



# NEWS@COM



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The Magazine of Comberton Village College  
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BEST IN THE COUNTRY — BACK PAGE

# First aid skills are for life

First-aid skills learned as an Army Cadet were put to the test when Year 9 pupil Ollie (9N) came to the rescue while on holiday in Cornwall.

He was walking along cliff tops with his family when they saw a man lying on the ground clutching his ribs after falling over a park bench while playing with this family.

Ollie went into action, assessing the injured man using the DRABC primary survey. He checked the man's breathing and discovered he had injured his rib.

The family had already called an ambulance and while they waited for it to arrive, Ollie used his hoodie to keep the man warm and provided calm reassurance.

With a police officer in Ollie's family and a passing paramedic, who also joined the rescue, they were able to keep the injured man well-cared for until the air ambulance arrived.

Ollie, a member of the Comberton Detachment, learned life-saving skills as part of Cambridgeshire ACF's commitment to first aid training.

But they recognise there is a crucial difference between taking the course and having the skills, confidence and presence of mind to use them. And the experience has also helped Ollie 'to do things I thought I would not be able to do.'

He added: "It's extremely important to learn first aid. The cadets gave me the skills and courage to help someone. It's a really good feeling to have."



**TRAINING PAYS OFF:** First aid skills are used in a real emergency.

Nicola Thompson said: "Ollie made us so proud. He helped by using his first aid skills and knowledge that he had learned from cadets, working with an off-duty paramedic and his mum, to make sure he was ok and comfortable until the Helemed arrived.

"He absolutely had every confidence and went straight over to the man with no hesitation. If it weren't for the Army Cadets, he would not have learned these skills, which he now has for life."

## Students making their voices heard

This academic year, four other Comberton pupils and I took part in the Cambridgeshire Student Forum, hosted by Unloc.

We started our journey with Unloc in January at Long Road Sixth Form College where we got to know everyone through ice breakers and lots of fun challenges to make us think about topical issues that we are passionate about.

We each got into an action group which comprised students from six other institutions

from Cambridgeshire.

I was in the diversity and inclusion group. However there were many groups such as mental wellbeing, future careers, climate change and eco matters.

Once we got into these groups, we established group leaders and vice-group leaders and these students went through a leadership course.

After the first summit at Long Road, we had many Zoom meetings to establish three points of

action. Ours were racism, radicalisation and gender inequality.

At the second summit, which was hosted by Comberton Village College, we discussed our plans on how to achieve our goals with an expert on our action group topics.

We spoke with Ms Burns, the coordinator of the diversity and inclusion group at Comberton Village College, and other action groups discussed their chosen theme with specialist professionals.

From there we had many more online meetings where we decided to send out a survey and collect data to create resources to educate young people on these topics.

We attended the final summit (end of year celebration event) at Hills Road Sixth Form where we participated in many more fun ice-breakers. I spoke to student voice experts, took part in the change makers grant and spoke to members of the county council, city council and health watch. Overall we all had a great time doing this. We feel that we have started some excellent work with Unloc and very much hope that we can carry on the work we have begun in the months to come.

Ella (9E)



**END-OF-YEAR EVENT:** The group heard from Mayor of Cambridge & Peterborough Nik Johnson (centre) at the final Unloc meeting of the year.

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**ARRIVALS:** Students turned up at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, by various modes of transport.

# Dancing in the rain . . .

**Incessant rain could not dampen the spirits for the Year 11 Prom held in the magnificent setting of the Imperial War Museum at Duxford.**

In fact, the inclement weather added some additional glamour and grace to the proceeding as students were greeted at their Ferraris, campervans, and even wheelbarrows by staff with umbrellas, including Deputy Principal Sean Sycamore in a bow tie — to escort them into the venue.

Surrounded by a stunning backdrop of historical aircraft, students and staff had a wonderful evening that was enjoyed by all.

In the main hangar, students entered to a drinks reception held under the wing of the planes.

There was a large dance space with a DJ in front of a Concorde, which was lit up, and chairs around beautiful white tables, decorated with lit-up cups with planes hanging inside. That was the touch of Ms Baker, who used her event-planning skills to great effect!

There was a chorus of squeals of excitement, enjoyment and pride as pupils met one another as they arrived. The night was beautifully planned and pupils danced the night away celebrating the previous two years of hard work.

That was the second celebration for Year 11 after finishing their GCSE exams.

The previous week they came together to celebrate their final day in school – and the weather was much kinder.

They were able to enjoy a fun-filled day out on our school field with an array of games, activities and food – and, of course, the obligatory shirt-signing!

The day concluded with the final celebration assembly, which was filled with memorable moments, videos and amazing music performances. Even Head of Year Matt Knight took to the mic! It has been an amazing journey watching all the students grow from Year 7 through to Year 11, and for a final time, all the students were an absolute credit to the school.

Wishing the Class of 2023 all the best for the future!



**MAKING MEMORIES:** Students enjoyed dancing the night away and taking lots of photos!

# Highlight of the year

**Activities Week, traditionally held in the last full week of the summer term, is always a much-anticipated event on the school calendar.**

With Years 11 and 13 enjoying a well-earned break after their exams, Year 10 and 12 on work experience and nearly all of Year 7 on their residential at Beaumanor Hall, in Leicestershire (see Page 7), the unusually quiet corridors of Comberton led to a wealth of different and

exciting opportunities. Some of those routes led directly to the patio at the front of the college where hordes of excited Year 8 and 9 students waited each day to board coaches to their chosen activity. Inside the building others were busy making art, crafts and music, perfecting dances, dishes and more. On this and the following three pages, we offer a taste of what's been going on.



**AQUAPARK FUN:** During Activities Week.



**HANDS-ON:** Students work with chocolate at Cadbury's World.

## Business & Tourism Week

The Business & Tourism Activities Week has been full-on for the Year 9 students who signed up. Monday was a visit to Woburn Safari Park for a behind and in front of the scenes visit. We started with a Bus Safari and managed to see lions, tigers, rhino, elephants and countless other exotic animals. A brilliant session followed with Natasha Kyle, Head of Education, on how the Park uses different marketing models to promote and increase visitor numbers, plus we had time to mess about in boats on the lake! Tuesday saw us at Cadbury's World, where we had a chance to see how chocolate is made (and gets loads of 'freebies'). We were able to have a go ourselves under the expert eyes of the 'Master Chocolatier'.

Wednesday we were off to Drayton Manor Theme Park. We had a business workshop where we learned about the '7 Ps of Marketing' and how they are used by Drayton Manor to ensure that they offer the best experience for their visitors. Thursday it was Harry Potter World, which was brilliant as we got to see how CGI and animatronics were used in the films. We were able to walk through the real Great Hall and Gringotts Bank and get a taste of 'Butter Beer'. And so, to Friday, where we spent the day exploring the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, investigating more about how the museum is run and funded and how they manage the huge flying displays which attract thousands of visitors.

## Snowsports Weeks

A group of Year 8 pupils set off to escape the heat of summer in search of something to cool down. We found plenty of snow at the Snozone in Milton Keynes, where pupils tried learning to snowboard. Under professional instruction, they started off learning to control their speed using the toe edge before moving onto their heel edge. We had a much-needed rest day off the slope on Wednesday where we had lunch together as a group, after looking for some bargains in the shops. Towards the end of the week the pupils were honing their edge skills and focusing on turning their snowboards. Meanwhile, in Hemel Hempstead, Ski Week was back and each day students piled into the minibus to head to The Snow Centre. For pretty much the whole group, skiing is completely new to us so the lessons started before even getting on the slopes when pupils had to figure out how to get their boots and skis on! With Aimee (9C), Lucas (9E) and Rosie (9V) leading the way, all pupils made progress quickly. By the end of the week we were all on the big slope showing our linked turns. The ability to stay on two feet at all times also improved!



**SLOPE STYLE:** Students learned skiing or snowboarding.



**INSPIRED:** By the work of illustrator Eric Carle.

## Art Week

Students worked on a project inspired by the illustrator Eric Carle as part of art week. They first designed a mixed-up animal (made with the parts of at least three different animals) and then painted tissue paper with acrylic paint. They then used this to collage their animals. They were a very industrious and enthusiastic bunch indeed!

**Trips that Tell a Tale**



**ALL ABOARD: Students on the Hogwarts Express.**

The English department organised a range of trips to give students the opportunity to visit Warner Bros Harry Potter Studios, Cambridge Aqua Park, the Fitzwilliam Museum, the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and watch the latest blockbuster films at the Vue, Cambridge.

During the Harry Potter Studio tour, they were able to marvel at the grandeur of the Great Hall, navigate the bustling streets of Diagon Alley and explore the beautifully crafted iconic props from the films.

Later in the week, students made a splash at Cambridge Aqua Park, where they had to slip and slide their way across an inflatable obstacle course.

To finish off the week, students participated in a treasure hunt around college. Some of the tasks included a crunch-fuelled cracker challenge and a design-your-own-T-shirt competition.

The action-packed week was enjoyed by all and will leave students and staff alike with tales to tell and memories to look back on.



**Get Crafty**



**CRAFT WORK:**  
Students tried a range of different activities.

Pupils on get crafty worked really hard all week on different activities including tie dyeing T-shirts, cross stitch, paper quilling and a wreath making competition. Another activity was enamelling. Students had to cut, file and sand their copper design, then drill a hole before adding colour. The enamel powder was sieved on and then the piece could go into the kiln until the enamel had melted. They added details to their designs by using stencils to apply more enamel powder, carefully placing crushed enamel pieces or adding patterned beads. Mr Law even came by to give out some prizes at the end of the week, this was a really hard decision as everyone had made such amazing items!



**EVERYTHING EQUESTRIAN: During horse riding week.**

**Horse Riding Week**

We welcomed a new group of year 8s and 9s for horse riding week. During this week, students are allocated a horse or pony for the week and learn how to take care of it, ride and about the theory behind horses and riding. On the first day, students were introduced to their ponies and learned how to put on a headcollar and lead their pony safely. They then learned how to groom the

pony, and why this was important, and how to tack up. There are a lot of parts to those bridles! It was then on to their first riding lesson, supported by lots of lovely helpers. They then had a theory lesson where they learned about their horse and its age, height and breed before finally learning about stable management and putting into practice the glamorous job of mucking out!

Over the course of the week the group tried out many new things, including riding without

stirrups, riding bareback, working in hand, hacking, field management, tack cleaning and fun pony races (pictured). Each day the group rode twice and did theory sessions and lessons in stable management. All of the group made huge improvements over the week and went from being led to riding solo! A huge thank you to all the staff and helpers at Monach Farm and well done to everyone who took part.



**DESK JOB: Learning to 'drive the desk'.**

**Coding Week**

During Activities Week some students joined the Coding, Electronics and Robots activity where pupils had the chance to develop their coding skills. One of the highlights was learning Python coding within Minecraft, where students were taught the skills to manipulate Minecraft via code. Due to the success a Minecraft for Education club may be set up in the new academic year.



**INSIDE MINECRAFT:**  
Students learned Python coding

**Good Gig Guide Week**

The Good Gig Guide Week teaches students everything about putting on an event, from planning and promotion to technical and backstage.

This week we were joined by the young Technicians Academy, who delivered a days workshop on lighting and sound.

Students visited Storey's Field Centre in Eddington to learn about their events programme and innovative building design.

The week concluded with Good Gig Guide students technical supporting the Dance, Drama and Music Weeks' final performances.

**Dance Week**

We had an exciting week, Nikki and Jodie, our dance teachers, taught us three dances. We danced to the Handing Tree, Circle of Life (District 78 Remix) — Lion King, and Beyonce mix. Each morning we started off with a game and warm up and got into learning dances, it has been lots of fun and tiring.

At the end of the week we performed the dances to other students at school.

Grace (8B) said: "I have had fun learning the new dances and performing them." Lacey (8O) added: "I have really enjoyed dancing to Beyonce."



**GRAND FINALE: Dancers put on a performance at the end of the week.**

**World War I Battlefields Trip**

On Monday, 10th July, we set off to explore the battlefields of WWI in Belgium and France.

After arriving at Calais, we began the drive to visit the Lijssehoek cemetery in Belgium, where we learned about the first of what would become many soldiers' stories and got to grips with the layout of a military cemetery.

We then traveled to the town of Ypres to buy chocolate, admire the city, and eat a meal at a restaurant.

Afterwards, we crossed the border back into France to get settled into our hostel in the town of Albert.

