



31 March 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians

I hope this newsletter finds you well. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents/carers for your continued support of the school. Please see below some highlights from this term.

HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE

Saturday 25th March saw TGGs buzzing with 175 students from 13 schools gathered for our Healthcare Conference. Throughout the day students from Years 9 to 13 explored a wide variety of healthcare professions, hearing talks from a Doctor, Midwife and Vet, as well as attending workshops run by universities and healthcare providers, and engaging with 20 different carousel stands, each with a different healthcare professional. For some students, it was a chance to add depth to their understanding of a career they are already committed to, such as Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry or Pharmacy. For others it was a great opportunity to learn more about the range of healthcare courses and roles that might suit them, including less well-known fields such as Hospital science labs, Occupational therapy, Vet Nursing, Optometry or Radiography. One highlight for many students was the workshop with the Devon and Exeter Medical History Trust, who brought their handling collection, including rare Roman surgical implements, to illustrate both change and continuity in healthcare over time. Other students picked out the chance to talk with eight TGGs alumnae studying a range of healthcare and veterinary courses at university, who ran a workshop giving tips for future applicants. Head of Sixth Tania Grigg was particularly proud of our Year 13 MedSoc students who gave a great workshop for younger students on how to run a MedSoc and prepare yourself for a demanding application process. Already this year 7 TGGs students have university Medicine offers, as well as others for Vet, Dentistry, Physio and Pharmacy, and we can now anticipate many more in years to come.



I am enormously grateful to the 55 parents, alumnae, university representatives and local providers who gave up their Saturday to support our young people, as well as the 12 TGGs staff who ensured the event ran so smoothly.

TGGs REED ENSEMBLE

The TGGs Reed Ensemble had a recent victory at the Torbay and South Devon Music Festival. They played very nicely and received lots of compliments! Here they are with their Certificate and Trophy. Players (left to right) are:

- Isabelle Tomlinson – Year 12
- Crystal Prince-Every – Year 9
- Freya Warren – Year 9
- Beatrice Summers – Year 7



"A haven of inspired, structured academic provision...all supported by a nurturing and enlightened pastoral approach and a wealth of opportunities. Girls leave with the belief that everything is attainable." **The Good Schools Guide 2022**



VISIT TO OXFORD UNIVERSITY

We took 51 students from Year 10 and Year 12 who enjoyed an excellent day at Oxford University on 22nd March. Our link college, Exeter College Oxford put on a great programme with different activities for each year group, and we were very well looked after by their Outreach team and student ambassadors.

Year 12s learned that Oxford is quite a long way from Devon (3 ½ hours each way on the coach) but also within their reach. Students explored Exeter College Oxford - the chapel and beautiful Fellows Garden in the very heart of Oxford. They then had an admissions workshop with Evie, Exeter College's excellent Schools Officer, and after being given lunch in Exeter's Gothic Hall either visited the Earth Sciences Faculty or had a Humanities tutorial. A last hour of free time to explore Oxford independently was also appreciated as the students took in other colleges, sights like the Bodleian Library, the covered market, or Oxford's iconic bookshops.

Year 10 students began with a tour of Exeter College and then visited the University Natural History Museum for a workshop and handling session before going to a workshop about Oxford opportunities with Ellie Exeter College's Outreach Officer. Later Year 10s toured Worcester College with its amazing and amazingly huge gardens and very cool spiral staircase up to the Library. We're very grateful to both colleges and all their staff and student ambassadors for giving us such a great day

WORLD BOOK DAY

On Thursday 2nd of March, TGGs celebrated World Book Day with lots of fun competitions and events. We held a whole school bunting decorating competition where forms were given a string of plain bunting to turn into a celebration of their favorite books and novels. On the day, we had lots of entries and eventually chose our two favorites (7W and 10B). We also held an artefact competition, where pupils had to create a piece of work inspired by their favourite novel, including cakes, models and a crocheted Hedwig! Overall it was a great showcase of the artistic talent and love of literature across the whole school - well done everyone from the TGGs English Prefects!



GEOGRAPHY WORLDWIDE QUIZ

In January, the Geography Department began hosting a fun lunchtime quiz club. The topics covered ranged from flags, country outlines, distance from the equator, O.S. map skill - to how well do you know the US States? All of which was done with the intention of generating interest in the Geographical Association Worldwide Quiz competition. Amazingly, over forty-five Year 8-10 students regularly turned up to compete and test their geographical knowledge. With so much interest in the event a 'decider' had to be held to select our five teams going forward to represent TGGs. The Worldwide Quiz competition took place on Tuesday 21st February at Torquay Boys' Grammar School and also featured teams from Churston Ferrers Grammar School; a great time was had by all and our teams showed excellent geographical understanding.

