



# TORQUAY GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

HEADTEACHER: Ms S FORSTER | FOUNDED 1915 | ACADEMY TRUST

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Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach February half term, I am delighted to share with you the latest updates, celebrations and important information from across the school. This half term has already been filled with fantastic learning, excellent progress, and many moments that remind us how proud we are of our pupils. Despite the winter weather, the enthusiasm and dedication shown by our school community continues to shine brightly.

We are especially pleased with the positive attitudes, resilience, and kindness demonstrated by our pupils over the past few weeks. Their commitment to their learning and to supporting one another is at the heart of our school's success. As always, thank you for your ongoing support—it makes an enormous difference and helps us provide the very best opportunities for every child.

## **CAMPAIGN SUCCESS – THE TORBAY CHARTER IS LAUNCHED**

We've been working alongside Steve Darling, our local MP, for over a year on a campaign about protecting women in the workplace. We feel it is vitally important that the voices of young women are heard and appreciated.

We want to ensure that women in workplaces can speak out against challenging and uncomfortable situations. This issue of workplace harassment was brought to our attention by students in our school who were reporting incidents to staff and to their peers.

To gain an understanding of the prevalence of the issue, we surveyed older students from TGGS who had part-time jobs, to gain an understanding of the areas of concern they have. What was clear from the survey was the frequency and volume of incidents that occur in the workplace and it was clear that action was needed.

We were provided with an opportunity to present this data to Steve Darling, and he was supportive of the need to take action to support young people in the workplace. We proposed a 10-point Charter to businesses and companies across the Bay during a roundtable meeting hosted here at TGGS to receive valuable feedback.



When the Charter was complete, we set out on designing two posters: one for public display and another for staffrooms to inform workers about the 10-point Charter. The visual design of the poster reflected the key aims as well as the locality of Torbay.



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

Once finalised, on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026, we were able to officially launch our poster campaign. The poster launch included two local MPs, Caroline Voaden and Steve Darling, a journalist from Greatest Hits Radio, as well as the businesses we had previously consulted. We were able to present the journey of the 10-point Charter, followed by a Q & A session. This experience has been incredibly rewarding, and we now are aiming for the campaign to gain further momentum and spread far and wide outside of Torbay!

### **RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

Year 10 GCSE Religious Studies students recently took part in an engaging and thought-provoking “Grill a Christian” session in their lessons. As part of the Christian Beliefs unit, visitors from the Linx Christian Youth Trust joined classes to answer students’ questions and share their personal experiences of faith.

Students did not hold back, asking challenging questions such as “*Why do you think God allows suffering?*” and “*Do you agree with euthanasia?*” This sparked lively discussion and encouraged students to think critically about belief, and morality. The session proved especially valuable, helping students to see how the ideas explored in the classroom have a real impact on the lives, choices and attitudes of Christians today.

### **SCHOOL LIBRARY LEADERSHIP ROLES**

We have appointed a fantastic new team of Student Librarians to help with shelving, tidying, and running events in the school library.

The team of 8 students (from Years 7-12) have now completed their training and are hard at work, devoting two of their breaktimes each week to help in the library.

For the first time, we also have a team of Reading Champions. Last year, TGGS was one of twelve schools involved in national research around social reading spaces. Following on from this study, we now have student-led book chat sessions in the library every Friday breaktime – this is an opportunity to foster conversations and book talk in a relaxed setting. Our team of friendly student Reading Champions lead these discussions and welcome all TGGS staff and students to drop in and share what they are reading and swap book recommendations.

### **ROYAL SOCIETY SCIENCE BOOK PRIZE**

TGGS students have been invited to form a judging panel for the Royal Society Young People’s Book Prize. The Royal Society is a Fellowship of many of the world’s most distinguished scientists, drawn from all areas of science, engineering, and medicine. This award inspires young people to read about science and to judge the six shortlisted books against a set of criteria. The topics of this year’s shortlist range from life cycles, plant evolution and animal anatomy to dinosaurs, geology, and the history of information. The panel of volunteer judges (from Years 7-12) are currently busy reading and will shortly cast their votes to choose the TGGS winner – the national result will be announced in April.



### **OXFORD VISIT FOR YEAR 10 & 11**

On Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February some of our Year 10 and 11 students had the opportunity to visit Oxford University. The team at Exeter College gave an inspiring introduction to university life, a fantastic Q&A with current students and tours of the stunning medieval hall, gardens and iconic views across the city.

Some of our students had the opportunity to explore the Earth Sciences labs and tried out some volcano-themed experiments. Other groups visited the Ashmolean or visited Hertford College after enjoying taster sessions in Law, Materials Science, History and Engineering.

### **MEDSOC VISITORS**

On 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026 we hosted a lunchtime talk by Pharmacist, Chloe Stokes. She shared with students what it is like studying and working in pharmacy. She also talked about routes into military sponsorship and healthcare careers in the army.

Later in the month we welcomed Dental Nurse Alice May Anthony, who gave a packed audience an insight into what it is like working in dentistry. She also took the opportunity to talk about the charity Dentaid, who support people struggling to access dental care.

### **CHALLENGE DAY**

On Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January all students took part in Challenge Day. They participated in either a trip, challenge, EPQ or mentoring day. Year 7 went to Plymouth Aquarium as part of the geography curriculum, Year 8 had a teambuilding and problem-solving day, Year 9 took on a Business Enterprise Project called “The Tyre Challenge” and Year 10 had a computing and bowling day. Our Year 11 students attended a 2-day residential.



### **YEAR 11 RESIDENTIAL**

Our Year 11 students got to let their hair down at a pre-exam, team building residential at Ashbury Resort.

