



17th July 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

As this academic year draws to a close, I have taken the opportunity to reflect upon the many opportunities and achievements within our school community. Our students have certainly taken onboard our school vision and values. They have grasped with energy and enthusiasm the many opportunities available to them which can only build and enhance their character skills and self-esteem throughout these formative years. Here is a snapshot of what our students – your child has been achieving.

EXPLORING THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Ten Tors Challenge

Preparation for the Ten Tors Challenge began back in November with the first of four one-day training walks and four two-day camps leading up to the event in May. The training sessions were generally cold and soggy, in stark contrast to the warm and dry conditions of the event weekend, which added an additional challenge for all participants. Unfortunately, some members of the 45 and 55-mile teams required medical attention for heat exhaustion and were unable to complete their respective distances; the 55-mile team was particularly disappointed as they were only one checkpoint away from the finish. Thankfully, all four 35-mile teams completed the challenge, with many members eager to take on the 45-mile challenge next year.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Throughout the year, our DoE participants have dedicated many hours to volunteering in their communities and developing their fitness and skills. This term, they embraced the challenge of the expedition section, which involves planning and undertaking their own adventurous journeys. Like the Ten Tors Challenge, these expeditions foster teamwork, resilience, and self-reliance, testing physical endurance while connecting to the natural world.

72 students have now completed their two-day Bronze expedition, which took them from Coleton Fishacre to Marldon— a journey of 33 km featuring a ferry ride at Greenway and an overnight camp at a working farm in Cornworthy.



Our Silver and Gold award students travelled to Dartmoor for their two-day practice expeditions before embarking on their qualifying journeys. 29 Year 10 students covered an average of 54km over three days on Exmoor. Last Friday, 17 Year 12 students returned from their four-day expedition in the Brecon Beacons, during which they walked an average of 80 km and completed the 'Fan Dance' up Pen y Fan!



Outstanding in all areas:
Leadership and management
The quality of education
Behaviour and attitudes
Personal development
Sixth-form provision

LAW SOCIETY (LawSoc)

LawSoc has continued to be a dynamic new society at TGGs, having now hosted 7 speaker meetings and taken part in a variety of events. In recent weeks 10 LawSoc members visited the Exeter Courts where we were made very welcome by Judge Climie and his staff. We were able to watch a number of cases in the course of the day. LawSoc members on the Year 12 London visit took time out to visit the UK Supreme Court in Westminster (see pic), learning about its role and the cases it had heard that day. Back in school, former student Evie Jenkins visited to help prepare students for their LNAT university application tests.



The highlight of LawSoc's year was the Mock Trial we held on Wednesday 19th June, when Paul Walton, our local Presiding Magistrate, visited with a trial scenario for us. Sixteen students took roles such as the accused in an Actual Bodily Harm case, the victim and other witnesses, Prosecution and Defence lawyers, Magistrates, usher, probation officer and court reporter. Over a lively afternoon, witnesses were examined and the evidence weighted, before the accused was duly found guilty by our three Magistrates. We learned a huge amount from the trial experience and are really grateful to Mr Walton for his time and support for us all.

TGGS MOCK ELECTION

The school has been gripped by three weeks of election fever as campaign teams representing all five main political parties plastered the school with posters, produced campaign videos, and spoke at two hustings assemblies. Voting day was Monday 1st July and each Year group went to a different polling station, with students identifying themselves to a polling clerk before being given a ballot paper to fill in and post into a very realistic-looking box.

Total number of valid votes cast in the TGGs Mock Election - 639, with 4 spoilt ballots. Estimated 78% turnout.

The results were as follows -

- Reform - 72 votes
- Lib Dems - 104 votes
- Conservatives - 34 votes
- Greens - 319 votes
- Labour - 110 votes

So, Martha Stenner the Green candidate is duly declared the MP for TGGs! Huge congratulations!

Thanks to all candidates – Martha, Charlotte, Tildy, Grace and Annemieke – and campaign managers (Emma, Orla, Abi, Sofia and Tilly), as well as the 30 Year 12 polling staff and all the voters.

JUNIOR PHYSICS CHALLENGE

We are delighted to announce that our Year 10 students at TGGs participated in the British Physics Olympiad Online Junior Physics Challenge 2024.

The Junior Physics Challenge is meticulously designed to engage and challenge students of all abilities by presenting them with a diverse array of problems to solve. While many questions are

based on the current GCSE curriculum, students who possess a general knowledge of physics and show a keen interest in practical work during lessons were able to achieve higher marks.

