



TORQUAY GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER: MS S FORSTER | FOUNDED 1915 | ACADEMY TRUST

19th December 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

We have had a fantastic first term and it has been wonderful to see the students embracing our school values. I am extremely proud that our whole school community took part in a full democratic process to elect our new Head Girls. Congratulations to Sophia Sutton (Head Girl) and Bonnie Skinner (Deputy Head Girl). Thank you to our outgoing Head Girls, Annemieke Karssens (Head Girl) and Izzy Drewett (Deputy Head Girl) – you have been amazing ambassadors for our school.

TGGS has again been ranked in the Top 10 of Secondary Schools in the South-West – stretching from Gloucester down to Lands End. This is testament to the enduring brilliance of our staff, students and wider community.

I would also like to take the opportunity reflect on all of the fantastic events and experiences our students have encountered within lessons and taking part in our vast array of clubs and trips.



CAROL SERVICE

The TGGS Music department performed for the annual Carol Service on Tuesday 10th December. We heard fantastic performances from various vocal and instrumental groups, as did around 200 primary school students the following day, who were treated to their own Christmas Concert at our school. A huge thank you to all who have worked so hard to put on these wonderful events, bringing the festive spirit to our school community and beyond!



RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

Well done to Maisie Winfield in Year 8 for getting a commendation and a £10 gift voucher in a national competition for her account of a miracle of Jesus.

Year 8 classes have been considering how religious and non-religious people might make moral decisions and were fortunate to have Charlie Haywood, from Lynx Youth Trust, come into lessons to share how, as a Christian, she might decide how to act.



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

PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

On the snowiest day of the year to date, two public speaking teams from Torquay Girls' Grammar School (TGGs) have excelled in the prestigious English Speaking Union (ESU) competition, securing their spots in the next round. This renowned contest celebrates oratory excellence and critical thinking, and the TGGs teams demonstrated exceptional skill and poise.

Team A addressed the topical question, *Should school uniform be abolished?* Hattie Eve passionately explored both sides of the argument, weighing the benefits of uniformity and equality against the value of individual expression. Hattie was exceptionally confident, exceptionally engaging and exceptionally funny. Her speech made us laugh out loud.

Team B explored *The future impact of artificial intelligence*. Anisha Kale discussed the potential AI holds to revolutionise industries, from healthcare to education, while also warning of ethical challenges, such as job displacement and bias in algorithms. Her thought-provoking analysis and engaging presentation showcased a deep understanding of the subject – we did run her Speech through 'Turn it in' to check she hadn't used chat GPT to write it. She hadn't

The ESU competition places a strong emphasis on teamwork, critical thinking, and eloquence under pressure. It also takes nerves of steel and the ability to pretend that your knees aren't knocking.

Well done Hattie Eve, Anisha Kale, Rosie Arnold, Rosie Reed, Isabella Shah and Mia Maddock

PTA UPDATE

On Friday 15th November 2024 the PTA held their very first Christmas Craft Fayre. Years 7-9 were released from their lessons for a while to join in on the fun, and then we opened up to the public after school. It was a very festive event, with the PTA dressed in their best Christmas attire (special award goes to the Christmas Tree costume!). We had around 20 local crafters selling a great range of quality gifts, food and decorations. It was a very festive start to the Christmas season and great fun for helpers and visitors alike. Thank you to all the parent helpers and to all those who visited and supported the event. It will be back next year – bigger and better.



The legendary TGGs quiz returns on Friday 28th February 2025. In true TGGs style there will be a variety of rounds plus the bonus fun interval round (to be revealed on the night – no feely bags this time!). We will be serving a tasty 2-course meal washed down with a drink from the licensed bar. This event is adults only with teams of up to 6 people. It is very popular and gets booked up quickly so watch out for the booking information in the New Year and get your team signed up.

STEVE DARLING VISIT

TGGS Politics were delighted on Friday 13th December to welcome Mr Steve Darling MP, the recently elected Lib Dem MP for Torbay. Steve visited with his guide dog and Westminster star Jennie and spoke to a large audience about the recent election, what it's like to become a new MP and about Lib Dem policies. As well as championing the area he has previously represented as a Councillor for 30 years, he is also Work and Pensions spokesperson for the Lib Dems, challenging the government on how their policies affect ordinary people. He answered questions on how he divides his time between Torbay and Westminster, and on better access for disabled people.

Steve also met with School Council to discuss student experiences of street and workplace harassment, issues that he had picked up as important on a previous visit to TGGS, and which he is committed to raising at Westminster. He is particularly focused on the Workers Rights Bill and has spoken on the need for better protections for young people working in the hospitality industry.



PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

The Physics Department at TGGS organised two exceptional opportunities this term designed to engage and challenge Sixth Form students with a passion for Physics. These events aimed to ignite curiosity, develop problem solving skills, and provide students with insight into real-world applications of Physics.

BPhO Physics Challenge. The British Physics Olympiad Physics Challenge saw Year 13 students test their knowledge and critical thinking in a fast-paced, 1-hour paper. This prestigious competition offers young physicists the chance to tackle stimulating physics problems beyond the school curriculum, sharpening their analytical abilities and fostering a love for the subject. Success in this type of activity is widely recognised by universities and can significantly enhance students' academic profiles.

