

The
Thomas Hardy
School

Newsletter



AUTUMN #1
2025



Welcome

What a wonderful half-term it is that ends now with a welcome break and descent into the darker days of late autumn.

All staff have enjoyed getting to know our new students in Years 9 and 12, and the former are to be congratulated on their focussed start to life at senior school.

Among the stand-out moments of the half-term have been the range of visits and extra-curricular opportunities on offer to our students, including the science trip to Switzerland to visit CERN and the Large Hadron Collider, history trips to London and, this week, Berlin and the geography trip to Iceland. Following the incredibly successful international trips during the summer to Sri Lanka and Borneo, these opportunities remain a remarkable and important feature of THS life. As always, I must thank the staff whose dedication, organisation and generosity with their own time mean these trips happen year after year.

Another area of excellence which is at the forefront of my thoughts is our incredible performing arts department. Anyone who saw the end of term production of *The Addams Family* will know how professional and entertaining the end result of their projects can be, and this is borne out in academic outcomes, where the progress made by sixth form students in music, music technology and performing arts place them as amongst the most

effective departments in the country. Last week the choir sang evensong in Sherborne Abbey, and the department have just received the exciting news of their nomination as Outstanding School Music Department at the national Music and Drama Education Awards 2026, which will be judged in February. This nomination is an incredible achievement for our music and drama departments and recognition that what is achieved at The Thomas Hardye School and across the Wessex MAT is amongst the best in the country. Well done to them, but particularly well done to the students who come early and stay late to rehearse and participate in the choirs, bands, ensembles, orchestras and shows.

We look forward next half-term to our Remembrance Service on 11th November and to the mock examinations for our Year 11 and Year 13 students. Whilst daunting for some, these mocks provide important exam practise and a chance for staff to understand where students need to focus for the final part of the year. If your child is struggling with how to prepare and revise for these mocks, please do contact the school so we can support.

Wishing all students and their families a restful week away from their studies, and we look forward to welcoming them back on 3rd November.

With all best wishes,

Nick Rutherford
HEADTEACHER

Newsletter design,
editing & layout:
Caroline Lester

COVER IMAGE: Borneo Trip 2025
Photograph courtesy of Miss Canning
More about Borneo on pages 12 - 13

Thanks to all contributors for their help with this issue

History



CAIUS EXPLORE WIN FOR LILY

In the recent summer holidays, Lily Wilson, a Year 13 student, was working on her **Caius Explore** entry. This Cambridge University outreach scheme comprises series of tasks for different subjects to develop academic interests beyond the school curriculum. Lily's entry won! As an historian, her task was to write a biography on any object within its historical context. She chose a pair of child's shoes from Auschwitz. The opening excerpt is below:

They lie behind glass, barely larger than a hand. Scuffed, hollow, and silent, they bear no inscription, no certificate, no name. Yet these shoes, no more than six inches in size, speak volumes. They are a pair of child's leather shoes, worn smooth by the feet they once protected, excavated from the grounds of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Of all the debris left behind by the most complicit genocide in human history, these shoes are among the most silently devastating. Their existence offers no dates, signatures, or claims of ownership. But within their still form resides a human presence that no crematorium could wholly extinguish.

It is a gripping read, full of intense description and thought-provoking ideas about how history can be interpreted. We are so proud of Lily here in the history and politics departments. It is an incredible achievement.

Mr Baker

Classics



YEAR 13 LONDON THEATRE TRIP

In early October Year 13 Classicists travelled to the National Theatre, London to see Nima Taleghani's new production of Euripides' play **The Bacchae**. It was a fantastic day and allowed students to experience the play in all its gruesome, visceral glory.

This production, which made its debut at the National Theatre's **Olivier Theatre**, is based on the original story of the god Dionysus and his cousin, King Pentheus, the puritanical ruler of Thebes, but incorporated contemporary elements like rhythm, movement, and music.

With the intermixture of street dance, rap and some volcanically spectacular invective, the students' opinion was that this was a truly postmodern version of the ancient play. Students had a great time and left with a real enthusiasm for the play and, needless to say, represented the school extremely well.

Mr Bewley

CCF



NEW YEAR, NEW RECRUITS!

The CCF has 50 new cadets ready to take on the challenges the CCF has to offer. 29 cadets will join the Army Section and 21 will join the RAF section once they have completed their joint initial training up until Christmas. Training includes drill and ceremonial training, weapon handling and shooting, tactical fieldcraft, military knowledge, first aid, communication, teamwork and leadership development.

Contingent Commander, Maj Kevin Matthews, said, "It's wonderful to have a good sized phase 1 cohort to start the year with. They are at the beginning of a fantastic journey of personal development and growth and I'm excited to see how they get on."