There was literally no time to spare as teams took part in chosen activities including swimming, badminton, air pistols, rifles, dodgeball, archery, pickle ball, paddle, bisque, pyrography and glass engraving.



Students were able to relax in the evening with bowling, snooker, darts, bingo or the house quiz.

A fantastic time was had by everyone, and it was a great way to relax before they begin their formal GCSE exams.

### **DEVON QUEEN OF BACKSTROKE**

It has been a very busy January for one of our Year 7 pupils, Siena Wilkinson. She has participated over 3 weekends at the Devon ASA Swimming Championships at The Plymouth Life Centre. Competing in the Female 12 age group stacked with talented girls from across Devon.



The County Championships commenced on 10<sup>th</sup> January with the short course events before the pool opened to the full Long Course Olympic sized

50m long, 10 lane swimming pool for the remaining individual events. The longer lengths make every swim a significant challenge due to being much less emphasis on turns and underwater technique, but this played into her strengths of tenacious spirit, stroke efficiency and prestigious speed on the water. Siena produced some outstanding performances every weekend, navigating the preliminary rounds flawlessly to reach the final in every event she entered and setting a new personal best time for all but one event. Her winning times were fast enough to rank her 12<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> for her age group in Great Britain for the 50m, 100m and 200m long course distances and touching the wall first in 33.79 seconds to retain the Female 12 50m Butterfly Devon title currently ranks her 5<sup>th</sup> in the country.

She is now looking forward to a well-deserved half-term rest before going again at the South-West regional championships in the spring.

### **NETBALL**

Torquay Girls delivered an outstanding performance to become **U15 State School Area Winners 2026**.

Across the day, Torquay Girls recorded six wins and one draw, remaining unbeaten and asserting their dominance in every match.

This fantastic result is a testament to the players' commitment and hard work, and it sets a strong foundation as they now look ahead to the finals on 5th March with confidence and excitement.



### **CRICKET**

The U13 team were victorious in the regional indoor cricket tournament. The undefeated team made up of Year 7 and Year 8 pupils managed to accumulate a massive 322 runs, with almost every player having to retire in one of the games. The amazing stroke play was complemented with some superb running between the wickets.

All the players bowled well but a special mention to Caitlin with 3 fantastic catches.

We move on to the area finals later in the spring.



### **HOLOCAUST VISITOR – A STORY OF SURVIVAL**

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, we were honoured to welcome Melvyn Leach, Holocaust Educational Speaker for Willy Halpert who, at the age of nine, was hidden from the Nazis.

The talk was arranged by our Year 12 History Ambassadors and was full, with standing room only. There wasn't a dry eye come the end of the presentation, so movingly told.



Our thoughts and heartfelt thanks go to Willy for bravely sharing his story and to Melvyn Leach for his work in ensuring that the experiences of the Holocaust are not forgotten or denied.

Willy's story can be found here: <https://www.pbs.org/video/willy-halpert-2qie4f/>

### **CLASSROOM TO 5K**

It has been great to see the Running Club at TGGS go from strength to strength! We have a new cohort of runners undertaking the 'Classroom to 5K' programme with those from last term still coming along for a run with their friends.

Just like last term, our aim is to run a full 5K Park Run at the end of the spring term and everyone is doing brilliantly in working towards that goal. It's been lovely to see some 6th Formers and lots of staff getting involved this term.



### **SIXTH FORM TASTER DAY**

On Friday 16 January, our Sixth Form opened its doors for a highly successful Taster Day, welcoming Year 11 students from our own school alongside over 30 students from 16 local schools. The day offered an exciting and authentic insight into Sixth Form life and the opportunities it provides.

Students took part in four full taster lessons in subjects of their choosing, exploring a broad and diverse curriculum of 20 A Level courses. Students opted for lessons in both new option subjects and well-established favourites including Psychology, Politics, Computer Science, Economics, Mathematics, French, Sociology and Media Studies. The sessions were designed to challenge and inspire students, while supporting them as they begin to make informed decisions about their post-16 pathways. Beyond the classroom, Year 11 students also experienced the wider Sixth Form environment, including time in the café, and hearing from current sixth form students about enrichment and leadership opportunities, helping them to gain a genuine sense of the independence, community and daily experience of Sixth Form life.

We have received extremely positive feedback from staff, who commented on how impressive the students were throughout the day, particularly their enthusiasm, maturity and the way they fully embraced the opportunities on offer, making the day a real success for all involved. Students have also spoken very positively about the day, highlighting how much they enjoyed the lessons, the opportunity to experience Sixth Form life first-hand, and how helpful the day was in shaping their post-16 choices.

***The deadline for sixth form applications is this Friday 13th February.*** We are all looking forward to welcoming this new cohort into Sixth Form.

Yours faithfully

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

**KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

- **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February – STUDENTS RETURN FROM HALF TERM.**
- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February – SWAT Challenge Day at Parkstone Grammar School.
- Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February - Year 7 Parents' Evening – B, C & J only.
- Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March – Year 11 NFER Reference Tests.
- Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March – Year 7 Parents's Evening – O, R & W only.
- Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March – Ten Tors night navigation, Camp 2.
- Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March – Year 12 Geography Lakes trip departs.
- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March – School Tour starting at 09:30am.
- Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March – Year 12 UCAS Fair (Westpoint, Exeter).
- Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March – Gold DofE practice expedition departs.
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March – Gym & Dance Show starting at 6pm.
- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> - Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March – Year 12 Art Mock Exam.
- Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March - Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March – Year 12 visit to Cambridge University.
- Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March - Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March – Year 10 Art Mock Exam.
- Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March – Silver practice DofE departs.
- Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April – Non-Uniform Day.
- **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April – LAST DAY OF SPRING TERM.**