing Students: Jasmine Field & Tom Gibson

Whether you were a record-breaker, a personal-best-achiever, or a passionate supporter of your form, it was clear to see that every single student brought their absolute best. It was a joy to witness such dazzling displays of talent, teamwork, and school spirit; the students truly shone as brightly as the sun. Sports Day 2025 was not only a celebration of athletic excellence, but a powerful reminder of the spirit and strength that make our school community so special. Here's to another unforgettable Sports Day, and to the champions in every one of us!







**Our Sport and PE students have been representing Waddesdon across multiple disciplines this term. Here's a round up of just some of their achievements.**

#### District Rounders

The commitment to Rounders Club this year has been truly outstanding from all of our students. Their dedication and enthusiasm have shone through at every opportunity. Students had the chance to develop their rounders skills and tactical awareness during a series of friendly tournaments held at Waddesdon, which proved to be invaluable for refining their technique and teamwork.

Each year group then went on to compete in the Aylesbury Vale District Tournaments, where the fruits of their hard work were on full display. We are incredibly proud to announce that the Year 10, Year 9, and Year 7 teams were all crowned District Champions. Meanwhile, the Year 8 team delivered a fantastic performance and narrowly missed out on the title by just a few rounders.

This has truly been one of our most successful seasons for rounders, and we could not be prouder of every student who has taken part. Their dedication, sportsmanship and team spirit have made this year one to remember.

#### Cricket

**U15s** In the dry summer sun the U15s competed, with various successes. Their opening game was against AGS B team. With a short boundary, the team was able to score 145, with Will Curtis scoring an incredible 60 before being caught out, with Freya Macrae providing the best bowling with 20 - 3. The next game, against John Colet, proved challenging, with several players only scoring 7 although Mason Guest came on late and did bowl 8-2. In the final game against AGS A team, Mason Guest scored 18 and the best bowling stats were reserved for Freya Macrae with 12 - 1.

**U13s** The U13s also opened against AGS A team. Our best scorer was Henry Loveland on 12, with the best bowling went to Arthur Atkinson 13 - 2. John Colet made an impressive 151 and Waddesdon put up a stiff defence, only falling 6 runs short of the final target, with Arthur Atkinson scoring 21 runs on the way. The final game was against AGS Bs, with the best stats going to Henry Loveland who bowled 21-1, and also batted 26.

We will also have the inaugural girls-only cricket match v John Colet this season another first for Waddesdon PE department.

#### District Athletics League

This year, for the first time, our girls proudly participated in the Aylesbury Vale District Athletics League, held at Aylesbury High School. We approached this event as both a training opportunity and a chance to gain valuable competition experience, helping our students discover their preferred events and better understand the demands of athletic competition, particularly in preparation for Sports Day and the Aylesbury Vale District Athletics Cup.

A large number of students took part, and we're excited to continue growing this involvement in the coming years. Our primary aim was not to top the league tables, but to encourage students to get involved, try out a range of events, and enjoy the experience of competitive athletics.

That said, the girls exceeded all expectations and delivered phenomenal performances across the board. The Year 10 girls dominated their league, storming to victory with an astonishing 60-point lead. Not to be outshone, the Year 9 team also showcased their talent and determination, securing first place with an impressive 40-point lead.

The Year 8 girls put in a fantastic effort

and narrowly missed out on the top spot, finishing just 24 points behind the winners. In the most closely contested league, our Year 7 girls rose to the challenge and clinched first place by a tight margin of only 17 points.

We could not be prouder of the girls, who have shown incredible dedication to athletics this year. It has been inspiring to watch their commitment translate into personal progress, new PBs, and even school records. A huge well done to each and every one of you!

#### District Athletics Success – The Waddesdon Way Shines Bright!

On Wednesday 9th July our athletics team took part in the Aylesbury Vale District Athletics Competition, competing against 12 other schools. Our athletes delivered an outstanding performance, showcasing not only individual talent, but also exceptional teamwork, determination, and school spirit.

