

17th October 2025

Dear parents/carers and students,

I hope that this letter home finds you all well.



School Music

The quality, depth and range of school music continues to impress, and indeed strengthen with every passing year. Although constrained by the poor accommodation available to them, the music department works exceptionally hard to ensure that every student benefits from experiencing a musical education in years 7-9, with quite unprecedented opportunities outside lessons open to those who wish to engage more fully in music, which hundreds of our students do. On Monday, the school's rich musical talent was on display in the Autumn Concert held in the school hall, with the evening showcasing both the talent at school and the continued improvement in the quality of the musicality of those who thoroughly enjoyed participating in the evening's programme. We are fortunate indeed to have such a strong musical culture at the school, a culture which strengthens each year under the superb direction of Mr Julian Whittaker and his team - Ms Sophie Banda, Mr Christopher Slemensek, and our other peripatetic music staff. I was delighted to find out that the music department has been shortlisted for the prestigious Music and Drama Education Awards 2026 outstanding music department of the year award, to be announced in February at a presentation event in London. This is a well deserved recognition of the department's hard work and inclusive vision for musicality at the school.

School Drama

As students from across the school continue to rehearse for the forthcoming production of Oliver, our GCSE and A level drama students benefited from a visit by an actor, who held workshops with them during the school day on Tuesday, organised by Head of Drama Mrs Crozier. I am sure that these workshops, with a professional actor, both inspired our dramatists, whilst helping them develop further as they move forward with their studies of GCSE and A Level drama. We very much look forward to the staging of Oliver, on the 28th and 29th of November, here in our school hall.

Cyber event

Mr Rice, Director of Digital Strategy and Head of Computing, took 11 year 9 pupils to the EmpowerCyber 2025 challenge on Tuesday. Those involved attended workshops from tech industry leaders and the organisers of these workshops commented on the excellent conduct and knowledge of our pupils; in one challenge, our students topped the leaderboard in a cyber event, taking 1st and 2nd places. Mr Rice offers a full write up of this event later in this newsletter.

Open Day and Evening

On Wednesday, school filled with prospective parents and pupils at our very popular year 5 and 6 open event. My thanks indeed to all my colleagues, supported by many students and the CSPTA for



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The Crypt School
Educating students since 1539

their work in ensuring the success of that event.

Sporting fixtures

Ms Leask is providing a full round up next week of all sporting fixtures thus far this academic year, and we will look forward to a report packed full of the many and varied sporting endeavours of our teams and individual students. This week, it was pleasing to hear of our two senior netball teams' victories over teams from Denmark Road High School, and the success of the senior boy's rugby against Cotswold School on Wednesday. Last Friday, at King's our senior boy's rugby players put up a strong performance and, although defeated, their performance showed that the squad, under the leadership of year 13 student Degan, is making very strong progress indeed as the season develops.

Careers

Today, our year 13 students all benefited from an employer engagement event, which involved them being interviewed by an external business person, to help support their confidence and develop their experience of a job/university interview situation. My thanks to all our external partners, including a number of Old Cryptians, who gave up their time to support that event.

The school's comprehensive careers guidance programme for term 1, will culminate next Wednesday in our annual careers convention, to be held in school and which will offer years 8-13 an opportunity to speak with employers, charities and universities about the opportunities available to them when they leave school. My thanks to all our external partners for their participation in that forthcoming event, and to Mr Germaine for his organisation of that event, and of our careers programme more generally.

Our whole school 2025, Charity challenge - Run the World

It was really pleasing to hear of so many of our students and staff taking part in the Run the World Charity Challenge across this week, and today in school at the athletics track. Mr Hart is now extending that challenge into next week, and into half term, to help enable us to reach our goal - of running the world - and raising £26,000 for charity Talk Well (<https://www.letstalkwell.org.uk>)

The just giving page remains open, and donations are greatly appreciated.

https://www.justgiving.com/page/thecryptschool?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL

With my continued best wishes,



Nicholas Dyer
Headmaster

School Dates

20th – 22 nd October	Y7 Residential
22 nd October	Careers Convention
23 rd October	Y13 Parents Evening
24 th October	Non uniform and cake sale for SARA
24 th October	End of Term
3 rd November	Inset Day
4 th November	Start of Term 2
5 th November	GCSE Music Trip
6 th November	6 th Form Open Evening

Personal Development

As a Grammar School we are clearly here to support students in gaining the best academic qualifications that they can achieve at both GCSE and A Level. However, we also recognise the importance of each student's personal development and therefore highly value and promote the activities that take place beyond the academic curriculum. Personal development covers activities that improve awareness and identity, develop talents and potential, build human cultural capital and facilitate employability, enhance the quality of life and contribute to the realisation of dreams and aspirations for students to flourish.

We have created a personal development journey for each year group and these can be found on the [school website](#). Please click on the links to show the wide range of the personal development opportunities available to students as they grow, develop and flourish in their journey from Years 7 to Year 13. Please be aware that this is a dynamic document and so some dates and activities may change, and others will be added to the list as we develop and continue to support students.

Students in Years 8, 10 and 12 will follow our EDGE programme where they Engage, Develop, Grow and Excel in the activities and skills they participate in as they move through the school. These will be recorded on unifrog and will be reflected upon by students in Term 5 and 6. We will then report home to parents towards the end of the academic year in their annual report. The EDGE initiative was launched to students in assembly last week and we hope it will encourage all students to get involved in the rich life of clubs, activities and events in the school.

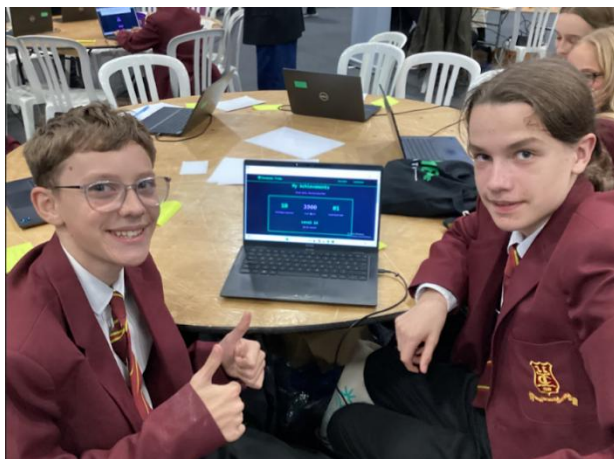
Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine and Veterinary Applications Sent

I was immensely proud this week of our ambitious students who submitted their UCAS applications for courses at Oxford and Cambridge, and courses in medicine and veterinary medicine. This year we have ten students applying to Oxford, seven to Cambridge, five to medicine and one to veterinary medicine. It has been a joy to find out about all they have achieved and learned in their personal statements, and to read my colleagues' glowing praise in their references. We will now be working on interview skills and academic discussion to prepare for interviews in early December. We wish them all the best of luck!

Empower Cyber Event 2025 – Trip Summary



On the 14th October students recently took part in the Empower Cyber Event 2025 at Oxstalls sports arena in Gloucester. An exciting day designed to inspire and challenge young people interested in technology and cyber security. The event brought together schools from across the region to explore real-world cyber challenges and learn from industry experts.



Throughout the day, students attended interactive workshops delivered by leading organisations including **Gemba Advantage**, **Golden Valley**, **NCC Group**, and **Bromford**. These sessions gave them valuable insights into topics such as ethical hacking, digital defence, and careers in the growing cyber sector.

A highlight of the day was the Cyber Challenge run by Bromford, where participants tested their problem-solving and technical skills in a series of hacking and security-based tasks.

We're thrilled to share that four of our students successfully completed all their challenges, achieving

1st and 2nd place on the leaderboard. The Bromford team were particularly impressed by their advanced understanding of cyber security concepts and practical hacking techniques.

We're incredibly proud of all our students for their enthusiasm, teamwork, and outstanding performance throughout the day.

Mr James Rice (Director of Digital Strategy)

Music Newsletter

Great News from Monkhouse!