The primary aim of the competition is to ensure that students enjoy participating and feel encouraged to delve deeper into the world of physics. There is no requirement to cover technical topics outside the syllabus; instead, the challenge includes enjoyable and inclusive elements. For example, students might be shown pictures of renowned physicists like Stephen Hawking, Galileo Galilei, or Isaac Newton and asked to identify them. General knowledge and a natural curiosity about physics provide a notable advantage.

The purpose of the Junior Physics Challenge is to be fun and inclusive, rather than to discriminate between varying levels of ability. We are proud to report that our students achieved a commendable number of Gold, Silver and Bronze certificates, reflecting their hard work and enthusiasm.

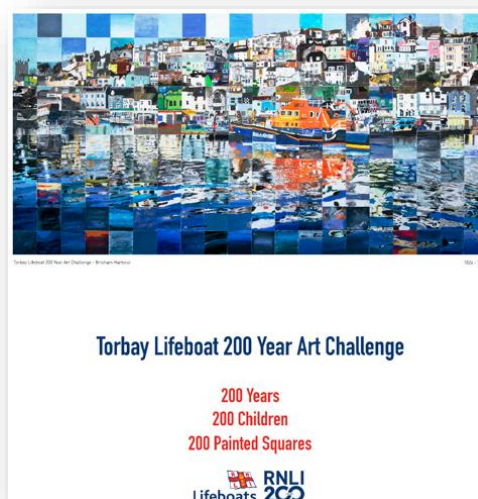
RNLI 200 YEAR ANNIVERSARY COLLAGE POSTER CHALLENGE!

The RNLI is celebrating its 200th anniversary and, as part of these celebrations, invited local school children to participate in an unusual challenge – A photograph was taken that was enlarged to be 2 metres by 1 metre and then divided into 200 smaller squares. The plan was then that an individual school child interpreted what they had been given in a randomly assigned square using acrylic paints by reproducing it in a 10cm square.

At TGGs, it was decided that we would give this challenge to our Year 8 – A crack squad of 20 fantastic Year 8 students, nominated by their Art teachers, four from each form, were tasked with the mission!

In the end, 13 local schools were involved, consisting of ten primaries and three secondaries, including TGGs.

It wasn't until all 200 squares had been completed that the image could be pieced together, like a rather large jigsaw puzzle. The result is stunning and was unveiled in Brixham on 10th June. The piece is on display outside the RNLI shop in Brixham for the next 6 months and we would urge anyone out for a stroll in Brixham to seek it out.



SPONSORED WALK

On Friday 28th June, we held our annual sponsored walk raising money for Imprezza, a school we sponsor in Kenya. At the time of writing this article, the total money raised so far is £7,904.25 with more money still to come in.

This year we had almost 600 students from Years 7 through to 12 and staff walk down to the Harbour, board 3 ferries to Brixham and then take the coastal path back to TGGs walking a total of 11 miles!



Many students dressed up in fancy dress with themes including Disney and Iconic Characters to name but a few. Even some staff joined in with the fancy dress themes.

One highlight for many students was the sense of achievement in completing this walk, a TGGs tradition that has been going for over 30 years now. This was a wonderful day, and a tremendous effort by all those involved.

PSYCHOLOGY ZOO TRIP

Year 12 Psychology students recently visited Paignton Zoo to experience lectures on behaviour, observational methods and evolution. They conducted their own animal observations including coding behaviour and deciding on sampling techniques and have been analysing the results and presenting the findings to their peers in the form of a scientific report. We've had insights into the lives of red pandas, zebra and baboons so far!



CELEBRATING THE SUCCESS OF OUR RECENT SPORTS DAY

We are thrilled to share the fantastic success of our recent Sports Day! The event was a resounding triumph, filled with spirited competition, exceptional teamwork, and unforgettable moments that brought our school community closer together.

One of the highlights of the day was the incredible contribution of our Sixth Form leaders. Their dedication and enthusiasm were instrumental in the smooth running of the event. From organising events to motivating participants, our Sixth Form leaders demonstrated outstanding leadership and commitment. Their efforts ensured that the day was enjoyable and memorable for everyone involved.



After a day of intense competition across various events, we are proud to announce that Jackson House emerged as the overall winner, clinching the coveted Sports Day Cup. Jackson House narrowly edged out Robertson House, making for an exhilarating and closely contested finish. The excitement

reached its peak during the staff relay, where the competition was fierce and the atmosphere electric. The relay showcased the spirit of camaraderie and friendly rivalry that defines our school.

