

26th September 2025

Dear parents/carers and students,

I hope that this letter home finds you all well.



Student safety and welfare - after school

Please note that if students need to stay at school after the end of the school day - between 3.15pm and 4.15pm - due to perhaps a late or missed bus, cancellation of an after-school activity, or for any other reason, then they are encouraged to go to the homework club that runs each day between 3.15pm-4.15pm, or to reception where they can wait until they can be picked up. After-school homework club and school reception are staffed until 4.15pm, and a senior member of staff is always on duty each day until 4.15pm. After that point, students will need to be collected, unless in exceptional circumstances when they must wait in reception until collected.

Year 7 Heritage Day

I hope that our new year 7 group enjoyed the Year 7 Heritage Day, held on Tuesday at St Mary de Crypt Church and school room, where the school was founded in 1539, by Dame Joan Cooke. Heritage day is an occasion each year for our newest students to learn about the rich history of the school and of its founders; to learn the school song and appreciate the environment of the Church and schoolroom, where the first Cryptians began their education in 1539. I hope the day added to the growing sense of pride and belonging that our year 7 students feel in their membership of our wonderful school community.

Sixth Form English Literature trip to Starford-on-Avon

As part of their studies, our A level English Literature students visited Shakespeare's birthplace and home in Stratford-on-Avon, and benefited from a lecture about the great bard and the continued relevance and importance of his work. I hope all students enjoyed that visit and my thanks to the English department for organising it.

European Day of Languages Celebration

European Day of Languages saw students enjoyed a variety of activities which encouraged them to explore new languages, use their language skills and celebrate cultural diversity. The themed food in the canteen added to the occasion and helped make the week particularly memorable. My thanks go to the MFL department for their efforts in organising such a valuable and enjoyable experience.

Sports

Sporting practices and fixtures have continued across the week, with fixtures in rugby and netball for many year groups. Fixtures included our senior girl's netball teams enjoying success in matches against Stroud High School on Wednesday; on Thursday evening the first rugby fixture for our new year 7 boy's team against St Peter's happened, with year 9 boys also playing St Peter's; and on the same



evening, our year 10 girl's football team enjoyed success in their cup game. Tonight the senior boy's rugby teams play St Peter's at the Old Cryptian Rugby ground under floodlights - I do hope these fixtures go well for all involved.

Charity challenge - Run the World

The just giving page for our ambitious charity challenge - to run the world in October - is now open, with our aim to raise £26,000 for charity Talk Well (<https://www.letstalkwell.org.uk>) which is a local Gloucester-based mental health charity. Donations are greatly appreciated.

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

Teaching and learning

Our teaching and learning lead, Mr Higgs, has spoken in assemblies this week to our students setting out what the Crypt approach is to outstanding teaching and learning, and he includes a summary of his assembly for parents/carers information later in this newsletter home. The aim of this is for all members of our community - staff, students, and families at home - to share a common approach and understanding of what we at school believe constitutes outstanding practice in terms of teaching, and through that enable further academic progress to be made in all subject areas. This approach also combines with our identification of what constitutes the successful Crypt Learner - the 8 characteristics which together will, if successfully acquired, enable each student to excel in their academic work and in all else that they do.

Staffing update

Finally, I am delighted to announce that Sarah Veale has been appointed as the school's first ever development manager. Sarah will start her new role in November and I very much look forward to welcoming her into our school community. She will focus on enhancing a culture of giving and of philanthropy, which will help enable the school to continue and indeed strengthen further what it can offer to all our students - for example in terms of clubs, societies, activities and other enrichment opportunities, both now and in the future.

