



KINGHAM HILL
SCHOOL

News from the Hill

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Word from the Head

'Explore, Dream, Discover!' Words of advice given to our pupils by explorer, Tom Avery, when he came to deliver the latest talk in our KHS Lecture Series in November. These words had a particular resonance for me, as it is vitally important for us, as educators, to remember that our job is not only to teach the curriculum and ensure that our pupils are academically prepared, but also to ensure that they are fully prepared for life after their time at school.

Here on the Hill we consistently enable our pupils to challenge themselves and encourage them to strive to achieve more than they think possible both in their lessons, and also in their activities outside of the classroom. The talk from Tom, who is one of the UK's foremost explorers demonstrated just what can be achieved when you push yourself to your physical limits (see page 4).

We have held a number of events throughout the term to raise awareness of inclusion and diversity (pages 4, and 6), helping us to make sure that everyone feels valued, accepted and understood. The ability to empathise with others and celebrate difference are key skills for life which we work hard to instil in our pupils.

A visit from our local MP, Robert Courts (page 5), provided our pupils with an insight into how people can dedicate themselves to serve their local communities, helping others and trying to improve day-to-day life for many.

Our annual hockey awards evening (page 7) was a lovely opportunity for us to reward the effort and dedication shown by our hockey players in all year groups during the term. It was hugely inspiring for our pupils to listen to our guest speakers talk about a growth mindset and how being part of a team that challenges and supports each other in equal measure, can not only lead to success in sport, but also life in general.

These are just a few examples of how we help our pupils to 'Explore, Dream, Discover!' We look forward to what the rest of the academic year brings and finding more ways in which we can empower our young people to take charge of shaping their futures.

Pete Last



Ist Form Residential

In September the Ist Form embarked on a 3-day residential trip to Rock UK in Wales. It was a fantastic opportunity for the year group to have some fun, form new friendships and really get to know each other at the start of the academic year. Over the course of their time at the centre there were a whole host of activities and challenges for the Ist Formers to tackle together as a group. Activities on offer included a high ropes course, climbing, bouldering and abseiling, canoeing, crate stacking, archery, and an array of team building challenges.

Head of Lower School, Mr Oatridge, said, "It was an excellent experience for everyone and a great way for us to get to know the pupils more and see them grow in their personal development and character. The teachers were really impressed by the way in which the pupils encouraged each other and were all so willing to work together."



All The World's A Stage!

At Kingham Hill, we are proud of our commitment to the Performing Arts and the opportunities that we are able to provide to our pupils. Our Performing Arts Academy takes place every Monday evening and pupils are able to choose between a wide variety of activities such as Wind Band, Dance Classes (junior and senior), Tech Club (theatre sound and lighting), Community Singing, Script-writing, Improvisation, Individual music practice, Rock Band. We also offer a range of creative arts subjects at GCSE, as well as a BTEC in Performing Arts in the Sixth Form.

As well as opportunities within school, we are also keen to support our local community and are a proud sponsor of the annual Chipping Norton Theatre Pantomime. This year the Theatre staged a production of Cinderella – with a Latin American twist! In the first



half of the Michaelmas Term, some of our pupils had the chance to interview the Pantomime Director, John Terry. Amongst other things they discussed how a Theatre goes about staging such a large production, what makes the performances unique, the challenges of scheduling, and how Kingham Hill School has been a part of this pantomime tradition for many years.

A number of our BTEC Performing Arts pupils also had the chance to see for

themselves how the theatre was preparing for the performances when they went to watch part of a rehearsal session. It was a great way for them to gain a greater understanding of the working life of a professional theatre company.

As part of our sponsorship of the Pantomime there was an exhibition of artwork by Kingham Hill pupils on display in the gallery space of the Theatre for the duration of the panto run. It was a fantastic opportunity for us to showcase the creativity of our talented artists to a wider audience.

Scan to watch an interview with John



CCF Regimental Dinner

On Friday 3rd November, the school hosted the CCF Regimental Dinner in the magnificent setting of the Top School Hall. The Hall bustled with the 140 guests, made up of the Cadets, staff, guests and VIPs, alongside five of our previous Cadet Heads of Corps coming back for the evening from far and wide.