On the Tuesday, we walked in the footsteps of the soldiers in the Battle of the Somme. We came across a grenade and an artillery shell, as well as visiting the crater at the site of one of the biggest explosions of the war.

At the end of the walk, we visited Newfoundland park, which commemorates the Canadian soldiers who fought during the war.

After stopping for lunch, we took shelter from the hot sun to learn about the uniforms and equipment used by the soldiers before visiting the breathtaking Thiepval Memorial to the Missing, where the names of over 76,000 unburied soldiers are engraved, before stopping at the Ulster Tower for ice cream.

We finished the day by visiting the Becourt cemetery, where our guide told us about the lives of three young soldiers: Robert Quilter Gilson, Geoffrey Bache Smith, and J.R.R. Tolkien.

After the death of his friend, Robert Quilter Gilson, Geoffrey Smith wrote a poem to commemorate their time together.

On Wednesday, we travelled to the city of Arras, where we were given a tour of the underground quarries used by the soldiers during the war.

It was an immersive experience, with a combination of sound and visuals helping us to understand how the soldiers lived in the quarries and the impact that they had on the war.

Afterwards, we stopped at a nearby French supermarket before making a pilgrimage to the grave of Freya's great-great-grandfather and learning about his story.

From there, we visited a massive German cemetery and found the graves of



**POIGNANT MOMENTS:** Students walk through the trenches and lay a wreath

different soldiers before making a second pilgrimage to another classmate's great-great-uncle. Lastly, we visited the beautiful Vimy Ridge memorial for Canadian soldiers who died.

On Thursday morning, we visited the Sir John Monash centre and learned about the role of Australian soldiers during an interactive gallery which connected to an app on our phones.

We paid our respects to the soldiers who fought and died in the war and laid a wreath on the grave of Valentine Rochford, who we had previously learned about, before embarking on the long journey home.

It was a brilliant trip which taught us a lot and helped us get into the headspace of the soldiers to better understand the first World War.

Natasha (9V) and Freya (9N)

**STEM Week**



**HOME AND AWAY:** Students visited Cambridge and worked at Comberton.

More than 30 students engaged in STEM week, enjoying a variety of activities related to science engineering and the natural world.

Students spent three days based in school where they made models of volcanos and then erupted them, made gel plates to make prints of natural materials, did a forensics investigation to discover who had "sabotaged the bake off", made and raced rocket cars and listened to a talk from a local farmer.

Two days were spent off site where students had tours around Cambridge museums.



Students hunted for fossils at the Sedgwick Museum, learnt about the history of scientific instruments and anatomical drawings at the Whipple Museum, and looked at artifacts from different societies at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. On the second off site day we focused on nature and the living word and enjoyed tours of the Zoology Museum, to look at how animals have evolved over time, and the Cambridge Botanical Garden, where they learned about the many different types of plants that live there.

**Adventure Club**

A week of sailing on the high seas at night and through storms, eight pupils from Comberton had an extraordinary experience that challenged them to their extremes! They navigated their way from Brightlingsea up the East Coast to Felixstowe and then Ipswich before returning via Walton Backwaters.

All came through and performed brilliantly, storing up memories that will last a lifetime.



**ON BOARD:** Students spent the week on 'Pioneer' in the North Sea.

**Culture Week**

Year 8 and 9 pupils had an eclectic mix this week during this cultural extravaganza: making mosaics, cooking French and Italian food, creating *ojos de dios*, the experience that is Eurovision day and finally learning all about Québec, which included line dancing and trying our own version of poutine!

**LINE DANCING:** While learning about the Canadian province of Québec.



### Adrenaline Rush Week

The Adrenaline Rush students had an excellent week last week taking part in a variety of activities.

Day one saw the group head to Milton Keynes for some rock climbing in the morning before a leisurely afternoon at Centre MK. On the second day pupils headed to Nene Parks Outdoor Centre for some kayaking, canoeing and paddle boarding, the latter being a particular highlight for most pupils as it allowed for students to test the temperature of the water! On day three we stayed in Cambridge and went ice skating and bowling. After some initial tentativeness on the ice from a few students by the end of the session the majority of the group were able to skate on their own. Thursday saw us head to Essex for Nuclear Races. The tough mudder style course saw pupils navigate the many obstacles over ditches and into water. Rather weary and tired we headed to Go Ape in Thetford on the Friday for some treetop adventures. Despite the rain pupils navigated themselves successfully through the many obstacles in the treetops. Highlights for the students were undoubtedly Nene Park and Nuclear Races, with the instructor at Nene Park commenting that the group was the best he had had all year.



**BE BRAVE:** Activities to get the heart racing on Adrenaline Rush week.

### Golf Week



**GETTING TO GRIPS:** With golf!

As much as the weather tried to dampen the spirits of the 14 students on Golf Week, we still had a great time at three different venues, Kingsway in Royston, World of Golf, Stansted, and Barkway Park! For many students it was the first time they had golf lessons or even played a proper course. For as many balls that got lost there were laughs and smiles shared. We hope everyone had a great week and continue playing and improving their game.

### Dali Week

During Activities Week, 27 wonderful Year 9 pupils travelled to Figueres in the north-east of Spain for six days. Having attended weekly after-school sessions to learn more about the weird and wonderful life of Dali, pupils were well prepared to appreciate the sites we visited in Spain. We visited his house in the picturesque location of Port Lligat. It is just as Dali left it, having fled the house when his wife died. Other trips included a visit to the theatre-museum which houses many of his works and collections. The ciutadella de Roses has over 25 centuries of history in 12 hectares. Pupils had the opportunity to sketch in the surroundings which



**EGG-CELLENT WEEK:** All things Dali.

are a place of archaeological interest. Beach trips, souvenir shopping and a trip to the water park were also activities on this trip. The pupils truly embodied the Comberton ethos of 'Caring, Confident and Capable'. They looked after each other during the heatwave, braved the Cobra in the waterpark(!) and proved to be excellent artists and photographers.

**MAKING MUSIC:** Many students tried new things.



### Music Week

For my second week of work experience, I was based in school helping with the music activities week. On Monday morning, I was greeted with a group of musicians, about 15 strong, ready to play almost anything. During the week, we had Metallica-adjacent Batman by the newly formed rock group 'The Rocktonauts', and a group of talented young singers with family links from around the world coming together to reimagine Fly Me to The Moon in a variety of languages. The thing I found to be most endearing

about the week is the environment these young musicians created, a culture of encouraging everyone to try something new. So many picked up new instruments, like the tenor horn or the cornet, the drum kit, the electric bass and guitar. This positivity culminated, on Friday, with a concert for the ages, with classics like Valerie and Misirlou interspersed with original compositions, each of the same jaw-dropping quality. I will be quick to return when I can!

Ziggy (10N)

### Year 7 Residential: Beaumanor Hall

More than 270 Year 7 students went to Beaumanor Hall near Loughborough for their residential trip during Activities Week. Despite the weather being a bit up and down, we had a fantastic time. Activities included swimming, climbing, abseiling, canoeing, bridge-building, nightline and cellars, challenges, archery, bushcraft and orienteering. The students' behaviour was outstanding and many individuals overcame fears and engaged fully with the

programme. We had the pleasure of some of our Grade 6 piano players serenading us in the morning while eating breakfast, and students had the opportunity to show off their skills at the talent show and disco on the last night. On Friday we returned with some very tired but very content students and all staff that went commented on how great they were. What an amazing way to end the school year, lots of memories made and lots of photos for the yearbook!  
Donna Jones, Head of Year 7



**WET FEET:** Some bridges were more better than others!



**TEAMWORK:** Needed to 'walk the planks'.

# CVC retain award

Comberton has been re-accredited with the International Schools Award.

The college now has the Award until 2025 after the British Council reviewed the Impact Evaluation of Comberton's international work. Marielle Burgess, who co-ordinated the re-application, said: "We had to fill in a very lengthy document listing the trips and activities we do, the impact on pupils, staff and the wider community. There are strict criteria of what they accept in terms of activities and the process is very thorough."

Comberton has held the award since 2004 and have earned re-accreditation every three years with the latest award running from 2022, when the work started, until 2025.

The letter from the ISA team at the British Council was fulsome in its praise of the work done at Comberton.

"I hope that the scope of your excellent international activities will continue to develop and benefit the school community; your support, commitment, creativity and innovative international work is greatly appreciated," said Irina Gecheva, on behalf of the team.



**CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION:** Students and Mrs Burgess with the ISA Award.

## Leaders run different clubs to aid learning

International Leaders in Year 10 have been busy running clubs for students in other years. Here they explain what they have been doing:

"As part of the International Leaders award, we chose to run a vocab testing club once a week on Tuesday.

"It was mainly for students who had been recommended to take a retest of their weekly vocabulary quiz to help them better learn and remember the words.

"Because students were mainly referred to the club by their teacher, the number attending each week varied quite radically from 10 to one or two.

"Usually, we would allow them time to revise their vocabulary, often on Quizlet, and then we would write the weekly words on the board and mark the tests afterwards.

"We found this to be an enjoyable experience as it helped build our organisation and leadership skills throughout the year. We would recommend the International Leaders programme as it is a great way to gain some responsibility within the school and a fun challenge." — Josie (10E) and Rufus (10V).

"Hola, we ran a Spanish games club on Thursday lunchtimes where we played games en español. Students brought their lunch with them and chatted while they played. About 5-10 pupils came regularly and seemed to enjoy coming to the club.

"This club helped with not only their Spanish speaking but also their social skills." — Lillia (10E) and Emily (10N)



**GAMES IN SPANISH:** International Leaders ran a weekly club.

## Students turn their skills to teaching

The Language Leaders programme is open for all students in Year 9 and it consists of planning and delivering three lessons to primary school pupils.

The programme begins with a training day at the University of Cambridge in September and runs until July.

The language leaders meet once a week after school. In the first sessions, students are taught how to plan lessons and how best to support primary school

pupils in their language learning.

Then they start working on their Christmas lesson. Once the first lesson is taught, they start working on their Easter lesson.

The final lesson usually has summer as a theme, but students are allowed to choose their own topic. Both the language leaders and the primary school students enjoy this experience.

Language leaders grow in confidence, learn how to work as part of a team, and get a better understanding of how younger pupils learn and how learning works.

Primary pupils enjoy being taught by the language leaders as they provide a different face to their usual teacher and are motivated to learn more and look forward to being a secondary school student and a language leader in the future.

Sra Hategan and Sr Wayne have really enjoyed meeting and guiding the language leaders in this experience.

Megan (9T) said: "Since I have become a language leader, I have improved many of my skills such as confidence, teamwork and organisation.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience as a language leader and loved the creative process of making the lessons.

"All the teachers were incredibly supportive and always gave us ways to improve. Overall, my favourite part was teaching and seeing all my hard work pay off from the joy you see in the pupils faces.

"As my time as a language leader comes to an end, I would highly recommend the course to anyone who has an interest in improving their skills, languages or teaching. I have benefited from the language leaders programme in many ways and hope others will in the future too."



**TEACHING AND LEARNING:** Comberton students lead language lessons at primary schools.





**PACKED PROGRAMME:** Students spent time in Spanish schools and visited many attractions in an around Comillas.

# Super Spanish visit

In May, 50 Year 7s and six members of staff went to the beautiful village of Comillas in Cantabria, Spain, for five days of Spanish immersion activities.

We have worked with our tour guide Jose Herrera for many years and it was really special to be able to continue this fantastic partnership after an hiatus of a few years.

Trip leader Clare Allinson said: "The pupils were a joy to accompany and made us all very proud.

"I'd like to thank the staff who came along on the trip for all of their hard work and enthusiasm."

Here's what a few of the pupils had to say:

"On the 8th of May 2023 I woke up 3:30 am to get up eat breakfast and go to school and wait for the coach to pick us up and go to Stansted airport.

"After the flight we landed in Santander airport we went to meet Jose (Jose was a very funny guy by the way) and got on another coach.

The first place we went in Spain was Cabárceno nature park. They had lots of animals like giraffes and kudus and the best of all, Nici the gorilla.

"We learnt a song in Spanish about gorillas and then performed the song . After that we got on the coach again with our friends and went to the cable cars but right as we got there it closed. That got everyone a bit down in the dumps.

Day 2 of Spain and, wow, we walked a lot around Comillas and went on a historic tour including a castle. Later we went to a square in Comillas and went on a treasure hunt. Then we went back to the hotel and ate dinner.

