After two terms at the helm, it is clear that I am in a fortunate position to be part of an outstanding school that has excellent teachers, highly competent leaders and fantastic students. In some ways this makes the task in hand both easier and harder. The challenge for me is to not to lose any of the good things that we do but focus on where we can make marginal improvements.

During Term 2, a ‘Deep-Dive’ review of the school was conducted over three days involving five members of the leadership group and an external consultant. During the review over 60 lessons were observed, 40 students from different year groups were involved in improvement forums and subject leaders were consulted about the School’s effectiveness. We concluded that teaching, learning and assessment were outstanding and directly impacting on progress at both GCSE and A-level. A school is never perfect and I think we can make marginal gains by focussing on our curriculum offer, application of our behaviour policy, homework, independent learning and extra-curricular provision.

I am very pleased that 15 of our students in Year 13 have interviews at Oxford, Cambridge or prestigious medical schools and I wish them the best of luck. In my next newsletter, I should be able to give more detail as to the potential destinations of all of our students.

The PTA have continued to be very active in the School supporting school events but also organising the amazing fireworks display at the end of Term 2. The professional display was based on the James Bond theme tune and opening tracks and attracted over 500 staff, students, parents and guests.

We have recently commissioned an honours board to mark our Head Students going back to 1925 and this is proudly displayed in the main reception.

I had enormous pleasure attending the Gifted Young Gravesham show case at Woodville Halls this term. In Now in its 10th talent from all over Gravesham performed in front of a packed house. A number of GGS students performed and the show was presented by our very own Mason Rickard from Year 12. Huge congratulations to all at GYG for an amazing evening.

We have been engaging with a Kent based charity and Tunbridge Wells boys grammar school on a project to support unaccompanied minors who have fled their countries and have come into Kent and are being looked after by the Local authority. We will be providing an opportunity for a small number of unaccompanied minors to engage with the 6th form on activities on a Wednesday afternoon during enrichment time. I think this will give our students an insight into the world around them and also help to integrate these children into our society.

At the end of this term we say goodbye to two members of staff.

Hilary Humphreys has decided to put her feet up after 16 years and 2 days of distinguished service as the personal assistant to Mr Wybar. A PA is essential to the running of the school and they are sometimes the first person to deal with some of the most difficult situations, something Hilary has achieved with aplomb. She has accompanied many school trips and will be remembered in particular for her skills on the ski slope. We all wish Hilary a long, happy and healthy retirement.

Dr John Gogarty, our Co-Head of Key Stage 4, has also decided retire after 6 years of service. I am in awe of any teacher who stays committed to the profession for over 30 years and John has achieved this with a continued passion to support both students and his colleagues and of course with a wicked sense of humour! Enjoy a well-earned retirement!

May I take this opportunity to wish you a happy and safe Christmas holiday.

MDM
STAFF NEWS

We said goodbye and good luck to Mrs Barnard as she started her maternity leave—and we look forward to seeing her again next year.

Retiring are Dr Gogarty (Co-Head of KS4) and Mrs Humphreys (former PA to Mr Wybar). We wish them long, happy and healthy retirements. We also say goodbye to Mr Bedward, who is leaving us to pursue other interests.

We look forward to welcoming Mr Clements back from his six month sabbatical in January.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mrs Shutt and her husband on the birth of their son in November.

NOTICE FOR YEAR 9 STUDENTS

Td/IPV and Men ACWY vaccinations for Year 9 students will take place on 12 and 13 February 2019. If you wish to know more, please contact Mrs Warner at the School. warn-erc@gravesendgrammar.com

HEAD STUDENT REPORT

Now December is here I think it is safe to say that everyone is deserving of a well-earned break after a very busy year. But first, let’s talk about what’s gone on this year at GGS.

The Head Student Team has been working very closely with the new Head, Mr Moaby, to kickstart the plans we had in our manifestos to contribute to the school when we first stood for election in March. This term has been the one where much of that has been achieved.

Firstly, training has once again began for the Student Support Mentoring programme - where a selection Year 12 students are having sessions on how to ‘mentor’ boys in KS3 who are suffering with issues socially, emotionally or in terms of organisation. This is on track to finish in January at which point we can get going with the mentoring sessions themselves.

The next thing on the agenda was Subject Mentoring - where Sixth Form students could volunteer to assist in KS3/4 lessons in their preferred subjects as ‘teaching assistants’. I was extremely pleased to see the extent to which this scheme was oversubscribed and I look forward to hearing feedback from the teaching staff in the coming months!

In addition to that, students are already beginning to sign up for the opportunity to help as pastoral and teaching support at Whitehill Primary School - a member of GGSAT. This will take place during weekly Enrichment sessions as an alternative option on the menu. With Mr Moaby on board with the organisational element, and his eagerness to be involved, we hope that this will be well underway in the New Year.

Nine months in to my role as the Head Student at GGS, I am overjoyed to see that the primary aim of my team - to provide new opportunities to students of any age or background - is beginning to appear as a real success.

With three months left in position, there’s still loads on the ‘to-do’ list with plenty of new ideas and opportunities to bring to GGS. But for now, with the last big event of the year being the Christmas Carol Service, which too has now passed - I think it’s time to wind down and focus on enjoying what is left of 2018.

On behalf of the team, I would like to wish everyone in the school community a very warm, safe and Merry Christmas and a delightful New Year 2019.

Mitchell Taylor
Head Student

IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to report the death from cancer of former GGS student, Thomas Frawley, at the age of 30 on 12th October 2018. Tom attended GGS from 1999-2006 before going to Durham University to study Physics. His funeral was attended by many Old Gravesendians. Our thoughts are with his brother, James, who also attended GGS and all of his family and friends at this sad time.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mrs Shutt and her husband on the birth of their son in November.

THANK YOU!

As I compile my last newsletter, I am always amazed at just how much goes on in School and how much our students do. I am sure this will continue—what reaches the newsletter is just the tip of the iceberg. I would like to thank (and apologise to!) all the students and staff who have endured my continual hassling to provide articles over the years!

HJH
BOOKS2AFRICA

Ever wondered what happens to old text books once they are replaced with more modern versions, or an exam board changes its syllabus? Well, at GGS they mouldered in a room, rather unsurprisingly named ‘the Book Store’. Over many years, Subject Leaders have lovingly kept old text books ‘just in case’. There comes a point when ‘just in case’ becomes ‘why’?

Having taken the decision to give the room a good clear out making many spiders homeless in the process, there remained the problem of what to do with literally thousands of old text books. It would be a shame to consign them to recycling when they could be used by others. The solution came in the form of Books2Africa, a charity based in Canterbury, who have so far shipped out nearly 900,000 donated books to countries all over Africa.

Decision made and Mrs Purdy persuaded to drive the very full minibus, we headed off to Canterbury over half term. When we arrived at the warehouse, we were warmly welcomed by Books2Africa personnel and volunteers and the minibus was unloaded. Job done we were shown round the warehouse and were absolutely astounded by its size—over two floors and literally thousands and thousands of books, computers and shoes—all much needed. Volunteers sort the books by subject and age group, barcode them, and pack them on to pallets ready for distribution. Whilst we will never know exactly where our old textbooks will end up, we do know that they will be well-used by students less fortunate than ours.

HJH

(L-R) just some of the books from the Book Store awaiting loading on to the minibus; our books unloaded; the ‘university bay’ (where books donated by universities are sorted into more subject specific topics) and computers and shoes awaiting packing.

CALENDAR GIRL!

As featured in our July edition of the newsletter, Mrs Bouhamdi’s ‘Fight the tumour with Humour’ calendar is still available for £8—all profits will go to Breast Cancer Care—either directly from her (bouhamdie@gravesendgrammar.com) or via PayPal at Tacklingthetumourwithhumour@yahoo.com.

GGS CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

Every year Year 7 are challenged to design the Christmas card that is sent to friends of the school. From over 100 entries Mr Moaby and the Art teachers selected the design by Dharuv Sharma of 7C as the winner and Veer Singh Punni 7H and Premh Singh Shergill 7F as the two runners up.