We were delighted to have Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Craig Hampton-Stone MA FRSA join us as the Principal Guest,

regaling the room with anecdotes and lessons from his busy and varied military career. He also presented two of the highest promotions Cadets can gain within the contingent. Many congratulations to Colour Sergeant Ritsperis for being selected as Head of Army Section and to Flight Sergeant Roberts for being selected as this year's Head of Corps. It was certainly a night to remember.



Visit to the House of Lords

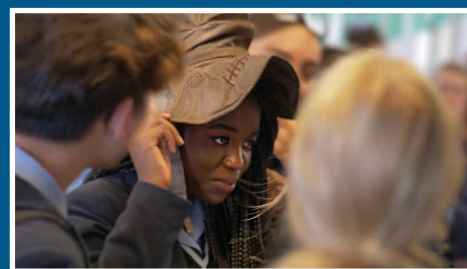
Our Upper and Lower Sixth Politics classes were invited to visit the House of Lords at the end of November as guests of Baroness Jo Valentine and Lord Steve Bassam. The pupils received a hugely interesting guided tour from the working peers and watched part of a debate. It was a fantastic opportunity for them to see democracy in action.

Great War Presentations

One evening in December three of our 4th Form pupils presented their Great War research presentations to members of the Cheltenham and Gloucester branch of the Western Front Association. Max K, Liv E and Judah J were judged to have put together the best research from last year's 3rd Form project work and consequently had the privilege of presenting their work to a room full of experts. They were a credit to themselves and the School and received a great deal of much-deserved praise from those present.

Harry Potter Day

We all had great fun celebrating Harry Potter Day in October. The day, usually held in May, is a chance for fans around the globe to celebrate J.K. Rowling's iconic series. Our Library underwent a magical transformation with bunting and flags from Slytherin, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Gryffindor Houses. Pupils and staff dressed up as their favourite character and had a chance to get sorted by the sorting hat! Our Catering Team also prepared some Harry Potter themed food for us all to enjoy.



UKMT Maths Challenge

In early October, our Sixth Form pupils took part in the Senior UKMT Maths Challenge, run by the UK Maths Trust with the aim of advancing mathematics education for children and young individuals within the UK. The Challenge presented a collection of thought-provoking problems carefully crafted to engage both novice learners and seasoned problem-solving enthusiasts.

Remembering the Fallen

In November, we held our traditional drumhead service to mark the 105th anniversary of the Armistice. The CCF were on parade, surrounded by pupils, staff and Hillians to commemorate this special occasion in the School calendar.

We were honoured to have among us Colonel Rob Kearney, Commanding Officer of Canadian Armed Forces in the United Kingdom, as we underlined the joint British and Canadian heritage of some of

the 64 men from Kingham Hill listed on our war memorial in Chapel, a third of whom volunteered for active service whilst at Havelock Farm in Ontario.

After the two minutes' silence, wreaths were laid at the drumhead by the Headmaster and the Head of School; the Last Post and Reveille were played for the final time by Zack Jones who, now in his Upper Sixth year, has played for us every year since he joined in the 1st Form.



House Singing

The theme this year was 'The Beatles', with each House producing a unique version of a Beatles' classic, including 'Yellow Submarine' and 'I Saw Her Standing There'. Several Houses provided their own live band, with props, dance moves and gimmicks aplenty. The contest was judged 'Eurovision Style', with each House awarding points to their favourites and in a nail-biting turn of events, Latimer was victorious by 1 point with their rendition of 'Here Comes the Sun' closely followed by Severn and their version of 'Ob-La-Di'.

Vinted in Veritas

In September, the pupils' Charity Committee hosted a 'Vinted in Veritas' event to raise money for The Branch Charity in Chipping Norton. Donated clothes were sold in our own charity shop over break and lunchtime, allowing people to give away things they no longer needed and get something new in return! On the day the Committee managed to raise £85 from sales, and will be looking to hold further sales throughout the year.

Explore, Dream, Discover!