Day 3 we woke up early got our breakfast and then went on ANOTHER COACH! We went to a Santander school and met some Spanish students, who we talked to in Spanish and English and then we made oral presentations then went to the beach which was fun.

"Later we went home to the hotel and relaxed a bit but then we went out again to

go buy things and we tried churros; they were delicious.

"And later we went back to the hotel and ate dinner and then went to bed.

"Day 4 we met a school in Comillas and did another oral presentation (I only said three words but made a teacher cry!). After the presentation we went to the beach and got ice cream.

"Day 5 we came home to England." — Liam (7T)

"My favourite memory of Spain was meeting the Spanish kids and playing football

with them because we learned a lot about their culture, like they call their teachers by their first name and they go home for lunch." — Eli (7T)

"I really enjoyed Spain it was a fantastic opportunity! One of my favourite parts of Spain was when we landed in Spain because I finally realised it was real!

"I liked visiting and being visited by schools; it was awesome to see what they learnt compared to us. I also enjoyed doing the oral presentations where we partnered up with a Spanish group and got to know what they learnt

about and did a presentation on it. Overall my experience in Spain was amazing! I hope I can visit again!" — Lottie (7E)

"Fifty Year 7s went to Comillas for five days. On the first day, we went to a zoo and met our tour guide Jose.

"On the third day we ate the Spanish dish paella, which was very tasty. On the fourth day we got into groups with Spanish pupils and we had to do a presentation in Spanish and they had to do it in English.

"This was my favourite part because we made lots of friends and learned a lot about Spanish language and culture." — Matilda.

"I really enjoyed the Comillas trip, in particular the tour of the town and the wildlife park, because they really showed us the beautiful Spanish countryside and culture." — anonymous student.



**SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF SPAIN:** Year 7 students enjoyed a range of different activities and experiences.



**AMAZING GEOGRAPHY:** Visiting the glaciers and coasts of Iceland were on the Comberton trip's itinerary.

# Trip of a lifetime

The Iceland trip has definitely been one of the highlights of my time at Comberton.

It was an incredible experience, and the landscape and geographical landmarks were beautiful to visit and learn about.

One of my favourite activities was the glacial walk, where we drank water off the glacier and made face masks out of the clay found there.

Although sad, it was really interesting to learn about, and directly observe, the impacts climate change has had on the area, as it was a way to apply our geographical knowledge.

Another thing I really enjoyed about the trip was the food and rich culture that we learnt about — when we visited an ice cream factory, we got to try traditionally-made Skyr and, while it wasn't

everyone's cup of tea, it was great to learn about its historical significance to Iceland.

While it wasn't included in the itinerary, my friends and I loved collecting rocks and souvenirs to bring back with us to remind us of the wonderful time we had there.

Krishna (11C)



Are you thinking about a career in education?

We are actively recruiting Teaching Assistants to work in several of our schools

We would particularly like to hear from you if you are a parent or recent graduate or are looking to gain experience of working in an area that provides tailored support to students with an inclusive outlook.



The post of Teaching Assistant will offer excellent opportunities for training and development in a Trust that has professional development as a core value.

Positions available from 30 hours a week, term time only.

We currently have vacancies in several of our primary and secondary schools. To apply or obtain further information, visit:

[www.catrust.co.uk/key-information/vacancies](http://www.catrust.co.uk/key-information/vacancies)

# Busman's holiday!

## What else would a teacher want to do over summer but teach some more?

When it's an opportunity to visit Japan, one teacher most definitely would.

Global English Camp was created for Japanese high school students to learn English with the help of native level speakers.

The coaches — who travel to a new school each week — are university students or recent graduates from the United States and the United Kingdom. For both students and coaches, GEC is a fantastic opportunity for language and cultural exchange.

In Japan, education tends to focus on written exams which decide who gets those highly coveted places at high-ranking schools and universities.

The students who attend Global English Camp are the ones who — in addition to regular school — also attend cram school in the evening and during the weekend for this purpose.

Learning in the traditional way however, can only do so much, especially when it comes to languages. And that is where GEC comes in.

Over the course of a week, the Japanese students work in small groups with one

native-level mentor. The camp's main objective is to help the students gain confidence in speaking English.

We learn through discussions on internationally relevant topics (for example, the Olympics and the United Nations Sustainable Development goals), but perhaps the most is achieved during the breaks. This is when we do various activities that get us out of our seats, or we play games at the table.

Card games especially are often exceptionally popular and bring out fierce competitiveness even from those who seemed particularly nervous.

The final assignment, an individual presentation about their life mission, is often a major achievement for the students. At the end of each week, a number of coaches enjoy the astonishment when they reveal their secret fluency in Japanese and there are always at least a couple of teary goodbyes.

During the programme in 2019, my group met up in traditional Asakusa, trained in a Shinjuku skyscraper, went on a trip to the mountainous hot spring resort of Hakone, saw the whale sharks at Osaka aquarium, and attended several summer festivals in between teaching in Gifu and Nagoya. Other groups of coaches even

went on an extra flight to the tropical islands of Okinawa and the winter sport famous Hokkaido. Now, after the pandemic, Global English Camp is finally back.

Comberton Village College supports both students and staff in international opportunities such as these, to bring the world into the classroom.

Last time I was part of GEC, I had the most wonderful experiences in Gifu and in Nagoya. The very sociable staff at the Gifu venue treated us all to dinner at a local restaurant and I also tried karaoke for the first time.

Everyone had a blast singing their favourite anime songs. Nagoya is a place where I've lived before, doing biology research at the university for half a year, and I was able to meet with an old friend when I returned.

That week I stayed with a host family, the parents of one of my students. The mother taught me origami, the father taught me golf, and I helped maintain the family's grave during obon.

Despite the language barrier, Japanese hospitality is truly something else.

After being accepted into the 2023 programme, I've been especially motivated to resume my Japanese studies.

This summer, much like the students, I want to challenge myself to try speaking it more. I also hope to travel to new places or revisit a city like Kyoto or Osaka. My favourite thing to do is to walk through towns and to take photos at temples and shrines. In Japan, I always feel such harmony between people and nature. This summer will be my fourth time in the country, and it certainly won't be the last.

Lea van de Graaf, Science Teacher



**GOING EAST:** Science teacher Lea van de Graaf can't wait to experience the tastes, sights and sounds of Japan again after opting to spend her summer holidays teaching English there.



# Education is key in global call for action

Student interest in climate, environmental and social justice has exploded in recent years. The global call to action for education to help mitigate the impact of the climate and environmental crisis has started to make headway. New national approaches to curriculum and schools'

action are being discussed and, in some cases, implemented. How can we capitalise on this moment and empower teachers with the knowledge and tools to teach for sustainable futures and for students to work alongside the wider school community to turn schools into shining

green beacons in their communities. What would it take to make this happen and what can teachers and school leaders do right now? This panel discussion brings together those working in education from the UN to students themselves to give real meaning to the word sustainability.

On Friday 31st March, Mr Gordon took me on a day trip to London with Freya (9V).

We went to an educational conference called Bett, where Freya and Mr Gordon were speaking on a panel about sustainability education in schools.

Once we arrived, we made our way to the speakers' lounge and met the other speakers: Won Jung Byun, a programme specialist from UNESCO; Alison Bellwood, the creator and director of World's Largest Lesson and host of the panel; and Ewurasi Nnadozie, the Head of International, Comms and Events (Sustainability and Climate Change) at the Department of Education.

During the discussion, each speaker explained their experience working for climate justice, as well as how they think that climate education should be improved and ways to do that.

Won Jung Byun said that many teachers may not feel ready to teach about climate change — or be unsure what to teach, while Ewurasi Nnadozie said that there needs to be more coordination between teachers, students, and those in power, and that young people's voices are essential.

They both brought up projects that they have been working on — the Greener Education Partnership, and webinars by UNESCO (Climate Change Education for Social Transformation), and Nnadozie's work. This involves young people in panels and discussion, as well as launching the National Education Nature Park Scheme with the Natural History Museum and a new policy paper on sustainability/climate change education in April 2022.

Here at CVC, Mr Gordon puts together lots of eco lessons for each year group. He said that it's difficult to incorporate them into the curriculum, but that he aims to educate us on the complexity and importance of the issues, while also alleviating any anxiety people may have and giving them action points and things to go forward and do in their own time.

Freya also added how a lot of people mock anyone who tries to work for climate justice, and how this likely stems from a lack of hope as opposed to malice or apathy, and how climate change impacts our generation as a whole.

To finish the panel discussion, Freya gave a short but impactful speech to



**DISCUSSION:** Panel members at the Bett conference.

summarise what she believes about climate change:

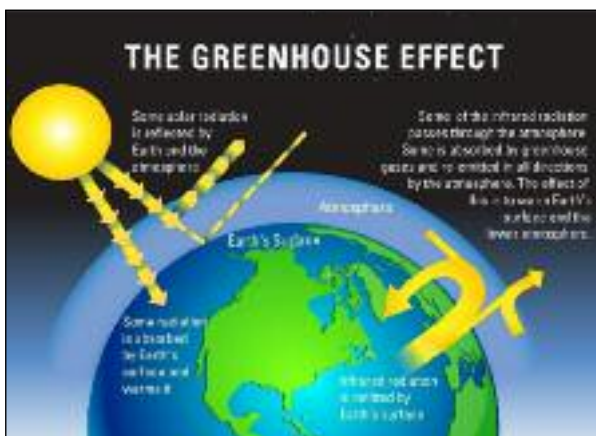
"We are in danger. Hope is only available through action. Our harmful carbon emissions won't disappear. If we don't act right now, we will irreversibly push the world past its brink; I, like so many others, can't imagine a safe future.

"We must demand justice now or it will be too late; destroying nature destroys humanity. Eat local food, reuse clothes, travel greener, do everything you can. We all changed our lives to protect ourselves and others in lockdown. Now, let's change our lives — even less than we did then — to protect the whole world.

"But governments, we can't solve this mess without power/alone. What you do, the laws you pass, will determine the fate of the earth. Targets only work if they create action. Put environmental protection first in every single decision. What do I need to do to make you act? Do you want to destroy everything we have forever, or be remembered as the ones who saved us all?"

Natasha (9V)

## Course details physics of climate change



**LEARNING:** About climate change through physics.

The Science Department has successfully pioneered a new, highly ambitious Scheme of Work for Year 7.

The goal of the course is to give students a much deeper comprehension of climate change by understanding the physics of energy transfer in and out of the atmosphere as well as the physics of energy 'generation' by both renewables and non-renewables, while covering the core concepts of KS3 physics.

The new SoW spans six lessons where pupils learn :

- The law of conservation of energy
- The relationship between temperature and kinetic theory
- Thermal conductivity and insulation
- Infrared radiation,
- The Electromagnetic spectrum and its role in the greenhouse effect
- The role of renewables and nuclear power in tackling climate change.

In the final lesson pupils can design a green home using the knowledge they have gained from the previous lessons.

Due to its success, other teachers within East Anglia have expressed interest in the new course and have asked whether their schools can implement CVC's new scheme of work.



**PRACTICALLY PERFECT:** The KS3 production of *Mary Poppins* was sensational in every way.

# Supercalifragilistic . . .

Here was some medicine that we all could use; a musical that brimmed with mouthfuls of words and smiles.

The lightness of dancing and singing made us all feel that anything is possible. Always entertaining, at times moving, even spellbinding — Comberton's *Mary Poppins Jr* was strictly sensational!

With no interval and a sombre start, the pace increased steadily, until the show crescendoed toward the celebratory transformation of the Banks family.

Amusement, cheerfulness, connections, we learnt, are not diversions but qualities to aspire to besides the precision ordered by Mr Banks.

When the family finally came together at the end, this production's stage tableau brought all these values together beautifully.

Much of the show works on contrasts and juxtapositions and the production captured these effects through many aspects: from costume and staging to music and characterisation.

Song by song, the cast built the enchantment as the children learn there is adventure in the simplest of activities.

Every member of the excellent cast played an important role in creating the settings and telling the story, every one of them gave a committed and energetic performance.

Of course, the play is called *Mary Poppins* for a reason and Elin (9R) was absolutely scintillating.

The cool blue of her gown, her gliding about the stage, her poise and exquisite vocal quality all contributed to her presence; it was simply mesmerizing.

Besides inspiring her charges, their parents, and Bert, she completely charmed the audience. With angelic calm, she worked her wizardry in many songs such as 'Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious' where the song and set exploded with colour, vibrancy, and joy. Dare it be said, she was practically perfect?

