

The
Thomas Hardy
School

Newsletter

SPRING #1
2025



Welcome

As we approach the end of another productive and vibrant term at The Thomas Hardye School, it is my pleasure to reflect on the many achievements and milestones we have reached this term.

Firstly, I would like to commend our students for their unwavering dedication and hard work. This term can be a challenging one, especially for students in Years 11 and 13, as coursework deadlines and practical assessments loom up and pass by. The quality of work in some of these subjects has been of an incredible standard, from the Year 13 examined drama to performance in art, photography, music and sport. Students in these year groups should be proud of the incredible efforts they have made and confident in getting what they deserve in the examinations. Moreover, the commitment to extracurricular activities across all year groups has been commendable; and was commented on especially by the OFSTED team during the very positive inspection in February. When describing the trips, visits, clubs, societies, speakers and opportunities available to and created by students at this school as exceptional, and beyond anything they had seen. This is down to the enthusiasm of our students and the dedication of our staff and is one of the most special things about our school. There are details in this newsletter of some of these, which I hope you enjoy.

Obviously, this dedication has its price; this term along I have spent all day dressed as a morally ambiguous wizard for World Book Day and pelted with sponges by worryingly enthused students for Comic Relief. I mention World Book Day for two reasons: firstly, to thank all the students, staff and, especially, Mrs Stevens, our inimitable librarian who organised it, for the fun and excitement this day brought to the school community, but secondly because it allows me to repeat the most important point that I, or any adult, can make to our children – namely that regular reading of appropriately complex and challenging literature and non-fiction is the single best thing children can do to ensure academic progress and success. Reading is the skill that unlocks so many subjects and experiences, and vocabulary at 16 remains one of the best predictors of future success. With our brilliant school library, students have access to thousands of titles from classics to newly published works, and reading for even 15 minutes a day can make all the difference to a young person trying to develop their confidence with language, comprehension, expression and knowledge.

On behalf of all staff, may I wish your children a very happy and restful Easter Holiday, and we look forward to welcoming them back later in the month.

Nick Rutherford
HEADTEACHER

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editing & layout:
Caroline Lester

COVER IMAGE: Florida 2025 - more on page 27-28
Photograph courtesy of Mr Rowe

Thanks to all contributors for their help with this issue **contact newsletter@thomas-hardye.net**

Fundraiser

HELP US FUND A NEW MINIBUS FOR THE SCHOOL

The raffle is now open, with over 100 prizes – experiences, days out, nights away, food and drink, garden, home, health and wellbeing, beauty and sporting prizes!

Please buy tickets on ParentPay or via the school office, via cash or cheque.
If bought on **ParentPay**, tickets will be sent home via students.
This will take a few days.

£1 / TICKET DRAW DATE: 9TH MAY

For a comprehensive prize list, please look on our website [here](#).
Some of the prizes on offer include the following items.

- Signed Bath Rugby shirt**
- Scarlets Rugby shirt**
- 300 & £100 permanent make-up vouchers**
- Limited-edition print of Anders Larsson by Kevin Mills**
- Makita DAB - Bluetooth site radio**
- Overnight stay at Bidlake Farm**
- 3 kgs half-moon mature cheddar with chutney & port**
- Bottle of champagne and a cream tea**
- Guided fishing trip for 4**
- Handmade electric guitar**
- £100 cash**
- Many alcohol prizes (including wine and spirits)**
- Golf lesson / 4 balls at local golf clubs**
- Fitness classes and membership**
- Glider flight.**



With grateful thanks to all the parents, carers and businesses who have donated goods and services to make our raffle a success.

**Thank you for all your support.
If parents, carers, grandparents
& friends of each student
buy £10 of tickets between
them, we will hit our target!**

Mrs G Glennie



Library



WORLD BOOK DAY

As an international celebration of reading and books, World Book Day is an important date on the calendar at THS.

This year, our staff body dressed as characters from the Harry Potter books with over 50 staff taking part. The attention to detail on some of the costumes was amazing and good fun was had by everyone involved. There was a treasure hunt for students to see

how many staff they could find.

This year's Guess Who's Reading competition was linked to well known people who were reading and students had to decide who the twenty faces were. Students from all year groups entered and there was a £10 Amazon voucher for the winner in each year group.

Who doesn't remember what they read as a child? For our Childhood Reads initiative, staff gave the name of a book they

remembered reading as a child and these were displayed in a huge montage with the covers of the chosen book. It was a trip down memory lane with titles including 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', 'The Faraway Tree', 'The Gruffalo' or 'Where The Wild Things Are'.

