



# LGS Headlines

April 2016





# LGS Headlines

## 29 April 2016

### From the Headteacher

Dear Parents

I hope you and your families enjoyed the Easter break. For many of you this will have been dominated by the revision programmes of your sons and daughters - and as a parent of a Year 11 student myself I know just what a demanding time it can be for everyone in the family. Of course, our Year 9 students have already completed their GCSE examination, having taken their on-screen assessment over the last two weeks.



As always this newsletter contains accounts of day and residential visits both in this country and abroad. I am always very grateful to those staff who willingly give up their time to arrange these very memorable experiences for the students, particularly when it involves giving up their own well-deserved holiday time. If your son or daughter has recently visited Pompeii or Sicily, hiked through Snowdonia or the Chilterns, or took part in a subject conference, I do hope they enjoyed themselves - and found time to thank the staff involved.

Some of our drama students have been involved in one very special event this term. We were thrilled to be asked to participate in one of the first official events in Windsor to mark the Queen's 90th birthday. Students from Years 12 and 13 performed excerpts from Romeo and Juliet at the opening of the bandstand in Alexandra Gardens, attended by Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh. This was a very special occasion which you can also read about in the student news pages.

With just a few weeks to go before the start of the public examinations, this is the last newsletter before they start study leave. I would like to wish all our students in Years 11, 12 and 13 every success in the examinations for which they have worked so hard. They deserve to do well.

**Mr J Constable - Headteacher**

### In the student pages of this issue.....

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- **Instagram Photography Competition**

**Mr M Aplin - News Manager**

### Dates for your diary - May

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Mon 2 May</b>  | Bank holiday - school closed   |
| <b>Tue 3 May</b>  | Year 11 GCSE Art exam<br>(until Wed 4 May)                                   |
| <b>Thu 5 May</b>  | Year 11 GCSE Drama moderation  |
| <b>Thu 5 May</b>  | 11+ information meeting for parents<br>(see website for details)             |
| <b>Mon 9 May</b>  | Year 11 'Exam attack' presentation<br><br>AS Drama moderation 2.15 - 6.00 pm |
| <b>Wed 11 May</b> | A2 Drama moderation day  |
| <b>Sat 14 May</b> | Year 10 Geography field visit to<br>Slapton (until Mon 16 May)               |
| <b>Wed 18 May</b> | Open morning for prospective parents   |
| <b>Thu 26 May</b> | Open morning for prospective parents   |

### Study Leave dates

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Year 11</b> | Last day in school Thu 11 May, study leave from Fri 13 May.  |
| <b>Year 12</b> | Study leave commences Fri 13 May                             |
| <b>Year 13</b> | Last day in school Fri 13 May, study leave begins Mon 16 May |

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### Staff news

#### **A warm welcome to.....**

**Mrs Bev Priddle**, who joined us this week as our new Receptionist, working 8.00 am to 1.00 pm every day. We wish her well as she gets used to the rhythm of school life.

**Miss Hannah Sabal-Wald** who has joined the English department this term to provide maternity cover.

#### **Goodbye to....**

**Mrs Cathy McKenna**, who has worked in the office on contracts and procurement for the last few months and leaves us for a role in the careers department at Eton College.

**Miss Karen Middleton**, who has now started her maternity leave. We look forward to hearing good news in a few weeks! Ms Middleton will return to school during the next academic year.

### Silver Music certificate

Langley Grammar School has been awarded the Incorporated Society of Musicians' **Silver** certificate in GCSE music.

This means that more than **15%** of all our GCSE students achieved an A\*- C in music GCSE in 2016, putting the school in the top 233 schools nationally.

This is a testament to the popularity of music in the school which has led to a healthy uptake to the GCSE course in Year 10 and 11.

**Deborah Annetts, Chief Executive of the Incorporated Society of Musicians said:**

*'Music is a hugely important subject in itself, for future professional careers and for wider learning in a school; it adds huge benefits to the wider curriculum, school and community life and educational opportunity. As the professional body for musicians, we are delighted to recognise this high level of achievement with this certificate.'*

The certificate is supported by the ISM Trust, the charitable arm of the Incorporated Society of Musicians.



The Trust was created in 2015 to promote and support music education and music itself.

To find out more, visit [www.ismtrust.org](http://www.ismtrust.org)

### 11+ and 2017 admissions

Full details of the admissions process for 2017 entry to Year 7 can be found on the school website. However, we would like to draw the following dates to your attention as you may wish to pass this information to prospective parents in your networks and communities.

