



The Smithdonian

Smithdon High School Magazine



The May 2023 Issue



Mrs Gibbins welcomes you....

Welcome to the May 2023 edition of The Smithdonian.

It has been a short but busy term, with the start of Year 11's GCSE Examinations, several trips and in-school, visiting speakers as well as Year 9 making their GCSE choices. The Performing Arts team completed auditions for Frozen Jr and our inaugural chess competition had a whopping 29 participants all vying to make the top 10 and to represent Smithdon in the Trust competition.

As always there has been lots going on, for you to read about in this half-term's magazine. However, I write this introduction with a heavy heart, at the end of what has been a hard week for our school community following the untimely death of one of our most bubbly, smiley and resilient students: Adele. I am so proud of how our students have supported one another as well as looking out for the staff at this sad time. If anyone could be said to truly embody the values of Smithdon's motto to Work Hard, Be Kind and Smile, it was most certainly Adele. She will be missed by everyone and we all send our heartfelt condolences to her family and closest friends.

Have a peaceful week's break. We look forward to seeing all our students on 5 June, ready for the final half term of the academic year and still more learning, exciting co-curricular opportunities and cross-Trust competitions.

Mrs Amanda Gibbins

SMITHDON IN THE NEWS

Smithdon student's sporting success!



One of Smithdon's students has been celebrating after representing both Smithdon and Norfolk at the *Anglian Schools Cross Country Championships* in Northampton.

Faith, a Year 7 student, qualified for the championships by ranking highly in a series of qualifying events. Faith began her winning streak when she came first in our school's cross-country competition, before progressing to the West Norfolk Schools Cross Country event, where she placed second.

She then made the top 10 in the next Norfolk Schools' event. She went on to finish in the top third of runners in the Anglian Championships, where she was also in the top 8 of runners representing Norfolk.

Smithdon's Head of PE, Mr Ward, stated, "Faith was the only representative from Smithdon that qualified for the event, but there were a large number of students from schools around the Anglian region of the country. It is an amazing achievement for Faith to have finished where she did, and the school is very proud of her achievements."

As well as her successes as a runner, the young sports star plays netball, football and badminton at Smithdon, and, outside of school, has won prizes for her swimming and sailing.

Mr Ward continued, "Faith is a very good swimmer and has recently been moved up a swim squad due to her performances in counties' competitions – this means she is training five nights a week and shows outstanding dedication.

Faith is also a very good sailor. She recently came second in a national event in her sailing class and has also been involved in regional and county races."

He added, "At Smithdon we promote as much involvement in sport and physical activity as possible, due to the benefits it has on our students' health, but also the characteristics they can develop through being involved in sport and physical activity. However, it is also really important to us as a school to celebrate sporting success, and we are proud of the achievements of our students. Faith has been recognised in school assemblies and will be recognised with sports awards throughout the year for her achievements."

Smithdon celebrates the King's Coronation!

For the students at Smithdon, their uniforms were put to good use when they helped create a picture of the official cypher of King Charles III. The cypher is the Sovereign's monogram, consisting of the initials of the monarch's name, Charles, and title, Rex - Latin for King.

The students split into groups of red, white and blue in order to create the image on the playing field where pictures were taken with a drone to see the complete effect (see the cover page).

The blue school blazers and white shirts were joined by red sports tops to create the graphic, complete with a Union flag.



Ms Moat, Mrs Gibbins and Mrs Robinson getting into the spirit of the historical occasion.



On 6 May 2023, history was made. With millions of people across the globe watching the coronation of King Charles III, our nation once again, had the focus on our Royal Family. Love them or hate them, they certainly pull in the crowds and with all the pomp and ceremony of the day, they truly gave a good show.

England has had coronations for over 1000 years, with 39 coronations taking place in Westminster Abbey since 1066.

Of course there are people that believe that the Royal Family is no longer relevant in these modern times. That it is expensive and outdated. The monarchy does generate huge revenue for Britain, much more than the expenses incurred by the British society for its maintenance. Therefore, our monarchy is not only a historic status symbol, but it also helps the businesses of our British brands. But surely it has a more positive benefit than just financial gain? Maybe it is also a pride for a nation that has fought and lived through so many challenges and changes over the years.

When we wave our flags and cheer the balcony appearances, what is it that we are feeling? Perhaps a unity with a nation that is steeped in history. Even after the destruction of two raging world wars, when England was bombed and rationed, when our men never came back, the Royal Family was always there, steadfast and strong. They were a family to look to for reassurance and hope with a leader to guide and have confidence in. But are they important to us now?

