



MALMESBURY MATTERS

DECEMBER 2024



From the Headteacher's Desk

As we approach the end of this festive term, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful experiences and achievements we've shared at Malmesbury School. This term has been filled with joy, learning, and a strong sense of community.

A highlight is always the vibrant Christmas Concerts and the heartwarming performances by our talented students, the spirit of the season has truly been alive in our school. Add to this the brilliantly observed remembrance service, Upper School Prizegiving and Carol Service, it has been a term packed with talent.

I am incredibly proud of the hard work and dedication shown by both our students and staff. Their commitment to excellence and their happy and caring approach for one another have made this term truly special. Whether it was through academic achievements, sports victories, or artistic endeavours, our students have shone brightly.

As we look forward to the Christmas break, I hope you all have the opportunity to relax and enjoy time with your loved ones. This is a time for rest and rejuvenation, and I encourage everyone to take full advantage of it.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Click on the links below to learn more about what your child is learning or visit www.malmesbury.wilts.sch.uk > General Information > Curriculum

YEAR

7

YEAR

8

YEAR

9

YEARS

10/11

Dates for your diary

6th January

Inset Day

7th January

All students return
(It is a Week 2)

7th - 13th January

Year 13 Mock Exams

16th January

Year 9 Options
Evening

23rd January

Year 9 Progress
Evening
9HD 9AH 9RY 9IS 9LH

30th January

Year 9 Progress
Evening
9JV 9RM 9UJ 9JL

14th February

End of Term

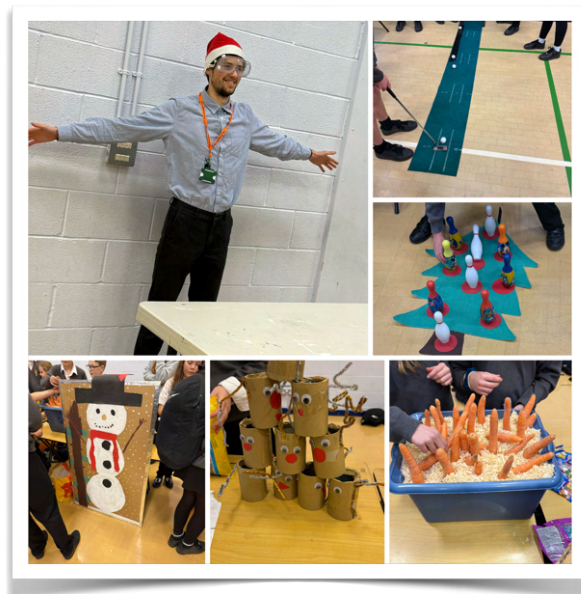
happy

caring

excellent

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

The annual Year 7 Christmas Bazaar successfully took place, demonstrating exceptional student engagement and entrepreneurial spirit. This year's event showcased remarkable imagination and collaborative efforts from all Year 7 tutor groups. This year we saw stalls such as upside down basketball, Tombola and Crazy Golf! Year 7 demonstrated exceptional enthusiasm, creativity, and teamwork throughout the event. Each tutor group strategically designed their stall to maximise fundraising potential for their house charity. The Heads of Houses were out, alongside Mr Jouny to play a number of stalls and decide their winners.



CHRISTMAS CONCERTS



Wednesday 4th and Thursday 5th December saw the return of the annual Christmas Concert and was a showcase of the hard work of many students across all year groups. Musical performances included the orchestra, soul band, chamber choir, whole school choir amongst the many soloists expertly accompanied by Mr Byrne. They were two evenings to be proud of, thank you to everybody for your hard work rehearsing this term! At the time of writing, students continue to rehearse and prepare for next weeks Carol Service in Malmesbury Abbey which is set to be another fantastic evening of music. Well done everybody!



STAFF & 6TH FORM QUIZMAS

On a cold, dark December evening over 120 sixth form students and teachers battled it out to win the 2024 Malmesbury Christmas quiz. With questions ranging from the Wigan kebab to the birthplace of Jesus the quiz had something for everyone, but after taking an early lead in round 1 the team of 'She's a 7 but she laughs like Santa' fronted by Ms Hendra and Mr Marsh-Ballard, never looked back. It was a lovely evening full of festive spirit, great quizzing and some wonderful snack selections, that ultimately ends up with the Quizmas trophy on the PE office mantelpiece for the next 364 days!



YEAR 10 FESTIVE FOOD

The last year 10 practical of this year was centred around Christmas. The students were given the brief that they needed to make a dish that would be appropriate for a Christmas buffet. Mrs Dodd and Ms Parsons were blown away by their creativity! Students created a range of savoury and sweet dishes including sausage plaits, peppermint shortbread, puff pastry Christmas trees and, Mr Corless' favourite, pigs in blankets wrapped in pastry. Congratulations to year 10 on a very successful practical and we look forward to their creations in the New Year.