#### Highlights from the Competition

Overall Team Placing: 3rd Place  
Overall Girls' Result: 3rd Place  
Overall Boys' Result: 5th Place

**Girls' Results:** Year 7 – 4th Place, Year 8 – 4th Place, Year 9 – 3rd Place, Year 10 1st Place

**Boys' Results:** Year 7 – 8th Place, Year 8 – 3rd Place, Year 9 – 4th Place, Year 10 – 5th Place

#### Standout Events:

The Year 10 girls' team beat all the other schools in the district, finishing 1st place overall.

Tilly (Year 8) broke the school record in the 1500m with a time of 5m 39s

Our Year 10 girls' 4x100m relay team won the relay with a time of 55.69s.

Annie (Year 10) broke the school record for the hurdles with a time of 15.65s.



Maddie (Year 9) came first in the high jump and equalled the school record, jumping 1.47m.

James (Year 10) broke the school record for the hurdles with a time of 12.99s.

What made this event truly special was the teamwork and support displayed by every athlete. Congratulations to all our athletes on another successful athletics season.

#### Our A Level Psychology students attended a conference aimed at helping improve their revision and exam technique. Year 12's Halima told us more.

On Tuesday 22nd April, the A Level Psychology students were delighted to welcome Jean-Marc Lawton, the author of the AQA Psychology books and a former examiner for AQA, in for our Psychology Revision Conference, in preparation for final A Level examinations for Year 13 and Predicted Grade Exams for Year 12.

The session began with him sharing a few insider tips and effective ways to answer exam questions which would prepare us for our upcoming exams. The session consisted of lots of activities and min practicals where we tested each other's short-term memory and looked over key studies. Due to the fact that Jean-Marc had written our book, we were able to ask questions as he guided us on how we should navigate it and use it to our advantage.



After the session, we gathered and debriefed, mentioning how useful it was for our upcoming exams, as he gave us tips on how to secure marks in both long and short exam questions, and how enjoyable the activities had been. Overall, it was

amazing to meet Jean-Marc and we were glad that he came in to share his passion and expertise on psychology. Thank you to the Psychology department for giving us this amazing opportunity.



**With its two music stages, dance showcase, world food, art, henna and face painting, WaddFest really has become a fully-fledged cultural festival. Mr Judson asked our Year 12 musicians how it felt to be part of this legendary summer event.**

# Waddstock Moment



This year's WaddFest was an absolute treat to be part of! The sights, sounds and smells were superb, and it was a real celebration of the community. Thank you to everyone who was there, whether as a performer, punter or someone who worked behind the scenes – we all believe it was the best one yet!

We asked our Year 12 musicians, all of whom formed an integral part of the set-up and entertainment on the day, how they were involved, how they felt it went, what their highlight was and what surprised them most about the event. Here's what they said:

## Evie

Having played WaddFest for a few years, I was looking forward to my last one performing. I played two songs in a band: one singing, and the other on the drums. On the day, there were no technical issues (thanks to Waddesdon Music's friend Jurrie and ex-student Luke) and the performances went smoothly. The highlight of the day had to be spending time with my friends. WaddFest is, at its heart, a social event and that was evident during some of the later performances when everyone gathered near the stage and sang along. We all made some happy memories that we won't forget for a while.

## Lizzie

This year was my first WaddFest since I only joined the school in Sixth form from another school. My expectations were pretty high, but the actual event still beat them, especially as the music at my old school was not nearly as good, nor were there as many opportunities. I played guitar in many songs and sang in the choir, which I also enjoyed. I think it all went well, especially the guitar that I played for Year 11's song, 'Street Life'. The best surprise was hearing the Staff Band, who were awesome!

## Matthew

This year was my first WaddFest and I performed in multiple bands including the Year 12 bands, choir, orchestra, Jazz Band and Funk Band. I also helped throughout the day with setting up both stages, and also helped mix the Acoustic Stage.

Personally, I thought it went very well. Most of the bands were seamlessly

transitioned on and off stage. My performances all went well; I always enjoy performing in front of a crowd. My highlight of the day was the headline act of Funk Band. The tunes were perfectly picked for this event and the song 'Mo Hippa' ended the night perfectly.

The best surprise of my evening was the Staff Band. I knew that my music teachers were going to perform well, but I didn't realise that other teachers in the school could play music comfortably – like Mr Dipple's bass solo!