#### **11+ registration**

Registration for the 11+ opens on Sunday 1 May and closes on Monday 27 June. Registration is completed through the grammar schools consortium website at

[www.sloughconsortium.org.uk](http://www.sloughconsortium.org.uk)

#### **11+ information meetings**

These are for parents only, to explain the 11+ process. Identical presentations are held in the four Slough grammar schools on two different dates.

There will be talks at Langley Grammar School on Thursday 5 May 2016 at 5.30pm and 6.30pm.

#### **School open mornings**

We are running open morning tours for prospective parents and pupils on the following dates:

- Wed 18 May 9.00am and 10.00am
- Thu 26 May 9.00am only
- Friday 10 Jun 9.00am and 10.00am
- Thu 16 Jun 9.00am only

*These open events give parents an opportunity for a guided tour round the school. There are no Headteacher talks, but there is an opportunity to meet senior staff informally and ask questions. Booking is essential - interested parents should telephone 01753 598315 to reserve places.*



# A Royal Performance

*Written By Pratyush Jain (6H)*

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April, 8 students from Langley Grammar formed a cast with 8 members of Cox Green School, to put on a Royal performance, for the Queen – quite literally! The Shakespeare Schools Festival organisers were impressed with the high quality of LGS's drama SSF productions from the last 5 years, and we had been chosen to perform a scene from a Shakespeare play as part of the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations in Windsor.

When we originally found out we were chosen, everything was very secretive. We were summoned to the drama studio one lunch time by Mrs Andrijasevic, where we found out that we were going to perform for senior members of the Royal Family, it was not until a few weeks in we found out we would perform an extract from Romeo and Juliet, that it was for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations, and the Queen herself would be present! We were all ecstatic and pleased to have this honour and some of us were in shock – I don't think the significance of the occasion hit us until we started to rehearse and the artistic director from SSF, Dom, said project your voice to the Queen!

We had 2 days to create the piece and a dress rehearsal the day before to ensure it was fit for the Queen! On the day of the performance, at Alexandra Gardens, Windsor, we were all excited and thrilled to be performing and seeing the crowds gather and people coming all the way from Canada really put the occasion into perspective. At roughly half past 11, the Royal Party arrived and it really hit us... we are going to perform for the Queen! She then greeted the 500 odd primary school children who waited patiently to greet her. Prince Philip and the Queen took their places in the 'royal box', right in front of where we would be performing!

Playing the role of Mercutio, I had the privilege of having the opening line of our piece, and was cued to start by one the 25 Irish Guards behind us saying "break a leg". Overall for me, it was a surreal experience and really was a once in a lifetime opportunity! Seeing the Queen 10 or so odd metres in front of you while performing really does feel quite surreal! After the piece finished, we all came back to the stage one final time to bow and exit. Tim Hashimi – 6H, who played Romeo, as well as Jess from Cox Green who played Juliet, got the honour to meet and shake the Queen's hand as she came to open the bandstand which we were performing on.







# A Royal Performance

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The Queen then made her way down from the Band Stand and quite unexpectedly for me, came to visit us! Being up and close to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh and speaking with them really made the experience that bit more special and unforgettable, it is something I will remember forever. The saying “she has to be seen to be believed” – really is true. After the performance, we were congratulated by the drama teachers, Mr Adams and Mr Constable and even some members of the public, as well as getting to meet our parents who were also very proud and happy for us having viewed the performance. Tim even had a reporter from The Daily Telegraph approach him for an interview, and then featured in the paper the next day.

I would like to thank the amazing cast - Avneet Poonia, Simran Kumar, Tim Hashimi, Alex Jarrett, Saab Sehmi, Emily Walter, and Aidan Button, as well as the 8 members from Cox Green. Also Dom, Johnny and Rich from Shakespeare Schools Festival who collaboratively directed the piece. I would also like to thank Mrs Andrijasevic, Miss Northcott and Miss Seymour who accompanied us on the days and organised everything! It really was a once in a lifetime experience!



## *From the Daily telegraph coverage of the event.....*

The Queen was winning over a new generation of admirers, raising the possibility that there will be some who will remember such an encounter for another nine decades. Tim Hashimi, the seventeen-year old grammar school boy from Slough, who was chosen to play Romeo, had not been sure whether he was a monarchist before the performance. Once he had shaken the Queen’s hand afterwards, he grinningly admitted “I am a fan now”.