HUNDRED HEROINES ART WORKSHOP



Hundred Heroines is a museum and gallery dedicated to women in photography, based in Gloucestershire. They are building a unique archive of contemporary practice and they aim to present world-class art in a way that is accessible to all. The artists from Hundred Heroines have been working with our year 12 artists to explore themes in the current exhibition called *Based on a True Story*, a beautiful and fascinating exhibition of the photography of three artists from Iran and Afghanistan.

Harriet and Shifra from Hundred Heroines visited year 12 art students for a workshop in November where they presented work from the exhibition and also brought along digital SLR cameras for us to explore. We are going to develop further work with Hundred Heroines and their artists through the year as our students develop a research project supported by the archive. We are delighted to be working with them and look forward to the next workshop for our GCSE artists in March.

You can find out more about the current exhibition by clicking here: [Women in Photography - Hundred Heroines](#)



YEAR 9 ARTISTS

Year 9 Artists have been busy planning exciting collaborative art pieces throughout the autumn term. Starting with the theme of Chinese New Year, and particularly the Earth Snake, students have researched and developed ideas for their own installations.

They have explored the powerful slogan art of Bob and Roberta Smith, giving them ideas for typography and bold statements. Students also explored the work of Ai Weiwei, taking inspiration from his Freedom Project in which he suspended a floating dragon installation in Alcatraz to represent the concept of Freedom of Speech. With these references, our artists have developed ideas in small groups and are in the middle of making pieces to be put up around the school.

We have been so impressed with the quality of their drawing pages, particularly their attention to detail on the tiny details of snake scales. There have also been some super examples of team-work in our lessons and we cannot wait to see the finished pieces after the Christmas holidays. Watch out for updates on social media.



PRIMARY ART CPD AT WESTONBIRT COMMUNITY SHELTER



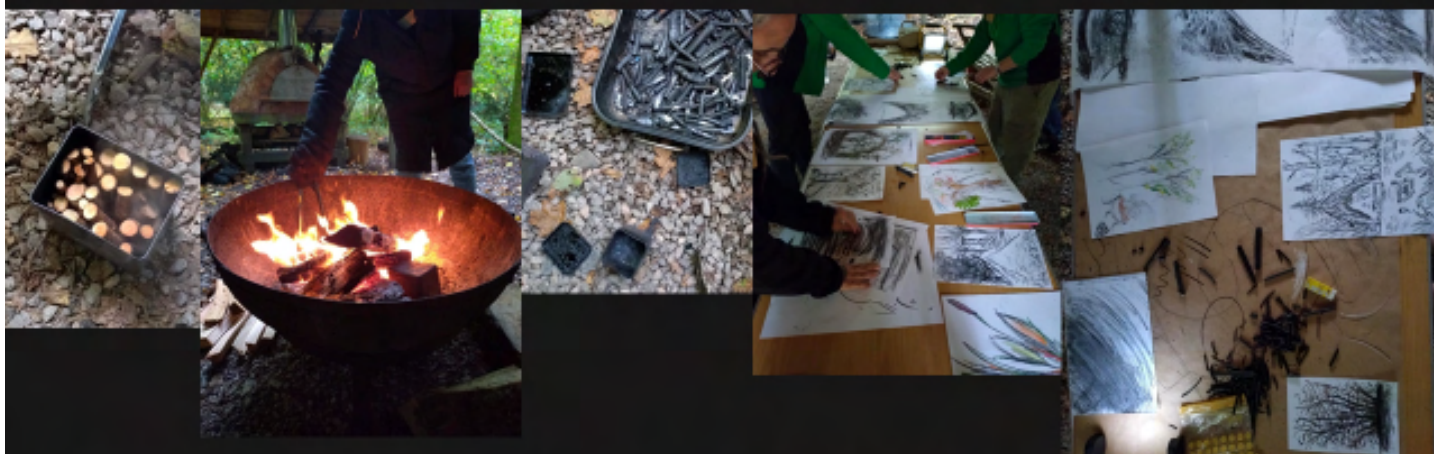
At the end of the first term the Art department ran a CPD workshop aimed at primary teachers at the beautiful Westonbirt Arboretum Community Shelter. This was a wonderful opportunity for teachers to work together in the fresh air as we enjoyed the glorious autumn leaves, made our own charcoal, drew from life and explored a collaborative approach to Art and making.

The Community co-ordinator and volunteers from Westonbirt Arboretum welcomed us and showed us how to gather willow and hazel which we then made into charcoal. Sue Gibbons led a drawing workshop where we used our freshly made charcoal to record from the area.

The CPD workshop is part of the work the Art department is developing to support our Artsmark projects over the year.

The Workshop; Making and drawing with charcoal (and so much more).