My continued best wishes,



Nicholas Dyer
Headmaster

School Dates

30th September – 3rd October

Y8 Bikeability

30 th September	CSPTA Meeting 6.30pm Sports Block, S1, all welcome
3 rd October	Sports Award Evening
7 th October-10 th October	Y8 Bikeability
7 th October	Y7 Pastoral Evening 6pm
9 th October	Harry Potter Book Day Quiz 4pm
10 th October	Young Minds
13 th October	Autumn Concert 7pm
14 th October	Whole school early closure 1.15pm
15 th October	Open event prospective students
16 th October	Bingo SARA Fundraiser 5.30pm
17 th October	Run the world event
20 th – 22 nd October	Y7 Residential
22 nd October	Careers Convention
24 th October	Non uniform and cake sale for SARA
24 th October	End of Term

Parent Trustee vacancy

The School's Board of Trustees has a vacancy for a Parent Trustee and would very much welcome interest from parents or carers who are willing to take on this voluntary role. Nominations, which should be made using the form on the [Governors](#) section of the website, should be submitted to Mrs Nicola Donlon (via clerk@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk or as hard copy) by **Friday 10 October 2025**. In the event of more than one nomination being received, a ballot of the School's parent body will be held. More information about the role can be found on the [website](#).

The CSPTA Christmas Fair



The CSPTA would like to invite stallholders to attend our Christmas Fair on Friday 5th December at 6-8pm. If you are interested, please complete the booking form below

<https://forms.gle/EXULZcjEDRYtP98k7>



Foodbank Harvest Collection

This harvest we are collecting cereal. Any donations you can make to be placed on the crush hall table ready for collection on Monday 6th October. Thank you.

This Harvest, we are the...



CEREAL CHAMPION

For our collection, in support of Gloucester Foodbank's emergency food parcel service.

We can accept all brands/flavours/sizes, please ensure all items are in date and unopened.

Please support our work this Harvest by donating this item to help continue supporting Gloucester's residents facing financial crisis.



Heritage Day

On Tuesday all of our Year 7 pupils visited St Mary de Crypt church and school room where the school was founded in 1539. The school song in Latin was sung loudly and enthusiastically, stained glass windows were sketched beautifully and children were taught about the history and heritage of the school, as well as exploring key sites in the city. We expressed gratitude for the work of those who came before us and we gave thanks to John and Joan Cooke and to St Mary de Crypt church and community for hosting us today. In the address to close the morning, Mrs Hargraves shared some of Ann Boleyn's last words to show how faith, being humble and appreciating friendships were all



important around the time our school was founded. We also talked more about Joan Cooke and what an achievement it was for her to found a school at this time. Pupils were reminded that they matter, and their actions matter and that they will write their own story - this is just the start of their journey as the newest members of our community. Pupils were encouraged to take responsibility for their journey, have integrity, respect each other and the community and be kind. But on Heritage Day especially, sitting in St Mary de Crypt - to be proud.

Teaching & Learning update - how students can make the most of lessons

All Y9-13 students have been given an assembly by Mr Higgs describing the 4 key elements of Crypt teaching, which make their lessons outstanding. The intent is that armed with this insight into how teachers are challenging them in lessons, students are able to maximise their own learning. The 4 key elements & some advice given to students (linked to the Crypt Learner) are as follows:

'Preparation' - Students need to be regularly testing themselves with knowledge retrieval tasks, this helps battle the 'forgetting curve'. Teachers will also 'hook' students into new topics, so students are encouraged to be curious.

'Explaining new content' - Teachers are often adding new knowledge onto existing knowledge, so it is crucial that students are showing resilience by proactively catching up with missed work. Teachers often explicitly demonstrate their 'critical thinking', so students need to pay attention to these steps, rather than just focusing on the end product.

'Checking understanding' - Students need to be confident in letting the teacher know if they don't understand new ideas, otherwise this issue will not be addressed. Students also need to ensure they are well prepared for any assessments, to allow teacher feedback to be useful.

'Student practice' - Teachers aim to reduce the level of support over time, to allow students to complete tasks with increasing independence. Students need to follow the processes teachers model in lessons, and practise these repeatedly to improve, reflecting too on how successful they have been on each attempt.