“It was just so surreal” he said. “She said ‘carry on’ - it was amazing. It was the best experience I am ever going to have in my life.”



# Junior House Drama

Written By Navin Vithana (8R)

This year's house drama was a fantastic array of skill, joy, enticement, and cheesy presenting that really shows what Langley Grammar School is capable of. The action and intrigue in every act made the whole show bring goose bumps to your arms. As the performances kept on coming, the understanding dawned on us that the bar was raised high and the tension between all of us was immense. As students waited nervously behind the stage ready to go on, people in the audience enjoyed the acts as the great performances kept on coming. Some of the favourite acts were 9H's great remake of Macbeth in school form, or 7V's remake of Cinderella in the ugly stepsisters view. In the end, this year's house drama is one to beat and I'm sure everyone had a great time. But the moment came when the tension was high, the silence dropped, fingers were crossed; it was the results.

The houses came in the following order:

**4<sup>th</sup> – Kedermister**

**4<sup>th</sup> – Villiers**

**3<sup>rd</sup> – Seymour**

**2<sup>nd</sup> – Robinson**

**1<sup>st</sup> – Harvey**



This year's House Drama was definitely one to remember. With all the talent and skills showed, everyone had a fantastic time and it will be hard for next year's house drama to match the quality shown this time.



# Year 9 Sicily Trip

*Written By Simrun Chandale & Anitha Mclean (9V)*

Finally the day we had been waiting for had come: 14<sup>th</sup> March, 4:30 am, Heathrow Airport! Though everyone was excited, the children, teachers and parents all looked rather weary in the very quiet terminal. After bidding our farewells, we boarded the plane and set off on our adventure! The plane journey was in fact quite relaxing – none of us having enough energy to act like wild animals yet- and with a quick stop off we were soon back charging down to the second plane where Faiza barged straight into the emergency exit setting off an ear splitting alarm before we landed in Catania Airport.

Suddenly the cool breeze and warm sun hit us as we stepped outside and boarded the coach, the miserable English weather was behind us! First stop: the orange plantation (La Tenuta del Gelso). At first most were thinking, an orange plantation? Why would we visit an orange plantation? Expectations were not the highest. However our thoughts were short-lived as we entered the beautiful La Tenuta del Gelso. We had a short talk on the history of the place, where many years ago, fresh orange juice and wine was made. Shortly after that, we were delighted with a huge Italian feast! From different types of bread, olives, fresh orange juice and pizza (this was obviously eaten the quickest – anymore tired or droopy faces immediately faded at the sight of the pizza!) And it only got better, we then went to the orange fields where we were surprised at what we found. Expecting the simply rather orange oranges, we found out they were in fact blood oranges due to the volcanic ash soil of Sicily. There were also other fruits, one being a fruit that looked like a gigantic lemon! The guide however, told us that these were not lemons but something you eat as a salad, so few of us lugged the huge yellow fruit back to the hotel so we could go home and try it. To our dismay, we found out that they were in fact huge lemons that just took up 1kg of our luggage space! At around 5:30pm we arrived at the hotel. We settled into our rooms and ate our 3 course meal. Shortly after that we took a trip into the town to buy some water. The walk was beautiful, though we were rather tired, the harbour of the city was lit and the atmosphere was calm. When we got back, everyone pretty much knocked out because we were so tired!

7:30am, we were eating a continental breakfast and an hour later, we left the hotel after collecting our lunch. We boarded the coach and met our coach guide. While travelling to the Volcano, our guide told us about the history of Mount Etna, however his extremely soothing voice only made us all feel rather sleepy – everyone loved it, he was much like a nursery rhyme coaxing us to sleep, the downside: I doubt many people were awake enough to take in what he said. After reaching 1900m, we got off and took a cable car. We could now feel the cold and everyone wrapped up nice and warm. The cable car ride was amazing as we went up the snowy Mount Etna. It was rather funny when the cable car would randomly stop or shake and a lot of the girls would go off on a screaming rampage of how we were all going to fall! Fortunately, that didn't happen! Our trek was still not over, for when we got off the cable car (and eventually got over the fascination of snow) we then had to take a big snow mobile even further up. The mobiles were surprising rather warm and toasty, especially in the blistering cold. We eventually got off and laid our footprints on the snowy surface of the Volcano.





