



Headmaster's Letter

27th February 2026

Dear parents/carers and students,

I do hope that all our students enjoyed a restful half term break, and enjoyed coming back into school on Monday for the start of another busy term.

School Choir Trip to Belgium

45 students from years 8-13 thoroughly enjoyed their choir tour of Belgium over the first weekend of half term. It was a great privilege for me to accompany them on that trip - to listen to their remarkable singing at Ghent and Ypres Cathedrals and most poignantly I think, to listen - as wreaths were laid in memory of the fallen of the First World War - to their wonderful rendition of Jerusalem at the Menin Gate memorial in Ypres: that was a moment of great pride for me, watching the school choir sing in memory of the fallen, and I hope for our choir as well - and a moment I'm sure that will live long in the memory of all who were present on that cold crisp evening in Ypres. My thanks to my colleagues who made that trip possible for our choir - Miss Parkin, Mrs Banda, Mr Slemensek and Director of Music Mr Whittaker.

Oliver! - review from the National School Theatre Awards

The school has received wonderful and unexpected feedback on its production of Oliver! from the National School Theatre awards. I set out the first paragraph of that feedback below:

The Crypt School: Oliver! - A Confident Comeback for The Crypt

As an NSTA representative, I had the great pleasure of watching The Crypt School's production of Oliver! performed



"We are an outstanding co-educational grammar school which places the child at the heart of all that we do..."



on Saturday 29th November 2025. What a triumphant choice for the school's first full-scale musical since 2019, particularly under the leadership of a new Director, Mrs A Crozier, and with an entire cast experiencing a whole-school show for the very first time. The ambition and scale of the undertaking were admirable, and the sense of collective commitment was evident throughout.

What a ringing endorsement of our school drama and music department and of all those students who made Oliver! such a success back in November. We now look forward to further production in the future.

Academic update

Year 13 mock exams continued across this week, with students also benefiting from study leave to enable them to work at home if they determined that was best for their revision and exam schedules. We look forward to year 13 returning to their normal lessons next week, in which they will review the outcome of those exams, work to complete their A Level courses and continue to revise for their summer public exams. Next week, year 11 have further assessments in the hall, as they continue to work hard towards their GCSE exams which commence in early May.

Personal Development: school value for term 4 - Respect

Each term, we focus additional attention in assemblies and in form time on one of our 5 shared Crypt values, with this term's focus being on the value of Respect. On Monday, Senior Deputy Headteacher, Mr Stanlake, set out the meaning of this value in the context of the school: the showing of due regard for the feelings, wishes, or rights of others. Here at school we seek to encourage members of our school community to show due regards to others - to other students, to our staff, and visitors; and also to show due regard to our school environment, to our school ethos and inclusive school culture and to our shared school values by example.

It was pleasing to see some sports fixtures taking place this week, alongside the year 12 geography residential field trip to Swanage as part of their coursework studies.

Government White Paper and SEND reform

It would not have escaped your attention that important proposed reforms to England's education and SEND provision were published earlier this week. School will be considering the impact these reforms may have on our educational offer here at Crypt and will be planning to make changes as necessary. It is worth noting, that we already offer considerable support to students identified as having a special education need, and that our approach in relation to teaching is; is that what works in classrooms for SEND students works well for every other student too. However, we intend to make further progress towards ensuring that every classroom at Crypt is an inclusive space for all students to learn and flourish within.

Parental Survey Results

Thank you to the many parents/carers who completed the parental survey before half term. The response rate was very strong, which is very encouraging indeed. Overall, for each question posed in the survey, the outcome was most positive, with the overwhelmingly majority of responses in the strongly

agree, or agree category. It was particularly pleasing to see that over 92% of responders felt their child was happy at school, with nearly 97% responding that their child feels safe at school and 93% saying that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved. 95% of responses said they would recommend this school to another parent. Of course, the survey also showed that there are some areas where the school needs to improve upon further, and I would like to see that every single one of our 1,100 students is happy at Crypt: that is our foremost concern, that students feel a strong sense of belonging to the school, enjoy strong friendships and feel valued, which means that they are likely to be happy and enjoy and look forward to coming into school each day. Other individual concerns set out in the survey responses, will be picked up by our pastoral team to review.

Mrs Sue Wales

Today, staff colleagues said a final farewell to our longest serving member of staff - Mrs Sue Wales - who has been at the very heart of our Crypt school community for 30 years, working with many different headmasters, staff and of course students, including her own children who attended the school. As our admissions officer, Mrs Wales is well known to all our families, ensuring that each student and their family's journey into Crypt, is as smooth and welcoming as it possibly can be. We shall all miss her very much indeed, but I'm sure everyone will join with me in wishing Sue a wonderful, long and happy retirement.

Finally, I note that we are in the midst of Ramadan (17th of February to the 19th of March), with many of our students and families at home observing this period of reflection, of prayer and of fasting. Last year, the school hosted a community Ifta after school, with many attending and enjoying a splendid meal. This year, the festival of Eid al-Fitr, is expected to fall on either Thursday the 19th of March, or Friday the 20th of March 2026, depending on the sighting of the moon, with much celebration due to take place then I've no doubt. This year, the school will again host a community Iftar (the evening meal, which signals the 'breaking of the fast' each day during Ramandan) at 5.30pm on the 9th of March in the School Crush Hall: everyone is very welcome to attend and enjoy some delicious food.