Dharuv explains how he created his joyful design: "I was thinking about incorporating the house colours and came up with a scarf with the house colours which was influenced by the house ties. The main theme was rugby as that is the sport that the school is known for, so I added rugby boots and a rugby ball. The snow man was a very easy choice as it was simple and easy to make it stand out. I wanted to keep the background basic and simple as I wanted the snow man to stand out and chose to make the snowflakes look like the Ofsted logo."
MOVEMBER

Movember 2018, the tenth anniversary of our annual GGS Movember fundraising festivities, has come to a clean-shaven conclusion. This year staff and students raised a whopping £1142 for the Movember charity, through a non-uniform day and staff-fundraising.

This money will be used by the Movember charity to fund projects and research around men’s health issues, including research and awareness programmes focusing on issues such as testicular cancer, prostate cancer and mental health issues.

The Movember charity was born in Melbourne, Australia in 2003. A group of friends asked two vital questions: Where had all the moustaches gone and how could they use the ‘mo’ to raise money for charity? That first year involved thirty ‘mo-bros’ and was so popular that in 2004 the friends formed a registered company, began linking themselves to men’s health charity and began spreading the word of the mo! 2006 saw the charity spread to New Zealand and by 2007 there were moustaches sprouting all over the world. Since those early days more than five and a half million mo-bros and mo-sistas have raised more than £402,000,000 for men’s health research and associated charities. 1200 vital mens’ health projects have been funded by the Movember organisation since those heady days of 2003.

Gravesend Grammar School signed up with the Movember charity in 2009. Since then we have organised staff moustache competitions each year, held assemblies during Movember that discuss the charity and men’s health issues, invited in guest speakers from the Movember organisation, taught Movember themed lessons in PSHE and held non-uniform days to raise money for the charity. Since that first Movember at Gravesend Grammar School ten years ago, staff and students have raised around £13,000 for Movember.

While the number of moustaches was down over previous years, the quality was of a particularly high standard and there were some spectacular moustaches on display throughout the month. The 2018 Moustache Of The Year winner was Mr Peter Bleakley.

Thank-you for your generosity!

JCM

PS: It’s not too late to donate. If you would like to add to our overall total or just learn more about the Movember charity and men’s health, please check out our webpage at: http://moteam.co/team-ggs

iDEA AWARDS

Computer Science students were recently given the opportunity to complete the inspiring digital enterprise award (iDEA), also known as the Duke of York award. The aim of this programme is to help develop digital, enterprise and employability skills. It is an excellent attribute to include on your CV to show digital abilities. The concept is very simple; there are about 60 online badges that can be completed based on different skills, each giving you a different number of points.

Most of the badges provide you with theory or instructions and then get you to perform a task or answer questions to test your understanding and skill set. The badges are split into core categories, each with its own series of badges to be won - citizen, worker, maker, entrepreneur and gamer. Once a user reaches 250 points, they receive the Bronze Award. At the end of the award, you receive a certificate in the post from Buckingham Palace! I have achieved the award and then went onto completing all of the remaining badges to become what is known as a ‘badge champion’ - there are less than 200 of these people at the moment. One of my favourite badges was ‘user interfaces’ because it taught me about the psychology behind simple things that you can use to make a webpage more user-friendly: for example, a green button is used for something positive, whereas red is used to show a negative option - it would cause a problem if you had a red box that had a tick in it! In the new year, we are going to start silver award and gold has yet to be launched, but I am sure that most students will want to do it!

Jordan Giannasi 9D

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

22nd October saw former student, Joe Hanson (2006—2013), appear in BBC’s University Challenge under Questionmaster, Jeremy Paxman. Joe was part of the University of Manchester team. Having gained a First in Physics, he is now studying for a PhD in Data Intensive Science. The team were pitched against a team from University of East London. The score seesawed between the teams in a very close competition but University of Manchester managed a last minute sprint to the finish and went through to the second round.

The second round took place on 26th November against Hertford College, Oxford with University of Manchester winning in resounding fashion by 160 points to 115. They are now through to the Quarter Finals.
On 9th November 2018, the Grand’s H4U (Here For You) Committee hosted their spectacular ten year anniversary of Gifted Young Gravesham (GYG) at Woodville Halls, Gravesend.

GYG first started in 2008 with the sole purpose of showcasing the raw and unique talent of young people in Gravesham. By working alongside performing arts, they have been able to promote positive well-being in the local area. Subsequently, the phenomenon has witnessed a true display of community cohesion in recent years - a fundamental factor in our society.

All aspects of this event were orchestrated by the young people themselves. As a result, numerous sub-committees were established, including the tech team, props team, catering, photography, make-up stylists, videography and hair stylists. These groups have worked tirelessly throughout the year to ensure the success of the evening.

This year the event raised an impressive £2,462.78 from ticket proceeds, programme sales and donations, which will all be contributed towards the Grand’s Active Listening Service - a free counselling service for young people. The brilliance of such a resource is that it eradicates the financial barrier for young people accessing help, therefore paving the way to breaking down the stigma surrounding mental well-being.

It was particularly pleasing to have so much support and participation from the GGS staff; who have since exclaimed their admiration for the event.

Auditions for GYG 2019 will commence in the new year. If there are any inquiries please feel free to contact me at: 13rickardm@gravesendgrammar.com.

Mason Rickard
Chairman of the H4U Committee
The majority of year 13 applications to University have been sent and many students have already received offers including those from the top universities. For those students still finalising their choices, the end is in sight! The variety of courses applied for is as great as ever and I have enjoyed reading the personal statements and hearing of the diverse sources of inspiration and experience that lead our Year 13s on to their future career paths.

For Year 11, Chances & Choices evenings have most likely raised many questions about how to discover your perfect A-level subject combination. Don’t forget to use the resources available in the Careers area of the cloud to help you and to browse the wide range of books in the Careers Library (by Room 301) for inspiration. Higher Ideas, for example, will help you research where different combinations of subjects can lead to. You may also be still searching out the ideal work experience placement. If you are struggling because you don’t know what area of work you may find interesting, perhaps use Kudos, the Careers matching software on the cloud, to help generate some ideas.

This term, Year 12 have all been attending Career information sessions in small groups with our in-house qualified careers advisers (Mrs MacMahon and I). These sessions introduce all the options available to them after 6th form and are designed to get them thinking about researching university ideas or apprenticeships at an early stage, to make sure they are on track. There will be a Higher Education Evening for Year 12 and their parents in January followed by a Post 18 options evening in April so that everyone is well prepared for the choices they need to make early in year 13.

As always, any feedback or suggestions regarding the careers events for pupils and parents are always welcome. Please contact me using the email address below.

Mrs Jenny Douse
Head of Careers
dousej@gravesendgrammar.com

GGS LAW SOCIETY

The month of September was one for new beginnings. A new headteacher, new strategies but most importantly new innovation. Out with the old and in with the new, a theme that has resonated throughout the school since Mr Moaby has taken over—new technology, new teaching styles and new extracurricular clubs.

Many people from GGS go on to study at university. With a large percentage of this cohort hoping to study Law at some of the most reputable universities in the land and sharing a common interest, it was almost imperative to ensure they had one place to ‘feed from each other’ and gain new information. As a result, Robert Hooker (11T) and I met with Mr Moaby to introduce our proposal for the Gravesend Grammar School Law Society (GGSLS).

Our main objective for GGSLS was to allow interested students to gain valuable knowledge and experience that would help them in their later lives and throughout their careers. We are a student lead group which aims to give everyone new knowledge. For example, we have a focus on LNAT (Law National Aptitude Test) practice, to ensure that students are able to answer the questions, benefiting the input of others.

GGSLS has been lucky enough to welcome the Kent Law Society here, where careers in Law and the day to day workings of a legal professional were discussed, along with an insight into the difficulties and challenges to be faced along the way. We are grateful to Jon Pitt (COO of KLS) and those who joined us from Martin Tolhurst Solicitors and Hatten Wyatt. We have also been lucky enough to meet with Magistrates to learn about decision making on whether someone was guilty or not. With more opportunities in the pipeline such as educational visits, hopefully to such places as the Supreme Court and the Houses of Parliament, the possibilities are endless.

The Law Society has seen a great start. This could not have been possible without the help of Mr Pollard and Mr Ward and with support from Mr Moaby.