# Year 9 Sicily Trip

*Written By Simrun Chandale & Anitha Mclean (9V)*

We walked a small amount, but the lack of oxygen, icy cold air, uneven snow and wind that blew ice into our face, made it rather difficult to move on. However, we finally sat down on the volcano, and the hardened lava surface was beautifully warm due to the magma underneath our feet. We learnt more information about the stratovolcano which sits on a destructive plate boundary and discussed the rock types and effects on surrounding vegetation. We took the same journey back down until we reached our coach and set off once again. The sight from Mount Etna was indescribably magnificent along with the whole trekking experience itself! At the time we were too busy falling in the snow to appreciate it all as much as we do now – Mt Etna will definitely be a trip to remember.

We then went to the Alcantara Gorges (a spectacular feature of Sicily that was formed out of basalt rock that came from an eruption of Mount Etna). Thousands of years ago, when the volcano erupted, a lava flow blocked the river bed. Due to the water, the lava cooled down much quicker than normal, crystallising in the form of columns. Overtime, the water eroded a channel through the columns, resulting in a series of magnificent gorges. Our guide explained the formation and we watched a short video with a 4D experience too!





# Year 9 Sicily Trip

*Written By Simrun Chandale & Anitha Mclean (9V)*

We strolled through the place where there were even more orange trees, lush vegetation, beautiful streams and of course the breathtaking engraved gorges. What also made the Gorges location very special, was the free wifi in the café! At 17:00 we were back at the hotel and ate our meal soon after. The teachers then decided that we could have a treat: walk into the town and all buy some ice-cream. Everyone, including the teachers, were very excited to be having ice cream at 21:00 and for the first time on the trip, so we all cheerily walked down till we reached the ice cream shop...it was as if the world was crumbling around us... there was no ice-cream!! It was only then that we realised that the summer season hadn't begun yet, so the ice-cream stock wasn't there. The upside? Everyone found out what an amazing Italian linguist Kiran was! After deciding that walking another mile to the next ice-cream shop was too much, everyone trudged back to the hotel with long faces. Our plans to stay up mostly failed, unfortunately we were just too exhausted from our exhilarating day to feast on our stash of sweets and stay up past midnight!

The third day was really exciting! It was a blazing hot day, and we took a ferry to Lipari and the neighbouring islands, where we visited an archaeological museum with various artefacts on show such as pots and actor's masks. These were interesting, because the actors would use the same masks in plays to distinguish their character. The museum was cool and contrasted to the hot heat outside - this is because it was made out of stone which is cool to touch. However, the best part of the day was Lipari Island. Lipari contains mud baths which are beneficial for the skin as they contain minerals which make the skin soft and silky. When we stood outside the baths, a putrid odour filled our senses - as the sulphur in the mud smelt like foul, rotten eggs! A couple of us were put off by the stench, but those brave enough to try it out were pleasantly surprised! Once you were in the mud, the smell wasn't so bad, and we had great fun immersing ourselves in the mud. We could wash off by the sea side and go back in for more! For those who didn't go in, the story was rather funny. Half of us went with Mrs Chowdhury to go to the toilet, but we had to walk rather far until we reached the café so by the time we got there we convinced each other how tired we were to walk all the way back to the beach with the others. So instead, we sat down, bought Coke, chocolate macaroons and chatted away beneath the sun. Some of the others were rather annoyed that we didn't return but who could pass up chocolate and Coke??

On the fourth day of the journey, we headed off to Syracuse. Syracuse is an ancient, archaeological town - which once rivalled Athens, and the birthplace of engineer and mathematician Archimedes. It is home to some of the oldest amphitheatres in Southern Italy and Sicily. Yet again, we were escorted around by a friendly guide, who didn't send us to sleep, but was very passionate about what she was talking about! She informed us that the slaves were forced to mine and build monstrous stone walls under the control of horrible dictators and Titans. We were lead into an absolutely huge cave, where our voices echoed. The guide even gave us a song! After this, we visited a Greek Amphitheatre, where the actors would perform tragedies, comedies and dramas. Those of the group taking classics were particularly intrigued, as this would help them when they started learning about the life of the ancient Greeks. Others of us tended to just sit and take in the view!





# Year 9 Sicily Trip

*Written By Simrun Chandale & Anitha Mclean (9V)*

At around midday, we ate our packed lunches in the square, and then walked a small distance to the Cattedrale di Siracusa where we were all enchanted by the immense scale of detail in the stained glass and architecture. Cathedrals are places of Christian worship, and back in the olden times, the locals would visit this cathedral to pray to God as much as possible.