We extend our congratulations to Jackson House for their remarkable victory and to all the houses for their spirited participation. A special thank you to the staff, students, and particularly our Sixth Form leaders for making this Sports Day a spectacular success.

We look forward to more such events that celebrate our school's vibrant community in 2024/25.

YEAR 12 HISTORY & POLITICS LONDON VISIT

The annual Year 12 London visit for History and Politics students packed a lot into two days in early June. In Westminster Abbey we admired the art and architecture and investigated the historic relationship between the Church and State in the UK. In the afternoon we were welcomed to Parliament by the Education Department for tours that allowed us inside the Chambers of both Commons and Lords before taking part in a workshop on how pressure groups and campaigners such as the suffragettes and XR have influenced Politicians.

The highlight was a visit from TGGs alumna Olivia Cairns who now works part time in Parliament as a tour guide and researcher, who shared with us how she'd landed those roles and what it's like to work in Westminster.



NATIONAL SPACE ACADEMY

We were thrilled to host a two 2-hour long masterclass on Space Physics for 60 of our Year 10 GCSE Physics students. These enriching sessions took place on Monday, 8th July, and were led by Dorian Pascoe from the National Space Academy.

The masterclasses provided our students with a unique and invaluable opportunity to delve deeper into the fascinating world of space physics. Dorian Pascoe, with his extensive expertise and engaging teaching style, captivated the students' imaginations and expanded their understanding of the universe.

During the sessions, our Year 10 students explored the latest advancements in space technology, how to build a Galilean telescope, the science behind satellite operations and their orbits, and the significant impact of space exploration on our understanding of the cosmos and our own planet. The masterclasses aimed to inspire and challenge our students, encouraging them to further pursue their interests in physics and space science.

MATHS DRAGON CHALLENGE

All students in Year 9 competed in a house Maths competition, testing their Mathematical skills, team work as well as running skills. They worked in teams to complete a variety of 24 Maths questions which in turn lead to them receiving a piece of their Dragon puzzle which they were racing to complete before the other groups. Congratulations to Wilkinson house who came both 1st and 2nd who were followed by Cross in 3rd place.



YEAR 10 - A LEVEL DISCOVERY FAIR

We recently held an A Level Discovery Fair for our Year 10 students. All A Level subjects had information stands set up and represented by our Year 12 students.

This gave our Year 10 students the opportunity to obtain firsthand information on the subjects that they may be interested in.

CAREERS FAIR

On Thursday 27th June we welcomed 48 organisations into TGS for our annual Careers Fair. This year we were lucky enough to have over double the number of exhibitors to last year, who had travelled far and wide to attend.

Each year group was given a timed slot for the students to visit the fair and speak with a wide range of exhibitors from Industry, Universities and Further Education establishments.



There was a real buzz in each of the two halls occupied by the exhibitors, with the students engaging in lots of conversations about their future career paths, and the free goodies on offer!

The feedback from some students said they had found out about careers they had not previously considered. They spoke to the Universities about the courses they offer, while others discussed different Degree Apprenticeship courses available with employers.

The feedback from the exhibitors that took part was overwhelmingly positive saying "Really enjoyable event -fantastic and engaged students" "The students were engaged and asked so many questions" and "The students were all so polite and had some really great questions. I was very impressed".

If you or your employer would like to take part in our Careers Fair next year, please contact our Careers Team.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

On Monday 1st July, GCSE Music students were able to watch a live-stream of Jeffrey Boakye, the author of The Musical Truth, which provided an in-depth conversation about the portrayal of Black, British history through music. Students were introduced to a wide range of unknown and more familiar music, from various points in history, as well as more contemporary pieces. The track list included: Samuel Coleridge Taylor - Hiawatha's Wedding Feast - Op. 30 No. 1, Fisk Jubilee Singers - Swing Low Sweet Chariot, Ambrose Campbell & West African Rhythm Brothers - London is the Place for Me, Lord Kitchener -London is the Place For Me, Winfred Atwell - Let's have another party, Eddy

Grant - Electric Avenue, Specials - Ghost Town, Neneh Cherry - Buffalo Stance, Stormzy - Blinded By Your Grace Part 2, Nia Archives - So Tell Me