This fusion of the past and present is important to many of us. Smithdon, along with many other schools, did celebrate this occasion. A whole school assembly was held with Mrs Gibbins giving us lots of interesting information about the ceremony and the Coronation regalia which are the sacred objects used in the ceremony itself, such as the Sovereign's Sceptre and Orb.

Ms Moat arranged for some of our students to be involved in the creation of the cypher which looked impressive. Even the canteen got involved with their coronation chicken recipes, complete with bunting over the counter.

Some of us will no doubt see another coronation or two in our lifetimes. There will probably be more newspaper headlines, gossip and anti-royalists taking their stance. But, as a nation, when the Gold State Coach goes down The Mall once again, with our new monarch inside, for those few moments we will feel a sense of pride and celebration. Together we will cheer, wave our flags and feel united.



Whilst waiting for warmer weather, we decided to bring spring to the library with an Alice in Wonderland display, bringing florals and colour to the otherwise grey days of April and May.

Our Year 9 students are being encouraged to begin reading some of the 'classics' in preparation for Year 10 when they will be studying *A Christmas Carol*, a novella which was written 180 years ago. It is important that they have an understanding of the different sort of language and words that were used in the 19th Century - a world away from David Walliams!

It may seem intimidating for students to read text that they do not use daily or stories that are set in an era that doesn't represent them now in 2023 but classical literature has the opportunity to take us through a unique literary experience. It can expose us to new cultures and different historical perspectives on life, love and ancient wisdom, taking us on a journey that remains unmatched by today's social media age of curt prose and quick, one-sentence dialogue.

Classic literature is an expression of beauty in the form of literary art, imaginative prose and language that has stood the test of time and transcends eras. It continues to touch readers even today, enriching and inspiring us in numerous ways. In this age of fast-turners and quick-reads, how does investing our time in a timeless literary classic change us for the better? Why do we still teach and study it?



It is common knowledge that reading as a habit helps us to improve our vocabulary and our command of the language. But classics have an edge. Their expressions and their words are something that sets them apart from modern literature. The writing style of classics is so enriching that it makes you pause and wonder about what you have just read.

But perhaps one of the greatest benefits you gain from reading classics is that it allows you to engage with the best works of the greatest minds. Like the monarchy, the past can still be relevant. After all, we are all going through the human experience, in whichever era, with whichever current world problems and whatever technological advances we have made.

Reading the classics and understanding and enjoying the prose guarantees that we do not become a society that relies on one word conversations. *1984* by George Orwell predicted that language would be deconstructed to become 'Newspeak' - a way to limit the range of human

thought so that 'Big Brother' could take absolute power over its people and fill their heads with their own doctrine, making words, language, conversations, stories and poetry no longer valid or necessary.

Thankfully, we still have Alice in Wonderland and its dreamy structure, its poetry and nonsensical language to keep us fluent in our varied and diverse language. With short tweets and quick texting now being the modern way of communicating, at least the Jabberwocky keeps us whiffling and galumphing through our frabjous days!

C H E S S

On Tuesday 18 May, our eagerly awaited chess tournament took place. With an impressive 29 students signing up - it was a busy and competitive day!

Many of the students had been practising and playing against each other during the library lunch-time chess club and Mrs Robinson's after-school club. Some students had only just begun to learn the rules of the game but still did surprisingly well.

Mr Martin Walker - Chess Master and international qualified tutor - led the day, making sure that the students stuck to the rules and were professional at all times.

Mrs Robinson stated, "It was great to see so much excitement and preparation for the day, and also how many of them enjoyed participating. They were all hoping to be in the top 10 to represent the school in the whole Trust tournament in the Summer Term."

Our overall winner was Noah in Year 8 who has only been playing for 4 months! Second place was claimed by Daniel in Year 7. They will be joined by another eight students when they play against the other schools in the summer.

The 10 students that will be going through to the next stage in points order are:

Noah - Year 8

Daniel - Year 7

Kash - Year 9

Rhodri - Year 7

Aidan - Year 10

Amrit - Year 10

Lucas - Year 7

Josh - Year 10

Thomas - Year 10

Mattie - Year 8

Congratulations to Daniel and Noah, who both received medals and certificates from Mrs Gibbins.

Good luck to our top 10 in the Trust Tournament, we will be rooting for you all!



Young Enterprise Final 2023

Throughout the year, Homemade Treasures, our Young Enterprise Team, have been selling their handmade craft products. The team designed and made the products themselves which included wooden decorations for Christmas and Easter.

Eight of the team took part in the *Young Enterprise Norfolk and Suffolk Area Final 2023* at the University of East Anglia on Wednesday 26 April. They were accompanied by link teachers Mr Chapman and Mrs Dibble. The team set up a trade stall before being interviewed by the judges on the journey of their company. In the afternoon, the students entered the lecture theatre along with the other teams.