Mrs Stevens



READING QUIZ

During World Book Day week two teams of students from Year 9 took part in the South West Regional heat of the National Reading Champions Quiz which is for students aged 10-14 yrs. The quiz is organised by the National Literacy Trust and sponsored by ALCS (Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society) and is aimed at keen readers. The quiz consists of 75 questions which are based on fictional titles and involve book titles, characters, authors, brain teasers and story details. It includes questions on well known books, series and covers a wide range of genres.

Our regional heat was held online and delivered by quiz master Mr Dilly who is excellent at guiding and supporting the students through the quiz. They spent the morning of 7th March working in small teams to try and outwit the other 23 teams from across the south west and demonstrate their book knowledge. They came a very respectable 7th and joint 8th and enjoyed taking part and sharing their very usual team mascots (I've never had a bottle of Tesco washing up liquid before!) with the other teams.

Mrs Stevens



Library



WESSEX AMAZING BOOK AWARD

On 12th February myself and Mrs Evans took a group of Year 9 students to Shaftesbury School for an award morning for WABA. This is an interschool book award set up by school librarians within Dorset and involves 8 schools across Dorset. Each school selects a book to go on the longlist and then this is cut down to a shortlist of 6. The award is for students in Key Stage 3 and so at Thomas Hardy the award is run within Year 9 book club. We read the shortlisted books from November to February and then attended the prize giving morning.

During the morning students choose the book they would like to champion and discuss it with students from other schools. Then each table does a short presentation as to why their book should win, after which the students all take a vote.

We also heard from local author, Gillian Cross, who has written various books for young people including

Then finally the winning book is announced and this year it was our choice 'Getting Away With Murder' by Kathryn Foxfield and we won a lovely trophy which we will keep until next year when the morning is hosted at Thomas Hardy.

Year 9 book club takes place on Thursday 3.30 – 4.30 in the Library and new members are always welcome.

Mrs Stevens



HARRY POTTER NIGHT

At the end of January the Library held its annual HP book night to celebrate all things in the wizarding world. We had students from across the year groups come along and make house hedgehogs and owls, try their hand at our HP puzzle plus a variety of other games, craft and fun all whilst eating popcorn and watching 'The Chamber of Secrets' on the big screen.

The evening ends with our big HP quiz which tests your knowledge from the very easy 'What school does Harry Potter attend?' to the more difficult 'What happens when you eat a tiny black Pepper Imp sweet?'

Good fun was had by all especially Alice from Year 10 who is a huge HP fan and came in full Slytherin outfit plus brought along her amazing HP merchandise and ate her popcorn from a cauldron!

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the 30th anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia. To mark this the students in the lower school, years 9-11, created a display to remember the 1.5 million Jewish children who lost their lives in the Holocaust. Each student wrote the name of one Jewish child who did not survive the Holocaust onto a luggage tag. There were nearly 1,500 names in the display which is just 0.1% of the Jewish children who died.

The project created some powerful discussion amongst our students so they can learn both from and about the Holocaust and more recent genocides, for a better future.

Mrs Stevens & Mr Matthews



Science



THE LIFE AQUATIC WITH CEFAS

Students from THS visited The Centre for

Environmental, Fisheries and Aquatic Science (CEFAS)

when they held an open day for Year 12 students.

Students got to meet scientists from the laboratory

and discuss their work as well as seeing working histology,

chemistry and electron microscope labs. Students were

bowled over by the scientific expertise on our doorstep and

the possibilities of degree level apprenticeships at CEFAS.

The students enthusiastic questions and engagement with

the day were fantastic to observe.

Mr Lewis and Mr Davis

BRITISH PHYSICS OLYMPIAD

This international competition is run by Oxford University, with nearly 8,000 Year 13 students from 550 UK and overseas school participating this year. The papers challenge a range of student knowledge, preparation and ability, allowing access for good students, whilst also aiming at stretching and challenging the top young physicists. The following results are the best set of results our students have obtained in the last ten years:

Ben Edwards – Gold; **Jeb Neely** – Gold; **Oscar Hills** – Silver and **William Tuke** – Bronze 1.

Congratulations to these four students for their wonderful achievement!

Dr Rand



WONDERS OF SCIENCE LIVE IN BATH

50 Year 11 students attended the GCSE Science Live event in Bath, where they were inspired by talks from five leading scientists and a GCSE examiner. The event showcased some incredible scientific concepts and provided students with eye-opening insights.