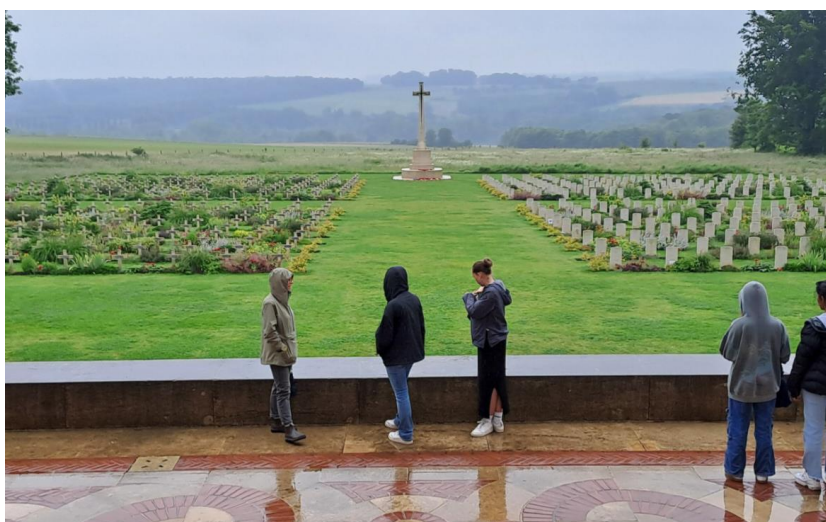
SUMMER CONCERT

On Monday 3rd June, we held our annual Summer Concert. We had a variety of exceptional performers who captivated our audience with exciting, show-stopping pieces from an eclectic mix of genres. Well done to all students who were involved! Many thanks to all who attended and donated to the League of Friends through our refreshments stand.



YEAR 10 BATTLEFIELDS TRIP

At 5am on Sunday 16th June, 59 Year 10 History students left school to visit the battlefields of World War One in Belgium and northern France. This is part of their GCSE Medicine course and gave them the opportunity to understand the conditions the soldiers and medics serving on the Western Front faced. The trip included visits to Tyne Cot Cemetery, Lijssenthoek Cemetery, Flanders Museum, Passchendaele Museum, Beaumont Hamel, Vimy Ridge, the underground hospital at Arras, and Thiepval on the Somme. The students were also very proud to be part of the Menin Gate memorial service, which has taken place every evening since 1921, except during WWII. Three students laid a wreath of Remembrance on behalf of the school in what was an emotional ceremony. The trip was rounded off with an afternoon at Bellewaerde Theme Park and an evening bowling, before heading back home (after some chocolate shopping!).



While the trip was intensely emotional, it was hugely enjoyed by all the students and staff who will remember it for years to come.

GIRLS INTO GEOSCIENCE

Mr Neighbour took a group of students to the Girls into Geoscience event (an outreach initiative from the University of Plymouth) encouraging more female students to look at gaining qualifications and seeking employment in the Geoscience careers sector. This day was run like an academic conference. In the morning, they heard from female geoscientists from industry and academia talking about how they got into science and what their job or particular field of Earth science involves. The afternoon session was run by female academics, researchers, and technicians from the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Plymouth and allowed them to use the brand new facilities that are world leading! The students came away really inspired with several of them having seen the exciting potential and the earnings available in the sector.

HOUSE PICNICS

The sun decided to shine on us for our House Picnics. Organised by our 6th Formers, each House was allocated a day where they could go out onto the Paddock and have a picnic with their friends, play rounders.

We really are very lucky to have so many lovely green spaces for our students to enjoy.



BLETCHLEY PARK AND WARWICK CASTLE

Students from Years 8 and 9 went on a short residential trip to visit Warwick Castle and Bletchley Park.

At Warwick Castle the students took part in a battle skills workshop, explored the ancient grounds and saw live displays in falconry, jousting and a working trebuchet. There was also a re-enactment of events during the War of the Roses with actors showing the roles played by the Earl of Warwick, Edward IV and Henry VII.



At Bletchley Park students took part in a workshop on codes and ciphers and were given the opportunity to operate one of the few remaining working Enigma machines. They toured the site that was occupied by codebreakers such as Alan Turing, Joan Clarke, Mavis Batey, Gordon Welchman, Hugh Alexander and many more. There was a replica of the Bombe codebreaking machine that Turing developed based on the Polish Bomba machine and the memorial to the Polish codebreakers who shared their work and knowledge with Bletchley. Students also learned of the team including Bill Tutte and Tommy Flowers who created the first programmable digital computer "Colossus" in their work to break the Lorenz Cipher. The Lorenz Cipher was used by Hitler and his German high command generals as it was even more complicated than the Enigma system.

CHALKE VALLEY

The Year 12 History A Level students attended the Chalke Valley History festival in June. They were able to attend lectures from prominent Historians , view living History displays and were put through their paces at the SOE Training camp for spies in WWII, learning self defence , code breaking and espionage tactics. The day ending with a trench experience , following soldiers during a WW attack.