## Elsie

This year at WaddFest I had the opportunity of performing in numerous band performances, taking part on both the main and acoustic stages. Each performance was individually unique, making it a spectacular event. My biggest highlight of the night was seeing the band The Placeholders perform 'Killing In The Name', and how everyone as a community came together to support. The best surprise of the day was seeing the awards at the end of the evening being handed to individual students and congratulating them on their achievements.

## Tope

WaddFest for me was a brilliant experience. It was my first time doing a proper performance for a festival. I was part of quite a few different things, but I think the main thing for me was my little solo set and performing with my band The Placeholders, which went really well. It was a very, very enjoyable experience but very tiring too, because of the hot sunshine!



More Photos





I think something that really surprised me was the fact that so many people enjoyed and appreciated the one of the songs I performed, 'Killing In The Name', which is a fairly heavy metal song. That song would also be the highlight of my day though too, because I managed to get a lot of people standing up and cheering. It was just a brilliant time all round.

I'm someone who really likes performing, so just having that many people come together to watch all of us perform and play music as a community was beautiful. I also managed to take pictures of a group of my friends to try and support them in promoting their band.

I recommend checking out some of these other bands like Incantation or Rouge. I'm just really proud of everyone who was there and thank Waddesdon School for giving me the opportunity to perform with their wonderful Music Department.

#### Will

At WaddFest I played in many ensembles, playing different instruments across all the bands, including bass guitar, trombone and voice. It was really good, to play with so many different people with many different qualities. My highlight was playing my solo in the Funk Band song 'Mo Hipa' at the end of the night. I really enjoyed playing along with the band and it also helped to improve my solo skills and it just sounded wicked. My surprise of the evening was Tope's performance on the big stage.



Photo by **Robert**, Year 12

#### Mark

WaddFest 2025 was the best WaddFest I've ever been to! The day was full of fun, fantastic music, and perfectly embodied the flourishing community of the school. I partook in a plethora of performances, including Funk Band, Samba Band, a Year 12 band, Rouge and Choir. Everything went smoothly and sounded amazing. The celebration of everything Waddesdon was apparent with all the stalls and events present. My highlight has to be Tope and the Year 13s performance of 'Killing In The Name'. It brought the energy that was needed, and was absolutely insane! Funk Band was the perfect end to the night, and it was an absolute treat to perform alongside such incredible musicians and human beings.

#### Saffron

This year was my first ever WaddFest as a new Year 12 and I was so excited for it. I played saxophone and flute and sang in multiple bands. All the performances were amazing and everyone matched the vibe of the night. My highlight was Tope's performance of 'Killing In The Name', as everyone gathered around the stage and started really getting into the music. The best surprise of the night was the Staff Band and how they hyped up the crowd ready for Funk Band as the headline act.

#### Luke

This year at WaddFest I hopped on keys for the songs 'Worth It' and 'Easy To Love' and had a solo at the beginning of 'Worth It'. WaddFest was a huge blast with no bad songs at all. I'd missed the last two WaddFests