We will be working in the fresh air as we enjoy the glorious autumn leaves, make our own charcoal, draw from life and explore a collaborative approach to Art and making.



CPD for primary teachers: October 2025: *Share the joy of experimenting with charcoal. Inviting curiosity and exploration.*

YEAR 11 STUDENTS EXPLORE RAT DISSECTION

On Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th November, a group of enthusiastic Year 11 students had the exciting opportunity to dissect a rat after school. The rats were specially prepared with coloured latex—red for arteries and blue for veins—to make the dissection more informative. The students were joined in the session by a special crochet rat, skillfully made by a former Malmesbury School Science teacher.

Day 1: Students began by carefully cutting through layers of skin and muscle to expose the organs underneath.

Day 2: They explored and dissected various systems, including the digestive system, kidneys, reproductive system, heart, lungs, and even the brain in some cases.

The students were fantastic, showing great care and diligence throughout the process. This hands-on experience allowed them to learn a lot about mammalian anatomy and how different organs and systems are interconnected. Their positivity and enthusiasm made the sessions a real pleasure to be a part of.

A big thank you to Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Atkinson, and Mrs. McCoy for volunteering their time to make these sessions possible.



PERIOD DRAMA



On Monday 18th November, Year 7 watched 'The Period Drama' by Atomic Rhubard, a theatre Company who specialises in Theatre in Education. This was delivered as part of their Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum in Personal Development.

'The Period Drama' was a show about periods and everything that comes with them. The Period Drama' enabled the pupils to learn about periods in an "entertaining and memorable way".

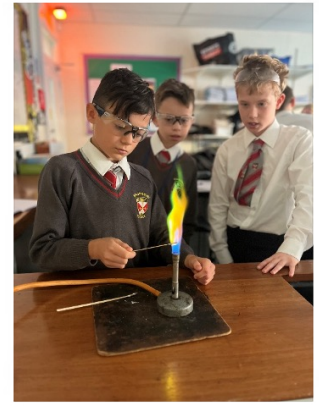
Year 10 drama pupils were also given the opportunity to do a two-hour workshop with the actors, where they produced a two-minute drama production in small groups with guidance and support from the actors on the subject.

FORENSICS WEEK

By George Crabb 7KM

In forensics week, in science we had to do some different tests to see who murdered Mrs McCombe's identical twin sister. It was clear at first that the killer wanted to kill Mrs McCombe but got easily mistaken.

As a team we all had to piece together different clues to find the killer. The different tests we did included: CCTV, blood splatters, fingerprints, DNA samples and a powder analysis that was found at the scene. There were six suspects, all teachers. We had a fun time figuring out that Mrs Griffin was the murderer!



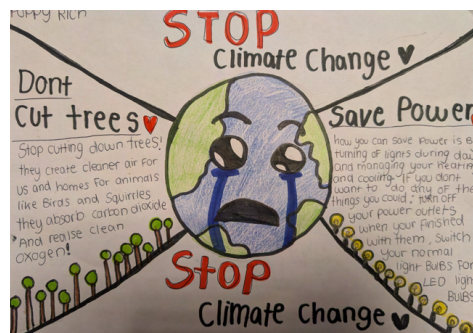
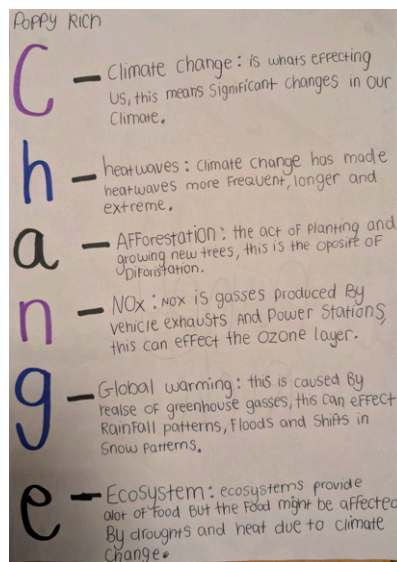
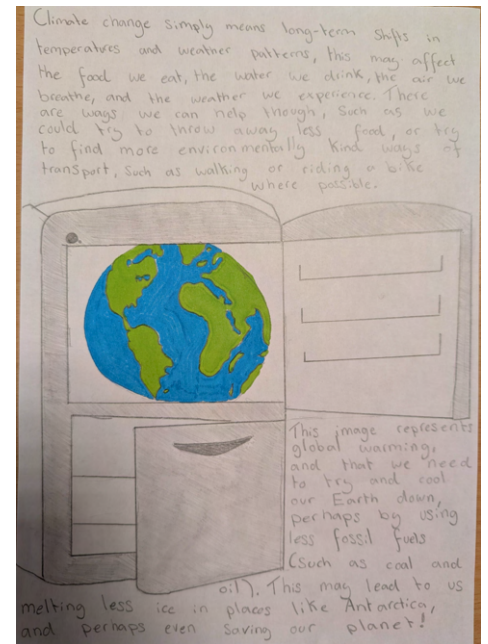
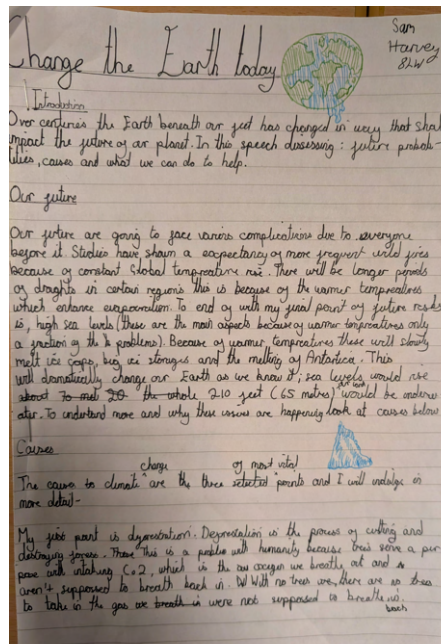
YEAR 13 PHYSICISTS AT LEA & GARSDON PRIMARY