Then, we were blessed with about an hour of free time! There was a competition to see who could have the best Sicilian experience. Some of us hunted around for organic, traditional food like olives and gelato and drinks like Sicilian lemonade. Others filmed dramas acting out the places that they had found. Points were awarded for each activity we did. Walking round the town was relaxing - the old, cobbled streets parallel with the high end, flashy designer road. We had time to purchase souvenirs and make friends with the cats! After this, we thanked the guide and boarded the coach back to the hotel.



Up early at 7am, we finished off the rest of our packing before going down to eat breakfast. For half of the day we would go to Taormina - the town in the hills. We thanked the hotel staff and departed on the coach to a bus waiting area. The bus then took us up the winding roads - rain beginning to drizzle! Mr Mace led us through to another amphitheatre with an absolutely amazing view! We took a group photo with the bread (Sicily 2016 inside joke) and in front of a fountain. Again, the view was stunning - water on one side and the amphitheatre on the other. Then, we had about an hour and a half of free time where we went shopping and sampled delicious, freshly baked pizza. I think I speak for all of us when I say that the pizza was one of the best foods we had ate this trip! Then in a matter of moments, it was finally time for us to head to the airport. While we were on the coach, Mr Aplin's hidden talent of poetry was revealed, his detailed account was a humorous yet perfect way to recall such a magnificent trip!

We were all tired and happy to be heading home, but sad that it had ended so quickly. After going through baggage and security, we waited for an hour for our plane to arrive, as there were some delays. We all sat on the floor, passing the time with talk and games. The first plane ride was quite noisy with our voices and exhilaration, but by the second plane, most of us drifted off to sleep, and it was a lot less loud.

We landed safely in the UK and were reunited with our family again! Hira even travelled to Heathrow to come and see us all!

Sicily was an amazing experience for us all, one which we will not forget quickly. We'd like to thank Mr Mace, Mr Aplin, Mrs Francis and Mrs Chowdhury for organising the activities and being there for us. This would not have been possible without them!



# KS4 Pompeii Trip

*Written By Jaslina Gill (10H)*

From the 21st to 24th March, 28 GCSE Classical Civilisation students were fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to explore the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum in Naples, Italy. After a short flight from Gatwick to Naples, we were definitely excited to settle down at the hotel and find out what we were going to be doing for the next 3 days.

The first day was a busy one; after breakfast, we went from the hotel to Mount Vesuvius, which we climbed to the top. Most of us were quite shocked at how big the mountain actually was considering we had only really seen it in photographs or in videos, so it helped us to understand the kind of impact it had on the towns that were destroyed in the eruption. While climbing, we got to look at the crater inside the volcano as well as the view from the top of the mountain, which was stunningly breath-taking!

We then made our way back down and visited Herculaneum, the smallest of the two towns, and completed activities in groups which helped us familiarise ourselves with the buildings, objects, paintings etc. Being able to see everything we've studied in real life has definitely given us a greater understanding of how the people lived, meaning that we can be able to apply our own knowledge as well as what we've already been taught.



The second day greeted us with a lovely storm, and after an early start we made our way to the train station, which took us to Pompeii where we spent the whole day since it was a lot bigger and there was a lot more stuff to get done in comparison to Herculaneum. Each of us in our groups were given the task of creating a presentation on a specific topic to do with Pompeii (which was helpful as it gave us the opportunity to recall what we've already learnt) and we presented them as we explored the town. Since it was a competition between the groups to see who would get the most points for the presentations, we all put in a lot of enthusiasm and effort because obviously, we all wanted to win.

Once we had returned to the hotel and had dinner, some of us along with the teachers walked to a local ice cream shop in Sorrento for some ice cream which we can all agree was really nice. Since we spent the whole day walking in the rain, the majority of us were relieved to get back to the hotel and rest!



# KS4 Pompeii Trip

*Written By Jaslina Gill (10H)*

The last day consisted of us getting ice cream in the morning (again), and being given some free time to explore Sorrento and get souvenirs. The town itself was very scenic, and it was really nice to be able to take in some of the beautiful views that a lot of us had never experienced, before we had to leave.

After we spent a couple of hours in Sorrento, we put all of our stuff on the coach, and then set off to the Naples Archaeological Museum, where we got to look at different mosaics and statues as well as complete more group activities. Sadly, we had to say goodbye to a wonderful trip as we left a few hours later to get to the airport to return home.