We were thrilled to welcome intrepid explorer Tom Avery to deliver the latest talk in our Kingham Hill Lecture Series at the end of November. A pioneering polar adventurer, climber and ski mountaineer, Tom is one of the UK's foremost explorers. He has led trailblazing expeditions to all seven continents, but is perhaps best-known for his record-breaking polar journeys. The Sunday Times has said of him: "Avery is shaping up to join the ranks of such British immortals as Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Dame Ellen MacArthur".

Tom's talk focussed on the completion of the polar trilogy; full-length South and North Pole expeditions and a coast-to-coast crossing of Greenland. The watching audience of pupils, parents and staff were captivated by his account of his adventures, including the fact that he holds two Guinness World Records; the fastest surface journey to the North Pole and the fastest crossing of Greenland.

Tom's main message to our pupils was that whatever your dreams and passions are, you should just go for it. He ended his talk with a quote from the novelist, Mark Twain: "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."



Why Inclusion and Diversity Matters

We kick-started our Hive events once more at Kingham Hill with a lunchtime seminar in December, focussed on the importance of inclusion and diversity. Led by the Headmaster, Mr Last, the seminar considered a variety of issues that may affect those in our community, from neuro-diversity to hidden disabilities, adoption and more. The discussion ended with an invitation for pupils to join the 'Inclusion Committee'. This group is a pupil-led initiative which aims to identify and engage the diverse groups within our community, fostering crucial dialogues and ensuring that our school is an inclusive environment, where all students and staff feel valued, accepted and understood.

From Page to Stage

Performers from Academy staged their first performance of the academic year at the beginning of December, with their production of 'The Phone Box on Holloway Road'. Written especially for the group by our very own Mr Jones, the one-act piece of theatre was inspired by the 2002 film, 'Phone Booth'.

Styled as a Pinteresque 'Comedy of Menace' piece for the stage, the play presented a range of moral dilemmas, challenging the audience to question how they would react in the same situation.

It was superbly acted by the performers who managed to maintain a powerful sense of gripping unease throughout.

The performance itself was an example of how quickly our now quite experienced actors have the ability to go from 'page to stage'. Having being given only a month to put the production together, the resulting show was testament to the impressive capabilities of this very talented group. We look forward to seeing more from them all later in the year.



Q&A with Local MP

We were delighted to welcome local Conservative MP, Robert Courts, to Kingham Hill in late November. Robert was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Witney and West Oxfordshire in the by-election in October 2016, and was re-elected in both the 2017 and 2019 General Elections. He currently serves as the Chair of the House of Commons Defence Select Committee.

On arrival, Robert was given a tour of the school, following which he took part in a Question and Answer session with some of our pupils, including Sixth Form Politics students and members of our Octagon Academic Society.

It was an interesting discussion, allowing those present to explore some of the current issues in local and national politics. Our pupils raised questions relating to a wide range of topics including the war in Ukraine, the Autumn Budget statement, immigration, education reform, environmental issues, the prospect of the upcoming general election, the legacy of Brexit and Robert's voting record in the Commons. It was very interesting for



them to listen to his responses as he talked about his reasons for his voting choices and expressed how he views his role as a representative of the local community.

Opportunities to welcome public figures into School are an excellent way to enable our pupils to become more aware of the world around them and gain a greater understanding of important issues. We hope to be able to welcome a representative from an opposing party into school to share their views with us, once the candidates for the expected General Election have been announced.

Art Trip to Oxford

4th Form GCSE Art pupils travelled to Oxford in November to visit The Ashmolean Museum, The Pitt Rivers Museum and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. The purpose of the trip was to explore the collections on display in order to gain knowledge and generate ideas for their current project work based on the theme of 'Natural Forms'. It will also help with the development of concepts for the work they will be completing in the New Year.

Ctech Sport Challenge

As part of the Upper Sixth qualification in Ctech Sport, the pupils are required to take part in two Outdoor Activities. This year the pupils went mountain biking and kayaking! The group had a great time, with lots of mud, lots of water and lots of fun. The pupils enjoyed being out of the classroom, challenging themselves in different activities and working together as a team.