The Banks children, Michael, played by Freddie (7I), and Jane (Katie 7I) were amusingly annoying and painfully pampered. Freddie ably managed an emotional range from spoiled brat to generating lovely father-son moments with real dexterity, while Katie lifted precociousness to a balletic level.

George Banks, played by George (9M), was the emotionally distant and stressed patriarch overseeing or, rather, over-ignoring his dysfunctional family, and he conveyed the character's difficult inner struggle with energy and maturity.

While his wife, Winfred, in Isla's (9M) subtle and sophisticated portrayal, conveyed that the Poppins-effect worked on more than just children as her presence grew.

Kiran's (9V) Bert effortlessly captured the cheeky edge and calm, casual, confidence the role demands; this Cockney compère role offered quick-witted



commentary on almost every scene. Cameo appearances were, without exception, sharp, effective, and distinct.

Standouts include Mr Northbrook (Jude 9V) who exuded warmth with every smile, gesture, or word; while Emma 'Holy Terror' (8V), speared her way around the stage, and certainly brought the brimstone!

The dancers, or chimney-leapers — I mean sweepers — were fantastic: always well-sooted! The Step in Time tap-dancing was a leap beyond or a brush with brilliance.

And the Chim Chim Chee-re movement was wonderfully kaleidoscopic. Indeed, much of the production's energy and dynamism was driven by the dancers'

appearances. The ensemble, with their swirling movement, bloomed with merriment and exuberance too. The playful inventiveness of the storyline was reflected wonderfully by the cast as they brought new life to set pieces that have entered our shared cultural experience.

The Edwardian setting was shown with imagist precision: walls of stone enclosing the Banks' home suggested something of a shell, which contrasted with the freedom of space front of stage, where only a few lampposts marked out street or park. The bluish lighting and use of shadows worked to cast a sooty glow in the early stages of the production as did costume with the predictable drab colours of caps and waistcoats punctuated with flashes of red, be they scarves or shawls.

When the colours exploded on the stage in the Talking Shop scene, costume amplified the dynamic movement of the dancing and singing.

As with most musicals, the audience were surprised just how many tunes they knew. Musical Director Ben Parker worked his magic to match 80 or so voices in all sorts of combinations with the Broadway Instrumental soundtrack. Direction provided by Jane Menczer, Jez Frost, Ali Hall, Millie Falconer and Amy Lunn was accomplished with the usual dynamism and precision.

Choreography by Millie Faulkner and Sarah Gosling was brilliant, with complex patterns, inversions and movements suggesting the larger patterns of the London scene.

The most important message of this show is

about balancing the necessities of life with plenty of fun; that the power of words, love, and imagination can change us for the better. That is what the cast managed to do for their audience, and they received a richly deserved standing ovation from a packed house on both evening performances. This production was entertaining, spellbinding and sensational — a truly supercalifragilisticexpialidocious experience for everyone who was lucky enough to have seen it!

**Mike Ryall, English Department**



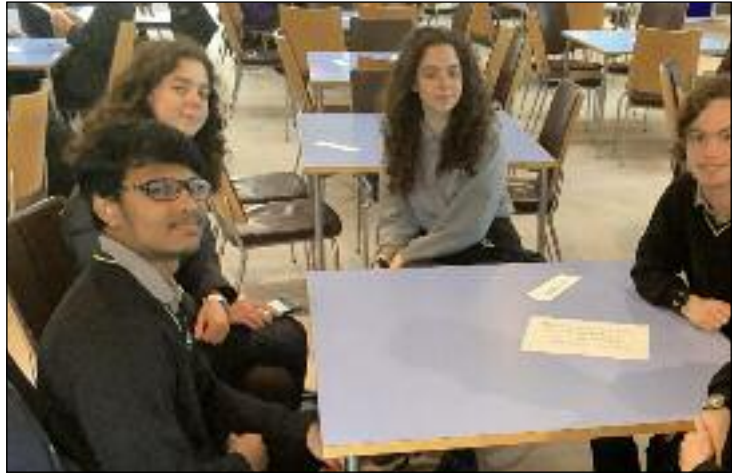
# Top team in the UK

Five students from Years 10 and 11 took part in the Naboj mathematical competition at the Centre for Mathematical Science in Cambridge.

They worked as a team to solve a series of complicated problems against the clock.

Our team scored 30 out of a total of 50 questions, placing them first in the UK for the junior category and 71st globally out of nearly 500 teams.

Well done Aditya (11I), Jonny (11T), William, Aurora (10M) and Rosabella (10B)!



**TOP OF THE CLASS:** Comberton's team were the best nationally.

## Leaders giving teaching a go!

Congratulations to STEM leaders, Cara (10V), Anastasia (9O) and Yahel (9B) who went to Meridian Primary school to teach a STEM lesson this term. They spent several weeks preparing their lesson resources, practising during their lunchtimes and making sure they were fully prepared.

They taught two classes at Meridian with great success. The children loved working out how to create their spaghetti bridges strong enough to hold a 300g mass.

Well done!



**LEADING A LESSON:** STEM leaders prepare to make spaghetti bridges with Year 6.

## On the treasure trail

**LEADING THE HUNT:** Year 10 leaders prepared a treasure hunt.



It was brilliant work by STEM leaders Stanley (10O) and Zach (10T) with some help from Atticus and Toby (both 8M), to set up the first Comberton Village College STEM Treasure hunt this term. There were five clues scattered around the college in all of the STEM areas.

Students had to scour the bulletin for the first clue, then locate a conical flask in science, solve a puzzle on the door of a maths classroom, correct some code on a website and research the world's tallest building to work their way to the final prize, which was a meteor fragment made from iron and nickel, extracted from a site in Mexico.

There was a lot of excitement around the hunt and many teams tried to work their way through — so Ido (7V) did incredibly well to beat all other participants to the prize. Well done Ido.



**LOADING:** Leaders spent time practising their lesson and built different bridges.

## Balloon power put to test



**UNBEATABLE:** The 3D-printed car won both categories.

Students at Comberton's STEM club held their first balloon car race — and now hope to make it an annual event.

Participants were charged with 'creating a car which travels on wheels and is powered by one balloon'. There were two categories — to find the fastest car over 1m and to find the one that travelled the greatest distance — but there was only one winner. Both events were won by the team of Atticus (8M), Toby (8M) and Silas (7R) with an incredible 3D-printed car which they designed themselves. Cars had been carefully planned and constructed over half a term and theirs easily won the speed test before travelling an amazing 6.2 metres under the power of one balloon.

# Say hello and . . .

Last month Comberton Sixth Form welcomed our offer holders from across local schools (and in some case well beyond).

These students, who have just finished Year 11, will be our September 2023 Year 12.

As the sixth form continues to be a popular choice for young people, we hosted 300 with a programme of introductory lessons, events and a very well-received lunchtime BBQ.

Our potential future students heard about the supportive programmes we offer and all the other elements of sixth form life that enhance the student experience, from enrichment options, to local fieldwork, to more far away destinations such as

the Ski Trip USA and the Geography/Biology trip planned for Costa Rica.

Recently, I overheard an individual describe our sixth form as the 'Goldilocks' of sixth forms, 'not too big, not too small, but just right'.

Perhaps that simply sums up what we are trying to achieve for our students, in a great many ways.

We are striving to create the circumstances where their Post-16 education is 'just right', with support, progress, outcomes and fun.

We wish all those in Year 11 and Year 13 the best of luck with their exam results in August (and a wonderful summer break).

David Clarke, Deputy Principal & Head of Sixth Form



**WELCOME TO COMBERTON SIXTH FORM:** Offer holders enjoyed a day of lessons, events and a lunchtime BBQ.

# Wave goodbye . . .

Not being able to have their own Year 11 Prom due to the pandemic was a huge blow for our Year 13 leavers, who were determined to make up for it and have the best party to mark the end of their examinations.

The Sixth Form Council booked The Graduate Hotel in the centre of Cambridge for the event, which saw the students and staff enjoying the warm summer evening in the garden area backing on to the River Cam.

The glamorous guests, in black tie and cocktail dresses, had certainly gone the extra mile this year to make the evening a very special occasion of reunion and celebration; starting with a drinks reception on the lawn for all the guests, before taking their seats in the River Suite for a buffet meal, speeches and awards.

The entire evening was played out with huge enthusiasm and excitement, culminating with a disco until midnight, as the year group came together for one last time.

■ Turn to Page 16



**IT'S PARTY TIME:** For Year 13 students at The Graduate Hotel in Cambridge.



**CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY:** On Year 13s last teaching day.



**WELL-RECEIVED:** Prizes were handed out.

On Friday 12th May, we marked the final day of teaching for our Year 13 students in our traditional way with our prize giving and celebration assembly. We were not particularly lucky with the weather, so our BBQ was moved under the sixth form canopy in a classically British approach to summer BBQs! A huge thank you to Barney, our outgoing President, for his inspirational words and to all the staff that contributed elements. The subject and progress prizes were as always well received. Particular congratulations to Amber, who was presented with her £250 Reading Foundation Scholarship.

David Clarke

# Introduction to CSF

Around 650 young people from across the local area visited Comberton Sixth Form for one of the two taster days last month.

This was a fantastic opportunity for current Year 10 students to experience Post-16 lessons and find out more about the content and opportunities gained by studying A-levels and BTEC extended diplomas. Many of them, as well as those unable to attend the Taster Days, had another chance to discover what Comberton Sixth Form has to offer at the Open Evening. More information on Post-16 study at CSF can be found on our website, [www.combertonsixthform.org](http://www.combertonsixthform.org)



**ON SHOW:** Comberton Sixth Form opened its doors to Year 10 for two taster days and then to a wider audience on Open Evening.



## New council take up their roles

As our Year 13 students finished lessons before taking their final exams, we have recently completed the election process to appoint our new Student Council.

Here the new presidents introduce themselves.

Hi everyone,

Our names are Shaarah and Matthew and we are proud to say that we are going to be your Sixth Form Student Presidents for the next year.

One thing that we want students to remember is that we're all in this together, and when we say 'we', we mean everyone at Comberton Sixth Form: students, teachers, and support staff.

It is the Council's role to represent our fellow students and make change where change is possible. Student voice is central to the progress of CSF and you will have many opportunities to offer your thoughts and opinions.

As well as representing all young people at Comberton, we are also here to be friendly faces around the sixth form and someone who you can contact to discuss various issues and concerns.

Fundamentally, we are here to make sure the time Comberton is as positive and fulfilling as possible.

One of the first priorities on our list is to help the new Year 12 students settle in and make friends. We will be looking into running various events,



**NEW TEAM:** Newly-elected members of the CSF Student Council.

from social opportunities to fundraising activities, so please do look out for further details.

We look forward to introducing ourselves to you face-to-face soon.

Shaarah & Matthew



**DISCOVERY DAY:** Finding out about studying languages at university.

## Uni languages taster

On 19th June, eight of our talented Year 12 linguists spent a day at the University of Cambridge, hosted by the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages & Linguistics. Students were able to experience a sample lecture about art and propaganda during the Spanish Civil war (during which our Spanish students felt very knowledgeable as it was something we had studied in class!) as well as a language lesson in French or Spanish. Later in the day, we had the opportunity to experience a new language (Japanese, Arabic or Ukrainian) and to find out more about what it is like to study languages at university.

We also got to hear from an admissions tutor about writing personal statements and how to best prepare for university interviews, and talk to current students about their course, experiences and plans for their year abroad, which students undertake in the third year of most degree courses that include a modern language element.

It was a really informative and enjoyable day. Now, where are those UCAS forms!





**THROWAWAY SOCIETY:** A third of food purchased by UK households ends up in the bin.

# Learning to reduce waste

In our lives, there are many things that we may enjoy and love, but some of our activities may destroy the environment in the place we live.

Food waste is one of the biggest problems, but how can we improve the food waste problem? What actions do we need to take? If you are not sure what you need to do, here is a course it can help you.

UN:CC Learn, the One UN Climate Change Learning Partnership, provides an opportunity to learn how to protect the environment. One of the courses is on food waste prevention, which is my favorite one.

Why do I love this course? Because the course helps me understand where the waste comes from and

how can we reduce it. There are many sessions involved in the course. There is a session about household food waste.

The study of household food waste in the UK was one of the main efforts to ever calculate how much food was ending up in domestic bins.