Maj Matthews



THIS SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Equestrian

Congratulations to Thomas Worsley, see *image left*, who competed in Lier for GB. After a week of competing in the Nations Cup, his team placed 2nd.

Netball

Congratulations to the U16 Girls Netball, see *image below*, who won their Area Tournament on Wednesday 8th October. They now progress onto the County Tournament.





Rugby

Teams have had a great start to the season. The 1XV overcoming Bryanston 21-22, and Leweston School 55-12., see *image top left*. The U16s won their Area and placed second at the County Tournament, see *image right*, with the U15s placing third. Well done all!

Swimming

Congratulations to the 16 students who competed in the ESSA School's Competition, with the teams having some great results across the board.

CLUBS LIST

Autumn term clubs are now in full swing, with a great attendance so far. No need to sign up, just turn up!

Miss Leatherland

Day	Lunchtime	Afterschool
Monday	Bottom Sports Hall Only Badminton All Years Gym All Years	Boys Rugby All Years Girls Netball Year 11 and Sixth Form Bottom Sports H Girls Netball Year 10 Top Sports Hall Boys Football Year 11 Later in the Term Boys Football Sixth Form Later in the Term
Tuesday	Bottom Sports Hall Only Badminton Sixth Form Only Gym All Years	Table Tennis All Years
Wednesday	Bottom Sports Hall Only Badminton All Years Gym All Years	Every Week 2 Climbing Club Lower Sports Hall Badminton All Years Lower Sports Hall Girls Netball Year 9 Top Sports Hall Boys Football Year 9 and 10
Thursday	Bottom Sports Hall Only Badminton All Years Gym All Years	Girls Football All Years
Friday		

Dance



FLAMENCO & POETRY IN DANCE

Year 11 GCSE students have started their choreography coursework, with stimuli ranging from a piece of poetry or prose by Poet Laureate Simon Armitage to artwork by Wassily Kandinsky.

The studio is a hive of activity after school, with students trying out movement ideas and setting movement on their dancers.

Year 9 Dance Club (Monday 3.30 - 4.30)

is popular this year, with members working on a piece for the school Dance Show in March 2026.

We recently held workshops for Year 9 students to give them a taste of the GCSE Dance course. In these, students developed their performance skills and learnt material with a Flamenco influence. All students gave full energy for two hours with fantastic results.

Year 10 students have made a positive start learning one of their GCSE set phrases, a short solo performance piece that everyone in the country who is undertaking GCSE Dance performs for assessment.

The sixth form dance company, **Co. Motion** has been meeting regularly after school on Thursdays to create a piece for the show in March. Any newcomers at our clubs are always welcome

Mrs Ncube & Miss Reader

Communication & Support

Reason for Contact	Contact Person	Preferred Method	Contact Information	Notes
Attendance	Attendance Office	Website/phone	https://www.thomas-hardye.net/for-parents/report-an-absence 01305 266064	Report absences before 8.40am
General Enquiries	School Reception	Phone/Email	01305 266064	Opening hours 8.30am-4.30pm
Academic Concerns	Child's Tutor	Email	Email address will be first initial followed by last name (no space) @thomas-hardye.net e.g. JBloggs@thomas-hardye.net	First point of contact for all educational queries
General/Social Concerns	Child's Tutor	Email	As above	First point of contact for general or social concerns
Safeguarding Concerns	Guidance Leader for Your Child's Year Group	Phone/Email	Year 9- Mrs Kelly CKelly@thomas-hardye.net Year 10- Miss Gosling JGosling@thomas-hardye.net Year 11- Mrs Morgan CMorgan@thomas-hardye.net	If your concern is urgent, please also phone reception. If your concern is out of school hours, please see helpful services below.

Tips for effective communication

Contact the tutor first:

For most academic and general/social concerns, the child's tutor should be your first point of contact.

Please be clear, concise and respectful.

Respect staff's working hours:

Parents should be mindful of teachers' workload and should not expect a response to emails immediately. Many staff are part-time, and teachers are not expected to respond to emails outside of the usual working day.

- **Family support and advice line** - 01305 228558
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/family-help-in-dorset>
- **Samaritans** (116 123) – Free, 24/7 support line for anyone struggling
- **Shout Crisis Text Line** – Text "SHOUT" to 85258 (24/7)
- **YoungMinds Parents Helpline** (0808 802 5544) – For advice on supporting your child
- **Connection** – Dorset's 24/7 Mental Health Helpline
- **Call 0800 652 0190** (free, open to all ages) – This NHS service offers round-the-clock support for anyone in Dorset experiencing a mental health crisis, including parents concerned about their children

***If your concern is urgent,
please contact the school office:
Monday - Friday
8:30am - 4:30pm.***

Mrs Noble

Sixth Form

LOCH NESS SUCCESS

Year 13 student Morgan Pitfield recently celebrated her 18th birthday by running her first ever marathon, in a truly scenic setting. She travelled with her family to take part in the Loch Ness Marathon in Scotland on Sunday 28th September.