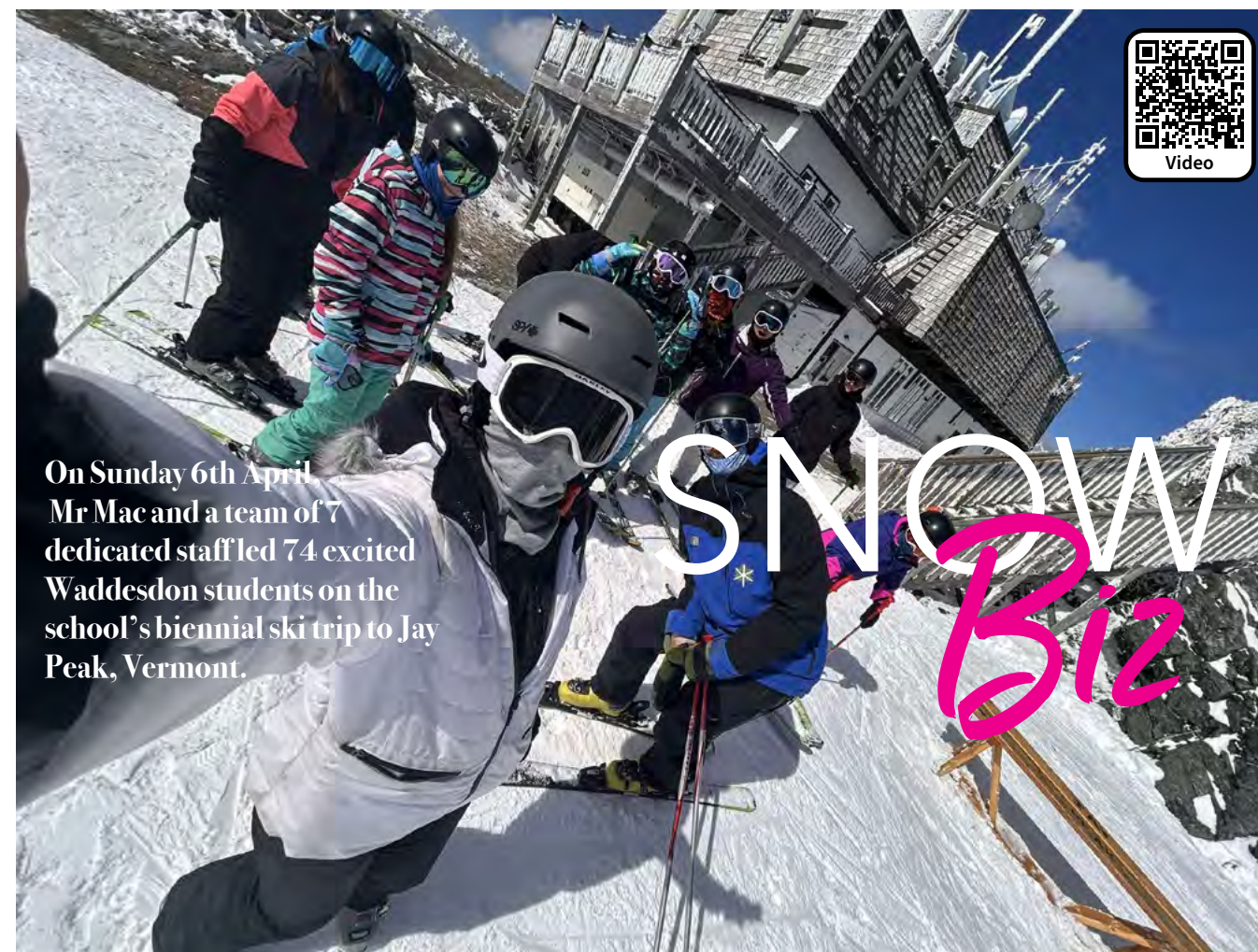
Photo by **Tope**, Year 12

due to a French trip and GCSEs, so I was super excited to get back into it. I also hit my notes in Choir, even with a shaky music stand as he couldn't stand still for the life of him! Everything went well except for one note in my solo, although it was jazz so it sounded fine. The highlight was Tope and Year 13 doing 'Killing In The Name', as it was such a banger and even formed a crowd at the front of the stage with people screaming for it. The biggest surprise was 'Toreador' by the orchestra, a piece I love, due to it being used as a motif for a character in a beloved franchise.

#### Matty

This year at WaddFest I had the opportunity to play lead guitar for many bands, including the headlining act, Funk Band. This was a great opportunity for everyone to showcase their skills and talents to the whole school and the community. This event, in my eyes, was the most successful so far, with around 1500 people and food and songs from everywhere - incredible talent, sound and community. My highlight was 'Mo Hipa' played by the Funk Band, as this got the whole crowd going and the whole mosh pit going crazyyyyyy!

The best surprise of the day was the weather: compared to a few years ago when it was cold and windy and a bit drizzly, this year was 30 degrees no wind and very warm. My second highlight was Mr Dimond's vocals dominating through in 'Stargazing', just leading with his beautiful harmony in the bass section whilst the new Year 7's joined us. Overall, a great event from everyone!



On Sunday 6th April  
Mr Mac and a team of 7  
dedicated staff led 74 excited  
Waddesdon students on the  
school's biennial ski trip to Jay  
Peak, Vermont.

SNOW  
Biz

With anticipation building and snowfall continuing right up to departure—an extra three feet just a week before arrival—the scene was set for another unforgettable adventure on the slopes.