For a limited time, enjoy 20% off all orders online and in-store – perfect for an opportunity to save money! **USE CODE SAVE20**

Offer Dates:

20% Off All Orders

Start Date: Monday, 27th October

- **End Date:** Sunday 9th November (midnight)

Music Newsletter



We have had an extraordinary week in the music department. Our Autumn Concert featured our largest orchestra with over 50 students participating. They set a majestic atmosphere for the evening's festivities with Bizet's March from Carmen. Jai S followed the Carmen story with his advanced transcription of Danse Boheme for marimba.

Our Belgium Tour Choir, Vox Floreat, made their performance debut with over 40 singers conveying the religious texts of Byrd's Kyrie from Mass for Four Voices and Pitoni's Cantate Domino. A wonderful way to prepare our talented singers to represent our school on the European mainland, making a beautiful, well prepared sound with excellent diction and choral blend. Erika M followed with a dramatic piano performance of Ravel's Pavane pour une defunte infante.



Mrs Banda led the Young Voices, who thanks to our Big Sing initiative were larger than ever with over 40 singers across Years 7 and 8. Their performance of Shadowland from The Lion King was spiritual and majestic. Our jazz trio consisting of Julian R, Sammy S and Sebastian B followed with a brilliant rendition of Autumn Leaves by Josef Kosma.

Reuben LA then played a melodious and respectful piano rendition of one of Beethoven's Bagatelles. Monty SB took to the drums with Stevie Wonder's For Once in My Life, which was dynamic and exciting.



Mr Rushton finished our first half leading the Jazz Band with Billie's Bounce by Charlie Parker. His tuition of jazz harmonic progressions and structure brought much excitement to the piece, with the students focused and playing with splendour.

Our KS3 String Quartet consisting of Oscar M, Arunpat K, Ella F and Rafael P, opened the second half with Gardel's Pour Una Cadeza, with plenty of character and energy.

Mrs Fullerton then led the A Cappella Choir with two reflective and harmonically rich pieces, starting with Chilcott's My True Love followed by Dowland's Say, Love. Daniel W proceeded with a wonderful piano performance of Hongjin's Cradle Song.

Amira MM continued our piano programme with a striking rendition of Fibich's Lento. This was followed by The Ladybirds, a band made of Year 11 students Samuel DG, Charles D and Abigail L. Their cover of Here Comes The Sun by The Beatles was nostalgic and powerful.

Ella F then took to the piano with her technically challenging and fabulous performance of Chopin's Nocturne in F minor.

Vox Floreat led by Mr Whittaker proceeded to return for their concluding performance of Lynne's Mr Blue Sky, with Mr Slemensek accompanying on piano and Sebastian B on drums. The event was drawn to a close with a final orchestral performance of Gershwin's Themes from Rhapsody in Blue, with plenty of dramatic flair. A truly exceptional evening filled with talent and hard work from our wonderful musical community.

We would also like to thank all our musicians and staff who gave their time and effort for an outstanding open morning and evening. Our musicians were giving performances to prospective students across the school. Our school representatives included Young Voices, Vox Floreat, Jazz Trio, Brass Workshop, Rock Bands and the Oliver Cast. Well done to everyone who highlighted the high standard and rewarding results of being a musician at The Crypt School.

One final announcement. We are pleased to mention that we have been nominated in the Outstanding Music Department category with the Music and Drama Education Awards 2026 in London.



The ceremony will be taking place in February and whichever way the result goes, we are so proud of everyone's achievements and contribution to musical life at the school.

Library Newsletter

Last Thursday 9th October we celebrated Harry Potter Book Day. This is a global event to celebrate the iconic series. The theme this year was Friend or Foe.

We had a very enjoyable evening with over 45 students taking part. Lots of chocolate frogs, waving of wands, cheering and banging tables and a general happy atmosphere.

The students of Hogwarts – in the canteen (after enjoying pizza) worked in teams to answer questions put together by Professor McGonagall (Mrs Jordan).

During the interval Professor Snape (Mr Bowen) entertained the students with some science magic.