The team's presentation looked at how they had tailored their products to the local market as well as giving details of the financial success of the project.

The feedback given from Young Enterprise was:

I was impressed with your team, they absolutely held their own. I was so impressed with how relaxed and confident the students were; plus, they really have learnt how to work together well. When they stood up and did their presentation they had an informative and sincere approach which was noted by all judges.

The group were delighted to receive the Sustainability Award for their Christmas products. The wooden decorations can be kept and used each Christmas for years to come. In addition to the formal presentations and interviews, the team enjoyed a tour of the UEA, a pizza dinner and presentations from the UEA business team.

Mr Chapman and Mrs Dibble are already looking forward to offering Young Enterprise to the current Year 9 and working with our next set of student entrepreneurs.

By Mr Chapman



Hospitality and Catering

Our Year 9 and 10 Hospitality and Catering classes have been cooking up a storm!

Year 10 have had the chance to make the beautiful, garden-art focaccia bread that previous students have had the joy of creating. We are always impressed by the beauty of these and the creativity that is shown by our students - using vegetables to create something unique, delicious and visually interesting.

Focaccia is a traditional Italian flatbread, quite similar to pizza dough. Usually, the surface is kept pretty simple with shallow dimples poked into it and then drizzled with olive oil, salt, and dried herbs. This creates the blank surface for arranging the vegetables and herbs over the surface to create the plant and flower-like pictures. The students always have fun

making these and hopefully their parents get the chance to have a taste!

Year 10 also made the lemon meringues - from scratch! Being able to practise all the varied recipes and techniques will help them to prepare for their final GCSE recipe but will also teach them skills that they will benefit from for the rest of their lives - even without wanting a career in hospitality and catering, being able to prepare food is a functional skill which they can all take into adulthood.

Not leaving Year 9 out...the homemade burgers they made smelt, looked and tasted delicious. It is important that the students learn how to cook from scratch using fresh ingredients. They chose their own fillings to personalise them and make them unique for their own taste and preferences.



Geography

The Volcanic Eruption



Mrs Johnson's Year 8 Geography class had a lot of fun whilst learning about Tectonics. They thought they would try to see if they could create their own volcanic eruption using everyday ingredients!

Crystal made the volcano with a bottle, paper and glue and then the group used washing up liquid, baking powder, water, food colouring and vinegar to create the lava.

This worked really well! Sometimes it is fun to teach the students in a more interactive and creative way.



E S C A P E R O O M

On Wednesday 3 May a fabulous group of students took part in the KS3 Science event for this half term which was a Science Escape Room. The theme for the escape room was ecology. There were numerous clues to find and solve before being able to unlock the escape room.

As always the students were amazing, taking part in the problem solving with gusto!

Our next KS3 and final event of the Year is on Wednesday 21 June with the theme of Whoosh! We will be experimenting with water rockets out on the field so this will be weather permitting. Look out for the sign-up sheet in Mrs Pike's classroom. I look forward to seeing you at our last event.

By Mrs Pike



Pippa and Lyra came first in the Escape Rooms event!

Recently I took part in the Science Escape Room event. When I first got there, I noticed there were lots of other students, so this was obviously popular!

We sat around the tables and Mrs Pike explained to us what the event entailed and what we had to do. The challenge was to solve nine different clues and write it all up on an answer sheet. The next activity was a word-search that informed us, “the final clue you seek is under the teacher's desk.” The question we had to answer was, “how many species do you see in the picture?”

My group finally worked out the code. We gave Mrs Pike our answer sheet and she told us it was correct! We all received certificates and had our photos taken. I still can't believe we were first!

I had lots of fun and felt proud when I got my certificate. If you would like to join in the next event, look out for the Science events posters around the school and sign up!

By Pippa, Year 7

I N T R O D U C I N G ...

... Alex Hawkins



Prime Agency came in to school to introduce a new up-and-coming music artist - Alex Hawkins. Hailing from the deepest Suffolk countryside and inspired by early Bob Dylan & Patti Smith, Alternative Folk artist Alex Hawkins has been playing guitar since the age of 10. The title track from his hotly anticipated new album, *New Kid In The City*, captures the excitement, alienation and trepidation of a life in the big city. Songs like the infectious 'Biro Blue' and piano-led 'We're Just Dogs' are brimming with melodic Brit pop energy. Alex is a charismatic, 21-year-old songwriter who “writes it like he feels it.”