Orchard Women's Conference

A group of Fifth and Sixth Form girls joined 250 other young women from across the country at the 'youth stream' of the Orchard women's conference in Birmingham in October. The theme was 'Only Jesus' and they enjoyed dance workshops, and attended a variety of talks and seminars. In the evening the group joined the wider conference of 5000 women for a talk from guest speaker, Jo Saxton.



Meteor Crash Anniversary

In November, we marked the 70th anniversary of an RAF Meteor plane crash in the wooded area down the hill by our Sports Centre. On that day, 9th November 1953, two pilots - Sqn Ldr Richard Anthony Fox Linton and Flt Lt Raymond Geoffrey Mead - lost their lives. We paid tribute to them with a small service at the location of the crash, which was attended by the son of one of the pilots, Dr Geoff Mead.

Meet the Team



Name: Anna Thatcher
Job Title: Catering Manager

What is your role within the School?

I am the Catering Manager which basically means that I make sure that everyone gets fed the right food at the right time! I also look after the Catering for all School events and for any lettings we have.

What did you do before working at KHS?

I worked at major sporting venues and events including Ascot Racecourse, The Sydney Olympics, the 2003 and 2007 Rugby World Cups, Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cups.

What would you say is the most interesting part of your day-to-day work?

I love watching the pupils' responses to our food, getting to know what they enjoy. I also enjoy teaching pupils to cook and helping them to understand where their food comes from.

What activities do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I love reading, sewing, baking and travelling, but mainly spending time with my family and friends.

Who, or what, would you say has most inspired you in life?

My Dad was an amazing man who treated everyone from the Queen to the binmen with the same respect and taught me that I could do anything and be anything so long as I was kind to others whilst doing it.

Tell us one activity that is on your 'Bucket List'

I love travelling and have been around the world. The most amazing place I have seen is Heron Island off Australia. I would love to take my husband and daughter there to experience the skies in complete darkness, the giant turtles laying eggs and the hatchlings and whales - but the highlight of the trip would be the England cricket team winning the Ashes in Australia!

Finally, the best thing about working at Kingham Hill is...

The people I work with, who, when the chips are down are beyond supportive to each other - it really is a wonderful place to work for that reason.

A Cultural Experience

Embracing culture and connections is something that is very important to us at Kingham. Just before half-term we were thrilled to host a group of visiting pupils from India who came to learn all about life on the Hill. The pupils took part in a range of taster lessons, and immersed themselves

into Boarding House life, forming bonds with their KHS peers. We were also privileged to learn more about our visitors' own culture when KHS pupils had the opportunity to groove to the rhythms of Bollywood and traditional dances.



Click here to watch a clip of the dancing

World Mental Health Day

Everyone has mental health and we are continuing to support our pupils to look after theirs. We understand it is not easy, but we want to encourage all to grow and flourish both in and out of school. World Mental Health Day took place in mid-October and we held various events in recognition of the occasion.

The activities started at sunrise with the boarders 'waking up and shaking up'. A walk, jog or run followed by some gentle aerobics as the sun came up - what an amazing way to start the day. At break time and lunch time, there were some interactive sessions around Zentangle

drawings and a couple of book reviews to get pupils and staff to think of their own mental health and how to be awesome (Matthew Syed's book - You are Awesome was discussed).



Black History Month

On the Hill, we understand the importance of celebrating, embracing and acknowledging diversity and inclusion. This year the theme of October's Black History Month was 'Saluting Our Sisters', paying homage to the often-overlooked contributions of black women, whose ideas have been appropriated, voices silenced, and accomplishments disregarded.

We marked this hugely important event in a variety of ways including in 4th and 5th Form History lessons where pupils spent time considering the achievements of figures such as Mary Seacole, Dame Kelly

Holmes, and Nelson Mandela, along with a range of modern historians and prominent black figures. This engaging activity served as an informative way to encourage our pupils to explore history beyond the scope of the British Empire. We also dedicated an episode of our ETF podcast to the significance of Black History Month, discussing the profound importance of the month and what it means personally to our pupils and staff.