Nicholas Dyer
Headmaster

Dates For Your Diary

Wednesday 41th March	Author Visit Y9/Y10
Wednesday 4th March	Drama Unpolished Playground
Thursday 5th March	Cheerleaders Bake Sale
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day Y7/8 Dress Up
Thursday 5th March	Y10 Parent/Carer Evening - virtual
Saturday 7th March	DofE Bronze training in school

Creative Writing Success

Before Christmas, many of our Year 7 and Year 8 students rose to the challenge of entering the national Young Writers' 100-word Saga Competition. The theme this time was "Stranger Sagas," which required our young authors to weave tales of mystery, the supernatural, and the unexplained, all in just 100 words.

We are proud to announce that 33 of our students have been selected for publication in the upcoming anthology! Certificates and bookmarks have been awarded to all selected students. Having work chosen for a national publication is a wonderful achievement. Not only have they earned a spot on the bookshelves, but they have bolstered their confidence as writers.

The five overall competition winners will be announced by Young Writers next term. Once available, a copy of the saga anthology will be added to our student publications collection in the lower school library for all to enjoy.

We look forward to seeing our students continue to showcase their literary talents in upcoming competitions.



WHERE
MYSTERY MEETS
CREATIVITY...

STRANGER — SAGAS —

CREATIVE WRITING
COMPETITION FOR
10-18 YEAR-OLDS

How You Can Help Your Child Prepare for Exams

We're excited to announce that Elevate Education will be hosting their next parent webinar on exam preparation on March 3rd.

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 how you can maximise your child's marks in exams by helping them to prioritise the work that really matters over the next few weeks.

How You Can Help Your Child Prepare for Exams

Tuesday 3rd March 6:00-7:00pm (GMT)

Here's what Elevate will be covering on the night:

- ✓ Prioritising your child's high-impact work to maximise marks
- ✓ Improving your child's time management to avoid last-minute preparation
- ✓ Helping your child study effectively using past papers

Register for free: <https://go.elevateeducation.com/e/891981/ukschoolwebinar/vxstr/1338334018/h/ift2h7WvwLnBpmEpLD17a036eMAc-DISm0hMKnAQ9BA>

Agriculture University Experience Day

Hartpury University are running an Agriculture University Experience Day during the first week of the Easter Holidays which includes agriculture specific workshops and an opportunity for students to learn about our agriculture courses at Hartpury

This event will be subject to an application process, and those students who meet our WP criteria (are eligible for free school meals or are from a postcode which is IMD 1 or 2) will get priority places.

Students can apply here: <https://gck.fm/xosfc>

Date: 1st April 2026

Event times: 09:30 - 3:00pm

Additional information: Students should wear clothing and footwear appropriate for spending time on a farm, and bring plenty to drink. Lunch will be provided

Cheerleading team

The competition cheerleading team are holding a bake sale (and bracelets/ book marks/ crochet goods) on Thursday lunch time outside the canteen to fundraise for their competition uniforms! Please do come along and support their cause - cash only.

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Help us raise money for our
cheerleading uniforms and
enjoy a sweet while doing so.



Join us on Thursday 5th March
at lunch in the Quiet Area
behind the canteen!

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The Crypt School: Oliver! - A Confident Comeback for The Crypt

As an NSTA representative, I had the great pleasure of watching The Crypt School's production of *Oliver!* performed on Saturday 29th November 2025. What a triumphant choice for the school's first full-scale musical since 2019, particularly under the leadership of a new Director, Mrs A Crozier, and with an entire cast experiencing a whole-school show for the very first time. The ambition and scale of the undertaking were admirable, and the sense of collective commitment was evident throughout.

Oliver! is the musical adaptation of Charles Dickens's 1838 novel *Oliver Twist*, with book, music and lyrics by Lionel Bart. Premiering in London's West End in 1960, it became an instant success thanks to beloved numbers such as 'Consider Yourself', 'Food, Glorious Food' and 'Where Is Love?'. It later transferred to Broadway in 1963, winning three Tony Awards, including Best Original Score. Over the decades, *Oliver!* has become a firm favourite in school theatre, celebrated for its rich ensemble opportunities, iconic character roles and blend of drama, humour and memorable music.

The staging of this classic was handled thoughtfully by the production team. Working within the practical limitations of a stage without wings, backing boards were cleverly utilised to create both side masking and a stage backdrop. Above these, strung handkerchiefs and laundry effectively evoked the cluttered atmosphere of Fagin's hideout. The use of the trapdoor as an entrance into Fagin's den was particularly imaginative, lending a convincing sense of a hidden criminal underworld (or attic!) and adding depth to the storytelling.