Archie, Ashleigh, Aaron, Chris and Tom from Year 13 Physics delivered a wonderful outreach session at Lea and Garsdon School. The physicists taught the Year 5s all about pressure – what causes it, and what happens when there is too much! Students experimented with exploding film canisters to find out which combination of reactants gave the biggest build up of pressure. Arthur in Yr5 declared it to be “the best science lesson ever”. Thanks to all the students for a great opportunity for the next generation of Malmesbury scientists



YEAR 8 GEOGRAPHY

Well done to 8CT, 8CP, 8SB, 8LW and 8SG for their creative homeworks. The students produced persuasive speeches, poems, artwork, presentations and videos to highlight some of the global issues they've been learning about this term in the topic "think green, act green". We have been very impressed with their contributions with lots being spoken aloud to their teacher or whole class. Fantastic effort and learning year 8!



COMPUTING NEWS FROM MR SHAW

Our amazing team of I.T. Technicians have been hard at work, making sure we get the best equipment possible across the Computing classrooms and school site in general. Since I started here at Malmesbury school, they have always been great to work with - very open to ideas from teachers and always genuinely happy to help. For instance, one small example: Minecraft Club has been a great success, and we literally couldn't do it without them.

On a bigger scale, we are blessed with a very practical rolling upgrade programme, with equipment needs being regularly reviewed and planned for. MC11 will soon see much needed new slimline PCs and wider high definition monitors - the cherry on the cake being a huge HD display screen - a much needed enhancement in a room that is getting busier and busier.

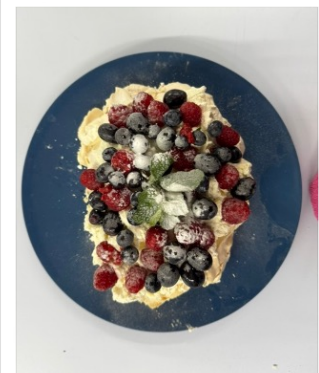
Mr. Cox and team have very recently announced that wifi grumbles are soon to be a distant memory, as we will be shortly bathed in excellent, enhanced wireless internet connectivity right across the school site! Good times!

YEAR 7 FOOD & NUTRITION

This term the year 7 Food and Nutrition groups have been focusing on the importance of getting more fruit and vegetables into their diet.

For their assessed practical they had to create a family friendly dish that included a portion of fruit or vegetables. The standard and creativity of these dishes has been very impressive and has ranged from lasagne to pavlova to sushi. It has been good to see them setting themselves challenging tasks and working hard to achieve them.

The year 7's also enjoyed experimenting with how to get more fruit (and sometimes vegetables) into their diets by making smoothies. We have discussed how this can help us to get lots of the vitamins and minerals our bodies need to help us stay fit and healthy. Using the blender was also a big highlight for them.



NEWS FROM PE

Year 9 Rugby Champs

Year 9 boys became joint champions of Wiltshire school rugby back in November. After a tough group and a tight loss to Sheldon, the boys regrouped to get through to the semi-final. They worked hard and made the final where they tied with Sheldon after a last second try and conversion. Congratulations boys and well done for a fantastic tournament!



Year 10 Rugby waterfall tournament:

The year 10 students capped off an amazing season with some fantastic rugby at KGA in their waterfall tournament. The boys took on a strong Kingdown school in the first game and lost by one try in the last minute of the game. This was their only loss of the tournament and the rest were comfortable wins with some free flowing rugby some may say 'joue rugby'. The boys ended up finishing 2nd to the Kingdown school they lost to in the first game. The first game of the tournament turned out to be the championship game and we came out second best. This gave the boys a great send off to a tough season for them with games against Clifton college and Marling in the national cup. Well done everyone who was involved and lets hope next season brings some more success.

