



13th December 2024

Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

I do hope that this correspondence home finds you well.

Year 11 have been busy with their mock exams in the hall this week, and which will continue on through the course of next week, and which will also see them being granted study leave in line with communication already sent out to year 11 parents. We look forward to analysing their mock exam results after Christmas, the results of which will be sent home as soon as the marking is completed. Thereafter, year 11 teachers will focus on ensuring any issues raised by the mock exams are addressed in class, whilst working to complete the GCSE courses, undertaking revision and support, in class, at lunchtimes and afterschool in line with our revision programme. This week has also seen the continuation of year 7 and 9 in class assessments.

Over 60 members of the school's wonderful choir travelled to St Mary Redcliffe Church in Bristol on Thursday, to take part in 'A Grand Georgian Christmas' with Gabrieli Roar. I thoroughly enjoyed the performances from the many young people assembled, and our own school's contribution was outstanding. Well done indeed to everyone who took part in that performance, and to Mr Whittaker and his colleagues for enabling that opportunity for our singers. My thanks also to OC, Dr Charles MacDougall for inviting us to be part of that magnificent occasion.

Thank you to Mrs Crozier, and colleagues, for taking drama students to see Warhorse, in Oxford on Thursday evening. The school's drama department offers so much to their students, with all KS3 students studying drama, with it being offered at both GCSE and at A Level. Through studying drama, and taking part in lunchtime clubs and school productions, students develop so many valuable skills and qualities, whilst also enjoying themselves and having fun. Through engaging with drama students develop their self-confidence and ability to speak in a public forum; learn about others' lives and experiences; develop empathy and learn a range of other related technical skills needed in the TV and drama industry, an industry so valuable and important to the wider UK economy.

Sport matches and practices have happened across the week, as have lots of other clubs and societies, providing all students with opportunities to thrive.

To help support those students in year 13 who are considering applying for a degree, or other apprenticeship, Ms Glock (Director of Post 16 Education) and Mr Germaine (Careers Leader) organised an apprenticeship Assessment Centre workshop for them at school on Tuesday. Students were put through their paces, being interviewed, writing a CV and researching choices.



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The Crypt School
Educating students since 1539

Most applications are made after January and my best wishes and good luck to all those in year 13 thinking of that route following the completion of their A Level exams in the summer.

Congratulations and well done indeed to year 9 student Rafferty, whose brilliantly researched article has been published by the Historical Association Blog - what an achievement. Please view it here: <https://onebighistorydepartment.com/2024/12/11/young-voices/>

Thank you very much indeed to those many families who have taken the time to send messages of thanks and Christmas best wishes into school to staff: it is highly appreciated by all colleagues. With Christmas in mind, it is great to see so many students involved in the House Christmas Window competition, brightening up their rooms and spirits in the process.

We look forward to Tuesday's Carol Service to be held at St Barnabas Church, and of course to the end of term and the beginning of the school holiday at the end of next week. With that in mind, school ends next Friday for all students at 12.30pm, following our end of term celebration assembly.

With continued best wishes,



Nicholas Dyer
Headmaster

School Dates

17th December – Christmas Carol Service, St Barnabas 6.30pm

20th December – **12.30pm End of Term**

6th January – Start of Term Week 2

14th January – CSPTA Meeting (6pm, Sports Block)

16th January – Year 13 Parents Evening

22nd January – Year 9 Showcase Concert 6pm – 7.30pm

3rd February – Year 11 Information Evening

5th February – Music Theatre Showcase 6pm – 8pm

6th February – Year 10 Parents Evening Virtual

End of Term Arrangements

Our term finishes at **12.30pm on Friday 20th December**.

All students are asked to leave the school site at this time. All dedicated school buses will be arriving between 12.30 and 12.50.

The canteen will be open at breaktime as usual, but there will be no lunchtime food available for students on this day.

Please ensure arrangements are in place for your child to leave school at 12.30pm.

We look forward to welcoming all students back to school on **Monday 6th January**.

Parent Trustee

Mr Dare Owatemi was successful in the recent election to become a Parent Trustee of The Crypt School. Our sincere thanks go to all the candidates who offered their support to the School and to everyone who participated in the vote.

Preparing for Success

On Tuesday, December 10th, our Sixth Form students gained valuable experience by participating in a mock apprenticeship assessment centre. This event was designed to prepare them for the challenges and expectations of real-world recruitment processes.

We were fortunate to have the expertise of Louise and Charlotte from North Tower Consulting, and Sophie from Gloucestershire NHS, who generously volunteered their time to guide and support our students.

'It was an absolute honour to assist Crypt with their first-ever Assessment Day for students exploring degree apprenticeships after sixth form. Contributing my expertise and being part of such a significant initiative was truly rewarding. The event showcased the exceptional calibre of students, which was both inspiring and encouraging for the future of the workforce.'