One of the fascinating discoveries was that the energy needed to power everything in a person's life for ~30 years could come from just half a bathtub of sea water and the lithium in a laptop battery, through nuclear fusion. They also learned about the hydonic region of the brain increases your desire for calorie dense food when we're full—the proof behind the "dessert stomach."

Students also explored time dilation, learning that traveling at 99.99999999999999% (yes, this exact value...) of the speed of light could allow you to cross the galaxy in one day. Finally, they witnessed how patterns in nature are explained by oscillating reactions.

A truly inspiring day for future scientists!

Ms Brammer and Mr Mules

Science

BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK

The week was a fantastic success for the school, with many students and staff taking part.

A trip to the Manor Park Primary School taught the Year 2s and 3s the exciting physics of flight. Groups of students worked in teams to build design and test futuristic planes.



Throughout the week, the science department organised lunch time activities to engage students



across all year groups. Demonstrations included Fun with Fossil, Dissections, Funky Physics,

Hero or Villain? (to decide the fate of Fritz Harbour) and Chemical Curiosities.

We were also fortunate to have external speakers at the school discussing their industry. **Tim Dowley** and **Ruby Vincent** from Tradebe explained how the nuclear industry will play an important part in addressing



sustainability and climatic challenges. **Natalie Abbott**, a Principal Radiotherapy Physicist at Bart Health NHS Trust came to speak to our sixth for regarding uses of radiotherapy in medicine and avenues into the profession.

Daily quizzes were given to all year groups. These were centred around physics, chemistry, biology and environmental science trivia. Congratulations to the winning tutor groups **9MW, 10TR, 11LL, 12NB, 13MK.**



On the Sunday, the school ran a stall at the Dorchester Family Science Day as part of the Dorchester Science Festival. Over 800 visitors were at the event. The school set up a chemistry stand with exciting demonstrations appealing to both children and parents alike. Huge thanks to sixth formers **Evie Dovey, Jess Mortimer, Amelia Winthorpe, Oliver French** and **Canon Reid** for giving up your time to support us.

Mr Price



ODDBALLS AMBASSADOR VISIT FOR YEAR 11

In January, as part of the school's tailored Personal Development programme, Year 11 received talks on cancer awareness and the importance of self-examination from Head of Year 9 Miss Samways and Oddballs Foundation Ambassador Lysander Duree of Exeter University.

Mr K Matthews

Politics & Law



HOUSE OF LORDS TALK

In late January, A level politics & law students welcomed Lord Robin Janvrin (member of the House of Lords and previously the Queen's communication secretary) to discuss the role of the House of Lords in governing, creating and amending laws. The students pressed him on many issues, including a mandatory retirement age for Lords, if Bishops should have automatic seats and if he believed that the Royal Family should contribute towards the NHS. Students chatted to him informally after the talk, receiving advice on issues such as starting a diplomatic career.

Lord Janvrin also quizzed the students on lowering the voting age to 16 and if they thought having a House of Lords was a good thing. Coming into the school in person and being willing to be subject to student interrogation was very brave. Lord Janvrin confirmed that he had enjoyed the session enormously and was full of praise for our students.



HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION

In January, Year 12 students Jonathon Wright, Lettice Busby and Jess Townsend, took part in Dorchester's Holocaust Memorial Commemoration event at the Corn Exchange. This event is organised by the Holocaust Memorial Trust hmd.org.uk and takes place every year to remember all those killed in genocides from the Holocaust in World War 2 and all the genocides since.

This year, the school was asked to talk about the ten Stages of Genocide, focussing on the Bosnian genocide in Srebrenica in 1995; this year marks the 30th anniversary of that event. The students spoke movingly about the events leading up to the genocide and reminded those attending that despite saying 'never again' after the holocaust, it was only 50 years until a further genocide had happened on European soil. Dr. Vest then repeated the talk in assemblies for Years 10, 12 and 13 in the week following Holocaust Memorial Day.

Dr E Vest



POLITICS IN WESTMINSTER

In December, the politics department

attended a politics conference in London. 2000 sixth form politics students were in attendance. We listened to and questioned politicians in Westminster Central Hall, including Nigel Farage, Stephen Kinnock and the speaker of the house Lindsay Hoyle. Two of our students asked brilliant questions. Many of the ministers discussed the Assisted Dying Bill and why it was such an interested piece of legislation. There was also a common theme of young people needing to engage in politics, and the recent US election result was also discussed by politicians.