Morgan started running two and a half years ago, only embarking on her marathon training in June this year.

Both Morgan and her dad completed the marathon together. She had an impressive time of 5:27:33.

Congratulations Morgan on your fantastic achievement!

Mrs Harris & Mrs Pearson



IMAGE COURTESY OF MORGAN PITFIELD

Sixth Form



IMAGE COURTESY OF LYDIA THOMAS

ANGLING FOR SUCCESS: A GREAT CATCH FOR LYDIA

We are incredibly pleased to celebrate the outstanding success of Year 13 student **Lydia Thomas**, recently chosen as an Ambassador for Fishing for Schools. Her passion, dedication and commitment to her sport have also earned her a place on the British Angling Team, a remarkable accomplishment that reflects her talent and hard work.

Lydia had the honour of visiting the Houses of Parliament this month to take part in a prestigious event, where she helped present medals – a moment that showcases the respect she has earned within the angling community.

During the awards ceremony, it was announced that a new qualification, Angling and the Countryside, will hold UCAS points.

Lydia said, "I am proud to say I have been invited to be an ambassador for [@fishingforschools](https://www.fishingforschools.org/)"

A BTEC Business student, Lydia is a fantastic role model for extra-curricular achievement, showing how pursuing passions outside the classroom can lead to extraordinary opportunities.

We are so proud of her and look forward to seeing all that she accomplishes next!

Mrs Miller

Fundraising



BAKING FOR MACMILLAN

On 26th September, students from Years 9, 10 and 11 came together to organise a fantastic cake sale in support of Macmillan's Biggest Coffee Morning. Held in the spine during breaktime, the event raised over £160 thanks to the students' hard work baking, setting up, and selling a delicious range of treats.

A special highlight was a beautifully made cake donated by teaching assistant **Jemima Holloway**, which was auctioned to staff raising an additional £35 for this important cause.

A huge well done to everyone involved for their teamwork, generosity, and community spirit.

Mr Graham, Head of Y9
Miss Samways, Head of Y10
Miss Williams, Head of Y11

Library



MURDER MYSTERY FOR YEAR 9 INDUCTION

Every Year 9 tutor group has taken part in the THS #murdermystery during an English lesson. We have four delightful suspects from our THS teaching staff and one dead body. Using ten questions based around knowledge of the Library they try to work out who the murderer is.

There were small prizes for the top two teams in each tutor group and the overall prize for most correct answers and brilliant library behaviour went to 9LA and 9AR.

Mrs Stevens

Borneo 2025



ADVENTURE & COMMUNITY

On 16th July, 44 eager students set off on a four-week expedition to Borneo, partnering with Camps International to combine adventure, learning and impact. Our journey took us from Mamutik Island – home to some very large Komodo dragons – to the heart of the Kinabatangan jungle.

Throughout the trip, students worked hand in hand with the local community to improve drainage (plenty of cementing!), build infrastructure and paint local facilities. Evenings were filled with Malay language lessons, cultural dances, visits from the local children and craft sessions. A highlight for many was a lively karaoke night on our final evening at Camp Rangbulan, set on a stunning beachfront.

The adventure element of the trip focused around completing the PADI Open Water Scuba Diving Course. Students balanced theory and practical dives, exploring vibrant reef ecosystems and developing a deeper understanding of marine biodiversity. Stingrays, turtles, a wonderful array of fish and the odd sea cucumber were spotted!

We spent 2 nights in hammocks in the jungle, spotting wild macaques monkeys, crocodiles and hornbills. Equipped with machetes, our students helped clear, level and reforest areas of the jungle, planting over 200 trees that will one day provide vital habitats for orangutans.

Day trips to the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre and Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre

Borneo 2025



offered a once-in-a-lifetime viewing opportunity of the region's unique wildlife and ongoing conservation efforts.

From fundraising and long-haul flights to wild orangutan encounters, an ungodly amount of chicken and rice and laughter every day, this expedition was far from a holiday. Students were fully immersed in local culture, contributing to meaningful projects and gaining experiences that will last a lifetime.

If you'd like to see more of our journey, visit Instagram [@thsin.borneo](https://www.instagram.com/thsin.borneo)

The next Camps International expedition – Tanzania 2027 – is set to launch later this year!

Miss Canning

Music



ADDAMS FAMILY MUSICAL

In July, we staged our annual school

musical - The Addams Family. Over 100 students were involved in all aspects of the production; on stage, back-stage and in the band. We were incredibly proud of the end result. It was a pleasure working with such dedicated and talented group of students. Audience feedback included:

"What an amazing production - all the performers were absolutely outstanding! The talent of the band and tech team was also incredible! If there were awards for school youth theatre you would be up there with the best!"