SEYMOUR VETS

There was a packed crowd for the visit of Seymour Vets to speak to MedSoc on Friday lunchtime. 56 students including 10 from TBGS MedSoc enjoyed a great talk from Lizzie and Catherine about Vet Surgeon and Vet Nurse careers, and a lively question session. We're really grateful to them and also to Poppy our MedSoc VetChair who organised the whole thing.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Last month, TGGs hosted round two of the English Speaking Union's Public Speaking competition. We were joined by teams from Taunton School, Taunton Academy, and Queen Elizabeth school. Both teams proved themselves to be worthy competitors and both progressed through to the regional finals; the first time TGGs has ever taken two teams to the regional finals.

Incredibly, on 18 March, the two TGGs teams participated in the regional final of the competition and one of the TGGs teams won, taking the singular place in the final at Cambridge University next month!

The girls conducted themselves in an excellent manner and were fantastic ambassadors of the school.

Huge thanks to Mrs Baker-Thornton who has been a superb mentor for the girls. They were exceptionally happy to see her at the regional finals even though she had been poorly!



Excellent work and congratulations to Miranda Hunter, Sophia Sutton, Lucy Mays, Eve Buckley, Annemieke Karssens and Isabella Passarelli.

FOOTBALL TEAM

This term the TGGs football team have competed at multiple tournaments as well as 2 matches at Churston Grammar School. The U15 and U13 teams have been working hard at training and have been successful in the fixtures they've played. Most recently the Years 7, 8 and 9s played in a tournament where they won 3 matches and drew 1, not conceding a goal throughout. With the teams being new we are very excited to see what lies ahead for them all.



GERMAN TRIP TO LONDON

On 23rd February, 40 year 8 pupils along with Ms Stacey, Ms Boyd, Mrs Gerry and Mrs Bumby woke up bright and early for a day of German cultural fun in London. We enjoyed a traditional German meal of sausages and sauerkraut in a German restaurant before walking to the Tate Modern. There, we wrote our own interpretations of work by German speaking artists. The pupils were amazed by the variety of art produced by artists from the German speaking world from conceptual pieces

through to towering sculptures, abstract and surreal paintings through to video installations. We ended the day with a stroll along London's South Bank before the long journey back to Torquay. The students were outstanding ambassadors for the school throughout the day and it was a pleasure to take them on this trip.

YEAR 10 MUSIC GROUP

The Year 10 Music Group have been taking part in a number of Composition Workshops over the last two terms, creating their own pieces with specialist composers. Their work culminated in a performance in front of approx. 130 other pupils from schools in Torbay. The group performed their own pieces well and found the whole experience to be fun, educational and full of creativity!



YEAR 11 – CHRISTIAN YOUTH TRUST

Charlie Haywood of Linx Christian Youth Trust visited Y11 GCSE lessons recently to consolidate their knowledge of Christianity and reinforce their understanding that there is a diversity of belief and practice within the religion. She also visited Y7 lessons to talk about why Easter is important to Christians in a fun and informative way.

YEAR 12 – RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS PROGRAMME

As part of Year 12s Religion, Philosophy & Ethics programme, Dr Sam Wilkinson of the University of Exeter's Philosophy department visited the school to give an engaging lecture on the Philosophy of mental health. After explaining how Philosophy can underpin the study of any subject, Dr Wilkinson proceeded to explore how defining mental health has implications for how it might be treated. He then discussed issues relating to mental health and culpability for crime. The talk was very informative and included cross-curricular links with Psychology as well as linking to careers in healthcare and law.



It was the turn of TBGS to host the latest joint Philosophy Forum this week. Over 40 students from TGGs attended and enjoyed some socialising and workshops on the theme of Philosophy and Law. One of our parents, Ms Butler-Cole, spoke of how her degree in Philosophy links with her work as a barrister. In other workshops, some of our sixth form Philosophy ambassadors did an impressive job of leading discussions on the work of Valarie Kaur and the death penalty. Students from both schools undoubtedly benefit from the opportunity to exchange ideas and we are already looking forward to hosting the next one!

500 WORDS STORY WRITING

This year's 500 words story writing competition was on the theme of Dawn to Dusk and once again the students impressed us with the quality of their entries. It was difficult to make the final selections from the outstanding stories that were submitted, but the ambassadors and English department finally chose the original and inventive story 'The Moon's Lament' by Rose Butler-Cole of 10R for the Key Stage 4 prize, and Emily Davies of 7R as the Key Stage 3 winner for her haunting and evocative tale of mystery (an extract of this fantastic piece of writing can be found at the bottom of this newsletter – enjoy!). All entrants will receive house points for their efforts, and we would like to thank them all for taking the time to submit their stories - we thoroughly enjoyed reading them.