We headed to the Houses of Parliament to meet with Edward Morrello, the MP for West Dorset. He was very engaging, discussing his main priorities for the constituency, but also how and why opposition parties are so important. It was a brilliant day, and we all came away talking about politics (even more than normal!).

Mrs C Roper-Brown



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE LORDS' YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

This year, the school is participating in the Youth Engagement Programme with the House of Lord's Environment Select Committee. The Chair of the Select Committee, Baroness Sheehan, visited in February to talk about the committee's work and answer questions on a range of issues, including the proposed incinerator at Portland and Air BNB properties in the local area. The students did not allow her any 'politician' answers, asking a number of follow-up questions for her to address.

Several students presented their ideas about what the Environment Select Committee should be investigating. Baroness Sheehan talked about moving their ideas forward. Next, the students will focus on nitrogen pollution, with their feedback to the committee being considered as they complete their investigation.

Dr E Vest

Sixth Form



TOM CLIFTON, YOUTH MP!

Back in May 2024, Tom Clifton was

elected as the member for Dorset's Youth Parliament. Since then, he has been involved in everything from full council meetings to national youth conferences.

As the first half of his two-year term approaches, Tom now begins exciting work with central government. Much of his work has been set up for after A Levels but one important event before then was sitting in the UK Youth Parliament Annual Session last Friday 28th February. This is an event where all the UK's members of youth parliament come

together and debate on policy and decide on which campaign should be pushed forward for the national youth parliament campaign. This event was also televised on parliament TV and is recorded on the official speech recording database (Hansard).

Tom said, "This was fantastic day and a true honour to represent Dorset's young people nationally. The day started with us congregating in Westminster hall

and then being ushered to the house of commons for our first debate on lowering the voting age to 16. From being called to order as a house by Mr Speaker to signal the opening our sitting, to the last call of order from Madam Deputy Speaker to signal the close of our sitting, the day passed in a flash. To sit on the green benches where the MPs and now MYPs are able to sit, is a truly nerve-racking experience."

As a Sixth Form, we are really proud of Tom's achievements this year and it would be lovely to think that more students will follow in his footsteps in the year to come.



Mr Bewley

English

“UNMISSABLE”: AN INSPECTOR CALLS AT THE MAYFLOWER

On Wednesday 29th January, 150

Year 10 and 11 students travelled to the Mayflower Theatre in Southampton to watch Stephen Daldry’s production of Priestley’s “An Inspector Calls” - a text many of our students study for GCSE English literature.

First opening in 1992, Daldry’s reworking of Priestley’s 1945 script has received widespread acclaim, winning four Tony awards and three Oliver awards. Priestley’s original setting of a wealthy suburban household is placed within the bleak landscape of an end of war Britain, merging his criticisms of the 1912 rigid class system with the tumultuous historical setting in which he was writing. The dramatic collapsing of the set to mirror the collapsing world view of the Birling family really brought home Priestley’s moral message to our students in an exciting and physical spectacle.

As far as the personal performances go, we were treated to a rather sardonic Inspector, played by Tim Treloar, whose scorn for the family was palpable. And whilst Mr Birling’s words were sometimes lost amidst

a fast-paced delivery, this was compensated by Leona Allen’s portrayal of Sheila Birling which was both heartfelt and powerful: her white ornate wedding dress went through a symbolic change during the course of the play which was artfully reflected in her character’s change from an immature, almost hysterical capitalist to passionate and earnest socialist.

However, although I am certainly biased, the stand-out performance was given by the Thomas Hardy students. All 150 students were impeccable throughout the trip: courteous and polite to the coach and theatre staff and unfailingly respectful of their environment and of the performers. At a performance of a GCSE text, it came as no surprise that there were many other schools attending.

However, our students’ brilliant conduct set them apart as an extraordinary group of young people. I am always proud to be a teacher at Hardyes; this trip exemplified the reasons why.

Mrs J McNaughton

PE

Congratulations to Year 9 student **Leah Johnston** who competed in the British Shooting Schools Competition in the 10m precision. She and the team came away with a silver medal in the National Competition. Congratulations!

The U19 girls have completed 3 fixtures in the County Cup and won 2 out of 3 of their fixtures. An excellent display of football this year. The U16 girls had a narrow defeat in the County Cup semi-final, an excellent achievement – well done girls!

Congratulations to the U16 boys got now through to the 3rd round of the County Cup.

Well done to the U15 boys rugby who travelled to London to play Cranleigh School in the National Plate competition. This is a great achievement to get to the Last 16 in a National Competition.