Oscar's Oliver was portrayed with touching youthful innocence. He captured the downtrodden vulnerability of the character, particularly in his fearful encounters with the menacing Bill Sikes and blustering Mr Bumble, and delivered the famous plea, "Please, sir, I want some more," with sincerity and clarity. His rendition of 'Where Is Love?' was a standout moment of the evening. This song, often challenging for young performers due to its sustained phrasing and delicate emotional demands, was delivered with impressive breath control and genuine feeling. It was a beautifully shaped performance, and one that demonstrated considerable vocal promise. 'Who Will Buy' further showcased his lyrical tone and musical sensitivity.

Daniel's Artful Dodger burst onto the stage with charisma and an assured East End accent. His rendition of 'Consider Yourself' set the tone for the camaraderie of Fagin's gang, and the energy generated by him and the ensemble prompted spontaneous audience participation. It was a confident and engaging performance.

Jai's Fagin was brimming with energy and comic invention. Fagin's role demands stamina and precision in navigating lengthy passages of dialogue and patter, and Jai met these demands with confidence. His performance of 'Reviewing the Situation' was a highlight, combining characterful acting with strong engagement with the audience.

Bill Sikes was played with understated menace by Iasonas, who resisted caricature and instead built a quietly threatening presence. His first entrance, producing stolen items from various



pockets before culminating in the reveal of a necklace concealed in his mouth, was both atmospheric and sharply executed, working effectively alongside Fagin's rapid commentary.

Tifaine's Nancy was portrayed with maturity and emotional depth. 'It's a Fine Life', alongside Amelia's lively and well-judged Bet, was full of character and vitality. However, it was in 'I'd Do Anything', performed with Daniel, that Tifaine particularly shone. The chemistry between the pair was natural and warm, and the duet was both musically secure and dramatically engaging.

Indeed, the ensemble work was a particular strength of this production. 'It's a Fine Life' was a highlight of Act One, with Nancy and Dodger establishing strong character dynamics, Bet and Oliver contributing polished vocals, and the chorus filling the stage with enthusiasm. The reprise in Act Two, sung by Nancy, Bill, Fagin and Bet as the narrative builds to its crescendo, was charged with tension and effectively underscored the shifting dramatic stakes.

There were many notable performances from the supporting cast. Brandon's Mr Bumble was suitably pompous and affronted, with 'Boy for Sale' providing an opportunity to display a resonant vocal performance. Carleigh's Widow Corney demonstrated excellent comic timing, particularly in 'I Shall Scream', which was both vocally secure and theatrically playful. Connor and Lauren brought suitably macabre humour to Mr and Mrs Sowerberry, relishing the seedy tone of 'That's Your Funeral' with clear character choices, oozing seedy, awfulness in all the right ways.

The ensemble, impressively large for the school's first full musical in six years, provided consistent support to the principals while maintaining strong characterisation of their own. Whether as workhouse children, Fagin's gang or lively public house patrons, they remained focused and committed. 'Pick a Pocket or Two' was delivered with spirited precision, and 'Oom-Pah-Pah' in Act Two was a joyful, high-energy moment that reflected the cast's evident enjoyment and strong rehearsal discipline.

This production of *Oliver!* was a confident and commendable return to large-scale musical theatre for The Crypt School. Under Mrs Crozier's direction, the cast and creative team demonstrated ambition, teamwork and a clear dedication to storytelling. Strong principal performances, vibrant ensemble work and thoughtful staging combined to create an evening of engaging and heartfelt theatre. The Crypt School should be immensely proud of this significant milestone production, which sets an exciting benchmark for future musical endeavours.

National School Theatre Awards

www.schooltheatreawards.com

@schooltheatreawards

Women in the Army – Real Stories, Real Impact

Join us for an online event celebrating women in the Army and the many career opportunities you can explore. You'll hear from soldiers and officers as they chat about their roles, the sports they get involved in, the places they've travelled, and how they balance Army life with family life.

Date: Wednesday 11 March 18:00 – 19:00

Event Type: Virtual

Register Today: <https://britisharmy/RealStoriesRealImpact>

Army Junior Soldier Information Event

You are warmly invited to attend our Army Junior Soldier Information Event.

When: Saturday 7 March 2026

Where: Army Careers Office Gloucester, GL1 1DG.

Time: 10:30

Duration: 2 – 3 hours

This event is designed to provide valuable insight into the Army Junior Soldier pathway including:

- Entry requirements and eligibility
- Education and training opportunities / qualifications
- Career progression
- Life as a Junior Soldier
- The application and selection process
- Question & Answer session with serving soldiers

Whether you are a student exploring future career options or a parent seeking more information, this event will offer guidance and the opportunity to speak to Army representatives.

This is a free event, however we encourage early registration as spaces are limited.

Please use the following link to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/army-foundation-college-harrogate-information-brief-tickets-1982765267289>

ARMY FOUNDATION COLLEGE HARROGATE

Thinking about your next step?

Information Brief | Gloucester | 7 March 2026 | 1030 - 1200



Sign up here





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PEACH & TOMATO SALAD

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BAKED SWEET POTATO WEDGES
MEATBALL MELT

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ORANGE CAKE