As much as we didn't want to leave, we were extremely grateful that we had this experience, and all of us that went on this trip can definitely say that we had the most incredible time. We would also like to give special thanks to Mrs Hidden, Mrs Andrews and Mr Wolters for taking the time to make this trip the most enjoyable experience for everybody!



# Gold D of E Practice

Written by Pratyush Jain (6H)

On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> April, 12 Gold DofE students embarked on a 6-day journey to Dolgellau (pronounced Doll-Geth-Lie – I believe), North Wales, in order to complete training and the practice expedition as part of our Gold DofE. It was an emotional, eye opening, liberating and physically testing experience that we all enjoyed, in the end at least!

We all reached school for 9am and after preparing, departed at roughly 10am, raring to climb mountains and motivated to complete the expedition, having looked at the views on top of Cader Idris – the mountain we aimed to climb, oh boy was that about to change. After the long 6-hour journey from Langley to Dolgellau, we reached King's Hostel, where we would stay for the first 2 nights; having seen beautiful scenery across England and Wales, motivation levels had increased. We were then told to go to our dorms to get comfortable and then come to the lounge in 15 minutes, where we had our briefing. On the first day, we practised our tent pitching skills, which was a new experience for some people, as well as learning how to use the emergency shelter, the best way to describe it would be, a large red parachute like sheet, which we all sit under, to protect us in case of extreme weather. We also got the chance to use a survival bag and finally got to taste Mr Podbury's fine cooking skills as he made a nice curry for our dinner.



On the second day, it was our practice walk, we started out by packing 1 rucksack between our pairs, unlike the 2 we would take for the actual walk and then after finding the route on our maps, headed out for our first day of walking. This was difficult with steep inclines and hard rocky terrain, however the weather was forgiving, and after 5 hours of walking, we reached the hostel, tired and exhausted; some of us doubting if the next 4 days could be done, after the long first day of walking. We then packed our bags for the 4 days, Mr Podbury made us dinner; our last substantial meal for a while, then we planned our route and then slept, ready for the long day ahead.

On the third day, after making our breakfast, we set off in our groups of 6, the weather was not forgiving anymore, neither was the initial terrain. We walked through the cold snow falling down on us, and sludgy ground and steep inclines, which really dampened our motivation. However, as soon as we hit flat ground, and the sun was out, we could really appreciate the beautiful views surrounding us. Our pace picked up and we had the belief again that we can complete the 4 days of walking. On our way, we walked through valleys surrounded by beautiful rivers and nature, and even met another DofE group from Birmingham on the way. Reaching the campsite on the first day was like seeing light at the end of a dark tunnel, the relief and satisfaction after completing the first day was amazing, and the feeling being inside your tent, dry without your boots is quite blissful at that point! We made our dinner and most of us slept early, exhausted after the day of walking.

On the fourth day, we had another long day of walking, and after making breakfast, we set off into the fields one more time. It was one of the most memorable days, especially for me, as we had an interesting encounter with cows, or cow faeces to be precise. After Ollie had gotten stuck in a cow pat, and fallen in, I attempted a rescue and didn't realise the land I was about to step in was in fact a whole metre deep stack of cow pat, of which I was now knee deep in!! After this the rest of our day was spent walking through the tricky terrain, as we found out the strength of nature, battling strong winds, and as a result having to take our escape route around Cader Idris, instead of climbing Cader Idris to its summit; this was quite disappointing for some of us. As we battled through the strong winds, struggling to walk and climb higher and higher, we finally reached flatter terrain that was downhill all the way to the camp site. What a relief!



# Gold D of E Practice

*Written by Pratyush Jain (6H)*

On the fifth and the penultimate day, motivation levels were mixed as we knew we would be home the next day, but the day ahead seemed like impending doom. We had another tough start to the day, and after breakfast we set off, with another steep climb. This day was perhaps the most testing for all of us, as the relenting climbs were really getting to us, both physically and mentally. However, after reaching the top and walking down seeing the amazing views, mountains, rivers and the stunning clouds it made us realise that hard work does pay off. It had been raining for the whole day from about 8am in the morning to late at night, and nearing the end we were really demoralised after we saw another climb after already ascending a large hill, which we originally thought to be the highest point of our journey. The torrential rain combined with the harsh winds and the cold at altitude meant that morale was at a low point. However, with determined team work and everyone pulling together we completed the climb; even if we did crawl, scream, cry, get lost and take steep routes, in the end, together we made it to the camp site. Our struggles didn't end there though, as when we reached the camp site, the whole ground was soaked and we couldn't find a place to pitch our tents. After we finally did, we realised our waterproofs hadn't done much water proofing and everything was wet and cold, including the sleeping bags we had to sleep in. We, reluctantly for some of us, made a hot meal in the cold to keep us going and stay warm during the night.