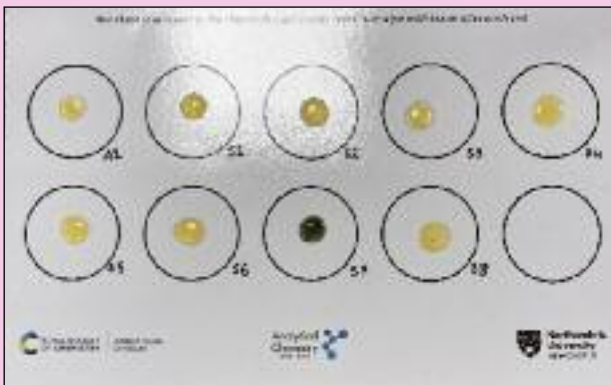
The findings were staggering: one third of the food households bought was finishing in the garbage because it was left unused, uneaten, or because people had cooked too much of it. Having figures on the amount of avoidable food waste was a first step for all stakeholders to raise awareness, set targets, take actions, and change behaviours.

This study also showed that by not wasting food, households could save the equivalent of around \$500 every year and authorities \$1.2 billion in landfill management expenses.

These studies show how saving food can save our environment. It also can bring benefits to us! Therefore, UN:CC Learn brings a lot of knowledge. They also have other courses which relate to our lives, such as climate change, air pollution and circular economy. If you are interested in protecting the environment, you can join sign up to UN:CC certificated courses for free!

<https://www.uncclearn.org/>

Hong (12KS)



**WHODUNNIT?** Analysis to unmask the bake-off saboteur.

## Chemists tackle two challenges

This term Year 12 Chemistry students have taken part in two competitions; The Cambridge Chemistry Challenge and the RSC Chemistry Analyst competition.

The Cambridge Chemistry Challenge is a competition that aims to stretch and challenge students interested in chemistry.

It is designed to extend their knowledge beyond the A-Level syllabus and encourage them to think about science in the way they would at university.

The students sat a 90-minute written test in which they had to answer two multi-part questions.

The Royal Society of Cambridge Chemistry Analyst competition involves carrying out a series of chemistry experiments in our after-school chemistry club.

This challenge gave our students the chance to apply their chemistry knowledge, skills and aptitude for analytical science in a fun and rewarding way.

The students worked in groups of three to find out who was sabotaging entries at The County Bake Off.

They had to complete chemical tests, titrations, and thin layer chromatography experiments to reach their conclusion.

## Fen investigations

As part of A-Level Biology studies, we visited Wicken Fen Nature Reserve in June to complete some practical work for our Practical Endorsement Certificate.

We undertook three activities. Task 1 involved the study of two ponds. We sampled the different ponds and recorded the number of each invertebrate species we collected. We used nets and trays to collect our organisms before returning them to the ponds. At college we calculated the Biotic Index and Simpsons Diversity Index for the two habitats.

Task 2 was the dissection of an owl pellet to retrieve bones and identify mammals they had eaten. The smell was awful, however the activity itself was fascinating. We glued the bones to a black piece of card and labelled them. Our pellet contained four skulls indicating that four mammals had been consumed with in a six-hour period.

Task 3 was transect sampling of the fen. Using the ID sheet and our plant identification app, we mapped the distribution of plants in a small section of the fen. In college we then presented this data as a kite diagram. Our work confirmed that Wicken Fen is a very biodiverse ecosystem.

Beth (12JD)



**FIELDWORK:** A-Level biologists at Wicken Fen.

# In the name of the law!

**This year Comberton Sixth Form set up a Law Society for the growing number of students interested in pursuing a career in law.**

We have had a mixture of guest speakers and Mrs Jenkins running sessions. With Mrs Jenkins students examined different areas of the law, for example criminal law in relation to the case of conjoined twins and whether it was lawful to separate them knowing that as a result one twin would die (is this murder?), and tort law and the case of Nettleship v Weston from 1971, where a learner driver caused injury to their friend who had taken them on a driving lesson and the

friend then sued them for the injuries caused.

We have had two guest speakers, Sarah Calder, from the Law Clinic at ARU, and Maddie Tomlin, a former student at Comberton who now works as a solicitor at Slaughter & May in London.

It was fantastic hearing about the different routes into law and the type of work Sarah and Maddie do in their roles.

One member of the Law Society has now secured internships at both Slaughter & May and Skadden in the summer holidays and October half term and we look forward to hearing from him about these experiences in future sessions.



**BACK TO SCHOOL: Former Comberton student Maddie Tomlin talks about her work as a London solicitor.**



**TASTER DAY: At Peterhouse for those thinking of applying to Oxbridge.**



## Getting in early!

At Comberton Sixth Form we run a programme of events for students who are interested in making an application to Oxford or Cambridge universities or for medicine, veterinary medicine or dentistry (collectively known as 'early entry' due to the earlier UCAS deadline).

This year this included a trip to Peterhouse, our link college at the University of Cambridge, for a taster day where students experienced lectures in a range of subjects, had a talk on the application process, heard from current students and had a tour of the college.

We have also had visits from staff at both Oxford and Cambridge to run sessions for the students, including an introduction to early entry, a session on interview skills and a session on writing personal statements, as well as a local vet who came to speak to potential veterinary medicine applicants.

We would also like to thank all the parents who kindly volunteered to support our students by running mock interviews over Teams. This gives them a valuable chance to practise before their real interviews.

## Work placements give future focus

Year 12 students have spent Futures week completing their work experience placements. This has been a fantastic opportunity for them to gain additional skills and expertise in relation to their chosen industry, to support future UCAS and apprenticeship applications.

A number of Year 12 students have spent the week at the Work Insight and Skills week organised by the Social Mobility Business Partnership (SMBP) for

Year 12 and 13 students in Cambridge.

The week has had a focus on creative careers and has involved partners such as The University of Cambridge Museums and Botanic Garden, Cambridge University Press and Assessment, City Events, Kettle's Yard and Cambridge Junction.

During the week, students have developed key skills which employers are looking for when recruiting, learnt from high profile organisations in the creative

sector and spent time publishing, curating and learning about museum conservation and event planning.

Well done to all Year 12 students and thank you to the Year 12 Parents and Carers, Work Experience employers and the Sixth Form Team for their support in providing a fulfilling work experience week.

## Say hello . . . and wave goodbye

■ From Page 13

A special mention should be made of the sixth form council who put the evening together and to our Sixth Form President, Barney (13JD), for his comical repartee whilst presenting the awards during the proceedings.

The evening was a huge success and captured the joy and revelry that the students deserved. We wish them all a safe and happy future whatever they are moving on to next in their lives.

The Sixth Form Leadership Team



**HAVING A BALL: AT the Year 13 Prom.**



**SO MUCH TO SEE:** Art, photography and graphics filled many corridors and spaces for the annual private view.

# Full works go on show

On July 5th the Art Department hosted its annual private view.

This involved a display of all the outcomes across GCSE and A-Level for Art, Photography and Graphics.

There were well over 300 finished pieces of work on display across the Art Block, Sixth Form Studios and Design Suite. This was the first year since 2019 that we've been able to celebrate the full GCSE course on show.

The reduced post-covid curriculum had meant fewer outcomes until this year when all students were back to producing full coursework and exam projects.

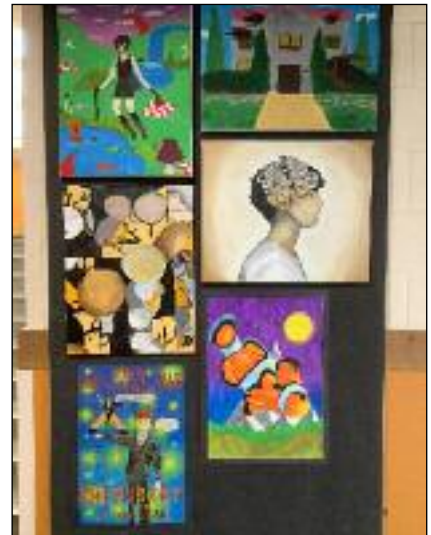
There was so much work produced for GCSE Art that Ms Altmann, our fabulous technician, had the job of perfectly tiling together all the artworks down the length of the Art corridor as if playing a huge game of art Tetris!

The exhibition looked wonderful; in A-Level Photography Mr Frost had kindly set up the lights and allowed the use of the Sixth Form Performing Arts room to create a dramatic and professional atmosphere that showed off the work to its maximum potential.

The A-Level Art Room was the base for one of the best selections of work ever produced by a cohort, with Art adorning the walls and hanging from the ceiling as well as all the display boards.

Congratulations to all our Year 11s and 13s for their wonderful, imaginative and skilful creations produced over the last two years. Fingers crossed that this is reflected on results day too!

**Greg Dean, Head of Art and Photography**



## Amazing art inspires students' creativity



Last month Year 10 took a trip to London with the Art department.

We saw such delights as Van Gogh's Sunflowers and Monet's Waterlilies, as well as some stunning architecture. We were lucky enough to be some of the very first visitors to the refurbished National Portrait gallery, which has been closed since 2020.

It opened the same day we visited, and looked wonderful. Year 10 relished the opportunity to study and draw from some of the most well-loved art of our time and came away feeling inspired to create amazing art for our own GCSE projects.

**OPPORTUNITY:** For students to see amazing works of art and stunning architecture.

Photos by Lou, Nina, Phoenix and Caleb

# Fun to shadow awards

For the past few weeks, students in Years 8 and older have met every Wednesday to read and discuss books from the Carnegie shortlist.

The Carnegie medal is awarded for writing and illustrating a book for children and young people.

As shadowers — along with many reading groups across the country — we analysed the books at lunchtime over squash and biscuits, discussing our thoughts on covers, storyline and characters.

Even if we hadn't read the book being discussed that week, it was still a lot of fun to weigh in on whether we thought it would win and why.

I enjoyed sharing my thoughts on the books; many of us agreed that this year the selection was fantastic, so there were lots of great things to discuss about them.

On Carnegie Day — when the winners are announced — pupils from Cambourne and St Peter's came with us to the library where we did lots of activities.

We did a quiz about books, ate lots of cake and biscuits, and made Top Trumps about our favourite characters in literature.

Inspired by the books, we were tasked to make something creative, and the results were amazing! Everyone put effort into their work and had a great time.

The highlight of the day was when author Julian Sedgwick came in to give a talk about his new book, and a little about *Tsunami Girl*, a previous Carnegie Shortlisted book.

It was highly engaging, and many of us bought his books afterwards.

*The Blue Book of Nebo* by Manon Steffan Ros was announced as the winner of the Carnegie Medal for Writing in a ceremony livestreamed from The Barbican in



**BIG DAY:** Comberton hosted other schools to hear the results.

London. It was one of our three favourites, which was very exciting! I personally loved it and was glad that it won.

The Carnegie Medal for Illustration went to Jeet Zdung for *Saving Sorya: Chang and the Sun Bear*.

The day was fantastic, and I think everyone enjoyed getting to share our thoughts on such good books.

Jess (9M)



**AIMING TO INSPIRE:** Poet Ash Dickinson ran workshops for KS3 and KS4 students.

## Poet brings out best in students

Poet Ash Dickinson visited Comberton to run some writing workshops with small groups of KS3 students in the morning and KS4 students in the afternoon.

Everyone involved found it to be incredibly useful, as well as inspiring: the range of creative tasks that Ash set the groups encouraged many of them to demonstrate insights and abilities that they never knew they possessed.

Almost everyone seemed to start the sessions feeling a bit dubious, and even resistant, but ended them delighted with what they had produced!

Special thanks to our wonderful librarians, in particular Mrs Peck, for organising and coordinating Ash's visit.

## Unique prize on offer

This half-term, the English Department had the pleasure of welcoming author Helen Moss to CVC.

Using an extract from her soon-to-be published book, she worked with Year 8, discussing the importance of crafting characters, developing vocabulary and being specific when writing.

It was a joy to see students respond with such enthusiasm and eagerness, offering a flurry of fantastic suggestions to help her edit an entertaining extract of her writing.

It was clear that she inspired them to think creatively about their personal expression, particularly how they — as young writers — should be considering the purpose of their craft.

Helen Moss has also set up a writing challenge for Year 8 students which she was judging at the end of term. The extraordinary prize of having a character named after the winner was certainly a unique incentive to enter!



**TOP WRITING TIPS:** From author Helen Moss.





**OUT IN THE FIELD:** Students pitched tents, cooked and even washed up during their DofE assessed expedition.

## Spa scene is deceptive!

Although from the photos it may look like a Spa trip (nails being painted, outdoor bathing), you are actually looking at photos from a DofE weekend.