Sam El-Henawy 11C
Chair GGS Law Society
GGS MEDICAL SOCIETY

After a nerve-wracking delay, the universities have replied... with excellent news. An impressive 10 students have secured at least one formal interview at a Medical School, a record number – including each and every member of the Medical Society in Year 13. After a brief celebration, they’re on to interview preparation: The vast majority of the schools run an MMI (Mini Multiple Interview) circuit as a way of narrowing down their applicants. These involve a series of ‘stations’ where an admissions advisor will ask the candidate a question that is designed to test their aptitude, mentality and motive for studying Medicine. The Medical Society has since been focused upon improving our students’ awareness of this interview style, as well as engaging in practice sessions.

We have been fortunate enough to have received external help throughout this daunting process: Amy, an Admissions advisor from St George’s University, has been kind enough to host a course of three MMI sessions over the past three weeks. In one such meeting, we looked into self-reflection techniques that could help provide insight as to our personal motives for becoming doctors. We then went on to create a fully-fledged mock MMI interview – where each of our members took turns playing both the interviewer and interviewee, drilling one another with probing and difficult questions.

MMI Group Session
We were fortunate to receive an offer to speak to the Medical Society from one of Gravesend Grammar School’s ex-students.

Dr Ishaan Bhide gave an inspiring presentation on both the hardships and intricacies surrounding the life of a doctor, but also offered us a glimpse into the awesome field of cutting-edge Neuroscience. His career has been atypical, in that he been involved in research and leadership, in both a business and academic environment, yet his story stands as a testament to the endless possibilities within Medicine.

As their interviews take place over the coming months (from now until late February), the Year 13 members of the Medical Society will each undergo the penultimate hurdle before receiving that coveted position to train as a doctor. However, A level exams will then prove to be the deciding factor for each of them, the assortment of 3 A’s and/or A**’s required will provide an incredible challenge; but the payoff is entirely worthwhile. Meanwhile the Year 12 students among our society are in the midst of preparing for this tumultuous journey, undertaking our volunteering/work experience placements, completing the UKCAT/BMAT exams, and ultimately writing our 500 word personal statements – this year will be hectic to say the least!

Ethan Cruise-Smith, UT1
Chair GGS Medical Society

MEDIC MENTOR

Medic Mentor is the largest national organisation known for inspiring, helping and informing students about the medical world. They publish articles and students are encouraged to contribute. They produce weekly "webinars" that students can watch, for free, and ask questions. Another resource they offer us is their insight meetings (where many doctors come to talk about their experiences) and they also give information about all the different universities, including the requirements.

I applied for the School Ambassador Programme which is one of their main attractions. This is my second year of running as the School Ambassador.

I have really enjoyed my experience as an ambassador and will do again so this time around.

Shamoon Ratter 12UH1

Opportunity and challenge in a caring environment

December 2018
MATHS INSPIRATION

What do Brexit protesters, the Savoy Hotel, Christmas and Maths have in common? Answer—we experienced them all when we travelled to London to attend the Maths Inspiration event at the Savoy Theatre in London! Y11 students and four staff were entertained with comedy and song about amazing maths, fact and fiction.

Tuesday, 27th November was a fantastic day for aspiring mathematicians, or those who want to see how maths can be applied to life, as year 11s had the opportunity to watch and be part of the Maths Inspirations talk, set up by three mathematicians and a scientist. One thing that everyone of the 800 audience members picked up is that maths can be applied anywhere and everywhere in life, and isn’t just an arbitrary thing we’re taught in schools.

The main host of the show was Helen Pilcher, a scientist looking into the ideas of de-extinction, who recently published a book on the same topic that will be released shortly after Christmas. She introduced the show and the three main speakers, who all had lessons to help us in life. The first speaker was Matt Parker, a mathematician from Australia who focused on how even the slightest ignorance in maths can result in big and dire consequences. The “Greatest Mathematical Mistakes in History” were the main foci of his allotted slot, and he certainly pointed out a few. For example, how recalculations by architects and builders resulted in the unfortunate deaths of over a hundred people, or how companies don’t actually check their maths in advertisements, and what they've used as a “big number” may not even be very big at all.

Then came Hugh Hunt, another Australian (why is everyone from Australia so smart?) who focused more on space and motion. One of the main topics was “spinny things”, and this man certainly delivered. He explored various key concepts for physics, a very maths-heavy science, many of which we’d covered before, acting as a sort of revision session, which was very handy. Impressively his boomerang always came back, exactly as it should! Ben Sparks was the third and final speaker of the evening, who’d previously been a contestant on Britain’s Got Talent and an avid music artist, and spoke to us about gambling. Obviously he warned us against gambling due to the dangers associated with it. One gentleman in the audience did not heed Ben’s advice of steering clear of gambling, however, because at the mention of the possibility of winning some money, he placed in £1 to challenge a mathematician at a game of probability. To be fair to the student, £50 could have been his, but challenging a mathematician to a game of probability is an event that would probably have fitted well in Matt’s section of “the Greatest Maths Mistakes”!

Overall the show lasted just over two hours, including all speakers, a Q&A and everything in between. I am very glad I went on this trip, as it was one of inspiration and learning, despite taking time out of the school day. Many people were unsure as to what it would be like, but, guaranteed, everybody laughed at least once, showing how good the show really was.

Sam Paternoster 11T

MATHS CHALLENGE

A company is producing circular advent calendars. Here is last year’s design. The 2018 version is going to have a radius of 4 inches and will add a border of tinsel around the circumference.

(a) Without a calculator, work out the length of tinsel required (take \( \pi = 3.14 \)).

(b) appreciate the festive appropriateness of your answer to (a).

Answer on back page
We have an amazing Science Club going on every Thursday after school. This week, Dr. Nikmal showed us the wash bottle experiment. He put an alcohol in and turned it into a gas. He then put a match over it and a huge flame came rising from the bottle. That was only the start of the session! We then made slime from our own recipes. We had three groups compete to see who would win the best slime challenge. They all received sweets for taking part and the winners got an extra special prize.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

**Review by Advait Panicker 8H**

On Thursday 29th November, the whole of year 8 went to the assembly hall, waiting eagerly for an exhilarating performance. We were watching Quantum Theatre’s adaptation of the famous Charles Dickens novella, which was organised by our English Department.

I was listening intently to the three actors who managed to create and perform all of the character roles in the novella. They were excellent. They used skill and technique to transform from one character role to another with ease.

We all watched eagerly. The performance was around 1 and a half hours long and we were entertained all the way through it. The actors interacted with the audience and livened it up. Moreover, they made it amusing and cracked a joke occasionally. They showed a huge amount of skill, which included singing carols.

The actors were impressive and never missed their cues or stumbled on their lines. They had obviously spent many hours rehearsing. They were also responsible for all the music, lighting and set changes. These were very cleverly and expertly done. After every scene one of the actors sang ‘Deck the Halls.’ She sang this song to get everyone into the Christmas spirit. Although it created a Christmas atmosphere, some of us found it a little too repetitive. Additionally, the costume changes were very clever and well thought out.

In conclusion, I thoroughly enjoyed this play and was mesmerised throughout. I was never bored and hope Quantum Theatre company will come to Gravesend Grammar School each year to perform yet another delightful play.

**Review by Daniel Obarotimi 8H**

On Thursday 29th of November 2018, Year 8 students attended a dramatisation of Charles Dickens’ ‘A Christmas Carol’ by the Quantum Theatre Group.

In the novella, it tells how a miser, Ebenezer Scrooge, could change his ways and perception about Christmas through the visitation of Three Spirits. The Spirits show him memories from his past, the way things are in the present and how things will turn out in the future if he doesn’t change his ways.

At the start of the performance, we are introduced to Scrooge at work. He is met by a donation collector for a charity that helps the poor and destitute. He declined to do so saying there are workhouses and prisons for the poor. Later, he is met by his nephew, Fred, gleeful and joyous about Christmas. Scrooge asks him what is there to be happy about. Fred then says how Christmas is a wonderful time of year. Further into the performance, Scrooge is met by his former business partner, Jacob Marley, who had passed away seven years previously. Marley warns Scrooge about how he is going to be met by Three Spirits during the night. Scrooge then goes to sleep and awaits the Ghost of a Christmas Past.