AUSCHWITZ TRIP

At the beginning of February, four Year 12 students went on a daytrip to Poland in order to visit Auschwitz. This trip is run as part of Lessons From Auschwitz – a programme run by the Holocaust Educational Trust that encourages students to learn about the Holocaust and consider its contemporary relevance in modern society.

We visited both Auschwitz and Birkenau, and, to end the day, we joined a memorial service led by Rabbi Shaw, in which one of the students read a poem. The trip taught us more about the Holocaust, but also enabled us to hear the stories of individuals. Although being an emotional day, it was an educational experience that we all learnt a lot from.



SIXTH FORM OPPORTUNITIES

Year 12 are now beginning to explore options post sixth form. So far this term they have had talks on degree apprenticeships and UCAS, ranging from our ex-head girl Alice McNaughton who is doing a degree apprenticeship with Siemens to Bath University who visited to talk about University life. They have also visited an Apprenticeship Fair and the UCAS Fair at Westpoint. We aim to expose our students to as wide a variety of options as possible.

Year 13 had a well-being enrichment trip to Manor Hotel. This year group missed out on so many trips and events due to the pandemic, so we wanted them to have a last opportunity to make some fabulous school memories as a year group, relaxing and having fun with friends before the exam season begins. It was a huge success and they participated in activities from the Spa and Indian Block Printing through to archery and curling.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our Year 11 and 13 students the best of luck in their forthcoming public examinations. I'm sure you are going to make us proud.

May you all have a relaxing and enjoyable Easter break.

We look forward to meeting all our students again on **Monday 17th April 2023**.

Yours faithfully

Ms Sarah Forster BSc (Hons), PGCE, MA, NPQH
Headteacher and Accounting Officer
Torquay Girls' Grammar School

Continue reading.....Below is an extract from our Key Stage 3 500 Words winner.

Dawn to Dusk by Emily Davies (7R)

Silently, she crept away from the loud bustle of people and exhaled. Too many people! She'd never been so grateful for the cool, fresh air of the evening. Gazing across the lawn, she watched the autumnal sun set onto the trimmed grass. She felt lonely. No one knew her. Not there, not anywhere. No friendly smiles of acknowledgement as she wandered into a room. But watching the sunset made her calm. Content, even. It was just so beautiful. Then a sound. A whoosh. In the corner of her eye, a figure darted past. She froze. The sound again. Then a whisper, calling her name. It echoed all through the trees, quiet and eerie. The figure again. Right in front of her eyes, flicking across the grass. She decided it was a man - but she couldn't be sure. A ghost perhaps? Intrigued, she slipped off her uncomfortable heels and ran. The figure kept dashing across the field, back and forth. Finally, she reached where the figure had been. It came to an abrupt stop as it saw her standing there, staring. It was a man, (who was slightly transparent) with skin as white as a sheet. She didn't move. She was not afraid, just mesmerised.

"Hello." She whispered, unsure of what to say or do. He stayed silent, staring at her.

"Um, hello?" She repeated.



Yet again, the figure said nothing. Just nodded. Curious, she took a brave step towards him. He still didn't move. Even more inquisitive, she reached out a nimble hand, placing it on his face. It was freezing, but awfully smooth. It caught her by surprise. She went to pull away, but he stopped her, placing his own hand over hers. It was a gentle feeling, yet she could tell it was firm at the same time, preventing her from moving. For some strange reason, this didn't bother her. Carefully, he moved his ghostly arm around her waist and took her now trembling hand in his. Then they began to dance. Her feet elegantly glided across the grass. She never wanted to stop. The moment was just so perfect, she knew she wouldn't be heading back to the party any time soon. Why should she go back to being ignored, when she could stay here with only them in the world? Just stay here, dancing.

"I don't want to leave. I'm not going back in there. Don't leave me, please." She begged, desperate. He shook his head.

They kept dancing, adding more impressive moves, speeding up, then slowing down. They continued all through the night. When an unsuspecting person strolled out to the veranda, he'd quickly dance into the trees. She forgot all about time, until suddenly, she felt warmth slowly spread onto her back. The dancing stopped. His face became sinister.

"Why have we stopped?"

He shook his head, and turned to look at the sunrise, releasing her. He stroked her hair. Then, as the sun rose, he whispered, "Dawn."

And vanished into thin air.