In the Summer term, more than 150 Year 9 pupils completed the expedition for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award with one group going in May, another in June.

Leaving on Friday after school finished, pupils completed a training walk before setting up camp at our usual site in Stow Longa.

After a 'luxurious' night's sleep, a few pupils were up at times they previously never knew existed (5 o'clock has an AM!) to get prepared for a long day ahead. They walked around 18km on the Saturday before returning to set up camp again for the evening. Various culinary skills were on display, and we can confirm to their families, that they are all capable of washing up and should be doing this at home too.

Sunday saw another long walk of 18km, mostly around the Grafham Water area. Pupils on the June weekend had to battle high temperatures and pace themselves very well to ensure they completed the expedition safely.

We are very proud of all the pupils for passing the expedition section and persevering in challenging circumstances.

Here's what some of 9Vs students had to say:

"We excitedly sat on the coach in anticipation. On the first day we were taught how to read a map and a compass and we walked along fields to the campsite.

"The toilets were sawdust and the tents were small.

"We cooked our own food and had hot chocolates. We talked and had fun with

other groups. On the second and third day we walked in a group of four in 29 degrees Celsius. It was hard but a great experience. At the end we went to a cafe and bought what we'd wanted the whole weekend — an ice cream." — Lorien.

"DofE was very helpful and enjoyable as it tested our awareness and map reading. It also was good at improving my teamwork by walking together." — Ashton.

"We walked in groups of seven; we had to walk for a minimum of six hours a day. We camped at a place in Stow Longa and it was very hot on both days. We also got lost a lot and did not have very good food. I also made people walk up a hill for no reason." — Beau

"DofE was an interesting experience. I did it in May. It was hot. I got sunburned." — Blyth

"DofE was brilliant, it improved our social skills and taught us new abilities about navigating, camping, and surviving. It made many great memories despite some minor catastrophes that made for some good laughs along the way." — Jude.

"We camped overnight for a day and walked twenty-six miles over two. We cooked our own meals and carried our tents, stoves and food." — Ben.

"During DofE participants developed navigation, teamwork and cooking skills while walking around 18km a day with all the things needed like a tent and stove." — Rosie.

"I enjoyed DofE because it showed me how to work in a team environment and improve my map skills." — Rocco.



**TIME TO RELAX:** Volunteer Jon enjoys a well-deserved cool-down after a weekend of temperatures above 30 degrees, while Mr Gordon and many students benefitted from a manicure service offered by two charming technicians.



## CVC Music Department Piano Appeal

*The Music Department are raising funds to purchase a much-needed new piano to be used for lessons, recordings and performances. Any donations are extremely welcome by either of the two methods below:*



You can raise free donations for our piano appeal every time you shop online. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! It is easy and completely FREE! These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cvcmusic/>



To donate, please either scan the QR Code above or click the link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/23146>

# Partnership relaunch

The UK has just joined a Trans-Pacific trade group which now means increased opportunity for trade with Japan.

This coincides, post-pandemic, with our partner school in Japan, Kobe University Secondary School, looking to kickstart our exchange programme.

The Japanese school is part of the prestigious Kobe University. It caters for students ages 12-18 and is one of the most highly rated schools in the country. The school has a strong focus on science and technology; a large proportion of graduating students study STEM disciplines.

The school, however, also has very strong traditions in Japanese art and culture, ranging from the martial arts, such as Kendo, to calligraphy. The school is also famous for its choir, which has won numerous national competitions.

At the end of January 2024 Japanese students (all 16-17 years of age) will be shadowing students at Comberton as well as taking part in visits and trips during the college day.

We are currently looking for volunteers willing to host one of the students.

Hosting will involve sharing your house with a student, providing meals and a bed (same sex can share a room).

Activities during the evenings would be welcome but predominantly spending time with UK families will be the top priority for the Japanese students.

There will also very likely be an additional payment of £100 to host families to cover the cost of food and energy.

Past experience has shown that exchanges such as this can be very rewarding



**FAMOUS CHOIR:** The Kobe University Secondary School choir has won many national competitions.

for everyone involved and very often foster links that last a lifetime.

For more information contact either Mrs Shorten in the MFL Department or science teacher Mr Winter.

## Composting completes the food circle

In their Monday after-school Eco Club, students in Years 8 and 9 have been busy putting together a compost bin.

In September a specialist spoke to students and gave guidance on what can and can't be composted and how to look after the compost. Since then, they have worked with the Food

Technology department to collect food waste from cooking lessons with the aim of turning it into compost over the coming year.

They hope it can then be given back to the FT team so they can use it to grow herbs and vegetables for use in lessons.

Club members have also been growing

vegetables — spinach, lettuce and peas have all done well amongst the wildflowers they've grown between.

The group have also continued to improve the school site, through tree planting and litter picking.



**GROWING AND RECYCLING:** Students are growing plants and making compost.

## Summer concert is truly captivating



**THE SOUND OF MUSIC:** Students rehearse for their summer concert.

Comberton's summer concert was enthusiastically performed and well-received.

The Soul Band, featuring Bronwyn's (10R) mesmerizing vocals, captivated the audience with a powerful rendition of 'I Will Survive.'

Their musicianship and Bronwyn's talent left a lasting impression.

The opening half included the Brass and String groups, whose harmonious melodies filled the auditorium and showcased their talent; strings performing an invigorating ragtime number. Next up was an enchanting Disney melody performed by the orchestra, evoking childhood memories and reminding us of the enduring magic of these beloved tunes. It was impressive to see their unity and precision.

These young musicians are sure to impress in the future.

Lastly, the Comberton Young Voices filled the auditorium with angelic harmonies, reminding us of the importance of nurturing musical talent from a young age and inspiring hope and unity. The fledgling Concert Band ensemble began the second half, followed by a beautiful a cappella rendition of Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline" performed by Senior Choir. Their harmonious voices united in song and created a magical moment.

Yahel (9B) delivered a passionate violin solo, captivating the audience with his command over the instrument and his evocative playing.

The concert concluded with the Big Band taking the stage to deliver an electrifying performance of jazz arrangements that transported us through time.

**Ben Parker, Head of Music**

# Making positive changes

**Healthy Eating Week is an annual event created by the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF).**

It's all about celebrating healthy living and encouraging people to make positive changes to their lifestyles and promoting healthy eating, drinking and physical activity.

This year, Healthy Eating Week took place from the 12th-16th June and was the event's 10th anniversary.

Comberton has taken part for several years, and it is an opportunity to remind ourselves about the links between nutrition, wellbeing and the health of our planet.

Each year, the BNF release a new set of health aims, and this year's was to highlight what you can do to have a healthier and more sustainable diet and lifestyle, in an affordable way.

We are encouraged to follow the Eatwell Guide - the UK's healthy eating model. This is a plant-rich style of eating that can also include some nutrient-rich animal-based foods (meat, milk, eggs, fish, and dairy).

Following the Eatwell Guide more closely can have environmental and health benefits including:

- 30% lower greenhouse gases
- 4% lower water use
- Reducing the number of new cases of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke in the UK population

By trying these things and finding what we enjoy, we can make slight adjustments that work towards a significant health impact!

To adopt a healthier lifestyle, try:

- Focus on fibre — have more wholegrain foods, fruit and vegetables, beans, peas and lentils.
- Get at least five fruit and vegetables a day- canned or frozen count too, can be more affordable and help prevent food waste
- Vary your protein — choose plant-based more often- they tend to be cheaper,



**TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT: Students were encouraged to taste a variety of healthy foods.**

better for the environment, lower in fat and provide fibre, vitamins and minerals

- Stay hydrated — fill up from the tap

Reduce food waste- aim for the right amount when you shop, cook and eat to avoid throwing food away, and be creative with leftovers. Do you know that food

waste costs the average UK household (with children) £60 per month. During Healthy Eating Week at CVC:

■ Our catering team took on the challenge of our themes of the week. We were treated to additional wholegrain food items, new fruits and vegetables, a new salad bar full of crunchy, fresh and delicious salads, and jugs of delicious, flavoured water available for all

■ We had food tastings out on the field on Wednesday-Friday. We handed out hundreds of homemade ice pops, as well as high fibre, vegetable protein tasty treats, and treats made using leftovers

■ We ran Healthy Eating Assemblies for Years 7-10.

■ Year 7s kept a healthy habits tracker to log their food and drink for the week

■ We ran a cookery masterclass for previous winners of competitions, who prepared a two-course meal of spatchcock chicken, flatbreads and couscous salad, and a Basque cheesecake for dessert.

■ We launched our new cooking club - Wednesdays 3-4.30pm which has been well attended. This will resume in the Autumn term. We will also have two national cooking competitions running in the Autumn Term — please keep an eye on the student bulletin for information.

Please also check out healthy eating section on the school website for video links, information and recipes. <https://www.combertonvc.org/parent-and-student-information/healthyeating.php>

## New cohort enjoy taste of Comberton

On Thursday 6th July we were delighted to welcome more than 290 Year 6 pupils to spend a transition day at CVC.

It was also their first day spending time in their new tutor groups and with their new form tutors. The morning began with an assembly where important information for the day and for September was shared and introductions to key members of staff were made. The pupils, ably guided around the school by our soon-to-be Year 9 Leaders, were then given the opportunity to experience a number of different lessons in a range of subjects, including maths, science, English, Spanish, design & technology, and art.

During break and lunchtimes, in addition to the healthy snacks and meals that were provided by the catering team, the Year 6 pupils were able to relax and chat to existing and new friends outside the Atrium, in what will

be their social area in September. Finally, a packed, fun-filled day was rounded off with period 6 spent with their new form tutors in what will be their new tutor rooms when they return as Year 7s.

Mr Knight, Head of Year, said: "It was an absolute pleasure to welcome so many bright and enthusiastic faces into our school. I know that for many of the year 6 pupils, the transition from primary to secondary school is somewhat daunting, and understandably, there were a few nerves on show.

"Overall, the pupils adapted to their new surroundings incredibly well, and the buzz, excitement, and positivity radiating from the Year 6 pupils during their lessons and around the school was clear for all to see. I wish them all an enjoyable, restful summer, and I look forward to welcoming them all again as Year 7s in September."

- Fantastic Festival — Page 29



**LESSONS: For Year 6 on Intake Day.**

## Book lovers stock up on summer reading



**BIG HIT: The book fair was very popular.**

The school library was pleased to host our first book fair in June, provided by Scholastic. We welcomed 3 large portable book shelves into our space for a week and invited pupils to browse and buy books.

There was a great deal of excitement, with some excellent titles on offer, some old favourites and classics, but with a host of sensational new titles on display too. Running in the lead-up to the summer holidays we were

thrilled to see how popular it proved. Several pupils asked for us to host it again every month! For each book sold Scholastic have given the library a donation towards new books for our shelves, and we are delighted to say that £170 worth of books will be bought with the proceeds! Many thanks to all the families who were able to support us, we hope the books provide a lot of enjoyment over the summer.





**WORK EXPERIENCE:** Students had a variety of roles at home and abroad.

# Into the world of work

**Well done to the Year 10 pupils who have completed their work experience placements.**

All Year 10 pupils have worked extremely hard to organise placements and lots of positive feedback has been received from work experience employers.

During their work experience placements, Year 10 pupils have been able to develop their skills in a professional environment, increase their knowledge of their chosen industry and gain additional skills to support their post 16 applications.

A group of 13 of our bravest GCSE Spanish students completed a week of work experience in Cantabria, northern Spain. Working in a variety of cafés, shops, a hotel, a pharmacy, a newsagent

and even the Gaudi museum in the small towns of Comillas and Cabezón de la Sal, they put their Spanish skills to the test and experienced life and culture in a beautiful part of Spain.

After working hard in the mornings, we were able to enjoy the stunning beach in Comillas, meet some students from a nearby school, and even enjoy the local fiesta on our last night in Spain. ¡Qué ilusión! Well done to all our amazing students, we are really proud of you!

Thank you to the Work Experience employers, Year 10 Team and the Year 10 Parents and Carers for all your help and support with providing a fulfilling work experience programme for our Year 10 pupils.



## Support is strong

Comberton has been working hard with students who had recently arrived from Hong Kong.

Mrs Tang-Gentile has been acting as an extra point of contact for the Cantonese families, to support them with settling in and integrating into our communities.

We now have a Chinese club every Friday lunchtime, catering for beginners and advanced learners on alternate Fridays, run by Teaching Assistant Ms Wan.

