



# TORQUAY GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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23rd May 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

It is hard to believe that we are approaching our final half term of this academic year. Our Year 11 and Year 13 students have been amazing over the last few weeks as they have been completing their examinations. They have been working so hard but also taking time in between exams to relax, enjoy the sunshine and make use of the new seating areas added to our outside spaces. I feel sure that come results days they are going to reap the benefit of their dedicated preparation and hard work.

Whilst Year 11 and Year 13 have been in exam mode our other year groups have participated in an array of activities across the school curriculum. It gives me great joy to be able to share these with you in this newsletter.

## **Goodbye to Year 13**

On Tuesday 6th May, we were delighted to host our annual Year 13 celebration evening at the stunning Dartington Great Hall. This special event marked the end of an era for our Year 13 students, who gathered in their finery alongside their families to reflect on their seven-year journey through school.

The evening was a heartfelt and memorable send-off for a truly exceptional year group. With a mixture of warmth, humour, and pride, speeches were delivered by staff and students alike, capturing the spirit and achievements of this cohort. Awards were presented to recognise academic success, personal growth, and contributions to school life, celebrating the diverse talents and dedication of our students.



A highlight of the evening was the incredible array of musical performances, showcasing the creativity and passion that has been a hallmark of this year group. From solo pieces to ensemble acts, the performances moved the audience and added to the emotional atmosphere of the evening.

As parents and students reminisced about the years gone by and looked ahead to the exciting paths that lie beyond school, there was a real sense of community and shared pride. It was a fitting celebration of all that has been achieved and a powerful reminder of how far these young people have come.

We wish all our Year 13 students the very best as they take their next steps—and hope they carry the memories of this special evening with them.



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

### **Micro Short Story Competition**

We are thrilled to announce the winner of this year's Micro Short Story Competition, based around the powerful theme of courage.

After reading through dozens of thoughtful, creative, and inspiring entries, one story stood out for its poetic beauty and moving originality. The winning piece described a moment of quiet bravery through the eyes of a most unlikely heroine: a raindrop.

In this touching tale, the raindrop (trembling yet determined) faces her very first leap from the comfort of the clouds. The story's gentle personification and delicate imagery captured the essence of courage in a way that was both fresh and deeply human. With only a few lines, it reminded us all that even the smallest among us face great leaps, and that bravery often begins with letting go.

Congratulations **Ada Wolpert-Adams!** Your imagination and heart have truly inspired us all. Your short story will be published in the local Torbay Council, Shiphay Newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who participated. Your words made us laugh, reflect, and dream and we're already looking forward to what you'll write next. Keep writing, keep dreaming, and above all, keep being brave. Ada's story can be found at the end of this newsletter.

### **Cultures Day**

During May we celebrated our school value of equality by holding our very own TGGs cultures day. The demographic of our school includes students who speak over 35 different languages. The school community also includes students who worship different religions, students from a variety of different ethnic groups and students from many different countries of origin. We celebrate this diversity through our visual TGGs cultures map, and each year our Student Council raises money to support yearly updates to the map which celebrates our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Celebrations this year included our Dining Hall offering of Chinese, Japanese and Greek food which was, unsurprisingly, a sell out! We also held a school non-uniform day where students could choose to dress in clothes to reflect their culture.

The week culminated with a 'Walk Around the World Event' led by our fantastic Sixth Form Cultural Leadership Team. Our Sixth Former students gave up their time to plan and then host the event with different stations representing a different world region. Students could immerse themselves in many different cultures by trying new traditional dishes, looking at some beautiful cultural clothing and learning some interesting facts.

### **The Great Debate Grand Final**

To be in the final 20, whittled down through 36 heats, then the semis, is an achievement but then to take part in the final in such a historic location was a real privilege for Isabella Passarelli (Year 12). From the moment of arrival, going through King Henry 8<sup>th</sup> Gate, which is a private gate, the students were made to feel special.

The 20 finalists and their guests received a private tour of St George's Chapel, with special access and very knowledgeable guides, and were also able to watch the Changing of the Guard from a private area. The standard of debate was unbelievably high, judged by leading





professors from Cambridge, Oxford and York Universities, which must have been very intimidating for all the finalists.

Isabella debated brilliantly, eloquently and with zero mistakes! Although Isabella was not placed, she has been asked to send in her written debate speech, which will be published on the Historical Association website. Well done, Isabella!