This proved very popular and exciting to see the magic put together with science.



The winners of our fancy dress competition enjoyed chocolate treats.

Hagrid won receiving a Harry Potter gift bag of stationery.

Luna Lovegood and a very happy Ravenclaw student were the runners up.

Congratulations to everyone who dressed up you looked amazing.

The evening ended with the winners of the quiz receiving Harry Potter notebooks. Well done to the Dumbledore's Army.



The evening was a wonderful event, thank you to everyone who helped to make it a special event for students to remember.

Special thanks to Lucy from the canteen, Mr Bowen and the CSPTA.

Mrs Jordan (Prof McGonagall)





On **Friday 17 October 2025**, our Year 13 students took part in an invaluable experience as they completed their **mock interviews** — a key component of our planned **careers education programme** at The Crypt.

Over **40 volunteer interviewers** from a wide range of professional backgrounds generously gave their time to conduct one-to-one interviews with our students. Volunteers included representatives from local businesses, universities, and public sector organisations, all bringing a wealth of experience and insight into the world of work.

These interviews are a wonderful opportunity to help build confidence and improve communication skills before real job or university interviews. Although it puts many of them outside of their comfort zone, the students always recognise the benefits. They receive constructive feedback, so they can refine their answers and make a strong impression when it really matters.

— **Ms Glock, Director of Sixth Form**

The mock interviews provided students with the opportunity to experience a **realistic interview environment**, reflect on their personal presentation, and practise communicating their skills, strengths, and aspirations with confidence. For many, it was their first experience of a formal interview and an invaluable opportunity to receive tailored feedback from professionals.

— **Volunteer Interviewer**

Taking part in the mock interviews also supports our school's **EDGE Programme**, which helps Crypt students to **Engage, Develop, Grow, and Excel**. Opportunities like this enable our students to build the confidence, communication skills, and self-awareness that help them stand out from the competition — giving them the *edge* for future success.

"[Insert student quote about the experience — e.g., 'The interview really helped me feel more confident about talking about myself and what I want to do after sixth form.']"

— **Year 13 Student**

We extend our sincere thanks to all the volunteers who supported this event and to the staff who helped organise the day. Their time, expertise, and encouragement made a lasting impact on our students and provided an excellent platform for their next steps beyond The Crypt.

The event was made even more memorable by the return of numerous Old Cryptians, with graduates from as far back as 1981 revisiting the school. Their willingness to return, share experiences, and

discuss their accomplished careers gave our students invaluable insight and motivation for their own futures.



Crypt CSPTA Agenda

Our next meeting to be held on
Monday 20th October 2025 at 6.30pm

Venue: Sports Classroom 1, Sports Block, The Crypt School

**This is a group open to all parents and
carers and all are welcome to attend
and support meetings/events**

Agenda

- 1. Present**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Treasurer's Report**
- 4. Bids**
Sensory Garden Proposal
- 5. School Report**
- 6. Future Activities/Events/Fundraising & Marketing**
Year plan of events for planning: car boot sales, annual quiz night, January unwanted
present donation, other annual events
Year 6 Open event 23rd October
Sixth Form Open Evening 6th November
Oliver 28-29th November
Christmas Fayre 5th December – hot food and licence for selling wine?
Spring Term Art Event
- 7. School Clothing Sales**
- 8. 200 Club**

9. Dates of next meetings

Tuesday 25th November
Monday 15th December
Tuesday 27th January
Tuesday 24th February
Monday 23rd March
Tuesday 28th April
Monday 18th May
Tuesday 30th June

10. AOB

2nd hand textbook sales

Hygiene certificates for working in the school kitchen

Chairman: Mike Byfield Vice Chairman: Tracy Scott
Secretary: Sharon Byfield Treasurer: Steve Scott
Web: <http://www.cryptschool.org/association-aims/> Email: cspta@cryptschool.org

The Crypt School Association, Podsmead Road, Gloucester GL2 5AE
The Crypt School Association is a registered charity dedicated to supporting the school, registration number 280200