Alex performed for both Year 7 and 9 and then followed with a question and answer session about mental health, growing up, exams, social media and friendship issues. He also talked about misogyny and how to treat each other fairly whilst respecting everyone around us and our differences, whether that be our gender, race or sexuality. Alex has performed on the BBC In Session music programme. The students were fantastic and had some really good questions. They also were lucky enough to have the opportunity to meet Alex and get a signed photo!



Performing Arts

By Miss Miller

We have been working hard again in the Performing Arts Department this half-term. We have been so busy since completing the Spring Concert that we held at the very end of last term; a Night of Cinema and Stage - Celebrating the Arts. This was such a special concert because for the first time we incorporated Art and Music.



We were lucky to have had the amazing opportunity to be able to take four students to Fakenham Academy to participate in a workshop. The *Missing Coda* who are two teachers and performers who bring a fun approach to teaching music were there to lead the workshops. Jaz, Faith, Darcey and Isabel participated in workshops throughout the day, developing their musicianship and playing together!

They certainly made Smithdon proud.

Frozen JR

This half-term also meant the beginning of our next school production! That's right ladies and gentlemen, we had auditions for Frozen Jr!

The entire show is now cast and we have already begun rehearsing. We will even be showcasing some of the songs from the show next term at the Hunstanton Carnival, The WNAT Community Music Week and our own Summer Concert. The best part is that we have the biggest number of students involved in one of our shows yet: with almost 40 students auditioning and 50 students involved in the show altogether. This number will grow when we meet our new Year 7 students in September.

Performances

As if that wasn't enough we even had some performance opportunities on Tuesday 15 May. We had 4 of our piano students participate in a piano recital held at Springwood High School.

Two days later we had our own Peripatetic Music Recital held in the Drama Studio. Students were specifically asked to perform songs based on the work they have been doing in their private music lessons. Their parents were invited to attend and hear all of their hard work. This was our second event like this and we will definitely be doing them again!

After all of that we will finish the half term with one more big event! On Friday 26 May, the organisation *Classical Music Rocks* will visit us with the hope of encouraging a love of classical music within our young people. With so many students now doing music lessons, this is a great inspirational opportunity for our students to meet and hear a professional musician. Johan Lofving, a Swedish guitar and theorbo player will be performing for all of our Year 7 and Year 8 students.

Film Music Gala

We also went on our annual trip to London on Saturday 13 May to see the Film Music Gala at the Royal Albert Hall. Twenty five students from our music and drama classes went, along with students from Springwood High School and St. Clement's High School. The students really enjoyed the opportunity to visit such a beautiful and historic theatre and to see such a famous orchestra (the same who played at the Coronation) playing music from their favourite films.



Sports and Games



Hello Summer! As the sun is shining - well some of the time - we are now into summer sports. Whether it's trying to get that personal best in athletics, hitting an ace in tennis or trying to hit the ball in rounders. We will have an amazing summer term! We are ready and excited for the summer term fixture of rounders, cricket, tennis and the athletics competition.

Year 11 - GCSE

The Year 11 GCSE students have been busy in preparation for their upcoming exams. All GCSE PE students were fantastic during their practical moderation as everyone brought their A game!



A special shout-out to Josh for his exceptional performance in the high jump!

Good luck to all of the PE cohort for their upcoming exams.

Sports Leaders

This term our sports leaders have been busy leading various sports. Our cricket leaders helped out with the Primary Cricket Cluster at the Snettisham Competition by umpiring the scores and coaching the primary school students.

Our Year 10 students are planning their sessions for the upcoming Primary School Festival at the end of June. This takes a lot of planning and organising as we are expecting it to be the biggest one yet!

Year 8 has the next instalment of the Youth Sport Trust, Beyond the Baseline leadership programme to look forward to. If any Year 8 student is interested in being involved please speak to the PE Department.

Sports Ambassadors

The Sports Ambassadors had their first sports council meeting to discuss everything Sports and PE within school and in the community. Lots of discussion around sports clubs, PE in school, community sports and physical activity and trips. If you have any ideas how we can improve PE and Sports please see the PE department and the Sports Ambassadors.

Upcoming Events

Sports Fixtures:

West Norfolk Tennis Tournament

Primary School Sports Festival

Sports Day



A big "Well Done" to those that took part in the Kings Lynn Gear run. Mr Tilley and Harry managed to get their photos in the news!



United Kingdom Mathematics Trust

Intermediate Mathematical Challenge

Every year, Smithdon students from across both Key Stages are selected to enter the UKMT (United Kingdom Mathematics Trust) Maths Challenges.

In April, our top set students in Years 7 and 8 were selected to participate in this year's UKMT Junior Mathematical Challenge.

"The Junior Mathematical Challenge is a 60-minute, multiple choice competition aimed at students across the UK.

It encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought, and fluency in using basic mathematical techniques to solve interesting problems.

The problems are designed to make students think. Most are accessible, yet still challenge those with experience". (UKMT)

The thresholds for certificates this year were:

82+ - Gold
66+ - Silver
52+ - Bronze

I am pleased to announce that we achieved:

Seven Bronze awards in Year 7: Sidney, Maxwell, Pippa, Maisie, Isobel, Mollie and Mercedes.

Seven Silver awards in Year 7: Lyra, Jessica, Reuben, Ronnie, Millie-Mae, Hadleigh and Harrison.

Congratulations to Lyra and Jessica for achieving the Best in Year 7 award.

Three Bronze awards in Year 8: Ryan, Amelie and Oliver.

Two Silver awards in Year 8: Thea and Freya-Mae.

Congratulations to Thea for achieving the Best in Year 8 Award and for the Best in School Award.

A huge well done to all of those that took part and congratulations to those that received a certificate.

We're very proud of you all!

Alton Towers



Mr Chapman along with the students waiting to go on Wicker Man.

On Friday 31 March, fifty two Year 11 students, along with Mr Chapman, Ms Wright and Miss Stewart took the three-and-a-half-hour coach journey to Alton Towers. Students enjoyed breakfast at Grantham Services, which we returned to on the way home where many students took the opportunity to have a tea-time burger.

Miss Wright and Mr Chapman along with 12 students 'fed the flames' of the wooden roller coaster, Wicker Man, which speeds along at 44 miles per hour. A number of the party also enjoyed the re-imagined Haunted House known as the 'The Curse at Alton Manor'.

The coach arrived back at Smithdon High School at 8.30pm. An excellent day thoroughly enjoyed by staff and students. Worth the 6am start!

By Mr Chapman

IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING WITH YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Mind

Text 86463
Call 0300 123 339
9am-6pm Monday to Friday

Samaritans

Call 116 123
24hr helpline

SHOUT

Text SHOUT to 85258
Available 24/7

Switchboard

LGBT helpline
0300 330 0630 – available
10am – 10pm everyday
online chat from 5pm on
www.switchboard.lgbt

Childline

1-2-1 web chat on
www.childline.org.uk
call 0800 1111 – 24/7

Mermaids

Trans youth helpline
0808 801 0400 – 9am-9pm
Monday to Friday
Web chat available at
www.mermaidsuk.org.uk

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Another half term has come to an end and it seems like time is flying by!

Year 11 students are completing their final exams and the stress and pressure on them has naturally intensified. It is more important than ever for them to be in school, attending as many revision sessions as they can whilst also taking care of themselves, physically and mentally.

Although students are being told their grades will be protected from Covid disruption, standards are now returning to pre-pandemic levels, with results being based on exams rather than teacher assessments. Therefore excellent attendance is now more crucial than ever as we deal with the aftermath of lockdowns, online learning and health issues.

Exam stress is common and understandable. The stress can make it feel harder to cope with worries and the added pressure of revision and waiting for the results. It can feel overwhelming, both mentally and physically.

We are always here for you and there are ways to help yourselves so that you don't burn out.

We are all unique and cope in different ways but hopefully the following tips will be helpful:

Make time to do things you enjoy. Talk to someone you are comfortable with and connect with others that feel the same as you. Take breaks from revision. Find the right balance for you and keep it all in perspective, exams do not last forever, they will soon be over and you will be looking forward to prom and college/sixth form and a lovely summer break.

Get enough sleep, eat lots of healthy food and drink water!

Get moving. Play football with your friends, go for a walk, do an online yoga class. You will probably hear this a lot but that is because it is important. It's simple but works!

Focus on yourself and do not compare yourself to others. Think about all the things you are good at it and be proud of yourselves! You have come this far so don't give up now and do the best that you can manage.

Raffle winners this term:

Year 7: Ethan, Florence, Alexis, Megan

Year 8: Pleasance, Hope, Emily-Jane, Lily-Rose

Year 9: Megan, Ruby, Mattie, Joel, Max, Jack

Year 10: Izzy, Hannah, Oliver

To report a student's absence, please use one of the following methods:

Phone: 01485 536123

Text: 07935 059774

Email: attendance@smithdonhigh.org.uk

A photograph of a tree branch with pink flowers and green leaves against a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on this image.

Get in touch:

Phone: 01485 534541

Email: office@smithdonhigh.org.uk

Website: www.smithdonhigh.org.uk

Twitter: [@smithdon_high](https://twitter.com/smithdon_high)

**We hope you have a restful
break and we will see you all on
5 June.**