Reagan (80) said: "Ms Wan's Chinese club is held every Friday lunchtime, to help us polish our language abilities and interact with others speaking the same language. "Over the terms, I've found that the club has improved my fluidity and helped with my public speaking. Not only so, it's also a great chance to meet new people. The advanced club also offers opportunities for us to teach other students Chinese, which is beneficial for both sides."

Some students sat their GCSE Chinese exams this summer. Anna (9V) commented: "Preparing for the GCSE Chinese as a native speaker can still evoke feelings of anxiety, but with the right support, it can be a smooth process.

"Mrs Tang-Gentile's assistance in practising for the speaking exam was invaluable, boosting my confidence and refining my skills. Ms Wan provided us with past exam papers and the support she gave us through the Chinese club greatly aided my preparation.

"During the exam period, my friends and teachers were incredibly encouraging, which helped alleviate my nerves. Their support and belief in me motivated me to perform at my best.

"With the encouragement I got from my teachers and peers, I approached the

Chinese GCSE with confidence."

In the spring term, we took part in a research project, as well as the privilege to be interviewed by a reporter from Welcoming Committee for Hong Kongers, which is now a case study on their website. They were especially impressed with the support that Mrs Siu from the library has provided.

<https://www.welcomehk.org/news/blog-case-combertonvc>

Following that, Mrs Tang-Gentile was a panellist at the Committee's annual conference to talk about young people and education. She explained the work done at Comberton in supporting the 20 students who recently arrived from Hong Kong.

<https://www.welcomehk.org/news/welcoming-conference-2023>

To round off the year, we had a Hong Kong parents network meeting. Norman (90) said: There were about 25 parents in the meeting. They talked about the school life their children are having and parents are looking to support each other.

"During the network meeting, Mrs Tang-Gentile talked about the Chinese club and Chinese GCSE that we have in school, also she taught the parents how to check their child's progress on Go4Schools.

"Miss Bird and Mrs Spencer told us about Duke of Edinburgh Award, and the English support we have in school. On top of that, there were also some special Hong Kong food — the sweetheart cakes and barbecue pork puff were great!"

If you have recently arrived from Hong Kong, and wish to be connected to a Cantonese member of staff, please email [ltang-gentile@combertonvc.org](mailto:ltang-gentile@combertonvc.org)

## Hotel inspectors!

**As part of the Hospitality and Catering course in Year 10, the teachers provided us with a trip to the Holiday Inn. We travelled by coach in a double lesson and arrived at a presentable, clean and country-like setting.**

**In a neighbouring field, there was a flock of sheep which added a lovely natural environment near the busy roads.**

**We were welcomed into the hotel and within minutes of arrival we were served hot drinks and juices.**

**The manager then showed us around the different rooms that could be used to accommodate people during the day and on longer overnight stays. We viewed the different meeting rooms that can be provided for businesses, with flat screen TVs and different room sizes to accommodate the different-sized parties. They offered spa facilities, including a hot tub and swimming pool, a full equipped gym, an outdoor playing area for children, a bar serving all kinds of drinks, including Starbucks, and a restaurant.**

**This opportunity was very useful to really understand what a hotel can offer.**

Lola (10M)



**INSIDE THE HOTEL:** Students viewed the different facilities available to guests.

# Trust poised to expand

**We have all been relieved to come out of the pandemic.**

It really does feel like that is where we are now and it is great to see the wonderful range of wider educational activities and opportunities offered to pupils across the Trust.

Given the Trust's stated principle of 'Broad Education', it is really good to see this happening again.

Another indication that the mindset has shifted to a

post-pandemic way of thinking is that schools seem to be considering their future plans.

In this respect, the Trust has been approached by several schools interested in joining us and seeing this as a positive way forward for them.

We are in several discussions regarding this possibility.

Always, the thinking is that this must make sense both for the potential new school(s) and for the schools currently in the Trust.

One such school is Fowlmere Primary School. Its request to become an Academy and join The Cam Academy Trust has been approved by the Advisory Board of the Regional Director's Office, so this development can now move into formal processes. Fowlmere is already a partner primary of Melbourn Village College, a school already in our Trust. This move therefore makes much sense as we seek to provide quality education for local communities.

**Stephen Munday, CEO**



**LOOKING TO JOIN:** Fowlmere Primary School could be the next addition to the Trust.



## Focus on providing extra support

While we have very much moved out of the pandemic in terms of how we now operate, we are also seeing something of the difficult legacy of the pandemic and lockdown in our schools.

Nationally, pupil attendance at schools is notably lower than it was before the pandemic.

Schools report some greater challenges with pupil behaviour as young people have to learn how to behave appropriately again when with groups of others and in an organisation.

Mental health issues in young people are now at far higher levels than they were before the pandemic.

We see these national challenges mirrored in various ways in schools in our Trust.

Clearly, the origins of these sit outside the control of our schools but that does not mean they do not have an impact.

As such, the Trust is looking to do what it can to support all schools as they look to move forward positively with some of these issues. For example:

- The Trust-employed Education Welfare Officer, Rachael Panther, has been working closely with all schools to look at approaches to attendance and ways that these might be developed.

- The Trust is supporting some co-ordination of work on supporting the mental health of pupils in our schools and the related training of staff. We are looking to ensure that proper access to support in this area is available to pupils in all our schools.

- We are reviewing effective approaches to pupil behaviour in our schools and sharing effective practice between all our schools. There are many excellent examples in this area.

- We are reviewing our arrangements for Alternative Provision for those pupils who need this.

There is very little central or local provision in the system now and it is fundamentally up to us how this might be organised.

Again, schools are doing some great things in this territory, but we are looking at how we can strengthen this further, especially by working across our schools to provide as well as possible.

All these things remind us of why we choose to work together as a Trust of schools rather than simply as individual entities.

We can do more and better by working together than we can by trying to go it alone.

Stephen Munday

## New event has pupils dodging!

Teams from three schools took part in the first Inter-Trust Dodgeball competition.

And now there are plans to expand it to more primary schools in the Trust after two teams of Year 5 and 6 pupils from each school — Jeavons Wood, Everton Heath and Gamlingay — had a fun afternoon at Cambourne Village College, where Trust Director of PE and Sport Hannah Curtis is also the Head of Department.

The competition was run in a round-robin format with all the teams playing each other — starting with the other team from their own school. Each squad had up to eight players with five in action at a time.

After some fast and furious competition, Jeavons Wood B came out victorious.

The event was run by Cambourne Year 9 and 10 sports leaders, led by Tyla, who took charge of the organisation, scoring, timekeeping and officiating and did a brilliant job keeping everything going smoothly.

Miss Curtis said: "We are hoping to have more of these Inter-Trust events going forward and are looking at what different sports we might include. We also hope that the other secondary schools in the Trust will also be able to host them and give their sports leaders the great experience of running an event for younger pupils."



**ACTION-PACKED:** The inter-Trust dodgeball tournament.

## CSA MEMBERSHIP PRICES

**'GREAT VALUE – EXCELLENT FITNESS FACILITIES AT LOW PRICES'**

### FANTASTIC NEW GYM - NO JOINING FEES!

#### DIRECT DEBIT

Standard	£30 per month
Concession / Corporate / GP Referral	£20 per month

#### PAY MONTHLY

Standard	£40 per month
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#### MEMBERSHIPS INCLUDE

- Fitness Suite 'Fantastic New Pulse Fitness Equipment'
- Free Weights Room
- Excellent Range of Fitness Classes
- Free Badminton Court Hire

**NON-MEMBERS WELCOME TO TRY (ANY OF THE ABOVE)**

**ON A PAY & PLAY BASIS**

# Sharpshooting Coton

**Coton finished as runners-up in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough county netball finals.**

They remained unbeaten through all of the Bee Leagues, South Cambs final and the county final but a draw with Histon Brook at the county finals meant they finished as runners-up to a very tall team from Wittering RAF School.

It was still an amazing achievement for a school of just 110 pupils.

Equally impressive was the way that Coton retained the South Cambs title after winning the A Team shield at Impington Village College.

The top teams from the local rounds gathered for the showdown at Impington Village College with the top four then qualifying for the county games.

At Impington, the schools were split into three pools,

with each team playing all of their rivals within that group to determine whether they qualified into Division 1, 2 or 3 for the next round of matches.

The standard of netball across all of the teams was exceptionally high and it was great to see the level of improvement from all teams across the rounds, especially with their shooting accuracy.

After the first round of matches, Histon Brook A, Trumpington, Coton and Swavesey went into pool 1 to play for the title.

It was a close competition but the accurate shooting of Coton primary school meant that they were unbeaten in all of their matches and scored a massive 42 goals across all of their matches at the competition.

The plate is A teams who finished in the second half of their local league and also featured 12 teams.

Hardwick, Haslingfield, Histon Brook and Linton were the four to make it through to the top division after the first round of matches.

After a display of excellent netball across all of the courts the overall winners were Histon Brook who were unbeaten throughout the evening, with Linton finishing as runners up, Haslingfield third and Hardwick fourth.

The sports leaders from hosts Comberton VC umpired all the matches using the skills they have developed from being part of the leadership academy.

The first of the finals nights was for the B and C teams who had entered their local leagues and was contested by 14 teams.

The top four of Meridian, Swavesey, Hardwick and Great Abington went through to play for the title with the Comberton primary winning all their matches to take the title ahead of neighbours Hardwick.

Tournament organiser, Julia Scarboro said, "Our annual Bee Netball League is one of our most popular competitions. We had 31 different schools taking part this year and just over 50 teams.

"The children really enjoy the opportunity to represent their school in inter-school competition and it is nice for them to get the chance to play in the league rounds before experiencing one of the finals nights which are played in a friendly yet competitive spirit.

"There is always a nice atmosphere and a real sense of occasion as parents gather to cheer on their children.

"Seeing so many schools involved is a real credit to all of the staff in schools who provide opportunities for their pupils to be involved in netball."



**HOTSHOTS:**  
Coton were second in the county finals after winning the South Cambs competition.

## Small but mighty cricketers

One of the smallest schools in Cambridgeshire proved a big hit at cricket.

Dry Drayton Primary School, one of Comberton's partner primaries, has just 74 pupils in the whole school.

Of those, only 15 are in Years 3 and 4, with one joining the school only a week earlier! So Dry Drayton took the majority to the SCSSP Dynamos cricket tournament for those year groups' competition at Caldecote Recreation Ground.

They proved small and mighty as they grabbed runners-up spot alongside Jeavons Wood, from Cambourne, with Harston & Newton and Swavesey taking the top spots in two simultaneous competitions.

Barton, another Comberton feeder primary, and Elsworth were Spirit of the Games award winners for demonstrating excellent teamwork and respect.

Dynamos cricket is for eight-11-year-olds, with everyone on the team getting to bat and bowl. A no ball or wide gives the batter a 'free hit' from a batting tee to give everyone the opportunity to score runs. More than 220 youngsters in 22 teams from 19 primary schools were involved at Caldecote and Sawston, the other venue, where a third Comberton partner primary, Bourn, were runners-up alongside Linton Heights as Histon & Impington Brook and Gt Abington schools took the top spots.

Partnership Manager Claire McDonnell said:

"Both events went really well, with lots of competitive matches and some great fielding and batting in particular.

"It was great for schools to get to play against other schools in some friendly competition.

"They loved playing at a proper cricket ground, they had lots of chances to hit the ball and loved being part of their school team."



**THROWING:** One of the four events.

## Athletics fun

More than 300 Year 5 and 6 pupils from 28 primary schools competed in the Quadkids competitions at the Cambridge University Athletics Ground.

Divided into 'big schools' and 'small schools', the teams of five boys and five girls scored points in a 75m sprint, 600m run, long jump and vortex howler throw.

Cumulative scores gave the team results with the best individuals also being recognised.

Histon and Impington Brook retained the 'big schools' title ahead of University of Cambridge Primary in a repeat of last year's results, while Harston & Newton took home the 'small schools' trophy they have won the last three times the competition has been held.

Top individual across both competitions was Lenny, from Petersfield, Orwell, who scored a massive 253 points after great performances in all four events, including a sub-two minute 600m.



**RUNNERS-UP:** Dry Drayton took second place in their Dynamos cricket competition.



**BEST OF THE BUNCH:** Year 8 winners, M, and the cohort's top individual performers.



# Wonderful week of sport

The biggest week of the PE year was kicked off by Year 7 sports day and they really did it justice! The banners and flags were waving across the day and students really got into their first sports day as Comberton students!