"It was impressively slick from beginning to end... It all spoke of hours of hard graft, determination and commitment but also a heartening sense of ensemble and teamwork that is a credit to every individual involved."

"Each and every one of the individuals bring something to this show...during the big numbers I was really watching the ensemble...the show would not be as amazing without the ensemble."

"No need for the West End when you live in Dorch. Well done everyone!"

Next year's musical will be performed 6th - 10th July. More information will be revealed around Christmas time, so keep your eyes open!

Music



THURSDAY LIVES

We have kicked off our musical

year with two Thursday Live lunchtime performances in MUI, performed by our Yr12 and Yr13 Music A Level Students and open to all. Well done to those who took part and to the audience who supported them

Mrs Trevorrow



Upcoming Music Events

THURS 16TH OCTOBER **TH SINGERS SING EVENSONG**

TUESDAY 21ST OCTOBER **AUTUMN CONCERT, 7PM, SCHOOL THEATRE (FREE ENTRY)**

SATURDAY 8TH NOVEMBER **DORCHESTER YOUNG MUSICIAN FESTIVAL, ALL DAY WITH 7:30PM CONCERT**

FRIDAY 14TH NOVEMBER **BARN DANCE WITH TH FOLK GROUP (TICKETS ON SALE SOON)**

SUNDAY 30TH NOVEMBER **ORCHESTRA AND CHOIR CONCERT AT POOLE LIGHTHOUSE**

WEDS 3RD DECEMBER **CHRISTMAS CONCERTS, 7PM, SCHOOL THEATRE**

WEDS 17TH DECEMBER **CAROL SERVICE, 7:30PM AT ST PETER'S CHURCH**

Black History Month

STANDING FIRM IN POWER & PRIDE

This has been a collaborative project between the History department, Diversity Group and the Library. Two weeks of events have been taking place across the school starting with The Great Big Live Assembly which focused this year on Rosa Parks and how she changed our world for the better. This was followed live assemblies focused on the Bristol Bus Boycotts. During a lunchtime THS History and the Diversity Group hosted a UCL lecture covering the Black Industrial Revolution. The first week finished with the weekly tutor group quiz takeover covering icons from black history.

In week two the Diversity group hosted a film showing of 'The Hate u Give' based on the book by Angie Thomas about a black girl who sees her friend shot by a white police officer. Our Year 9 after school book club are also reading this as their first group read.

Every tutor was asked to select a small piece of reading related to black history from a fantastic range of titles including 'Black History for Every Day of the Year', 'Musical Truth, and 'Cane Warriors'.

The canteen offered a range of diverse foods on Thursday 16th May which students loved. To finish the week, there was a bake sale organised by our Diversity Group and a concert of Funk and Soul music celebrating Black Music artists played



Black History Month



by the student band Cosmic Dustbin on Friday lunchtime.

History students across the year groups investigated some lesser known, diverse histories linked to their periods of study. This included Black Suffragettes and Tudors, the Harlem Renaissance, the Haitian Revolution and hidden black figures from the 20th century. Here is some of the excellent work they have produced so far. Alongside this there were displays of black history makers covering the many areas of our curriculum and the Library focused on black protagonists from the wide range of fiction books they hold.

Happy Black History Month!

Mrs Bunker, History
Mrs Stevens, Library
Alex Swift, THS Diversity

DORCHESTER YOUNG MUSICIAN FESTIVAL



For all young musicians in Dorchester
and the surrounding area

SATURDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 2025

THOMAS HARDYE SCHOOL

Classes for the festival will take place during the day, with a celebration concert at 7:30pm, which will also feature ensembles from Thomas Hardy School. £10 per festival entry. Spectators are welcome for both the daytime classes and the evening concert, with entry by donation on the door.
More info and online application form here:





music.wessex.ac

**MOMENTS
MATTER,
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**

ATTENDANCE & ACHIEVEMENT

Last year, **4 out of 5** students with **above 90%** attendance gained **5 or more GCSEs grade 4** and above (including English and maths).

Below 90% attendance, this dropped to only **1 in 3** students.

Being in school **every day** is crucial to **exam success**.

Thank you for supporting your child to attend every day.

It's easy to check your child's attendance on **Class Charts**.

If there is a reason why your child isn't attending, **please let us know at school** as soon as possible so we can help:

attendance@ths.wessex.ac

Mr Dean

Dates

AUTUMN TERM

*open for staff training only:
half-term:*

*last day of term:
open for staff training only:*

Wednesday 22th - Friday 24th October

Monday 27th October - Friday 31st October

Thursday 18th December

Friday 19th December