### **Drama**

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 87 pupils from our drama clubs came together to put on a show in the Old Hall. Year 7 performed a mini version of 'The Little Mermaid' followed by Year 9 who performed a GCSE adaption of 'The Government Inspector'. Year 10 elected to perform a play called 'The White Feather' and the evening was finished off by the Year 8 Drama Club performing their own mini version of 'Mary Poppins'. All pupils performed with enthusiasm and a lovely evening was had by all. Well done to all our pupils and thank you to all parents who came to watch them in action.

### **Geography – Urban Fieldwork**

Our Year 10 Geographers have been enjoying the beautiful weather whilst carrying out urban fieldwork in Bristol. They were exploring the success of regeneration strategies in the city, they visited The Temple Quarter, Harbourside and Cabot Circus.

Our Geography Ambassadors have launched a geographical cake competition with entries due after half term. We are all looking forward to seeing what our students decide to make.



### **Ten Tors/Duke of Edinburgh Award**

The weekend of 9<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> May saw the return of the incredible Ten Tors Challenge. An epic event organised by the Army with support from other organisations. In the lead-up, our teams braved months of tough training: navigating Dartmoor through thick fog, camping in sub-zero temperatures, and pushing themselves both physically and mentally. When the big weekend arrived, they were met with milder weather thankfully.

At 07:00 hours on Saturday, the sound of the starting cannons echoed across the north moor. Our three 35-mile teams, alongside both our 45 and 55-mile teams (the latter a fantastic collaboration with Honiton Community College) set off with focus and determination and by Sunday, all teams had successfully completed their routes. What an achievement! Congratulations to all involved, you've done yourselves and our school proud!

At the same time, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition season is underway. Year 12 students have already completed their practice Gold expedition on Dartmoor and are now preparing for their qualifying expedition in the Brecon Beacons this July. The Year 10 Silver practice expeditions, also on Dartmoor, have also commenced ahead of their qualifying trek across Exmoor next term. Lastly, Year 9s, are preparing for their Bronze Qualifying expeditions in the equally stunning South Hams.



Of course, the expeditions are just one part of the Duke of Edinburgh experience. Throughout the year, our students have volunteered in their communities, taken on physical challenges and developed new skills. We're so incredibly proud of you too!

### **Holocaust Witness Talk**

There was an amazing turnout at the Holocaust Witness talk at lunchtime on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May, with students from every year attending. Judith Hayman of Generation2Generation spoke to a packed Hub about her family's experience of persecution when the Nazis took over Austria in 1938, and about how her mother escaped to England while many relatives died in death camps. We are very grateful to Judith for such a moving, powerful talk and also proud of Isabella Passarelli of Year 12 for inviting Judith and organising the whole event, which grew out of the participation of several of our Year 12s in the Holocaust Education Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz visit to the former death camp in Poland.



### **LawSoc Courts Visit**

Ten LawSoc Year 12s visited Exeter Courts on 14<sup>th</sup> May, for an eye-opening and engrossing immersion in the justice system.

Clerk of the Court Lisa Roberts arranged our visit and welcomed us, and we began with a tour of the cells underneath the Courts and a sobering chat with the security team who handle the flow of remand prisoners and sentenced offenders.

We were then very fortunate to have an hour with Judge Climie, who talked about the courts system, his own career and role as a judge, and about the case we would see, which was a jury trial for sexual assault. We witnessed the barristers negotiating with the judge and each other about how witnesses would be handled, and the prosecution advocate also shared with us about his role and how he prepares to examine witnesses. Once the jury was brought in, we watched the case from the public gallery, taking in the witnesses' evidence and the way they were questioned by the barristers.

At the end of the visit, Judge Climie debriefed the group, discussing what we had seen and answering questions.

It was a very impactful day and we are very grateful to all those who made it possible for us to visit - definitely one of the highlights of a busy LawSoc year.

### **LAMDA Lessons**

LAMDA lessons have recently started in the Drama Department and we are already celebrating successes!

Both Eleanor Reifler and Cecily Fox passed their Grade 6 exams with distinction. At the Torbay Speech and Drama Festival, Georgia Dunn won first place for her poem and April Humphreys and Martha Baker won first place for their duo Musical Theatre. Further awards were also given to April, Martha and Alice Butchart won their group musical theatre and Erin Jolley and Riyanna Goh who won the Shakespeare duet. Eleanor Reifler won silver for her duet and solo Musical Theatre.