While the day had its showers, the rain did not dampen their spirits as they took part in a range of events including high jump, quoit throw, hurdles and 100m to see what tutor group would be victorious.

While Year 9 maths leaders were busy inputting our results, the day finished with the team relays. It was fantastic to see (and certainly hear) so much support for all tutor groups.

Well done to top-performing tutor group 7B, endeavour winners 7R and leading individuals Liubomyr (7E) and Isla (7M).

PE staff awoke to another 5.30am alarm ready for Day 2 and the turn of Year 8 to see if 8N or 8B could retain the titles they won a year earlier on an exceptional day of competition.

The weather held out almost all day with the heavens opening only after the relays had finished, leaving staff and students heading for the sports hall for the likes of the YMCA and Cha Cha Slide as Miss Shipley led the dancing. The atmosphere indoors was arguably better than outside.

New champions were crowned too as 8M took the Performance title and 8C won

the Endeavour award. Alex (8E) and Madeleine (8N) were crowned as the leading individuals.

Just when staff were starting to feel weary, Year 9 injected the most amazing energy.

The clamour for endeavour points started early as 9V decided to film a video and send it to the PE department ahead of the day beginning!

Another highlight from 9V was them embracing their country (New Zealand), by drawing portraits of the PE department on to actual Kiwi fruits (photo attached). Along with this we had some epic chants ('Aussie Aussie Aussie, Oi Oi Oi' will be stuck in my head). A brilliant atmosphere created for Year 9s final sports day at CVC.

The endeavour award was highly contested, with three tutor groups only dropping one endeavour point across the day. Well done for 9C, 9E and 9N for all being awesome. We felt one tutor group needed to be crowned, so after a competitive Dance Off, Head of Year 9 Ms Burgess made the final call on the endeavour champions and gave it to 9C.

It was 9M who took the Performance title with Zak (9N) and Georgie (9C) taking the individual honours.

Rebecca Kingston, PE Department



**GETTING IN THE SPIRIT:** Year 7 pupils.



**SPORTING SUCCESS STORIES:** Year 9s top individual performers.



## Fantastic festival

The sun was finally shining on Friday 7th July to welcome our new Year 7s to their first experience of a sports day at Comberton.

With each tutor group assigned a colour and the T-shirts handed out the day before, the pupils looked fantastic during our group warm-up on the field — it looked like a rainbow! With Mr Magan flying a drone above us for most of the day, we got some fantastic shots of the pupils as they competed in 10 events across the day, including the hurdles, skipping races, sprinting and high jump to determine who the top tutor group would be.

Alongside this, tutor groups were also competing for the endeavour award and the levels of support, cheering and chants were very impressive.

After some dancing to finish off, we had our winners. Those who will be in 7B took the performance title with O picking up the endeavour award. Alexia (7B) was top girl with Rupert (C), Stanley (M) and Patrick (B) tying for the boys' title!



**ALL TOGETHER NOW:** Pupils complete a group warm-up.



**HIGH-FLYING:** Malteasers kept airborne (left) and students enjoy the mountains from the slopes.

# Fun on and off slopes

During the Easter holidays an eager group of Year 8 and 9s embarked on the amazing opportunity of a snowsports trip to Pila, Italy. However, before being able to hit the slopes, we had to endure a very long coach journey. Upon arrival (relieved to be off the coach), we went for a scenic and sunny walk up to a castle with breathtaking views. Having made it to our hotel, we spent the evening doing exciting challenges and activities... including trying to make a Malteaser levitate and trying to eat chocolates without using our hands — ending in some quite messy faces! To add to this, bibs (such as 'Diva', 'Where's Wally' and 'I'm a star') had already been handed out to the people who had created some of the most memorable moments of the day. The next day (and the whole week) we had a very early start. The first day on the slopes saw most of us learning the basics of our chosen snow sport, although some people were already flying high (literally). We all worked hard, but also had a lot of fun learning how to ski or snowboard...

although a few people did prefer just lying in the snow. The next few evenings we spent at a pizzeria, a bowling alley and an arcade where we competed in our teams to win the bowling and played on dance machines. In our social time we played games like dobble and avocado smash, which brought out some vicious sides in students and teachers. As the week went on, we all progressed massively and some of us even got the chance to go on a free ski with the teachers. As well as the teachers, our instructors helped us achieve different skills and were there to pick us up when we fell — we were really thankful for their guidance and patience throughout our time in Italy. We even got to go on the snow park, where we went over ramps and tried new tricks. Overall, the trip was an amazing opportunity, and we all had the time of our lives. Thank you!

Ellen (81)



**HORSES ARE BACK:** Comberton's equestrian team was reformed this year.

## Year of the horse!

This year saw the return of the Comberton equestrian team after a few years' hiatus. The team comprises riders, who compete on their own horses, and ambassadors, who help promote the sport of horse riding within the school. The team also had the opportunity to go on an equestrian vaulting trip (featured in the last issue) and, since then, have competed in a number of NSEA (schools) competitions. Particular congratulations to Natalia (11I), who qualified in the 85 Eventer Challenge at Lime Kiln for the Hickstead Championships, and Ella (8I), who went double clear in her first competition at Forest Edge. The ambassadors have also been busy, creating an equestrian noticeboard by the Ally Brennan Gym to help raise awareness of the sport in the school. This includes profiles of the riders and ambassadors to share how they got into the sport and what they enjoy about it, as well as helping signpost interested students to local opportunities. Thank you to all the students for their work in creating this.

## A splashing day!

The annual swimming gala took place on Wednesday 28th June with Year 7, 8 and 9 all competing. The morning saw Year 7 take to the pool with an incredible amount of competitors. The width races were highly contested especially! A special mention should go to Lexi (7E) and Megan (7B) who displayed some top quality swimming throughout the morning. Their technique was impeccable! Victory, however, went to 7N. Year 8 then had their turn after break. 8T took an early lead which continued across the event. In the afternoon Year 9 took to the pool. It was great to hear so much support from each tutor group. There was some standout swimming from Scarlett, Kim and Henry (all 9C), who stepped up on many occasions for their tutor group in an event won by 9E. After some rapping on the microphone, we were done!



**WATER WINNERS:** The top tutor groups in Years 8 and 9.

# Another trophy for girls

Comberton Year 7s are shaping up to be another formidable force in girls' football after a fantastic first year.

The under-12 games started in September with teams entering both the district and county competitions.

Comberton are lucky enough to have two teams' worth of players, with one taking on the district competition and the others playing in the county league which then led on to the county plate competition.

Both teams progressed through round after round, taking on challenging oppositions throughout.

The district team, notably, had a nail-biting penalty shootout against Cambourne while the county team had an exceptionally close match against Chesterton, narrowly edging ahead to proceed to the semi-finals.

We were delighted that both teams made it through to the finals in their respective competitions, which took place in June.

The County Plate final was held in Yaxley, Peterborough and had a fantastic sense of occasion for the girls — and a very large trophy at stake!

The team faced fellow Cam Academy Trust school St Peter's, from Huntingdon, and the teams were very well matched.

Comberton edged ahead through Isla (7M) and Amelie (7N), though St Peter's came back to score before half time to leave the midway score at 2-1.

Straight after the break, St Peter's equalised, which led to a very tense second

half!

Both teams had further chances, but it was Comberton who were next to score with approximately five minutes left.

Comberton held their nerve to take the title and the trophy. Congratulations to all the girls involved in this team for a fantastic season.

The district final was held at Bottisham Village College between Comberton and Cottenham VC.

The teams were again very evenly matched, though it was Comberton who took the lead first through a goal by Isla after 22 minutes.

Cottenham quickly responded to leave the score level at half time.

After the break it took just four minutes for Comberton to edge ahead again, this time through Amelie.

Again, Cottenham quickly responded with an equaliser just one minute later to level.

Grace (7E) and Matilda (7V) were notably consistent in defence as the second half progressed but with just two minutes to go, Cottenham scored their third, and then quickly a fourth before the final whistle to seal victory.

The girls have had an incredible year and to be district runners up in such a close game is a huge achievement. Well done to the whole team.

Harriet Shipley, PE Department



**FINALS FOR ALL:**  
Both under-12 squads reached the final of their competition this season.



## Teams enjoy tournament successes

All four Comberton rounders teams finished on the podium as the Cambridge and District competitions returned following the pandemic. There were victories for the Years 9 and 10 team. second place for the Year 7s and third for the year 8s.

Year 10 got the ball rolling on home turf as Comberton hosted the event. The girls showed excellent progress, teamwork and communication throughout and were unbeaten throughout the tournament, crowning them overall winners. A fantastic start!

The following week it was the turn of Year 9, this time at Bottisham VC. Despite limited time together as a team they bonded quickly and again made huge progress at the tournament went on.

Despite a fierce challenge from St Bede's in the final, Comberton again came out victorious to take the title.

It was then the turn of the Year 8s, who, due to covid, have had limited rounders experience so far.

They also were very competitive, losing to overall winners St Bede's by just half a rounder. They won their third place play-off against Impington convincingly to take bronze. Chesterton were runners-up.

Finally, it was the turn of the Year 7, who also travelled to Bottisham, for their first district rounders tournament.

With the turn-out at club, Comberton could probably have fielded four teams had it been allowed!

However, it was limited to one and so 10 girls represented CVC at the tournament. They did not disappoint!

From their performance, you would think that they had been playing for a much longer time — they were consistent, effective and cohesive throughout the tournament and had several huge wins!

Their second game against Soham didn't quite go their way, with a low scoring innings leaving them one rounder short.

Besides this, however, they won every game, and by quite a margin. The loss against Soham was unfortunately enough to rob them of the top spot, but they came in second with a huge number of rounders scored over the

course of the afternoon.

Definitely a team to watch for the future as well as finishing district runners up in their first outing!



**BIG HITTERS:** Three of Comberton's successful rounders teams.



**WHO ARE WE? PE teacher Becky Kingston's home-made banner leaves no room for doubt!**



**SHARING THE JOY: The players celebrate with supporters after collecting their medals.**

**Comberton win national final after nailbiting penalty shoot-out**

# 'We are the champions!'

**Comberton are national football champions!**

The team of Year 10 and year 11 girls won the English Schools Football Association under-16 trophy in a tense and thrilling final at Stoke City's ground in early May. After an end-to-end game against Kingsdale Foundation School, from South London, ended in a 2-2 draw, the Comberton girls held their nerves to win a nailbiting penalty shoot-out 4-3 to spark joyous celebrations both on and off the pitch.

Two coachloads — more than 100 — students from all years and staff had made the three-hour journey to cheer on the team, who had won through seven rounds (having had a first-round bye) to reach the final a year after making the semi-finals at under-15 level.

Coach Joe Asensi, who has been with the team for two years, said: "The girls have done brilliantly and I'm really, really proud of them. It was tense and Kingsdale were awesome; it was a shame someone had to lose.

"When we scored in the last 10 minutes, I was just hoping we could hold on but they equalised within 30 seconds, it was that close."

He also expressed his sadness that fellow PE teacher Abbey Cotton, the team manager for the past five years, missed the big occasion through illness. "We all wish she was there," he said. "But I'm sure she'd have been watching!" (the game was live-streamed on YouTube) Izzy Callaghan had put Comberton ahead after just three minutes, but Kingsdale levelled midway through the half to go into the break all square.

Maddie Welham shot just over the bar from the restart and a Comberton free kick also ricocheted off the woodwork before Gwen Davis-Jones won a penalty which was confidently converted by midfielder dynamo and captain Jenna Whinney, also named player of the match after a vote on the ESFA's social media feeds. But from the restart, Comberton were caught napping and Kingsdale again levelled, with just seven minutes left.



**HANDS ON THE PRIZE: Comberton's team with their hard-won trophy.**

A missed, retaken penalty — the Kingsdale captain initially scored but had shot before the ref blew his whistle — unnerved the opposition in the shoot-out and they also missed their second spot kick. Although Comberton also missed one, Gwen — one of six players who are part of the Cambridge United set-up — coolly put away the winning penalty.

"I wasn't nervous," said Gwen, who will join the Cambridge United Academy at Cambridge Regional College next year. "I had decided where I was going to put it and was thinking about that."

● Striker Maddie Welham made her debut in Milton Keynes Dons Women's National League season finale defeat by Plymouth on April 30th, coming on for the last 20 minutes after impressing in the under-16 and under-23 squads.

● **Another trophy for girls — Page 27**



**WE'VE DONE IT: Showing off the trophy, celebrating scoring the decisive penalty and acknowledging the supporters.**