The group departed school at 4:30am and headed to Heathrow for their flight to Boston, USA. After a smooth journey and a four-hour coach transfer through the stunning Vermont landscape, the group arrived at Jay Peak, one of North America's premier ski resorts. For many students, this was their first ski trip; for others, it marked their second or even third visit to this remarkable destination.

The week did not disappoint. Fresh snowfall continued throughout the trip, pushing the season's total to a staggering 1,206cm. Each day began with a hearty American breakfast, a fusion of full English classics and fluffy pancakes drenched in Vermont's very own maple syrup fuelling students and staff alike for full days on the mountain. Jay Peak caters to all levels of ability, from complete beginners to seasoned experts. Its vast terrain includes

beautifully groomed runs, adventurous glade skiing, challenging snow parks, and breath-taking mountain views. The variety ensures that every skier finds their challenge and joy on the slopes.

Evenings were just as action-packed. The itinerary included two nights at the resort's spectacular indoor waterpark, an evening of Clip 'n Climb, cosmic mini golf, and the chance to experience a live ice hockey game; an American cultural staple that proved a huge hit with students.

After five exhilarating days on the slopes—and an additional two feet of fresh snow, the students rounded off their adventure with a little retail therapy in Boston before boarding the return flight to Heathrow.

The trip had everything: snow, sun, spills, and smiles—not to mention

a few bumps, bruises and, sadly, an unfortunate break. As the 2025 trip drew to a close, the countdown to Jay Peak 2027 had already begun.

A special thank you to Oliver Poynter Smith for producing this year's fantastic trip video, which you can view by scanning the QR code at the top of the page.







Our students in Years 7,8, 9, and 10 took part in their activity days recently. Our Year 8s had the longest trip as they camped at Longridge Activity Centre near Marlow and enjoyed two days of climbing, rafting and kayaking.

Year 8 Camp – Longridge, Marlow: Adventure, Challenge and Chips! After months of planning and eager anticipation, 143 excited Year 8 students set off for two action-packed days of outdoor adventure at Longridge in Marlow. Whether it was paddleboarding on the Thames, climbing Jacob's Ladder, overcoming a fear of heights or coping without mobile phones for 36 hours, every student rose to a personal challenge.

The adventure began the moment they arrived, with the first task being to pitch their tents. These ranged from compact two-man shelters to towering inflatable group tents. A special thank you goes

to the Waddesdon School Association for donating 10 brand-new tents, which provided essential accommodation for students without their own and will be used by many more in years to come.

With the sun shining and the river calm, students embraced every activity with enthusiasm, determination and a real sense of teamwork. Many discovered new strengths, supported one another and pushed themselves out of their comfort zones. Whether navigating the water, scaling heights or simply adjusting to life without home comforts, the spirit of resilience and collaboration shone through.

As the sun began to set, a well-earned feast arrived courtesy of Gav from Oysters Fish & Chips in Marlow. All 170 chip suppers were devoured with great appreciation—especially by Mr Judson, who demonstrated a talent that didn't involve playing a musical instrument. After a night under canvas, with varying degrees of sleep, it was time for breakfast and one more day of fun and adventure in the glorious sunshine.

A huge thank you to the parents for giving their children this opportunity, and to the 19 fantastic staff who gave up the comfort of home to support, supervise and share in the experience. It truly was a camp to remember!



## Social CLIMBERS

Our Year 9s took to the treetops at Go Ape, and, as Amy tells us, they really got into the swing of things.

On Friday the 4th July the Year 9s went on a school trip to Go Ape for Activities Day.

We had to arrive at school to get the coach for 9:00 am. As soon as we were all on the coach, we made our way to Wendover Woods which was about an hour's journey. When we arrived, we all made our way over to the instructors to find out what we would be doing during the day. The activities were team building activities which included physical activities and trivia activities, and high ropes. We also had an hour of free time during the day when we could relax, go on a walk in the woods or explore the site.

First, we had our team building activities. We had to roll a dice and move around a mat and every time we landed on a square we had to complete activities and answer questions to win points for our team. It was great fun and a very good activity to build our team's strength and skills. After the activity, we had an hour of free time and most of our year played a cricket match. Others went for a walk or played other sports such as football and tennis.