Cross country Running North Wiltshire Area Championship:



On Wednesday 27th November we took teams of willing runners out to Kingsbury Green Academy in Calne for the North Wilts area cross country running championships. We took 50 students ranging from year 7 - 13 who ran on a very cold and windy day. All were fantastic in their own rights during their races. The championship is broken down into races for different year groups in which we had qualifiers in all races for the County Championships in January. Some special mentions go to our year 10 - 11 boys' team who had all 8 members finish in the top 15 meaning they all qualify for the County Championships. In addition, there were some notable individual achievements. Georgia Grierson and Izzy Coombs finished first and second in the senior girls' race, Sam Davies won the senior boys' race and Matthew Hunton the Inter boys' race. In total 21 athletes have qualified outright to represent North Wiltshire in the County Championships in January.

Year Seven Area Rugby Tournament:

On Wednesday 4th of December sixteen Year Seven boys went to Devizes School for the North Wiltshire Area Rugby Tournament. Year Seven have had a lot of students regularly taking part in rugby training so it was difficult to narrow the squad down to sixteen players. The tournament involved ten schools who were split into two groups of five teams. Malmesbury were in the same group as Hardenhuish, Lavington, Kingdown (Warminster) and Kingsbury Green Academy from Calne. Malmesbury won all four of their group games meaning they played in the final against Corsham School. It was a well contested final and Malmesbury won the match making us Area Champions. Congratulations to all sixteen boys involved who played brilliantly as a team and are a credit to the school.



Triathlon Club - Autumn Term:



In the six Fridays, in the weeks either side of October half-term, 32 students from Years 9 to 13 took part in triathlon training after school at The Activity Zone. This involved training for two of the three disciplines each week. Triathlon consists of swimming followed by cycling and then running. Our previous clubs have led to many students continuing triathlon in their own time and when they leave school. In fact a former student and school triathlete, Lizzie Rayner, took part in the World Championships in New Zealand in December. In the last week of our club sessions

28 triathletes took part in the triathlon competition. This involved swimming 16 lengths of the pool (400m), cycling 10km on a stationary bike and then running 6 laps around the school. Among those who took part some had taken part in the competition before but there were many 'first-timers'. All 28 triathletes finished the race and Matthew Hunton was first among the boys and Georgia Grierson first among the girls.

HUGE CONGRATULATIONS TO FORMER STUDENT LIZZIE RAYNER

Lizzie recently competed in her first triathlon world championship in New Zealand and placed 16th IN THE WORLD!! Congratulations Lizzie!



WHAT AN INCREDIBLY EXCITING TIME ABOARD TS ROYALIST!

By Rosa Clough, Year 9

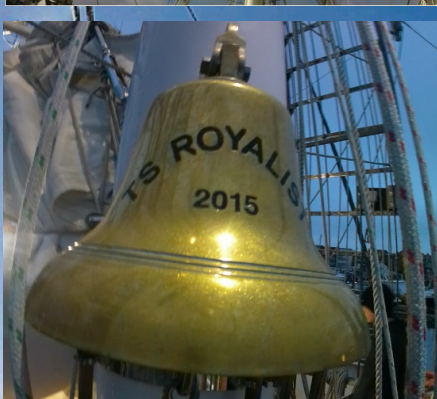
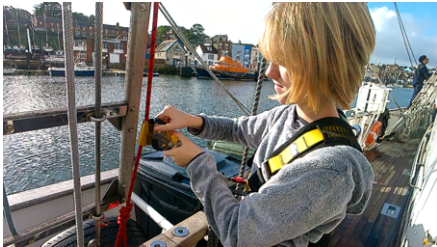
In October, Sea Cadet Rosa Clough in Year 9 was accepted to participate in a trip aboard TS Royalist with the Sea Cadets. Below she describes what a brilliant opportunity this was for her:

When I got accepted on to TS Royalist, I was so excited I couldn't believe it and when the school said I could go I was so happy. I was to get on Royalist in Weymouth and sail to Cowes in the Isle of Wight and then sail to Poole.

Royalist is 83 GRT and her hull is 23.32 metres long, with an overall length of 29.52 metres. As well as her sails, she is equipped with two diesel engines of 110 kilowatts each. The engines drive twin screw propellers.

Read more over the page....





Cadets can gain various qualifications when they complete a week on board TS 'Royalist'. Mainly Offshore Hand 1 and Offshore Hand 2. Later qualifications such as Offshore Seaman, and Offshore Watch leader are usually held by Cadets with experience on board the Royalist, but it is generally required, especially for Offshore Watch Leader, that Cadets wishing to gain these qualifications also have experience on board the Yachts TS 'Vigilant' or the sister TS 'City Liveryman'. I achieved my Offshore Hand 1 qualification during this trip.