DEVELOPING OUR SITE

The focus for this spring has been our grounds, a fantastic resource that allows students to socialise and relax between lessons. With lots more seating areas, everyone has a favourite place to be. We have also had to deal with aging behind the scenes heating and electrical plant, the things no one notices until they fail. Summer break brings new energy management systems being installed along with energy saving lighting designs being proposed, this releases more budget back into teaching.



Maintaining and developing a school of this size and age range is a challenge, getting the balance correct in limited budgets even more so. TGGS is fortunate to have an active school council and proactive staff with the backing of our caring trustees and parents we can make informed decisions on our facilities that makes our students feel both valued and welcome.

Summer holidays are strange at TGGS, no students, limited staff, lots of contractors. We have a limited time to undertake significant or hazardous works while the school is open, so this is a key time for projects to push ahead.



The focus this year is to lift the school's old buildings and make them more welcoming to students. Unfortunately, budget and time do not allow a whole site transformation, so we are concentrating on the initial welcome zones (student reception, main driveways and external decoration) and one tired teaching area (Haystacks). This project will then spread out over the coming years and include student input in the design and use of areas via the student council.

PTA

Friday 21st June was our first 'PTA Day' and was a real success. As well as dressing in rainbow themed non-uniform, the students were encouraged to perform a random act of kindness during their day. After school we held a pre-loved uniform sale which is always popular (watch this space for future sale dates).

The day ended with our first family bingo evening where parents, their children's families, friends and TGGs staff all had their 'eyes down' hoping to win one of our amazing array of prizes, including family tickets to Splashdown, Hollywood Bowl, Dartmouth Steam Railway to name just a few. The room got very loud during the Music round with most of the participants singing and dancing along to some popular tunes. Wine and slushies flowed, pizzas and sweets went down well, and a lot of fun was had by all. Definitely a night to repeat.

As well as having a great night, we recruited some new members to our PTA.... but we can always welcome more. The day was also a great success financially raising nearly £3,000. Massive thanks to all the people who made the day such a success: PTA members, students (little did they know that when their parents joined the PTA they might be roped in!) and TGGs staff (great bingo calling Mrs Dore).

We will be working on our next events when the new academic year starts in September and hope to see you and your families before too long.

FINAL WORDS

At the time of writing students are enjoying enrichment week and thankfully the weather is on our side as many are at the waterpark. A much-deserved treat after working hard all year. I would like to take this moment to thank all parents/carers for your continued support and wish you a lovely summer.

I would, also, like to take this opportunity to wish all our Year 11 and 13 students the best of luck in their GCSE and A Levels, with results coming out on Thursday 15th August 2024 for A Levels and Thursday 22nd August 2024 for GCSE's. I am sure they are all going to do us all proud and I hope to see many of our Year 11 students back in our Outstanding Sixth Form in September, whilst our A level students go onto pastures new and exciting adventures.

I look forward to welcoming all our Year 7 and 12 students on **Wednesday 4th September 2024** and the rest of the school on **Thursday 5th September 2024**.

A few other useful dates for your diary can be found at the bottom of this email.

Yours faithfully

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

KEY DATES SEPTEMBER 2024:

- Wednesday 4th September 2024 – Year 7 & 12 return only.
- Thursday 5th September 2024 – Whole School returns.
- Thursday 5th September 2024 - Year 8-11 & 13 – Awards Evening.
- Friday 6th September 2024 - Year 12 – River Dart Country Park.
- Friday 13th September 2024 – School Photographs.
- Saturday 14th September 2024 – 11+ Examinations.
- Thursday 19th September 2024 – Year 12 Parent Information Evening.
- Tuesday 24th September 2024 – Parent On-Line Safety Evening.
- Thursday 26th September 2024 – Year 11 Parent Information Evening.
- Monday 30th September 2024 – Year 11 English Literature Mock.
- Tuesday 1st October 2024 – Senior Maths Challenge.
- Monday 7th October 2024 – Year 13 English Literature Mock.
- Tuesday 8th October 2024 – Main School Open Evening.
- Monday 21st to Thursday 24th October 2024 – Annie the Musical.
- Friday 25th October 2024 – Non-Uniform Day.
- Monday 28th October to Friday 1st November 2024 – HALF TERM
- Monday 4th November 2024 – Non-Pupil Day.
- Tuesday 5th November 2024 – All students return.

Term Dates for Academic Year 2024/2025 – [click here](#).

Term Dates for Academic Year 2025/2026 – [click here](#).