Music Newsletter



Our Belgium Tour Choir now has an official name! Meet our 'Vox Floreat' singers, meaning singers who flourish and indeed our group are showcasing tremendous skills in their performance and commitment. We are preparing a diverse range of sacred and

secular music for our tour in February which will see the Vox Floreat perform in beautiful settings including St Baaf's Cathedral in Ghent and The Last Post Ceremony. The programme will revisit old favourites including Parry's I Was Glad and Byrd's Mass for Four Voices and also introduce some beautiful new pieces including Palestrina's Sicut Cervus and Dowland's Magnificat.

Oliver rehearsals are now at full pace, with Food Glorious Food and Who Will Buy! demonstrating a rich sense of the working class of Victorian London. Rehearsal information can be found on Google Classroom and all cast members should be off-script by next week.

The Young Voices Big Sing project commenced with an impressive intake of 80 students, led by Mrs Banda. Open to all Year 7 and 8, the project is focused on preparing a piece from The Lion King to perform at our upcoming Autumn concert. It is a wonderful opportunity to perform and make new friends.

Our Symphony Orchestra, led by Mr Whittaker, began with a wealth of new and keen players which is always a joy to behold. Our programme for the Autumn concert, which is only just over three weeks away, includes The Great Escape and Themes from Rhapsody in Blue. The atmosphere was a delight on Tuesday and we look forward to showcasing our orchestra to you on Monday 13th October.

Finally, a reminder that our music department has been successful in becoming a Lead School for the GSW Music Hub. This reflects our outstanding level of teaching and learning with the music department and allows us to promote more opportunities within the network of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Swindon. We will also be offering training opportunities for other schools in the area as CPD, setting our school as a benchmark for high achievement in music.

A new co-curricular schedule and event calendar is now available and we are looking forward to welcoming new members to our ensembles. Please come along and have a go at singing or playing an instrument.

Year 13 Oxford Trip



On Friday 19th September, eight of our aspiring Oxford candidates in Year 13 participated in our Oxford Open Day trip with Miss Parkin and Mr Germaine. We were based in our link college, Lady Margaret Hall, where we watched some fascinating demonstration interviews with tutors and current Oxford students. Students also had

independent time with their peers to explore the city. They participated in a range of events including visiting subject departments, meeting tutors, attending taster lectures and looking around other colleges, including Christchurch, Keble and Balliol.

Students said:

"I found it really useful to talk to the people at the individual colleges and to look at the accommodation specifically."

"Speaking to the current Oxford students and watching the demonstration interview was really inspiring; it was interesting seeing how they think."

Huge thanks to Miss Price for the support organising the trip and to Mr Germaine for driving the minibus!

European Day of Languages Celebration

During the week of 22nd September, our whole school community came together to celebrate the European Day of Languages.

As the official EDL website reminds us: "There have never been more opportunities to work or study in a different European country. Globalisation and patterns of business ownership mean that citizens increasingly need foreign language skills to work effectively within their own countries. Learning other people's languages is a way of helping us to understand each other better and overcome our cultural differences."

Our Year 8 students set the tone by recording themselves speaking in a variety of languages to create a tutor activity. Their challenge to fellow students, 'Decode what was being said'! A huge thank you to Fayrouz, Jaenah, David and Matilda for leading the way.



On Thursday, languages came to life in the canteen. Many pupils ordered their lunch in their own language—or the language they are learning—supported by our wonderful catering team, who prepared a delicious themed menu. This interactive experience added to the atmosphere and made the celebration even more special.

Meanwhile, Frau Thompson and Frau Jacob-Reilley welcomed students to teach each other a new language, sparking plenty of fun and laughter.

Sporting Success for Tom

We're proud to share some fantastic badminton achievements from Tom (Year 8), who has had an exceptional couple of weeks on the court.

Tom recently won the Gloucestershire U14 Boys Doubles title, going unbeaten throughout the tournament. In an impressive display of skill and consistency, he also reached the semi-finals in both the U14 Singles and the U16 Boys Doubles, narrowly losing 21-19 in both matches to the eventual champions.