A massive congratulations to the U14, U15 and U16 football teams who are all champions of the Area Cup. The U16 have also qualified for the County Cup Final – a massive congratulations to all.

Well done to all the year 10 girls who were involved in the Inter College Netball, a great evening had by all.

There will be a new club lists for the Summer Term, so look out for this in the new term!

Congratulations to former student **Ed Bird**, who set a British U20 Record in the 3000m at the Sharon Colyear-Danville Season Opener in Boston



Miss Leatherland

Environment

BEACH CLEANING STARS

Aida, Harry, Harrison, Isabella, Martha, Oona, Ruby B, and Ruby F, all Year 11 pupils, participated in beach cleans as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award, receiving a recycled picnic bench from Clean Jurassic Coast in recognition of their hard work and dedication. Clean Jurassic Coast is a community organisation dedicated to reducing plastic pollution along Dorset's Jurassic Coast through regular beach cleans and educational programmes.

Their efforts not only helped reduce plastic pollution but also contributed to the recycled materials used to create the bench. Collecting around 140 kg of plastic off the beaches at Chesil and Ringstead, the plastic was taken to DCW Polymers in Exeter for recycling through Keep Britain Tidy's Ocean Recovery Project. DCW Polymers clean and shred the plastics, before melting and extruding them into plastic planks and making garden furniture. The bench is 100% recycled plastic, of which 45 - 50% is beach plastics. The only other thing that's been added is an industry standard black dye called Black Masterbatch, which is purely to colour it.

Martha said, "I volunteered as part of my bronze DoE because I felt that helping Clean Jurassic



Coast was the perfect thing to do given we live near the coast and seeing plastic on the beach is heartbreaking."

Roy Beal, Ambassador for Keep Britain Tidy, said, "This bench is a shining example of what can be accomplished when young people take action to protect their environment. The dedication and enthusiasm shown by the Thomas Hardy pupils during their beach cleans are truly inspiring, and it's fantastic to see their efforts recognised in such a meaningful way."

For more information about Clean Jurassic Coast and its work, visit

www.cleanjurassiccoast.com

Mr S Walker

Music

WINTER UPDATE

In November, the school held its first Barn Dance.

With live music provided by the Thomas Hardye School Folk Group, it was a memorable evening of dancing, tunes and mayhem, well-attended by the school and local community. The Folk Group look forward to playing for more dances in the future.

In December, the Thomas Hardye Singers travelled to Exeter Cathedral with 60 middle school students to take part in the Gabrieli Roar project. This involved young people performing a selection of Christmas pieces from the 18th Century, accompanied by professional singers and instrumentalists from the esteemed Gabrieli Consort. To sing in Exeter Cathedral was an amazing experience and feedback from parents was that the overall sound was fantastic. We hope to work with the Gabrieli Consort again in the future.

The music department held their annual Christmas Concert in collaboration with Wessex Schools Music. Most of the school's music ensembles took part, including the Concert Band, Orchestra and Rock & Pop Choir. The concert was a huge success: we were particularly proud that our school orchestra now contains around 40 students, including 22 string players.

Mrs Trevorrow & Freya Murray / Year 12

**FOLLOW THE
MUSIC DEPARTMENT
ON INSTAGRAM**



We welcomed new members onto the Governing Body at the start of this year. **Sophie Duke**, a parent and former Chair of Governors at Damers First School, has been co-opted to the Governing Board. **Chrissy Hancock** and **Rob Heathcote** were elected as Parent Governors. We are looking forward to working with them.

Technically the Governing Body of the school is a committee of the Wessex Multi Academy Trust Board and are delegated very specific responsibilities. These include monitoring Safeguarding, SEND, Health and Safety and Finance and a governor is responsible for each of these areas. Also, governors monitor and report back on key curriculum areas.

The role of governor is to support and challenge the leadership of the school so that the school continues to provide the very best education for its students. Governors are not involved in operational matters.

Governors have enjoyed attending and supporting school events. The Sixth Form Open Evening was hugely impressive, with students in every area showed how outstanding the Sixth Form is and what it has to offer to so many students.

The Christmas music concert and carol service show cased a superb quality of music with large numbers of students contributing their impressive skills.

Over the year we always focus on the School Improvement Plan and monitor that the school is taking effective action on the areas that need development. A key focus of the plan this year is embedding the "Three R's" - Respect, Resilience and Responsibility and ensuring everyone knows and understands these and what actions are needed to achieve them. Governors visit the school and talk to students to observe these values in action. Respect, Resilience and Responsibility underpin all the work of the school from attendance to outcomes.