When Scrooge is met by the Ghost of Christmas Past: he is shown memories from his youth, his job as an apprentice and how his fiancée didn’t want to marry him because she thought that he cared more for money than her. Upset by what he witnessed, he asked the Spirit to take him back home.

Then, he is met by the Ghost of a Christmas Present. He shows him the way that Bob Cratchit (Scrooge’s clerk that he treats poorly) and his family have Christmas. We then also meet Cratchit’s son, Tiny Tim, who happens to be ill. Despite this, he still has Christmas Spirit and is still grateful. Scrooge is welcomed at Fred’s party, much to the dismay of other guests. Then, the Spirit takes him to see two sick children. The Spirit says that they are of man: the boy called Ignorance, and the girl called Want. Scrooge then asks if there are any services to help them. The Spirit then quotes Scrooge’s exact words, “Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?”.

After this, Scrooge was met by the Ghost of Yet to Come – The Spirit that would show him the future. He sees his laundress trying to sell his burial clothing in a pawnshop, his nephew Fred and his wife celebrating his demise, having inherited Scrooge’s money and then sees a gravestone with his name written on it.

As soon as he awoke, Scrooge jumped right out of bed, filled with previously lacking Christmas spirit. When he encounters a young boy, he gives the boy a large sum of money to buy the biggest turkey in the butcher’s shop and paid to have it delivered anonymously to the Cratchit family. Bob Cratchit also received a generous increase in his salary. At the end Scrooge is seen joining the Cratchit family to have Christmas Dinner with them.

I thought that the performance was executed extremely well by the actors, despite there only being three of them! I also thought it was effective how they used direct quotes from the actual novella; it gave a good atmosphere and made the experience entertaining. Overall, I believe that the performance was a success and I would recommend seeing it.

Slime was really fun to do and everyone loves it. Come along and see for yourself when we do more different experiments!
ECHOES OF THE PAST

Photoshooting the echoes of the past for the Quasquicentennial

Year 12 A Level Art students are working on a project creating artwork to commemorate GGS being 125 years old – our Quasquicentennial (a new word to add to our collective literacy!)

Despite chilly November rain and cold, they were willing to suffer for their art so we walked into Gravesend for a photoshoot, paying particular attention to the features and architecture from different eras of the town’s history. We retraced the journey the school has taken from its first home as a boys’ and girls’ school in the imposing Victorian building that now houses the Adult Education Centre by the train station. We were given permission to explore inside and despite some modern refurbishments there is still a strong sense of how it must have felt for those first Victorian students climbing up and down the tight staircases of its three stories, and the ancient floor boards are suitably creaky as you walk on them.

The school hall was a revelation – the paint is peeling off the walls in places but it still has a beautiful vaulted wooden ceiling in gothic revival style and a magnificent stained glass window with panes featuring the names of the education committee, architects and first headmaster who designed and built the school. It also has many familiar symbols that still feature in our school badge, including a particularly fierce looking cow head on the castle that now appears to be breathing fire on the current version.

Our connection with the building continues – some of our pupils attend courses there and in the past many of our 6th form artists have attended drawing classes run by the Adult Education Centre, so if you ever go there make sure you check out the hall and feel some of the echoes of our past.

PDB

MORE ECHOES...

We have recently commissioned a Honours Board for former Head Students of the School, going back to 1925. The Board is now proudly displayed in Reception. Although extensive research has been carried out by our Archivist, we have been unable to discover the name of the Head Student in 1942-43. If anyone knows—please contact us so that we can complete our Board. We plan to have an official unveiling in the New Year and hope to invite as many former Head Students as possible to attend, although sadly we have just been notified of the death recently of John Etherington, who was Head Student in 1955-56.
ROAD SAFETY

In an attempt to reduce the high level of incidents for 11 and 12 year olds, Kent County Council have funded a presentation focused on this age group about the potential consequences of lapses in concentration and risk-taking behaviour around roads (such as using phones and listening to music, as well as 'messing about' with friends).

'Streetwise' Year 7 Pedestrian Safety

The play for road safety had very strong and clear messages: humorous at times but serious when it needed to be. All in all I thought it was an amazing play.

The main message of the play was to always pay attention when crossing the road even if you’re listening to music, worrying about a huge test at school or talking to your friend about an amazing game coming out soon—always put crossing the road first and then you can continue what you were previously worrying about/doing.

Another message of the play was that you should never be silly around bridges, pavements or roads. One of the actors in the play had a new phone and he and another boy were known for being silly. They playing catch with it and all of a sudden one of them accidentally threw it further than intended and the phone fell down onto the main road. Although the young person was very upset about the phone, they knew if it had hit a windscreen then it could have caused a huge car crash.

My opinion of the play was that it was extremely worthwhile and a lot of people take crossing the road for granted and I feel a play like that should be told to all schools.

Liam Lewis 7F

ECONOMICS IN ACTION

The Economics in Action trip taught us a lot about how economics can be used in the real world. We had various speakers who presented different topics on: monetary policy of the Bank of England; the wage gap and income inequality; exam techniques; the economics of Uber; 50 things that changed the economy; and a talk by HSBC on China and globalisation. Although not understanding everything - due to the amount of time we have spent learning about the subject - it was very beneficial to see how the concepts we have learnt can be used on different aspects of the world - such as Uber in one of the talks - making the subject a lot more interesting. We also took away good tips on how to prepare for our exams as well as write an essay well.

Kyran Pender 12UT3

250 CLUB

The winners for October 2018 were:
1st - £198.68 - No 299 - Member since 2015, 2 previous wins, holds 3 numbers.
2nd - £108.38 - No 157 - Member since 2012, 1 previous win.
3rd - £54.19 - No 3 - Member since 2014, 1 previous win, holds 2 numbers.
Contribution to the school - £361.25.

Welcome to more new members this month who have ensured the prize fund, and therefore the donation to the School has increased.

The winners for November 2018 were:
1st - £200.75 - No 158 - Member since 2012, 3 previous wins.
2nd - £109.50 - No 323 - Member since 2018, no previous wins.
3rd - £54.75 - No 177 - Member since 2016, no previous wins.
Contribution to the school - £365.00.

This month I am asking for help to locate two winners. From October a family with the name Fasuyi, potentially with boy/s in higher years and a new year 7 family by the name of Suyathasan. If anyone has any contact with either family could I ask that you get them to contact me via the 250 club email please - ggs250club@hotmail.com. School have tried to contact them to no avail and it would be great to pay them their winnings before Christmas.

Merry Christmas and all the best from the 250 Club for 2019.
Claire Holmes
GGS PTA 250 Club Coordinator
ART AND CREX

National Portrait Gallery

Students in Year 11 visited the National Portrait Gallery in November as part of the process of them revisiting their portraits project from Year 10. They worked with photographers, looking at the exhibitions 'The Taylor Wessing Prize', a high profile photography prize held every year, and 'Black is the New Black' an exhibition of portraits by photographer Simon Frederick, of influential black figures from the worlds of Politics, sport, music and theatre amongst others. They investigated ideas about identity and how people represent themselves and others through photography, before working in two different photography techniques, using different types of lighting. The results they got from the day opened their eyes to what can be achieved with professional techniques and also the difference that the thought and consideration given to a pose, clothing, lighting and facial expression can make to the resulting image. Since the visit, the art department have purchased a set of lights to develop their work further so we hope to see more fantastic work being produced over the next few months.

Year 9 visit to the Horniman Museum, Forest Hill

Year 9 artists visited the Horniman Museum in Forest Hill recently as part of their year of building skills and developing their interests and inspiration in art. The current project is called ‘Think Like An Artist’ and students were encouraged to look at the vast array of exhibits at the museum, including cultural artefacts, natural exhibits (such as a fully grown stuffed walrus!) and a gallery full of every type of musical instrument, to find an object that interested them and that they could take inspiration from. Over the coming term, the students will begin to develop their ideas to work as many artists have by responding to work found in museums around the world. They will use their chosen object to produce a final piece, which will be displayed in their exhibition to parents and staff towards the end of Year 9.