Adding to his achievements, Tom represented the Gloucestershire U15 Team last week, where he delivered a perfect performance—winning all six of his matches across singles, doubles, and mixed doubles.

Congratulations to Tom on this outstanding set of results—we look forward to seeing what he achieves next!



Year 12 Work Experience – Summer 2026

Parents and carers will recently have received a letter via Bromcom regarding the launch of our Year 12 Work Experience Programme, which will run from Monday 29 June to Friday 3 July 2026.

Work experience provides students not only with valuable insight into the world of work, but also the chance to develop essential employability skills that will support future university or apprenticeship applications.

As outlined in the letter, students are expected to be proactive in securing a placement. It is important that they start looking early and do not leave the process until the last moment. Good placements are often taken quickly, and students may face knock-backs before securing one. Persistence and planning will be key.

Parents and carers can play a valuable role in supporting this process by:

- Talking with your child about the types of placements that would be most beneficial for their future aspirations.
- Helping them to make use of family, friends, or professional contacts to identify opportunities.
- Encouraging them to draft and send polite emails or make phone calls to potential employers.
- Checking progress regularly and reminding them of the deadline.

A template letter is available in the Student Careers area on Google Drive, and students will be shown how to use Unifrog to record and confirm placements.

All placements must be finalised on Unifrog by Friday 27 March 2026. Students without a placement by this date will be required to attend school during the week of work experience to complete supervised study.

Thank you in advance for your support in encouraging students to be proactive and organised. With your help, we are confident that Year 12 can make the most of this valuable opportunity.

Chris Germaine - Careers Leader

Susan Glock - Director of Sixth Form

Rugby - Saturday Game Days

We are pleased to let you know that refreshments will be available in the pavilion on match days. Bacon butties, tea, and coffee will be served. To avoid disappointment, you may wish to pre-order using the following link:

[Pre-order Form](#)

We look forward to welcoming you.

County Tennis Success for Mia and Bianka

We're delighted to celebrate the recent success of two of our talented tennis players, **Mia** and **Bianka**, who proudly represented **Gloucestershire** at the **County LTA U12 event** in Lincoln.

Competing against strong teams from **Hereford & Worcester**, **Northamptonshire**, and **Lincolnshire**, the girls took part in a series of competitive **singles** and **doubles** matches across the weekend.

Bianka played three matches and impressed with **two wins**, while **Mia** showed great determination across six matches, also securing **two well-earned victories**.

Well done to both girls for representing the county with such commitment and enthusiasm—we're incredibly proud of your efforts and sportsmanship on and off the court!



Lunchtime Clubs T1 & T2

We have a range of lunchtime clubs during term 1 & 2, please view our timetable: <https://cryptschool.org/learning-at-the-crypt/extra-curricular-learning/clubs-and-societies/>

Stargazing Opportunity!

We're delighted to announce that thanks to a generous donation from the wonderful Mrs. Wales, the school now has a **Meade Polaris 114 reflecting telescope** available for long-term loan to students.

This powerful telescope is perfect for beginners and aspiring astronomers. With its equatorial mount and high-quality optics, you'll be able to:

- See the craters on the Moon in stunning detail.
- Observe the rings of Saturn and the moons of Jupiter.
- Explore distant star clusters and nebulae.

The telescope comes in a large, heavy box with an instruction manual and guide. You will need to collect and return it from school during the day between **8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.** in your own vehicle.

This is a fantastic opportunity to learn a new skill, deepen your interest in space, and make the most of clear skies with your family.

To express your interest in borrowing the telescope, please contact:

Miss Hall - ahall@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk

Library Newsletter

To celebrate World Literature month throughout September there is a display in the library which is focused on celebrating world literature for children and young adults. This encourages the exploration of books from different countries, cultures and languages. Over the summer holiday it was the fictional character Percy Jackson's birthday. To celebrate this there has been a quiz running with the closing date being 25 th September. We had lots of entries, all the students taking part will receive merits. The winner will be announced next week. We also had a Percy Jackson event last Friday. The students throwing Velcro balls at a target. Lots of fun, with sweet treats and merits for everyone who attended. Our winner was Seb 7RR who won a tote bag, along with Deek 7RR scoring very highly who received a Percy Jackson book.