Governors continue to be assured that The Thomas Hardy School is a very, very special school that offers so many opportunities to its students. That does not mean we are complacent, and we are always looking forward to ways in which we can support the school on its journey of excellence.

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS
Mr A Moore

ARKWRIGHT SCHOLARS

Sixth form students **Alexander Swift**, **Sofia Neilenko**, **Bruno Greenfield** and **Luca Smart** have been awarded the Mr Edward Ogden Arkwright Scholarship in recognition for outstanding potential leadership in Engineering.

All students created a practical based project using their engineering knowledge that also demonstrated creativity and innovation. Each project submitted went through a rigorous selection process of interviews and aptitude tests. Arkwright Engineering Scholarship programme is designed to inspire and develop the next generation of future leaders as they finish school and progress into the exciting world of engineering. Well done!



Mr G Davis



BEBRAS CODING CHALLENGE

In November, we had 36 GOLD award winners in the Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge 2024, scoring in the top 10% in the country. It is a international competition run by the Raspberry Pi Foundation, designed to test students' problem solving abilities. 512 Students took part overall. Special mentions for **Srihari Prabakaran** and **Harry Chilcott** who both achieved the perfect scores. Harry was the only person to achieve this feat, in his competition, in the country. Well done to all who took part!

Mr Price



JACK COMPETES IN ROUND OF ROTARY YOUNG CHEF

Recently, Year 11 student Jack Cawley travelled to West Somerset college in Minehead to take part in the District Final of the Rotary Young Chef competition, where he had to produce a two-course meal in two hours, in a very cold commercial kitchen, with industrial catering equipment – not an easy task.

He was not fazed however and cooked a menu of fresh pasta carbonara with home-made pasta and a hint of garlic, topped with a garnish of pea shoots, followed by

chocolate macarons with a raspberry orange puree, scattered chocolate crumbs and crushed macarons.

There were five contestants taking part from across Somerset, and Jack made us all very proud by coming runner-up, meaning he will get through to the next round to be held on 16 March at Clifton College Prep School in Bristol.

Very well done Jack, even when things did not go quite right, you didn't give up and produced a very delicate and tasty meal, showing great resilience!

Mrs Voss

Maths

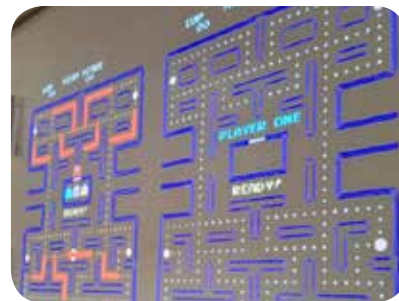
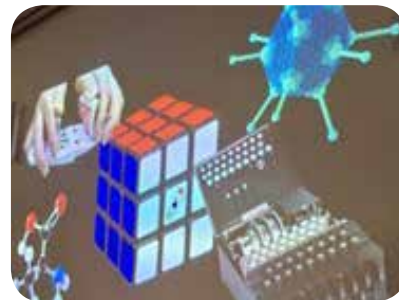


MATHS FEST TRIP

In early February, students from Years 13, 12 & 11 got up at the crack of dawn to travel to London for an all-day extravaganza to celebrate all things maths.

Engaging speakers, who all use maths in their everyday professional lives, inspired our students in topics including 'Maths in a Rubik Cube,' 'Simulation Modelling' (to investigate the way people move when they are in crowds), 'Pac-Man & Video Games Maths,' 'The Maths in Randomly Generated Numbers' and 'Maths in History'.

Students also were given techniques & tips to achieve their best in exams and took part in Maths competitions and puzzles; winners from The Thomas Hardy School were **Ben Edwards** and **Elian Looker**. Students from other schools shared their presentations in the 'Maths Slam' It was an amazing day and the students and teachers have returned to Dorchester inspired, motivated and excited to find out more.



Mrs Osment



FRENCH EXCHANGE BRINGS FUN & FRIENDSHIP

In March, 24 French exchange students from Nantes visited the Thomas Hardy School, marking an exciting and enriching experience for both our Year 9 and 10 students.

During their stay, the students took part in a wide range of activities, including students enjoyed a day of sightseeing around our local area, a trip to Bridport, a fun-filled bowling session, and some games of badminton, where everyone got into the competitive spirit while enjoying the chance to bond.