CrEx Pantomime project

Students in year 7 have been enjoying some awful jokes, ridiculous costumes and cries of ‘it’s behind you’ this term as they have worked on their Pantomime project. With work in Drama looking at the theatrical conventions of Panto, in music focus on the musical ‘stings’ used in jokes and traditional sketches included in Pantomimes and in Art, drawing observationally from Panto props, students are working towards performing their own short panto to Year 5 children from Whitehill school in January. This will be their first taste of performing on stage as a whole class, taking on technical tasks as well as acting roles. We look forward to seeing their efforts and the influence of our visit to see ‘Peter Pan’ at the Woodville Halls, where the students saw the theory they have been studying come to life on stage.

Nearly the whole of Year 7 made the short walk to Woodville Halls recently (oh yes they did!) to see Peter Pan where they shouted and screamed their loudest and ‘flossed’ and ‘baby sharked’ enthusiastically (ask your children to explain or look on You Tube!). They saw examples of theatrical conventions and ‘stings’ that they had discussed and gathered evidence for their project.

Drawing machines competition

In October, an event called ‘The Big Draw’ is run every year, to encourage the use of drawing to support design, thinking skills, communication and for pure fun! This year the theme was ‘Play’ so we set the students the task of creating a machine that could draw - the students took on this challenge with a number of exciting approaches, using cogs, wheels, remote control cars, motors and record players! The winners of the competition Eren Basch (Y7), Leon Wilson and Francis Olaleye (Y8) produced fantastic machines that enthralled visitors to the open evening with their hypnotic drawings. Leon said ‘It was a pleasure to be part of the drawing machine competition.’. There were many great entries from the classic spirograph, turntable powered machines and even elastic powered cars. It was great to see so many people with different ideas fully inspired next year’s Year 7s to have a go.

AJS
2018 saw the School’s annual Yorkshire Walking Trip take place during the Autumn Half Term for the first time. We have used the same accommodation through all the years, mainly because it is ideal in its size and location. Here are reproduced comments by four of those who went: a student in his second year in the School going for the first time; another in his fourth year going for the first time; a 6th form student who has been a few times before, this being his last year in the School; and lastly, 6th form student who has gone on the trip every year since he joined the School.

My first time going to the Yorkshire walking trip was brilliant! I really enjoyed all the walking and this was a new experience to me as I have never done anything like this before. I enjoyed everything, but the best bits of the whole trip were going to the top of Ingleborough (the second tallest peak in Dales) and on the 4th day where there were many waterfalls. I specifically liked going to the top of Ingleborough because it was extremely windy; so extreme that it nearly blew me off! I also enjoyed going to Malham on the fourth day as there were many waterfalls. This day was mostly sight-seeing as we went to many interesting places and we went to a village where I had delicious hot chocolate in a cafe.

Gurjeev Farmah 8D

As this was my first time going on this trip, I did not know what to expect, but what I was met with was a very enjoyable and unforgettable experience. Every day was different, but it followed the same structure: we would get out of bed and have breakfast and then prepare ourselves for the day ahead. Next, we would get on the minibus, in which we would be driven to our destination. From there onwards, we would be guided along one of the mountains (Whernside, Ingleborough or Pen-y-Ghent). Once our walk had finished, we returned to the bunk barn, where we could relax or, if you were part of the dinner team, cook. After dinner, we could play pool, table tennis, table football, go in the sauna, or go to bed.

Noah Thomas 10D

This year I spent my last year walking in Yorkshire with the school and I am gutted to say the least. Every year we tackle the Peaks in the Dales, which usually varies due to weather and overall mood. However, I can proudly say that this year an increasing number of individuals scaled the three main peaks: Pen-y-Ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough. The trip allows students such as myself to gain a relationship with teachers outside the school environment and therefore share laughs in a non-serious situation. The pool tournament was an important factor as usual with Oren taking home the trophy for beating every single individual he played at least once. I have been reminded that it is possible I could return in future years as an ex-student to maintain the culture and tradition of the school trip to the Yorkshire Dales which has been recurring for many years now. Don’t let the fact that it’s been moved to the Autumn put you off (because it was especially cold this year, I wasn’t sure whether I would come home with all my toes).”

Espen Laurie 13UD2

The trip is perhaps the best opportunity to develop oneself to be a well-rounded individual. Thanks to the wonderful staff who support the trip year after year it has continued to be tremendous fun for each and every student I have known to attend.

The Yorkshire trip itself has become the thing I will miss most from school: it is unique and there is nothing like giving yourself some time to refresh while braving all that Yorkshire’s three peaks have to throw at you.

I hope that people really take advantage of such an opportunity while they are able to. There is something quite special about it which after being part of it for the sixth and final time I believe I may have identified: the feeling of belonging, alongside a group of awesome people. A mild form of escapism if you would consider it as such.

Ed Salter 13UD1

Opportunity and challenge in a caring environment

December 2018
On Tuesday 16th October 2018, the Year 9s in the Gravesend Grammar School Combined Cadet Force (CCF) travelled to Portsmouth to get the first taste of Navy life. We departed after school on Tuesday, in the school minibus. Towards the end of the journey, we stopped for something to eat. When we arrived at the Portsmouth naval base, it was already dark. At the entrance to the base there were soldiers standing with large guns, which was quite intimidating. Once we had entered the base, we travelled to where we would be sleeping for the night - aboard the HMS Bristol, a decommissioned destroyer launched in 1969. Once we boarded the ship, we stood out on the deck and waited whilst Mr Poon signed in. Afterwards, we had to ‘peg in’ which is something that you must always do when you are on a ship. You get a piece of card with your name on it and you have to put it in a slot below your room number. If you are onboard the ship, you keep the card in the ‘on’ section, however, if you leave you must ‘peg out’ and move your card to the ‘off’ section. Once inside the ship, we had to navigate to our room. The ship had an oil smell which is supposedly common aboard military ships - this smell was awful put I suppose that a sailor would get used to it. In our room, we had a pile of bed sheets and we had to make our beds - which was a new experience for some! After a quick safety briefing, we had the rest of the evening to ourselves - most of us played ‘hide and seek’ or navigated the ship. It was very interesting to stand on the top deck and look out all of the other ships, even though the view was blocked by a giant ferry! The next day, we were awoken by the ship’s alarm at 6:30 am telling us to get ready to leave after we had got dressed and stripped the beds. We left the ship and took the minibus to the canteen. We had breakfast and afterwards we picked up the bag meals. This was the worst part... The bag meals are lunches in a brown paper bag. We had: a ham and pickle sandwich, a sausage roll, a bag of crisps, a piece of fruit and a packet of biscuits. Normally, this would be an amazing lunch, but it was definitely not! After lunch we marched to where we would get on a boat to travel to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. During that day, we went aboard ancient ships such as HMS Victory and HMS Warrior as well as going in different museums. It was a great day learning about naval history. In February, we will be staying on HMS Bristol again, but visiting the Navy training establishment HMS Collingwood.

Jordan Giannasi 9D

HMS Bristol was a great summer camp for me and was the first cadet camp I got to experience this year. I stayed on a ship for a week and I got to experience how it was to live at sea. There was a range of activities I enjoyed doing like kayaking, orienteering, mountain biking and many more. I’m looking forward to going on more courses next year as it was a good experience and I would definitely recommend taking these opportunities to other people.

Kelvin Akhigbe 10T

I have been on two Cadet Camps which I’ve enjoyed a lot. My first experience was a course learning the basics of handling a ship. On this course I sailed with a group from Dartmouth to Portsmouth. My second course was a Junior Leadership in which I learnt the fundamentals of leading a group and how to work together to complete tasks. I’ve enjoyed both of my two courses and I hope to go on more next year.

Baldeep.S.Atwal 10T
I decided to participate in the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh’s Award for many reasons. One of these reasons is that I have always been told I need to seize opportunities and become more involved with the community that I live in; another reason is that it sounded like lots of fun, rewarding and worth the challenge.

I have always wanted to participate in the DofE since I was young. As a family we went on many walks and we would often walk past the signposts and DofE participants on their expeditions, it looked like a lot of fun. I soon realised the expedition was only a small part of the entire challenge. There are four requirements for the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. These are Volunteering, Physical, Skills and Expedition and they have hundreds of suggestions to help you decide what activities to undertake to achieve these requirements.

For the Volunteering section I help out at a local charity shop. It raises money for the charity, Ellenor, who provide care and support for families facing terminal illness. I volunteer two hours every Saturday morning where I help organise the books, DVDs, CDs and video games.