This opportunity allowed me to help guide the next generation, which is a responsibility I value deeply. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and look forward to returning soon to continue supporting these talented young individuals.'

Charlotte Lipscombe, North Tower Consulting

The assessment centre provided a realistic simulation of an apprenticeship recruitment process. Students engaged in a group activity that tested their leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills. They also underwent individual interviews, where they were asked competency-based questions. By using the STAR technique (Situation, Task, Action, Result), students were able to effectively demonstrate their abilities and experiences.

“The mock assessment centre gave a truly in-depth experience and explanation on what to expect for those who are aspiring for an apprenticeship and do not yet know what’s to come.” Year 13 student



Charlotte, Louise and Sophie, our volunteers who came into school to help support our students

Apprenticeship assessment centres can be nerve-wracking, but by participating in a mock assessment, our students gained valuable insights and increased their confidence. This hands-on experience allowed them to identify areas for improvement and learn how to present themselves professionally.

The Crypt School is committed to providing comprehensive careers support. This mock assessment centre is just one example of our dedication to helping students prepare for their future careers. By equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge, we empower them to succeed in their chosen apprenticeship pathways.

Modern Foreign Languages



Our year 12 French students joined other sixth formers at the Parabola Art Centre, Cheltenham to watch and analyse contemporary French films.

This was a great opportunity to show off linguistic skills and discover new films.

Music



Our Gabrieli Roar participants performed a truly jubilant and unforgettable concert at St. Mary Redcliffe in Bristol last Wednesday. 64 students from across the year groups travelled by coach and spent the day refining and polishing their Georgian music with Paul McCreesh, Artistic Director for Gabrieli Roar. Our own OC Charles MacDougall provided some very spritely vocal exercises to warm us

up as the December nights draw in.

We would like to thank St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School for providing their facilities to have our packed teas and have a brief rest before the concert began.

Our concert was the last of an 11-day tour the group have been working on with over 4,000 young singers, which has seen Gabrieli Roar travel across the country and perform in remarkable spaces including renowned cathedrals such as York Minster and Exeter.



We were so lucky to receive this opportunity to sing with world-class musicians and ever grateful to Charles MacDougall and the team at Gabrieli Roar for making us feel welcome and bringing out the best of our students. No doubt they will have memories to treasure from this experience.



From one magnificent event to another, our own carol service is next Tuesday 17th December at St. Barnabas Church and we have a very exciting programme of festive music and a few selections from our Gabrieli concert. All invites should have been sent out to participating students and if you have not completed the Google Form, please can you submit this as soon as possible. We hope to see you there!

Christian Union at The Crypt

The Christian Union is a friendly, welcoming group of students across all year groups who meet to discuss questions of faith, learn more about Christianity, share fellowship (and snacks), and pray for each other and the wider school community.

In Christian Union this year we have been following the Youth Alpha course. The Alpha Youth series is designed to give young people space to explore their questions about life, faith, and purpose. It is a series of ten sessions (we are on week 4) and each session involves us discussing questions about each topic in small groups. For example, our last meeting was about faith itself, what this means and how we can live this out in our daily lives. We also welcome visitors who come in to lead some of these sessions with us, which works really well. We meet every Week 1 on a Monday at 1:30 in E9. We are looking forward to continuing the Youth Alpha series in the new year with more guests lined up to speak and continue with the big questions in Christianity. Everyone is welcome to come along who has any questions about faith or would like to find out more.

A very Happy Christmas to all from everyone at CU!

CyberFirst



I am delighted to share some exciting news about our school's participation in the CyberFirst Girls Competition. This annual event, organized by the National Cyber Security Centre, challenges students to solve real-world problems and develop skills in cybersecurity, critical thinking, and teamwork. Our team of talented young women represented the school with outstanding dedication and skill, earning a

highly commendable third place in our region and top performing school in the immediate area!

The competition was a fantastic opportunity for the girls to apply their knowledge to practical challenges across various domains, including cryptography, logic, networking, and coding. Over several intense rounds, they demonstrated remarkable perseverance and ingenuity, tackling tasks that required both technical expertise and creative problem-solving. Their performance truly reflected the values of hard work, collaboration, and a passion for learning.

Reaching third place in a field of such talented competitors is a significant achievement, and the girls can be very proud of how they represented themselves and our school. Whilst over 16 girls participated, below is our top performing team consisting of Tito, Poppy, Sabrina and Eloise all of 8WEH.