Picture is Georgia Dunn (Year 8).



### **Politics Talk**

Thank you to Professor Jason Reifler of Southampton University for an excellent and well attended Politics talk on how we can best understand public opinion on international affairs. Jason is a parent of two TGGS students and one of the highest-ranked political science academics in Europe. It was great to see students from every year group responding to his challenging talk and getting an insight into what studying politics at university might be like. This was the 8<sup>th</sup> Politics speaker meeting this school year, so hugely well done to Year 12 Ambassador Isabella Passarelli for organising such a lively programme.

### **PTA Update**

At the end of March, the PTA hosted two nights of a singalong version of Wicked. Students from Years 7, 8 and 9 joined us after school for pizza, chips, ice cream sundaes and bubble tea before watching the film. Fun (and noise!) was had by all, and we raised valuable funds for the PTA.

We are hoping to put on more after-school events as the feedback from the students was overwhelmingly positive. If you or your child has any suggestions, please email them to [swallwork@tggsacademy.org](mailto:swallwork@tggsacademy.org). This could be ideas for films for movie nights or something totally different.



Our next event will be Family Bingo on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July. We introduced this last year, and it was so well received that we are planning on making it an annual event. As well as traditional Bingo, we shall be playing Music Bingo (listen out and join in with your favourite songs) and Reverse Bingo where you DON'T want your numbers called! We shall be selling pizza/snacks, alcoholic and soft drinks. The cost will be £6 per person to include all your game tickets. This is open to friends and family with children from Key Stage 2 upwards welcome. Watch Arbor for sign-up information.

Our final event of the year will be a Christmas Craft Fayre on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November. Information to follow.

### **Pre-loved Uniform**

Do you have any unwanted uniform at home that no longer fits your child? Please consider donating any uniform items to our school PTA. We hold pre-loved uniform sales throughout the year at various events, and it would lovely to replenish our stock for the next event.

We would be grateful for any donations you can give; our drop off points are Main Reception and the Finance Office. Thank you for ongoing support of our PTA.

I would finally like to take this opportunity to wish you all a pleasant and relaxing half term break. We look forward to meeting all our students again on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025.

Yours faithfully

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

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### **Micro Short Story Competition Winner – Ada Wolpert-Adams**

Drip. Drip. Drip.

You've seen rain before. Abruptly ending your picnic, or hammering down loudly against the windows, while you're stuck inside. Maybe you've splashed in puddles while it patters down all around you. I'm sure everybody's felt it on their face and in their hair.

You know that annoying feeling when you feel that first drop of rain on your head and you think: Oh, no, here we go again... Have you ever thought about how that raindrop must feel, being the first one to signify that rain's coming, to say, "watch out, get your coats on." This is what this story is about. One courageous raindrop called Naia, who took her first step off the cloud and fell to the ground below.

"I can't do this."

"You can."

Naia and her sister Nanami stood on the edge of their cloud, staring down at the ground miles below. Naia was breathing unevenly, her little raindrop heart beating in her chest.

"Breathe," whispered Nanami.

Naia closed her eyes. She took a deep breath, and a warm feeling spread through her body and all the way to her fingertips. Her eyes snapped open.

"I can do this."

Naia inhaled.

And jumped.

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**KEY DATES NEXT HALF TERM:**

- **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – First day back after half-term.**
- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June – Year 8 Parents' Evening (B, C & J).
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June – Year 12 Psychology Zoo Trip.
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June – Year 6 Parents' Information Evening.
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June – Year 8 Parents' Evening (R & W).
- w/c Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June – House Picnics.
- Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June – Main School Open Evening.
- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June – Year 11 Disneyland Paris Trip departs.
- Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June – Year 13 Leavers Prom.
- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July – 6<sup>th</sup> Form Open Morning.
- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July – Sports Day.
- Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July – Year 6 Transition Day.
- Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July – Year 7 Parents' Evening (B, C & J).
- Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July – Sponsored Walk.
- w/c Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July – Battlefields Trip departs.
- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July – Mental Health of Students – Parental Workshop.
- Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July – Year 12 Taster Day at University of Plymouth.
- Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July – Year 7 Parents' Evening (R & W).
- Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July – Non-Uniform Day (for Imprezza Academy).
- Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July – Year 12 EPQ Day.
- w/c Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July – Borneo Expedition departs.
- w/c Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July – Activities Week.
- **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July – Last day of term and House Shout.**

Academic year 2025-2026 term dates can be found [here](#).

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