For the Physical section I go along to Gym Club after school on a Friday afternoon. It is run by the school and the first time I went along I was terrified because I am not particularly active and thought I would be surrounded by body builders! Everybody there was extremely friendly and supportive and I enjoyed it so much I will continue to go even after the DofE challenge has finished.

For the Skills section, I decided to continue in learning to play the guitar. I have played the guitar for nearly a year and have already achieved my Grade 1 in both acoustic and electric guitar, and as part of the DofE I plan to take further exams in the spring (Acoustic Grade 2 and Electric Grade 2).

The final section is the Expedition. This acts as the conclusion to the Bronze DofE as all the other sections should be completed by then. The expedition lasts two days and one night, which my DofE group and I train for every Thursday after school.

16 other participants and I who attend the weekly training sessions on Thursdays have done some great team building activities, including ultimate frisbee and cooking (the picture is of the chicken korma and naan bread that my group and I made), and lots more to come. I have already made new friends through these events and I have enjoyed the sessions a lot. I would like to thank Mr Poon, Mr Newman, Mr Standen and the ever enthusiastic Mr Townsend for delivering an excellent program of training and activities so far.

Joe Akehurst 9D
As we approach Christmas it is a time to reflect on the success of School sport and extracurricular activity. We have had a fantastic year so far, with record numbers involved with School sport. We hope everyone has a restful Christmas and will hit the ground running after the break.

Our U15 rugby team performed well in the Kent and National Cup, losing out on both occasions to strong opposition from traditionally very strong rugby schools. The U15 team currently have won 66% of their matches, well done to them.

Rugby overall sits at 42% wins, which is a very good return with our strong fixture card. It has been great to see, for the first time in a number of years, each age group is in the position to field at least 2 teams.

The Senior Basketball side is going from strength to strength with wins over The North School and St George’s. Mr Fotheringham has been really impressed with how a group of individuals are really starting to gel as a team.

Our Year 8 Badminton team had recent success against St John’s and Badminton continues to thrive on a Friday after School and the training squad continues to grow.

As a department, we are always looking to improve our communication with both students and parents. All teams have their own Google classroom where all relevant information is published to
the students. We have also introduced some digital signage in the entrance to the Sanderson Sports Centre.

Results, updates, fixtures and news can be found on the 'big screen'. Our website, GGS Sports, continues to run (https://sites.google.com/gravesendgrammar.com/ggssports/home), which gives both students and parents all the information they would need for curriculum PE and extracurricular sport. Finally, our extracurricular kit shop is up and running, which can be found through our 'GGS Sports' website (https://sites.google.com/gravesendgrammar.com/ggssports/kit-shop) or by following this direct link (https://www.vx-3.com/shop/Club/Gravesend-Grammar-School-Extra-Curricular-Sportswear#tradeFilter=Club%20items). It is hoped that all students who represent the School in any sport will purchase this training and warm up kit. I would like to thank all students and staff involved for their continued hard work.

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Gravesend Grammar School Rugby Dinner 2019

GGS welcomes our Guest Presenter—England’s most decorated Women’s Rugby International Danielle Waterman

Date: 29th March 2019
Venue: Gravesend Rugby Club
Time: 7pm for 7.30pm
Cost: Senior Squad Members £20 - Guests £25

3 Course Meal, Speeches & Presentations

The GGS Rugby Dinner is a celebration of school rugby and is open to all Senior Rugby players and their parents. We also celebrate the standout players from Years 7-10. Senior Rugby Players - Please collect letters to reserve your seats
STUDENT ATHLETE INTERVIEW

Name: Lucas Dennison  
Age: 12  
Form: 7T  
Sport: Golf  
Position: Kent U14s Squad  
Years in current sport: 5 years  
What got you started? 
My Dad plays.  
How often do you train? 
3 times a week of lessons and I play on Saturdays.  
How far do you want to go? 
I want to become a professional and tour competing on TV.  
How would someone get involved? 
Start by hiring clubs and have some lessons, Gravesend Golf Centre would be a good place to start.  
What was the best advice you were ever given? 
Keep going no matter what the outcome is. If you give in you won’t do well.

TEACHER ATHLETE INTERVIEW

Name: Mr Harris  
Professional Role: Physics & Engineering Technician  
Education: Physics at Nottingham Trent University  
What is your earliest sporting memory? 
Playing tennis with my parents and grandparents while on holiday.  
Who were your sporting heroes growing up? 
David Beckham was one of my sporting heroes growing up, not because of his spot kicks but his ability to pass to anyone on the field at any time and completely carve open the defence. That’s one of the mind-sets I have transferred across into playing Ultimate.  
Can you recall a memorable sporting teacher? 
Mr Pilkington and Mr Burton introduced me to hockey when I was in Y7 and I played for the school until I was in 6th form. Mr Turvey introduced me to Ultimate when I was in 6th form and I’ve been playing it ever since.  
What is your biggest accomplishment in your sport? 
Winning 16 trophies in the last 4 years including 2 tournament MVPs. Also going on a 72 game unbeaten streak.  
What other sports did you participate in and to what standard? 
I played football for 10 years for my local team until I was 18. I played hockey for GGS for 5 years. I have played Ultimate Frisbee for nine years now; my University’s first team for three years, Captained the Nottinghamshire club team to promotion the year after and recently finishing 15th out of 69 in the National Mixed gender division.  
What teams are you involved with these days? 
For indoor competitions I play for a team called Sandwedge, which consists of very close friends from my time in Nottingham and who coach the Nottinghamshire club team (one of them even plays for Great Britain). For outdoor competitions, I’m a bit of a mercenary and play for the best team that asks me to.  
What got you started? 
During my time in 6th form Mr Turvey introduced Ultimate Frisbee as an enrichment option, although at the time we didn’t play by the actual rules. When I started university I went to a taster session and was instantly hooked.  
What other ways do you stay healthy? 
Playing 11x25min games at the weekend is pretty tiring so during the week I try and get as much rest as I can.  
What is your favourite sporting memory? 
Individually it would have to be getting the game winning interception for my team’s first ever tournament victory. As a team it would have to be going back to Nottingham to defend our title for 3 consecutive years.  
What is your biggest sporting bugbear? 
When people play any team sport with a complete lack of awareness of where the ball/disc is and where their team members are. If you want someone to pass to you, get your head up.  
When was the last time you cried at a sporting event? 
I don’t recall ever crying at a sporting event. Ultimate Frisbee is a self-refereed sport, even at the highest levels, so if I lost a game I know it is only because the other team were better, and not feel cheated.
Opportunity and challenge in a caring environment

December 2018

Which three sports people would you like to have around for dinner and why?

Beau Kittredge (he literally jumped over a guy standing upright, to catch a disc), Jim Parinella (he wrote the book on Ultimate tactics) and Michael Glass (heralded as one of the best throwers in the history of Ultimate). I think they would have some amazing stories and I could learn so much from them.

What was the best sporting advice you were ever given?

"Do or do not, there is no try"

How would someone get involved in your sport?

There's training after school on both Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Sanderson sports hall and Wednesdays outside for sixth-form enrichment. Outside school, there are teams all over the country who welcome complete beginners, a list of which can be found at ukulti-mate.com

SPORTS RESULTS

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

It's been a great start to the American football season, with a range of students from Years 7 to 10 all coming to training sessions. Seasoned veterans Alex Pollard, Harvey Dean, Nathan Santhiapilai (all 10H) and Daniel Ogunbambo (10T) have taken the initiative and stepped up well into the holes left by senior members of the squad who were no longer eligible to play.

They've also brought in their classmates Matthew Stibbons, Daniel Goodbarne, and Joshua Stephenson (all 10C) who have got stuck into the sport and regularly attended training. They have been complemented by fellow Key Stage 4 students Luke Berry (9D) and Mx Owen (10D).

We've also had excellent commitment from more junior members of the school with a record 5 year 7s: Harkanwal Bedi, Penuel Alli, Szymon Bilkiewicz, Florian Nurcja, and Toye Olasiyan (all 7T) also joining the squad this year.

With tournament season beginning in March, there's a lot to look forward to!

The team have got a great chemistry and it'll be great to see it all come together on a competitive stage.