1. St Augustine's Catholic College
2. South Wilts Grammar School
3. The Crypt School
4. Denmark Road High School
5. Cleeve School
6. Colyton Grammar School
7. Bristol Free School
8. Cheltenham Bournside School and Sixth Form Centre
9. Braunton Academy
10. Pate's Grammar School

Reaching third place in a field of such talented competitors is a significant achievement, and the girls can be very proud of how they represented themselves and our school.

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the team for their success and thank them for being such excellent ambassadors for our school. I also want to thank you, the parents, for your support and encouragement, which played an essential role in their journey.

Empower Cyber Event

I am pleased to inform you about an exciting opportunity our pupils recently had to attend the Empower Cyber Event, held at Cheltenham Racecourse. This prestigious event is designed to inspire and educate young people about the possibilities within the world of technology and cybersecurity, and it proved to be an incredibly enriching experience for everyone involved.

During the event, our pupils were exposed to a variety of workshops, hands-on activities, and engaging talks from industry professionals. They learned about the latest developments in cybersecurity, explored potential career paths, and gained valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities in this fast-evolving field. The event also emphasized the importance of digital literacy, critical thinking, and teamwork — skills that are vital in today's digital age.



We are proud of the way our pupils engaged with the activities and represented our school. Opportunities like this not only help to deepen their understanding of important subjects but also inspire them to aspire to greatness.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us provide such meaningful experiences for our students. Together, we are equipping them with the tools and knowledge to thrive in the modern world.

GCHQ Christmas Challenge

It is that time of year again when GCHQ release their Christmas challenges. The resources can be found here, good luck!

<https://www.gchq.gov.uk/news/gchq-christmas-challenge-2024>



Helping Your Child to Alleviate Stress

We're excited to announce that Elevate Education will be hosting their next parent webinar on **stress and wellbeing** on December 17th.

Elevate works with our students, delivering high-impact workshops on study skills, motivation, wellbeing, and exam preparation. By tuning into their webinar series, you'll learn **how you can help support your child at home by reinforcing the skills they're learning at school.**

Sign up for the session below to learn some **effective stress-management techniques you can use with your child straight away.**

How to Help Your Child Alleviate Stress

Tuesday 17th December 6:00-7:00pm (GMT)

[Click here to register for free](#)

Social Media Checklists and Emotional Safety on Roblox

As young people continue to use their favourite social platforms, it's important they know about the settings that will keep them safe.

Social Media Checklists are available to parents and carers to guide through the latest settings:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/checklists/>

Emotional Safety on Roblox

Roblox is popular with lots of pupils at The Crypt School. The Jed Foundation has put together a great guide for parents regarding emotional safety and wellbeing on Roblox. Although the guide refers to American teenagers, this guide is appropriate for all children, not just teenagers. It covers cyberbullying, signs a teen might be struggling online and what parents can do.

The guide is available here:

https://jedfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Roblox_Parent-Guide_final.pdf

Drama

Last Thursday our year 10 Drama students were given an in depth workshop on Brecht (their chosen practitioner for component 1 of their GCSE) by a visiting actor; Julian Smith.

Julian has worked as an actor for many years. A few years ago he secured one of the lead roles in Punchdrunk's show "Enitan's Game" in London, and will be returning to work with them again in 2025.

Having taught and performed in Brechtian style for many years, Julian's workshop provided year 10 with a wide range of techniques and ideas to incorporate in their devised pieces moving forwards.



Library

The librarians are getting into the Christmas Spirit after putting the decorations up last week they are looking forward to the Christmas party next Wednesday.

The librarians are a great help in the library, keeping all books in order and carrying out lots of small tasks to keep the library running smoothly. I would like to thank them for all their hard work and time and wish them a very Merry Christmas.

Celebrating the 2024 Information Book Awards Winner

Alan Bissett's first-ever non-fiction book, *Lads*, scooped two awards, including Overall winner.

The School Library Association's Information Book Award, an annual celebration of non-fiction books, sponsored by Hachette Children's Group and supported by Peters, saw six authors celebrated at a central London ceremony on Thursday 28th November.

A panel of judges, made up of a range of experts from the education sector, crowned *Lads* (Wren & Rook, 2023) by Alan Bissett, their Overall and Ages 13-16 winner.



Bissett is a novelist, playwright and performer from Renfrewshire in Scotland. His book *Lads* (subtitled *A Guide to Consent and Respect*) is his first non-fiction book and was written to help teenage boys navigate relationships, understand boundaries and consent, combat negative online influences and call out bad behaviour when they see it.

Judges praised its essential message on boundaries and relationships, calling it a must-read for teenagers, parents, and educators.

This book title can be found in the Upper School library.

Christmas Jumper Day



£611 raised for the
James Hopkins Trust from
our festive wear!

Thank you to our students, parents, carers and staff.