Our next event is the Harry Potter Book Quiz which is on 9th October. Promotion for the event has been going on throughout the week. Last year it was a wonderful event with over 80 students taking part. It takes place after school, so students can stay in school. There is a fancy dress competition, last year we had some wonderful costumes. We have lots of chocolate frogs hopping around – the students all choose a character name and are put into the sorting hat. If they are picked out they receive a chocolate frog. We have pizza available for the students to order before the event at a cost of £2.00. The CSPTA are running their refreshment stall.



Thursday 9th October

We are celebrating Harry Potter Book Day by holding a quiz after school on 9th October

Open to all year groups and staff

The quiz will be in the Canteen area with pizza available from 4.00pm to enjoy before the quiz begins

Fancy dress is optional

Science magic in the interval

A choice of pizzas and prices will be coming soon. You can bring your own food if preferred

Refreshments by the CSPTA will be available to purchase throughout the event

Teams of no more than 6

Starting at 4.15 till 6.30 (approx.)

To register to take part in the quiz please come to see Mrs Jordan in the library

Any questions please contact Mrs Jordan



Young people can now get bereavement help through WhatsApp or text

Winston's Wish has launched a brand-new text and WhatsApp bereavement support service. Children and young people can already instantly speak to a Winston's Wish bereavement specialist by phone, email or live chat. Now they will be able to start a conversation by text or WhatsApp. This instant bereavement support service should be more accessible and allow Winston's Wish to reach more children and young people than ever before. No waiting lists, no need to book appointments, no need to work up the courage to call or keep a live chat conversation open.

 Text or WhatsApp 07418 341 800

 Open 3pm - 8pm, weekdays (excluding bank holidays)

It is designed for young people aged 13 to 25 to speak to Winston's Wish directly. You must be 13 or older, in the UK, to receive support via text or WhatsApp.



Adults supporting grieving young people or grieving children under the age of 13 can still contact us by calling free on 08088 020 021, emailing ask@winstonswish.org or using the live chat on their website: <https://winstonswish.org/>

Children can also access our school counsellor, Fiona - appointments can be made by talking to any Pastoral Support Worker.



The Crypt School Parent Teacher Association

Parents, Teachers and Friends

cspta@cryptschool.org

Our next meeting to be held on
Tuesday 30th September 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**
Netball Post Protectors
Football Shirts
5. **School Report**
6. **Future Activities/Events/Fundraising & Marketing**
Harry Potter 9th October
Autumn Concert 13th October
Open Day 15th October morning and evening
Year 6 Open event TBC
Sixth Form Open Evening 6th November
Oliver 28-29 November
Christmas Fayre 5th December – possible chocolate stall and licence for selling wine
7. **School Clothing Sales**
Rugby Shirts
8. **200 Club**
9. **Dates of next meetings**

Monday 20 th October 2025	Tuesday 25 th November 2025
Monday 15 th December 2025	Tuesday 27 th January 2026
Tuesday 24 th February 2026	Monday 23 rd March 2026
Tuesday 28 th April 2026	Monday 18 th May 2026
Tuesday 30 th June 2026	
10. **AOB**
Hygeine 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

Youth Sessions at Blackbridge – Open to Local Young People

BLACKBRIDGE

CHARITABLE COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY

YOUTH CLUB IS OPEN!



For young people in school years 7-11

Weekly fun and friendly sessions &
calmer, inclusive sessions

At Blackbridge Community and
Sports Hub



Want to join or ask questions?
Email: youth@blackbridge.org.uk
Call or text Kelz on: 07507 908821



www.blackbridge.org.uk



info@blackbridge.org.uk