ASG

BADMINTON

Year 8 Badminton

Two teams, one year 8 and four Year 7 students, took on a St John's team in singles and doubles.

This was the first opportunity for some of our students to play in a competitive match. Training is important but it is no substitute for a live opposition.

St John's put up a good fight but all the hard work from our students paid off with a comprehensive win from both teams.

Well done to the students involved.

SAB

CHESS

Since the beginning of term, we have introduced a chess club which runs on a Tuesday and Thursday after school. If you are interested in some chess, speak to Dr Nikmal who runs the club.

SAB

CRICKET

Cricket training will be starting term 3 and 4. We have a full schedule of games in terms 5 and 6 which we will every Saturday morning as well as some midweek cup games. So stay posted for updates about training and please try and keep Saturday mornings free. All fixtures are on the PE website fixture calendar.

BPS

CROSS COUNTRY

Swanley Park District Competition

The first District cross country event took place on Thursday 8th November 2018 at Swanley Park. In this event, only the top four runners would score in the team competition. Our boys ran very well and the U12 team came 3rd overall with Elliot Copeman (7C) coming 7th and Harry Lewis (7F) in 8th place.

The U14s team came 2nd overall with Luke Fenton (9C) placing 3rd and Franklin White (9S) who came 6th. Huge congratulations to all involved.

WBB

Opportunity and challenge in a caring environment

December 2018
Leigh Academy District Competition
On 22nd November, we went to Leigh Academy to run at the final District cross-country event. It was quite chilly, and the course was very muddy in some parts. The Year 7 boys did two laps and the Year 8 and 9 were in a combined race where we ran three laps of 1.1k.
Sam Lloyd 8H

This year, we have had over 30 students regularly at Monday training sessions which made selection difficult. As such, we entered several runners from our committed squad in order to allow as many runners as possible to compete against the strongest athletes in the District.

Gravesend Grammar School came 3rd in the team competition in the U14s. We look forward to seeing how many of our boys will be invited to the Kent Cross Country Championships to represent the District.
WBB

FOOTBALL

The first team have compounded on their success from the start of the season and remain top of the league with three games to play. What is more impressive however is how they have continued to conduct themselves in a very mature and respectable manner allowing their football to do the talking.

They have shown great determination and resilience to bounce back from a narrow defeat in the national cup to continue their success in the league. A piloting game was against Ravensbourne, the day following the defeat in the National Cup. This was an important game as Ravensbourne are the closest contenders in the league and a win was necessary to remain top of the table.

The boys showed great spirit and belief, after losing the day before in a penalty shootout, to bounce back with one of their best performances this season beating Ravensbourne 9-3 with a late hat-trick from Joe Simmons and an excellent all-round performance from Luke Pollard who also scored two goals. Unfortunately, the following game was not so lucrative against Wilmington where they were held to a 0-0 draw in a frustrating game.

This result added pressure to the next away game, at Beths Grammar School, where 3 points were vital to remain top of the league. After a very promising start to the game, we were unable to capitalise on the many chances created, that was until Marc Turner scored with a fantastic strike.

However, this was overruled by a handball decision. The players continued to produce chances in the second half although fewer in number, until a piece of individual skill from Marc Turner who managed to get the crucial goal to give us the lead.

The team then showed great fight and determination to deal with late pressure from Beths, with a great save from Lex Longhurst (stand-in goalkeeper) being the pick of the bunch. MOM went to Lex Longhurst for an outstanding performance in goal despite being an outfield player normally. All performances have been a whole squad performance.

Hopefully they can continue the good run of form and approach each game with the excellent attitude they have shown all season, to give us an excellent chance of winning the league which has not been achieved by Gravesend Grammar School in over 20 years.

Keep it up GGS Football First Team squad!
DGN

The 1st XI football team have had one of the most successful seasons in recent memory. They currently sit top of the North Kent Premier league with 3 games to play. So with three wins, they would be crowned North Kent Premier League Champions for the first time in 26 years!

The squad have gelled brilliantly as a team. Their work ethic and attitude is exceptional and as result, they have scraped some great results in very adverse conditions and difficult circumstances. The squad now look forward to their last 3 games which will decide the league.
BPS

HOCKEY

The Hockey season will be in full swing in terms 3 and 4 we have a number of afterschool fixtures. If you would like to be part of these fixtures, Year 7 & 8 training is on Mondays after school and Year 9 and above is on Wednesdays. All fixtures are on the PE website fixture calendar.
BPS

RUGBY

U12

My name is Kai, I’m in Year seven and had never played rugby until September. I had never been into sport (other than swimming) until I came across rugby. It is a great game to relieve stress and fire you up. Rugby at times can be very exciting and competitive, especially in the wet and muddy conditions that we have been experiencing in the last few weeks. (This I was not expecting but has made the experience that much better).

Since I came across rugby my life has changed completely (for the better). It has made me look at my fitness and look after myself better.

So far this season we have played two away games and the rest at home. The rival schools we played against are Kent College, St Olave’s, Chatham House, Ashford School, Westcliffe, Rochester Maths and our most recent rivals, Chislehurst and Sidcup.

Out of these, my favourite would have been against St Olave’s, this game was very intense, both teams played amazingly! Unfortunately, we lost but it was one of, if not the best game
of rugby ever played by the new Year 7s.

Despite losing we have much improved since then and have worked on specific skills to improve our play. Our most recent match (against Chis and Sid) was fantastic. This being our second away game was also a mind-blowing experience. Travelling on coaches with all of your friends is so much fun. The game in itself was phenomenal.

This is to name but a few of the fantastic games played by Gravesend Grammar School. We have got two of our biggest rivals to play in the coming week. On Wednesday we are playing our first ever game in the dark (under floodlights) versus Kings Rochester and on Saturday we are playing our biggest rivals EVER Dartford Grammar School.

All of our team are looking forward to these two games, which are probably the biggest we will ever play this season.

Kai Shrosbree-Arias 7F

U13 A

The U13s have had a very positive start to the season. There has been so much development and improvement for many individuals as well as improved structure from the team. They have picked up some good results with wins against Ashford, Chatham House and Langley Park B.

All topped off by a superb performance against Rochester Maths which ended in a 10-10 draw and could have so easily been more. The boys now look forward to big games against Chis & Sid and rivals Dartford, before their last term of rugby in term 3.

BPS

U13 B

The B team has been playing very well with a dominant display against Westcliff High School in which Uchenna Efobi scored six tries in a display that earned him Man of the Match.

Our toughest game came against Rochester Maths in torrential conditions in which the B team drew with 4 tries each. This was a hard fought contest with newcomers to the squad, Louie Mitchell (8C) earned Man of the Match and Shay Keelan (8D) also earned the Ironman award.

The boys who are committing to training are getting better week by week and the results of their hard work showing on the pitch. Great effort by all involved and if we keep high numbers at training we will have no doubt continue to succeed!

WBB

U14

The U14 Squad has come a long way this term. The numbers have increased to a point where we have started to offer the opposition A and B team fixtures.

Gabriel Fischer (9F), having not played rugby before, is now frequently scoring tries and has become the leading try scorer already and when Nathaniel Larney (9F), ‘the juggernaut’, gets the ball in his hands he is almost impossible to stop.

Mide Sodeke (9T) has continued to captain the team superbly, running the warm ups and parts of training sessions. On the pitch he also is leading the way in terms of Man of the Match/Iron Man awards.

We started this term with some big wins over Chatham House, Ashford, Gad’s Hill and Kings Rochester. The team has started to play with more composure and have started to run ‘patterns’ which is a big stepping stone towards U15 rugby and the development of over-

all team play.

The fixture card is hard leading up to Christmas where good team performances are imperative, even if the score line does not go our way. We are still on a 40% win ratio for the season that my not look impressive but compared to last season is a fantastic step forward and we will still have games until February to try and increase this percentage.

SET

U15

The U15 rugby team have continued to build on the successes of the earlier part of the season, picking up wins in all block fixtures since the single blight on the copybook of losing to Maidstone Grammar School back in early September.

A good Kent Cup run ended in a tight 19-10 loss to Kings Canterbury and a similarly tense fixture in the National competition saw the boys lose 8-7 away to ChisELLOW and Sidcup GS, where the team could not quite overcome three yellow cards.