During the voyage I had to do some up and overs using a harness. I climbed up to the first platform (circled in the picture) and down the other side. In the second picture you can see me connecting the slip lock to allow me to climb. I also got to climb up to the middle and top sail and undo them to let them down. I really enjoyed climbing because you could see everything for miles!

We also had lots of cleaning to do. I was on the brass bell and on the deck. This involved cleaning everything on your hands and knees. We were at it all day!

Night watch was fun and tiring. It was very rough and dark and I was awake 8-10pm and 12-2 am. We also had shore leave and at one point we were docked alongside HMS Queen Elizabeth who saluted us and we saluted back. We practiced safety drills and practiced our seamanship whilst at sea.

When it was home time I was sad to leave but I now have a memory to last a life-time! Goodbye Royalist! Hope to see you soon!



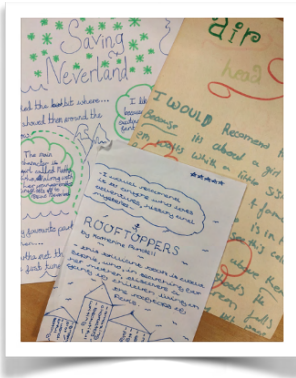
READING ROUNDUP

BUZZ ABOUT BOOKS

Earlier this term each year 7 student enthusiastically selected their own book to keep and take home with them this Christmas.

A selection of 16 book titles were on offer, so there was some tough competition! They were all able to thumb through the books, read the blurbs and decide which one interested them the most.

With many students lamenting that they could only choose one, many of these book titles can also now be found in our library vending machine!



READING CHALLENGES

In the library there are a variety of reading challenges for students to get stuck into. We have seen some fantastic book reviews and students tackling a range of genres, all to get their hands on a book vending machine token! New Year's resolutions are approaching - maybe make one about reading and set yourself a challenge! Ms Pincock, Mrs Dunn or our wonderful Sixth Form librarians would be happy to help students select the right book!

TUTOR READING PROGRAMME

The Tutor Reading Programme is well under way with lots of tutor groups over halfway through their book. Some are even on their second! Take a chance this Christmas break to have a chat with your child about the book they are reading as a class!





YEAR 7 STUDENTS ATTEND INSPIRING AUTHOR TALK AT SIR WILLIAM ROMNEY'S SCHOOL

In November, some of our enthusiastic Year 7 students had the wonderful opportunity to join peers from other Athelstan Trust schools at Sir William Romney's School. They were thrilled to hear from the author Danny Rurlander, who captivated them with his brilliant adventure story, *Spylark*.

This event was a fantastic way to bring students together, celebrate the joy of reading, and share invaluable creative writing tips. Additionally, Danny's insights touched on the intriguing potential of drones, sparking curiosity and excitement among the attendees.

Our students were eager to delve into their signed copies of *Spylark*, with many starting to read on the minibus ride home. It was an inspiring and memorable experience for all involved.

ANTI BULLYING WEEK 2024

Anti-Bullying week is always a special week in the calendar where we educate and celebrate that 'everyone belongs'. This year we had Armistice Day to start and there was a moment as we came together as a school to think about what it means for everyone to belong.

This was followed by our usual Odd Socks Day - the massive prize chocolate going to our lovely 6th formers. While Scarlet Barker also won a huge chocolate prize for her Bake Off for Anti Bullying week pie. There was music all week, as well as activities around the school of games, colouring, bracelet making, T Shirt design and The Tree of Kindness. We were so impressed by our students and the positive things they said not just to each other but to staff - there was even a heart stuck to the till at lunch, which had been received with much joy. It all makes you feel cared for and continues our theme of happy, caring and excellent.

With pastoral displays ranging from what to do if you are being bullied to how to make friends - we can rate ourselves well on the success we have in school and the fact that we don't have much bullying at Malmesbury so it is the exception rather than the norm. So we shall keep up the good work and good feeling between us all. And remember 'Everyone Belongs.'



MATHS NEWS

Axiom Maths

13 students were selected to take part in a weekly after school maths club, focused on problem solving skills.

"I enjoy axiom because there are lots of challenges and you get to think collaboratively with friends in a smaller environment."