To add a touch of British tradition, students took part in a lively pub quiz designed and led by the French year 13 students, testing their knowledge of British culture and current events. The exchange students from Nantes had a blast learning about British trivia and were eager to challenge their hosts.

The losing team was also delighted with their prize chosen by the French 6th form students - a tin of baked beans!

On the weekend, the students spent time with their British host families, who welcomed them into their homes and shared in traditional British experiences. From afternoon teas to joining in with drama performances with their host families, it was a wonderful way to deepen the connection between our two cultures.

We want to extend our thanks to all the students and staff involved in making this exchange such a success, and to our visitors from Nantes for being such wonderful guests.

The French exchange was truly a fantastic celebration of friendship, culture, and the joy of learning from one another. Students can't wait to go over to France in May!

Miss Didier

Year 9



CELEBRATION

We ended the Autumn term

with our celebration assembly. It was fantastic to celebrate with the students all their successes in their first term here. A few prizes to mention: **9FP & 9NW** – Best tutor group attendance; **9YK** – most achievement points; **9SY** – Alternative Olympic winners; **9NW** – Genius Square winners; **Srihari Prabaharan 9HT** – special recognition for scoring in the top 1% of the country in the Bepras ICT competition.



In school, students are attending the many extra-curricular activities that the school offers, and Year 9 students have made us proud by representing the school at music and sports events. **Leah Johnston 9NM** is a talented shooter, recently spending a day in Okehampton representing the school in the 10m precision shoot. Well done Leah!

We also like to celebrate the amazing things that our Year 9 students do outside of school. **Thomas Worsley** is a fantastic horse jumper who is currently training hard and hopes to be selected for the Children on Horse team. We are very proud of Thomas's accomplishments.

In December, **Jack Curley** took part in a competition in Weymouth where the funds raised went towards buying a new defibrillator for The Railway Inn. Jack played against one of the best up-and-coming darts players in Weymouth, and although he didn't win his match, he absolutely held his own. Perhaps we have the next Luke Littler in our year group!

If you headed to Weymouth Pavilion to see the Christmas pantomime Peter Pan, they would have seen the brilliant performance given by our own **Kaitlin Hillier**. What a star!

HELP FOR TEENAGERS

Raising teenagers is a hard job and there is no guidebook on how to do it. Naturally we offer a range of different support and interventions in schools, which often involves liaising with outside agencies and referring students to these. Outside of school, if you require guidance or support, dorsetyouth.com/directory-of-organisations is a fantastic resource. It gives a list of agencies parents & young people can contact directly and might be a useful starting point.

Miss Samways



DANCING SUCCESS FOR KAITLIN

Over the Christmas period Kaitlin Hillier from 9SM took part in the Weymouth Pantomime of Peter Pan. This was Kaitlin's third year of performing in the pantomime and was her first year of having a speaking and dancing role as a 'Lost Child'.

To gain a place in the pantomime Kaitlin had to audition with over 130 other dancers for 24 places. Kaitlin was then rehearsing every Sunday throughout November and December and took part in 8 performances during the Christmas holidays. We are so incredibly proud of Kaitlin's hard work and dedication to her dancing and her outstanding professional performance in the pantomime. Well done Kaitlin!

Miss Miller

CCF

MARCH IN MARCH FUNDRAISER

On Saturday 29 March 2025, the CCF undertook its main charity fundraising event of the year, the 10 mile 'March in March' for Combat Stress.

30 cadets and 7 staff took part and so far, with Gift Aid donations, £7,753.19 has been raised. Lead fundraiser, **Sgt Jessica Rose** (Year 12) has raised nearly £800 alone said, "I decided to take part in the March in March for Combat Stress this year as I believe that it is a wonderful charity, which aims to help veterans get the help that they need. I wanted to do something that would be meaningful for all the veterans of the services.

These veterans have done so much and given up so much for our country and I wanted to give something to them. Our contribution towards this amazing charity is going to be able to support so many people, whether it's using the call line or doing a virtual art therapy session. This will be making a difference in someone's life, whether they know it now or not"

CCF Contingent Commander, Maj Kevin Matthews, said, "It was a great day, albeit a cold one. Our cadets are amazing people, and they have truly gone above and beyond on this one with their commitment towards their fundraising. I'm enormously proud of them all anyway, but this has proven that this is a generation that cares about other people and is willing to undergo difficulty and hardship for the benefit of others."