Since then, good wins against Ashford School, Kings Rochester, Westcliffe High School and Rochester Maths have seen the squad amass 350 points at an average of nearly 32 points per game, with many of our squad showing signs of improvement with great commitment to training and their friends.

The most pleasing thing ahead of all of the positive results though, has to be the increase in the number of boys representing the school in Year 10. I am delighted to see that we now have an U15B team that have played games against a touring Isle of Man side, King William School, as well as Rochester Maths, which has seen the emergence of players such as Jay Millen (10T), George Page (10S), Nat Williams (10F) and many more, a real positive for the whole squad.

We look forward to fielding two teams against Dartford Grammar School in the final fixture before the Christmas break and continue to build into 2019. Onwards and upwards!

PJF

1st XV

Senior rugby has continued to grow and develop since half term with the fixtures and results demonstrating the improvement and growing success that this group of players is beginning to have.

The recent block of fixtures has seen some tremendous positives for the group moving forward from beating the King’s Rochester team to getting some of the best results in a number of years against a close school rivals, Rochester Maths & Chis & Sid.

The success is entirely due to the efforts and applications of the players, through repetitive practice in training of the pattern and continued desire in games to compete and never take a backward step, have all been features of their successes. Notably, there have been some tremendous performances from Nathan Oram (UH3), Ed Bentley (UH3) & Owen Hinks (11D) across the season so far.

Furthermore, this period has seen a great increase in participation at the senior squad this term, with a number of students coming back to rugby and a number starting for the first time. To see this is fantastic and is another accolade for those students who have been involved for a while as they have worked hard and generated this enthusiasm for school rugby that ultimately can lead to tremendous successes moving forward.

CC
HOUSE SPORT
House Sport has been going from strength to strength. Term 1 saw a tightly fought battle in the House Cross Country and House Rugby competitions. This term saw the Year 7 House Hockey with the final played between Downs and Cliff, who won their group competing against the other houses. Every student gave their all in the matches but eventually Cliff came out on top.

*CLIFF YEAR 7 HOUSE HOCKEY CHAMPIONS*

FLOODLIT RUGBY
On 12th December Gravesend Grammar School hosted Kings Rochester in the annual schoolboy Floodlit Fixture at GRFC. The Floodlit Fixture has been a highlight of the GGS school rugby calendar for almost 20 years, where we have hosted schools from as close as Dartford to as far reaching as Canada. This year we welcome the return of local rivals Kings Rochester. Given the historical sporting rivalry between the two schools, expectations were high for a quality game of 1st XV rugby.

Before the Main Fixture, both schools’ Year 7 rugby teams took part in a curtain raiser competition, with nearly 50 boys from GGS taking the field to represent their school. The boys did not disappoint, with some sublime U12 rugby played by all involved, with GGS taking the spoils with three great wins throughout the four team tournament.

With the curtain raiser complete, the 1st XV teams took to the field with over 500 people in attendance, the crowd that included parents, guardians, staff, students, old boys and members of local rugby clubs Gravesend RFC, Old Gravesendians RFC, Vigo RFC and New Ash Green RFC were given an absolute show of schoolboy rugby.

GGS started the game with great control, showing the patterns that they have been working on throughout the season and dominated early possession. Strong carries from they have been working on through the season and dominated early possession. Strong carries from Nathan Oram, Sam Jones and Oscar Powell helped the boys take the lead as the G’s crashed over for a 7-0 lead, try converted by Ben Hope. Kings started to get a foothold in the game, until a charge down from Andrew Cooke saw the ball rebound into the hands of galloping second row Oliver Webb who marched all of 50 metres to dot down to stretch the G’s lead to 14-0. Freddie Barrett and Nathan Covill were marshalling the troops well from 9 and 10, and full back George Olney repelling any attacks out wide. Just before the break, a string of penalties saw the Gs marching back towards their own line, and the pressure eventually told as Kings Rochester got their first score of the evening, 14-7.

At the half time interval the Gs rung the changes, giving a host of younger players their opportunity. The ever working Harvey Emery was battling hard in defence, with a number of fantastic turnovers at the breakdown and with a try held up over the line, the Gs hoped for more scoring. To their great credit, Kings went to a direct plan and started making strides into the Gs territory. From a set piece move, Kings burst through the middle to score under the posts, 14-14. The momentum was with the Kings group, as more carries and quick re-winds to the blind side left the Gs defence scrambling, and within 7 minutes stretched their lead to 33-14. Ed Bentley who had battled tirelessly throughout left the field showing the scars of a man in battle, and the Gs showed massive character to wrestle back some control, with an uncoverted try in the corner putting the scores at 33-19 with 5 to play. As the Gs searched for another score and push for the win, a break from their own midfield was intercepted leaving an open run in for Kings to finish the scoring 40-19.

Coach Mr Cutting spoke of his immense pride in the boys for putting on an absolute spectacle for the crowd in attendance, and ultimately as disappointing as the result was for the home team the overriding success of the night of rugby will do a great deal for the development of the rugby programme at GGS and leave long lasting memories for all that played and were at the ground.

A big thank you to Kings Rochester and we look forward to seeing you again next year and thank you for a fantastic set of fixtures. PF
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

TUESDAY, 18TH DECEMBER

MONDAY, 7TH JANUARY 2019

Wednesday, 9th January—Tuesday, 15th January
Thursday, 17th January
Friday, 18th January
Tuesday, 22nd January
Thursday, 24th January
Tuesday, 5th February—Thursday, 7th February
Tuesday, 12th and Wednesday, 13th February
Wednesday, 13th and Thursday, 14th February
Thursday, 14th—Wednesday, 20th February

THURSDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY

Friday, 15th February—Tuesday, 19th February
Saturday, 16th February—Sunday, 24th February

MONDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY

Thursday, 28th February—Saturday, 2nd March
Monday, 4th March—Tuesday, 12th March
Tuesday, 5th March
Wednesday, 6th March
Wednesday, 13th March
Thursday, 14th March
Friday, 15th March
Tuesday, 19th March

LAST DAY OF TERM 2
START OF TERM 3 (WEEK 2)
Y13 trial exams
Y11 6th Form Information Evening
6th Form External On-line Applications Open
Y11 Consultation Evening 15:30—18:00
Y12 Students and parents’ Higher Education Evening 19:00
Production—Avenue Q
Y11 Options due
Y9 Td/IPV & Men ACWY Vaccinations
CCF Field Trip Portsmouth
Rome and Sorrento trip
LAST DAY OF TERM 3
Berlin trip
Pila Ski Trip

FIRST DAY OF TERM 4 (WEEK 2)
Y12 Geography Field Trip
Year 11 Trial Exams
Y7 trip to War Horse, Canterbury
Y12 Hustings
Y10 Consultation 15:30—18:00
Year 8 Options Evening
Y12 EPQ Immersion Day
6th Form External Application Deadline
Y8 Consultation 15:30—18:00

TERM DATES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2018—2019

TERM 1:       Wednesday, 29th August 2018       Staff INSET day, new Year 7 Induction
             Starts: All students return Thursday, 30th August 2018
             Finishes: Friday, 19th October

TERM 2:       Starts: Monday, 5th November 2018
             Finishes: Tuesday, 18 December 2018

TERM 3:       Starts: Monday, 7th January 2019
             Finishes: Thursday, 14th February 2019

TERM 4:       Starts: Monday, 25th February 2019
             Finishes: Friday, 12th April 2019

TERM 5:       Starts: Wednesday, 24th April 2019
             Finishes: Friday, 24th May 2019

TERM 6:       Starts: Monday, 3rd June 2019
             Finishes: Friday, 19th July 2019

MATHS CHALLENGE

Answer: 25.12
Nice!
The next Gravesend Grammar School production is going to be Avenue Q: School Edition. Every year, members from the drama, tech and band groups join together to create a professional production. This year’s show is a more family-friendly version of the Broadway musical, which has since toured around the world. The musical tells the tale of a college graduate trying to find his purpose and all the people he meets along the way: there are some interesting characters! This year’s show follows on the success of previous shows at our school—‘Elf Jr’, ‘The Wiz’ and ‘Our House’. Tickets will be available in the new year and we hope to make this the best show ever. Everyone is putting a huge amount of effort into this performance and it is certainly something not to be missed!