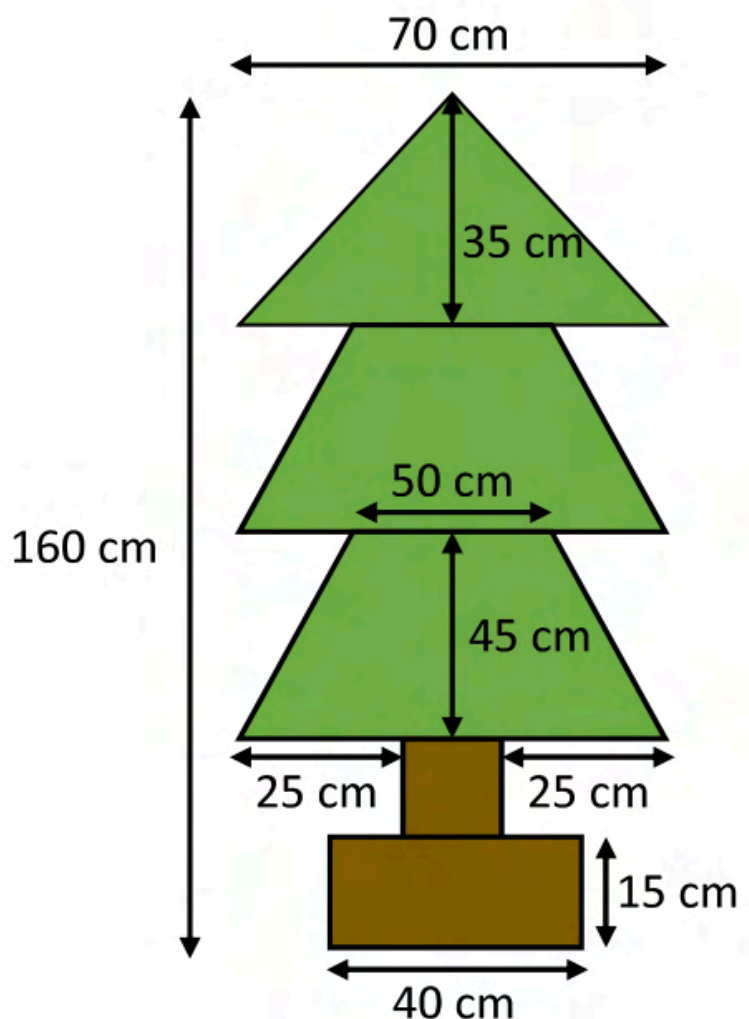
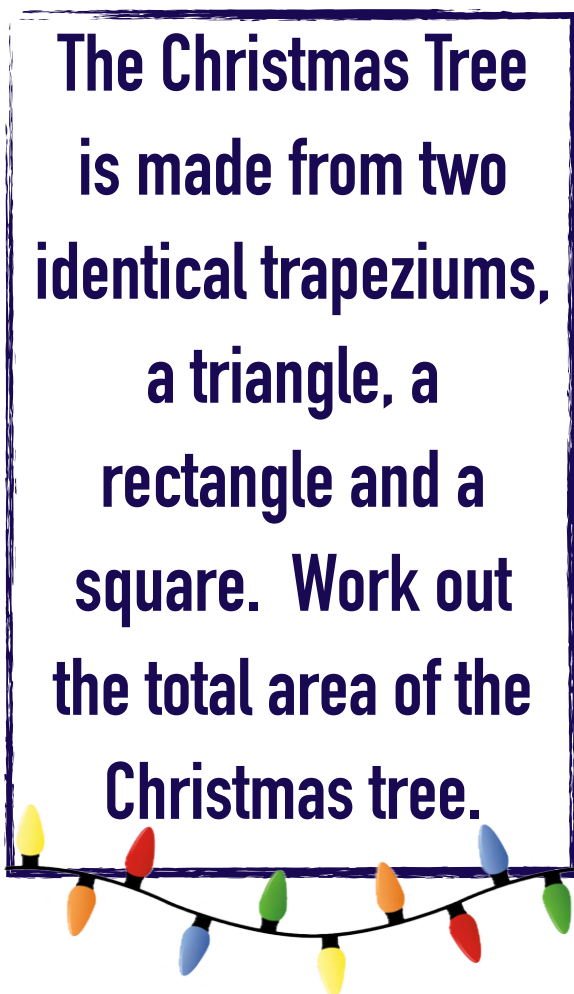
Year 7 Maths Challenge

12 students visited Bradon Forest School to compete in a team maths challenge, they did incredibly and Malmesbury won!

"I liked the maths competition because of the challenge and competitive aspect."

And finally, just for fun...

Not to scale



TEACHER TALK WITH YEAR 7



7EJH were very keen to contribute to this term's Malmesbury Matters, and decided to carry out an interview with Mr Freer, Geography Teacher at Malmesbury School

What were your favourite subjects when you were at school?

"At school, Geography was my favourite, followed by History. I also really enjoyed French. Miss Sims (my French teacher) was unorthodox but very fun, although I didn't learn much French."

Where did you go to university?

"I spent my undergraduate at Plymouth University. Then I went to Swansea for a year for my Post Graduate."

Why did you choose to become a geography teacher?

"I have always been an instructor, instructing canoeing and scuba diving, so teaching was a natural progression. However, I wanted to teach geography because of my Geography teacher at school, Mr House. He made me understand the landscape that I live in, and he was an environmentalist campaigner. He was what I thought a good teacher should be."