National Space Agency Day. Students also

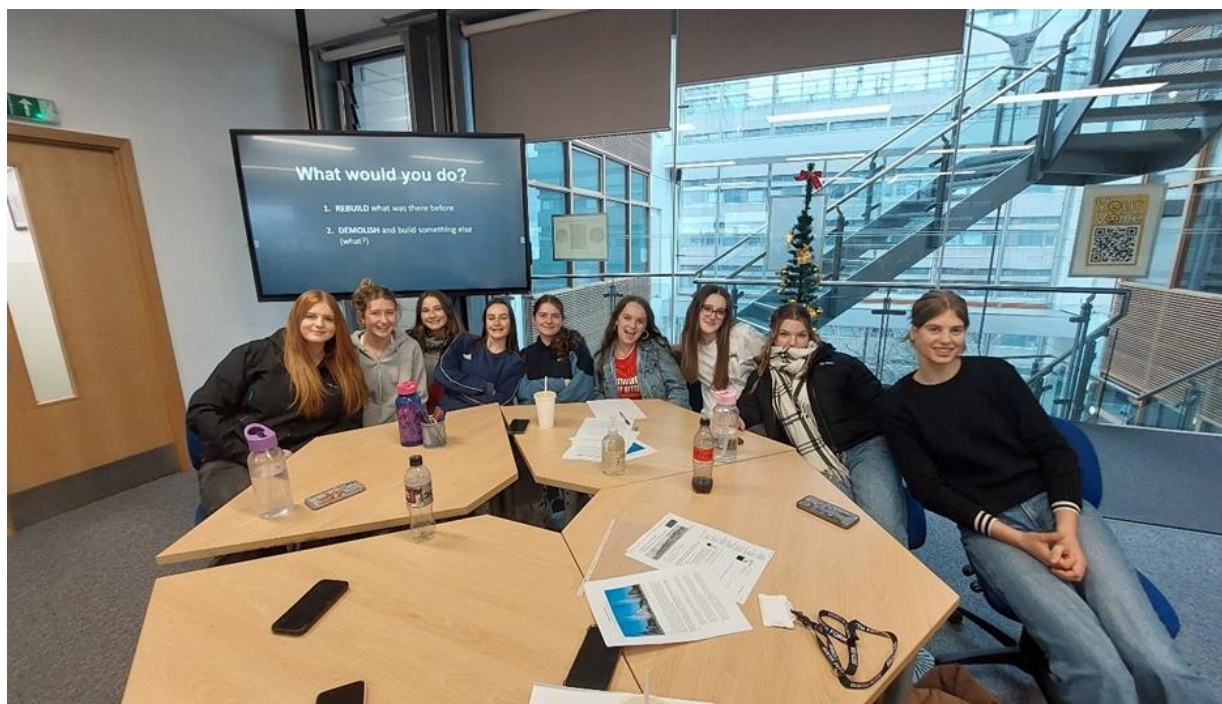
had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the world of space exploration with the National Space Agency. This event featured interactive workshops and masterclasses led by Dorian Pascoe, a distinguished expert in the field. Students explored cutting-edge topics in space science and gained hands-on experience with concepts that shape out our understanding of the universe including activities on "getting into space", "human spaceflight" and "spectroscopy". All these activities also reinforced and enhanced their understanding of topics already included in the subject specification. Building and launching rockets, learning about plasma balls, learning about pressure suits and how to measure mass in space with oscillations were some of the favourite hands-on experiences for our students.



These events reflect the Physics Department's ongoing commitment to inspiring the next generation of scientists. By offering students opportunities to engage with high-level physics challenges and industry experts, the Department aims to nurture their passion and prepare them for future academic and professional success.

GEOGRAPHY

There have been lots of opportunities to get active and creative in geography this term. As part of their Fantastic Places project students in Year 7 had the opportunity enter a trust wide competition about their favourite place. Year 8's are currently carrying weather enquiry fieldwork on site and Year 9's are just getting started on their volcano model projects at home. Our Year 12 and 13 Geographers had the opportunity to visit Plymouth University to take part in a Changing Places conference. They learnt about rebranding places and then took part in an interactive workshop exploring the impacts of the Christchurch Earthquake.



SPORTING SUCCESS

Hockey - Our Under 16 hockey team, consisting of Year 10 students and 3 Year 11 students, had an outstanding performance in the Devon round of the National Schools competition in October. Their efforts earned them a place in the regional rounds at Millfield—a historic achievement for TGGs! Facing tough competition from schools across the West, including Cheltenham Ladies College and Prior Park School, the team displayed exceptional spirit, determination, and resilience throughout the day. Their efforts earned them an impressive 7th place out of 12 schools in the Southwest. We hope this marks the start of more success for our hockey team at this level! Congratulations to everyone involved.