After lunch, we made our way over to the high ropes. We put our wristbands and harness on and headed to the first course. All of the Year 9s took part and

some teachers did too! There were some tricky and challenging sections such as the moving platforms but everyone made their way through. At the end of the course there was a zip wire that everyone enjoyed. Everyone had great fun talking to their friends and going around the high ropes together.

When everyone had finished we made our way to the coach and headed back to school in time for parents to collect us. The whole experience was one of the highlights of my year and we hope to have many more exciting trips together.





Our Year 7s spent Activity Day with the birds and the beasts at Whipsnade Zoo, as Joey tells us.



## AS ZOO LIKE IT

My friends were feeling pure excitement before the trip. In fact, I was talking about it to my friends for weeks and we were all excited and ready for the trip when the day finally came.

As we arrived at the zoo, the first animals we saw were the giraffes and the two baby giraffes which were running in circles. We then moved on to the bird show where my friends and I got a free haircut from birds! We then went to see the lions, but it turned out they were not there! I was not very happy as they were on my list to

see, but I suppose I can see them if I ever go back.

For me, the highlight of the trip was the bird show. It was very scary to have them fly so close, but it was also very good fun as well. I didn't like going into the butterfly enclosure as it felt like a jungle and made my legs itchy. Overall, the trip was great as we got to see lots of different animals and it was our first trip as a year group.

Thanks to Ms Brockwell and the staff for organising it!

*This fabulous picture of a penguin was taken by Year 7's Frank.*

## DON'T LET ME DOWN

Our Year 10s were left hanging around as they took part in team-building exercises for Activities Day.



Year 10 ended the academic year on a high, demonstrating terrific community spirit when WiseUp team building hosted Time Attack on school site. Amongst the 12 teams that competed against each

other throughout the day, the "Wycombe Wanderers" collaboration and perseverance has meant they have earned their share of the prize pot to enjoy over the summer break.



There was a relaxing trip to the zoo in store for our Year 12 Biologists - but not until they had braved the elements and completed their field work. Tamara told us of a day of testing, and being tested by the conditions.

## TESTING Times

At the end of June, Year 12 Biology students swapped out their textbooks for soil pH meters and embarked on an exciting field trip to Whipsnade Zoo in order to study plant diversity and the effects of levels of nutrients. The visit formed part of our Biology curriculum and offered us the chance to put theory into practice by using quadrats and transect lines outside of our very barren school field!

The coach journey started off with half of us having sleepy faces and the other half doing karaoke. Eventually, though, the day got more educational as it went on. We began our walk to the hills with exciting stories about Miss Tubb's animal dissections during her time at the zoo, inspiring lots of us

to look outside the traditional career routes of biology and further enriching our understanding of the subject.

Once we got there, we met our wonderful supervisor, Marcus, who told us about the history of the zoo and the importance of their conservation work. He briefed us on what we would be doing and provided us with fancy equipment that checked the humidity, pH, light intensity and temperature of the soil. We cracked on very efficiently with our practical investigation. Unfortunately though, our workflow was disrupted by a huge outburst of rain that ruined many workbooks and, most importantly, linen trousers! Although there was intense recreations of Wuthering

Heights and lots of giggles, we were quite resilient and managed to finish our investigation, leaving us lots of time to have a wander around the zoo.

Thankfully, the weather cheered up and we all got our steps in trying to enjoy the baby lions, baby rhinos and some rather angry chimpanzees all at once. After a few ice creams and about a salary's worth spent at the gift shop, we finally arrived back at school and went on to write up our notes in our practical books the following day.

Thank you to the Biology department for making the day both educational and unforgettable.





# A FOND WADDESDON *Farewell*

We'd like to say goodbye and thank you to our staff who are leaving us this term. Thanks for all the love and hard work you have given, and best wishes for the future.



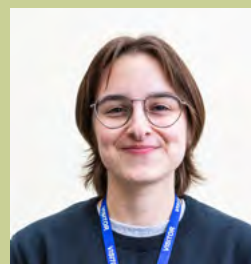
Miss Choudhury



Mrs Lamb



Mrs Breith



Miss Thompson



Miss Knibbs



Ms Sontowski



Mr Ashton-May



Mr Amir



Miss Hoe



Mrs Bambury



Mr Efunkoya



Mrs Cooper



Mrs Logan



Ms Dallas



Mrs Morgan



Rev McCulloch

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