How long have you worked at Malmesbury school?

"I have been here since 2004, so this year is my 20th year! I have now started teaching the kids of previous students!"

What subject would you teach if you weren't teaching your current subject?

"I would love to teach any of them! I used to have to do lots of cover, and I liked teaching anything. It might be history. I would love to teach music, but I can't play anything or sing!"

Do you enjoy being a teacher?

"Yes, that's why I am still here! I love the day-to-day of being in the classroom, and working with young people, and making sure they enjoy themselves. There are bits that aren't as enjoyable but generally I still love it."

Who is your best friend in school?

"I can't pick one person, but anyone in the Humanities department, they are a great bunch of friends. I know I can talk to any of them, and they will help me out and have a laugh."

What are your hobbies?

"I used to play hockey but I had to stop because of an injury. I used to go scuba diving, but I can't do that anymore. I have now just started sailing."

Do you have any pets?

"No, we just don't have time, we are far too busy!"

How many countries have you been to and which is your favourite country in the world?

"25 countries at least! My favourite place used to be Peru, as I lived and worked there. But I recently went to Ecuador and this has become my favourite place, because one day you can be in the rainforest, then the next in the desert and the next at the sea. It also has a lovely culture and the people are really friendly."

What is your favourite food?

"Ceviche - a Peruvian meal. It is raw fish marinated in lime juice and chilli. The acid from the lime juice cooks the fish."

What is your favourite animal?

"A sloth because they are so cool. What a life, just hanging around."

What is your favourite TV programme?

"The High Chaparral - a Cowboy TV series"

What football and rugby teams do you support?

"I don't support a team, but I follow 3 teams. Aston villa, because it was my grandads team and he took me to watch, Southampton, and Shortwood United which is my local team. I support Gloucester in Rugby."

6TH FORM SPANISH FILM REVIEW

This term we've been studying in Spanish A level the themes of regional identity and diversity in Spain as well as stereotypes. To help understand and put into context some of the themes we have been covering we watched a film called 'Ocho Apellidos Vascos', by Emilio Martínez Lázaro after school as part of the AQA curriculum.

These are a few of the reviews by year 12 Spanish students:

It was such a good film to watch especially as an A-level student looking specifically at Spanish culture and the regional differences within it. The film highlights the differences between the north and south of Spain and this was very interesting to see, especially in this dramatised and comedic way. It was extremely helpful as it exposed us to a lot of the cultural aspects we had been looking at in class as well as vocabulary that we had not come across before and was very enjoyable to watch as well.

By Charlie Sturdy

Ocho Apellidos Vascos is a satirical film covering the common stereotypes of the Basque people and Andalusians; It is a Spanish rom com about Rafa, a guy from Seville who falls for Amaia, a woman from the Basque Country. To win her over, Rafa pretends to be Basque, copying the accent, customs, and lifestyle. When he follows her to the Basque Country, he finds himself caught up in a series of cultural clashes and struggles to impress her tough father, who is suspicious of anyone from outside the region. The movie is a light-hearted exploration of regional differences, stereotypes, and love, showing that real connections go beyond cultural backgrounds.

By Felix Manners

We watched 'Ocho Apellidos Vascos' this term as we have been studying regional identity in Spain. The film comically displayed the differences between people from the Basque Country to the Andalusians. There was a young woman and man who were from different regions who were pretending to be together for the woman's hard to please father. He had to pretend to know the identity of his soon to be 'wife' but her father soon realises!

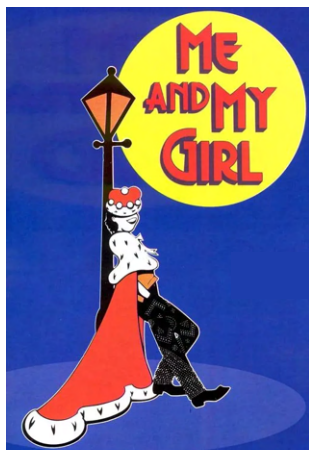
By Mia Prater

I really enjoyed the film Ocho Apellidos Vascos it was easy to follow and kept us all engaged throughout. The film linked well to the topics we had been learning about in school and enabled us to have a better understanding of the political side of things in Spain that we had learned about previously.

By Rosa Mullins



DRAMA DEPARTMENT NEWS



New dates have been set for the school production of *Me and My Girl* which will now take place on 16th, 17th and 18th July 2025. Let's head to the summer holidays with the happiest show in town! Cast, watch the board as rehearsals will restart in the New Year!

Watch out for **ZOOM LUNCHES IN 2025**. We will be inviting industry professionals to lunch to chat about their careers, first up in January **Samantha Perahia MBE Head of Production UK at the British Film Commission** who will be talking about her career. Ask Miss Edwards, Drama for more info.



ARE YOU FOLLOWING US ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