Swimming - Our annual swimming gala against Exeter School in December was a highlight of the term. The event was eagerly anticipated, and our students did not disappoint, taking the overall win. A standout moment came from our Under 13 girls' team, who not only won the majority of their races but also broke Exeter School's Freestyle Relay record! It was an exciting and memorable evening, showcasing the impressive swimming talent within our school.

Cricket - Cricket is continuing to grow at TGGs, and we're thrilled to see the sport's increasing popularity. Our Under 15 team competed in the area round of the indoor cricket competition and delivered a fantastic performance, qualifying for the Devon Round in the spring term. We eagerly await their progress in the next stage of the competition and are excited to see their development in the sport.

HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE

We're very excited to be running another Healthcare Conference after the success of the last one in March 2023. Already several Torbay NHS departments have agreed to come, and Exeter and Plymouth University healthcare faculties are committed to attending and running workshops. We are working to confirm participation from Bath, UWE and Bristol Vet School. In addition, a number of alumnae and parents with healthcare roles have confirmed they will contribute. If you work in any healthcare or vet field, and might also be able to come along on Saturday 22nd March 2025 Mr Endersby would be delighted to hear from you (aendersby@tggsacademy.org) - it would involve being on a carousel stand in our Dining Hall and having conversations with a lot of young people from a range of schools about your role.

TGGS Year 9 students will be welcome to attend, although it will be Year 10 upwards for those attending from other schools.



Many of our Year 13's have now applied to university and are receiving offers and interview calls. About a third of our cohort can expect interviews, largely in healthcare and vet field as well as for Oxford and Cambridge. Mr Endersby is enormously grateful to those parents and supporters of the school who have visited in the last few weeks to conduct mock interviews in Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Physio, Speech & Language Therapy, Vet, Law, Architecture, Economics & Management and Physics. We were also exciting to welcome back Georgie Scoot, our 2022 leaver now on an athletics scholarship at Princeton, who talked to a large audience about studying in the USA.



We put on a multi-mini interview carousel for our 30 healthcare/vet applicants in early November, preparing them for a common interview format for those courses. Stations included ethics, data analysis, precise communication, vocation testing, role play and NHS values.

CHARITY WEEK

Our 2024 TGGS Charity Week took place this half term! We had lots of enthusiasm from all year groups who worked tirelessly, as usual, to raise money for their chosen charities. Students from Years 7-10, led by their Sixth Form Heads of Houses, ran stalls every lunchtime. They baked cookies and cakes, made friendship bands and beaded bracelets, designed guessing games, painted on glitter tattoos, and even organised and hosted a teachers' karaoke event- all to raise money for a range of charities!

A huge well done to our students for participating in this popular, busy event! Here are the results of our fundraising:

- ✓ Beal raised £473.93 for Parkinson's UK.
- ✓ Cross raised £373.70 for Macmillan Cancer Support.
- ✓ Jackson raised £618.28 for Little Princess Trust.
- ✓ Robertson raised £688.22 for Alzheimer's Society.
- ✓ Wilkinson raised £491.63 for Rowcroft.

Total raised for charities = £2,645.76.



Linking to our TGGS Values of Kindness, Equality, Wellbeing, Open Minds and Collaboration, this annual charitable event is something we are incredibly proud of and one where the whole school comes together to help support those in need!

YEAR 7 PANTO TRIP

On Monday 147 students from Year 7 went to the Princess Theatre in Torquay to watch this year's pantomime "Jack and the beanstalk."

During the two hour show there was plenty of laughter, booing, cheering and shouting-all in true panto spirit. The performance was excellent and with the help of copious sweets and snacks so was the audience participation! Everyone enjoyed the show, from the beginning (thanks for the shout out Elsie) to the end when TGGs sang a spontaneous version of the Shaky Christmas classic "Merry Christmas Everyone "

It goes without saying that all of the students behaved explicably and were a credit to our school.



CHRISTMAS JUMPERS

On Thursday 12th December students from all years and staff participated in Christmas Jumper day; the students were given the option to wear a Christmassy jumper in addition to their uniform.



Finally, I would like to wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas break and look forward to welcoming all our students and staff back to school on Monday 6th January 2025.

Yours faithfully

Ms Sarah Forster BSc (Hons), PGCE, MA, NPQH

Headteacher and Accounting Officer

Torquay Girls' Grammar School

Dates for your diary:

- **Monday 6th January 2025 – First Day of Spring Term.**
- Thursday 9th January 2025 – Year 12 – Parents' Evening.
- Monday 13th January 2025 – Year 9 Exams start.

- Tuesday 14th January 2025 – Year 11 – Independent Learning & Revision Strategies, starting at 6pm.
- Thursday 23rd January 2025 – Year 9 – Options Evening.
- **Wednesday 29th January 2025 – Non-Pupil Day.**
- Friday 31st January 2025 – Challenge Day 2.
- Thursday 6th February 2025 – Year 11 – Parents' Evening.
- Monday 10th February 2025 – Year 13 Mocks begin.
- Friday 7th February 2025 – Non-Uniform Day.
- Friday 14th February 2025 – Year 11 – Be a 6th Former for a Day.
- Monday 17th February 2025 – HALF TERM BEGINS.
- Monday 24th February 2025 – First day back from half-term.