Click here to listen to the Podcast

Sports Tour to Valencia

Thirty of our 2nd and 3rd Form pupils thoroughly enjoyed an action-packed Junior Multi-Sports Tour to Valencia in Spain. As well as games against high quality club teams in rugby (boys) and hockey (girls), the group also had introductory coaching sessions in handball and beach volleyball! Whilst in Valencia our pupils were able to experience some cultural activities, including a cycling tour of the city and an afternoon visit to the Oceanogràfic Valencia - the largest aquarium in Europe.

It was a fantastic opportunity for them to improve their sporting skills, whilst also gaining a taste of life in an exciting new city! Following their return to school a group of pupils, along with some of the staff who accompanied them, recorded a Podcast episode all about the trip.



Scan to listen to the recording



Hockey Awards

We celebrated the many achievements of our sportswomen in the last week of term at our annual Hockey Awards evening. The coaches of each age-group gave an overview of the season, before announcing the Most Improved Player and the Most Valuable Player of the season. It was clear that all of our teams have made huge strides this season, with some significant win ratios and many stories of excellent teamwork and success.

Our guests for the evening were Andy and Sue Clark, who play and coach at Oxford Hawks Hockey Club. After 45 years in the game, Andy and Sue reflected on the impact that the sport has had on their lives, touching on the fact that when you do something for a long time there are ups and downs, but what is important is the lessons



you learn along the way. They spoke about the importance of resilience, and the joy that sport can bring when you commit, not only to your chosen sport, but also to your team and your fellow teammates.

It was hugely inspiring for our pupils to hear them talk about a growth mindset and how being part of a team that challenges and supports each other in equal measure, can not only lead to success in sport, but also success in life generally.

Partnership with Arden Motorsport

In the last week of term, YRDA and Arden Motorsport hosted a training day at Kingham Hill as part of our continued partnership with the Team. The day began with a talk from Jamie Horner, followed by a fitness training session in our sports hall and lectures on mindset preparations, the Race Fit App, social media in motorsport and much more. The sessions provided our Kingham Hill Karting pupils with a thoroughly enjoyable first-hand glimpse into the world of motorsport.



Staff vs. Pupils Hockey

In late November, the Girls Hockey Team took on a Staff XI in an exciting Hockey Match. There was brilliant teamwork on show from both sides, with some excellent game play and lots of friendly rivalry! Well done to the Staff Team who were the eventual victors in what was a very close game.



Marathon Success

Congratulations were in order for Lower Sixth pupil, Riley B, when he completed the Oxford half-marathon in October. Riley ran the course in 1 hour 16 minutes and 8 seconds and finished 43rd out of thousands of runners. He was third in his age group (17-19) and as his birthday was only two weeks before the event, he was sure to have been one of the youngest in that category!

Rugby Call Up

We were delighted to learn that 5th Form pupils, Lucas and Herbie, had been selected to represent Gloucester RFC U16s against Bath Rugby at Kingsholm Stadium in December. This is the boys' 3rd year with the Gloucester RFC programme, and their selection is testament to their outstanding individual skills, and also their teamwork, tactical understanding and leadership qualities. Both players have shown a huge amount of dedication to rugby, not only as key members of our School Rugby Team, but also receiving off-season training from the school's partner, Cotswold Rugby Academy, and taking on feedback from senior coaches in order to develop their game play.

Click here to watch an interview with the boys



Christmas Cheer

We rounded off the Michaelmas Term with a whole host of Christmas celebrations here on the Hill, providing the opportunity for staff and pupils alike to fully embrace the festive spirit!

Our talented musicians treated us to a wonderful evening of Music making at our Winter Concert at the beginning of December. There were performances from the School Orchestra, Flute Choir, Kingham Brass, the School Choir and our

Concert Band, along with a selection of notable vocal and instrumental solos and a duet. This was followed by our Carols by Candlelight Service which is always a very special occasion.

In the final week of term, our fabulous Catering Team treated us to an outstanding Christmas lunch, which was followed by the various House trips to London, Witney, and the Chipping Norton panto.

On the last day of term parents were invited to join us for our Junior and Senior Carol Services which were a joyous way to end the term as a whole school community.