It is still possible to support the fundraising effort, to donate go to

<https://events.combatstress.org.uk/so/342/t>



REVIEWS & REFLECTIONS

As part of the CCF biennial review last year, and as part of the recent OFSTED inspection, the CCF was recognised as one of the most influential parts of the wider personal development offer of the school. Alongside their single service military-based training programmes which focus on wider development such as leadership, followership, communication, resilience and teamwork. When asked what impact the CCF has had on them, a current cadet said, "It has taught me so many valuable life skills and gave me opportunities that I couldn't get from anywhere else. It has always been such a safe space for me, especially when I felt down or needed to take my mind off something. I am very thankful for this brilliant group of people and all the experiences that come with it."



CADET STAFF SUCCESS

The CCF has two newly qualified Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) **Sgt Maia Beswarick-Cobb** and **Sgt Gary Narraway** undertook the CCF(Army) Basic Instructor Training Course at Bovington Garrison during February half term.

The course is designed for CFAVs with no prior military experience to learn the skills they'll then be teaching to cadets once they're qualified.

The week included weapon handling training of the L98A2 rifle with a weapon handling test to ensure training safety. In addition to this the course involved basic drill and turnout, basic navigation and fieldcraft.

CFAVs do not need to be school staff or have any previous military experience, and they are essential to the continuation of the CCF. New CCF staff are needed for both the Army and RAF sections, contact ccf@thomas-hardye.net for more details on how to become a CFAV.



A DAY BRIZE NORTON

The RAF section recently went to RAF Brize Norton for the day. Whilst there they received a careers brief, visited 99 Sqn and a C17 aircraft, visited the RAF Police on station and the fire section. It was an exciting opportunity for cadets to see an active regular RAF station during a working week, as well as meet serving airmen and women.

Maj Matthews

Florida



Once again Florida welcomed and wowed our students from during the February half term break. After a long day of travel (which thankfully was largely uneventful this year!) the sun shone warm and bright for us on day one of the tour, and we took the chance to relax and recuperate on the slides and waterways of the Volcano Bay Water Park. To avoid potential rainstorms in Orlando, we switched our days around to visit Kennedy Space Centre for day 2 and were met by another hot sunny day as we boarded the shuttle bus to take us to the a Apollo Rocket Museum site. We spent a little longer in this area this year so that we could properly explore the awesome displays about the build up to the moon landings and then had lunch overlooking the rocket launch pads which are once again in regular use.

The week unfolded with visits to the amazing universal studios and islands of adventure, including a really atmospheric and memorable 30th anniversary Mardis Gras parade one evening. The lit-up floats along with

dance and music displays were just incredible and everyone was cheering and jumping to catch the beads along the route of the procession.

All our visits went brilliantly, as ever, thanks to the planning and hard work of Steve at Feat travel along the 4 members of staff (Miss Moss, Mr Bruchez, Miss Wilson and myself). Credit for the amazing success of the trip must also go to all the students who once again did the Thomas Hardye School (and our nation) proud. They made friends, had fun, helped each other and grew in terms of their knowledge, confidence and experience in ways that are hard to quantify, but easy to see the effects of. We were so proud of them all and the way in which they "levelled up" along the way.

Whether it was listening to the songs of rehabilitated dolphins, at Clearwater Marine Aquarium, spotting alligators and snail kites from our air boat ride, laughing and screaming on the awesome roller coasters of Busch Gardens Park or chilling with an ice cream on the Clearwater Beach, there

were so many memorable moments in this action-packed week. For some, of course, that even included the shopping at the Florida mall!

As ever we were blown away by the incredible atmosphere at the Solar Bears ice hockey match and were lucky enough to watch the historic hockey final between Canada and the USA live during our last night celebration party!

It is hard to imagine how this trip could be improved, but that is our challenge as we plan and prepare for Florida 2026! Look out Orlando - see you same time next year!

"I made so many memories and so many friends when I went on the Florida trip this year!"

Gracie Temple-Brown

"Best experience of my life!- A once in a lifetime opportunity."

Lois Joyce

"Thank you for the most amazing trip to Florida. I really loved getting to see all the wildlife"

Tyler Webster-Harris

Mr Rowe

Dates

SUMMER TERM

TUESDAY 22ND APRIL

INSET DAY FOR STAFF

WEDNESDAY 23RD APRIL

ALL STUDENTS RETURN

MONDAY 5TH MAY

MAY DAY BANK HOLIDAY

FRIDAY 23RD MAY

LAST DAY OF HALF TERM

MONDAY 2ND JUNE

ALL STUDENTS RETURN

FRIDAY 18TH JULY

LAST DAY OF HALF TERM