On the sixth and final day after the aftermath of the previous testing day, we took a long time to recover, and get ready to set off again. We woke up and packed and set off again for our last day of walking which was a relief for everyone. Our motivation was the fact that we could be home later tonight and it kept us going. However, it didn't last long, as Mr Podbury intercepted us mid-way through our walk and said we now have to go home on the mini buses as due to our slightly late start, we would not finish our walk until the evening, meaning we would reach school very late, which no one wanted. So the expedition was finally over. It didn't feel great at the time, but we realised, in combination with the walking we did on the first training day, we had done enough walking to practice for our real expedition and the feeling of being dry and sitting in a mini-bus was again so delightful. We then reached school at around 3pm and unpacked everything, hung the shelters and tents out to dry, folded and packed our maps and returned all school equipment and finally went home!



Overall, the experience was great, although at times we questioned why we were doing it, we felt very satisfied though after completing it with a real sense of accomplishment. We had learned a great deal of new things. We learned the power of stories by how they helped us get through the pain of walking, distracting our minds. We learned the vital importance of team work and how it can help us get through any situation. We learned and rediscovered our own physical and mental limits and realised when pushed we can achieve a lot more than we think. We learned to appreciate things a lot more, for example our beds, being dry and mum's dinners! For us, we could come back to our homes, but we realised for some un-privileged children this is reality they have to face every day in life, starving having to walk for miles, so we became more grateful for everything that we have. Finally, I would like to thank all the 12 people who embarked on this journey as well as Mr Podbury, who was constantly there as a source of motivation and support, who helped us get through our practice expedition. Also to Ms Curtlin who drove the Mini Bus to different collection points and to the campsites, as without her we would be still stuck in Wales!



# Year 12 Oxbridge Conference

*Written by Dayna Gill (6B)*

On Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, accompanied by Mrs Rackstraw and Mrs Goulding, 30 Year 12 Students attended the London leg of the Oxbridge student conference at Epsom Downs Racecourse. Upon our arrival we were greeted by undergraduates from both Universities and given a timetable of the day; with back-to-back lectures many of us were worried about when we'd get a chance to eat lunch, but thankfully for many of us, there was a burger van onsite.

The first lecture consisted of an introduction into student life at both Oxford and Cambridge; we were given an insight into the collegiate system that both universities use as well as an overview about some of the aspects that make both universities such prestigious institutions. Both universities operate using a weekly tutorial system where each student is assigned a tutor and they attend one on one or two on one sessions where the students go through problems with the tutor or discuss recent work; though at first they seem intimidating, they are a fundamental part of their learning. We were also reassured about the varied 'Student Life' that both universities boast, with the different colleges running different societies, from rowing to chocolate tasting!



The lectures that followed were all subject-based lectures, ranging widely from Law to Natural Sciences, a subject that many of us were unfamiliar with. Natural Sciences is a course run by Cambridge University that combines Chemistry, Biology and Physics with several other sciences, taking the place of traditional single sciences. The lecture entitled 'How to make a competitive application' also provided us with some useful information in regards to how to ensure our applications are unique and meet the Universities' requirements.

All in all, we enjoyed the day as it allowed us to explore the courses we were looking to study at University in more detail and perhaps even introduced us to new courses we had not yet considered. We are very thankful to Ms Makowski for arranging this opportunity for us.



# A Level Music Trip

*Written By Manav Kher (6H)*

On Wednesday 16th March, the A level music group attended a chamber music workshop with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The aim of this workshop was to familiarise students with the social and historical context of some of our set works, with an in-depth analysis and a critical commentary. This experience was enlightening for our A level students, as they experienced the set works played live by world class musicians. Students were able to engage with the speaker, Professor Rachel Leach; an expert in the field of music, allowing them to expand their knowledge of the set works beyond what is required in the EdExcel Specification. The experience as a whole allowed the A level students to broaden their knowledge of the set works and music as a whole; improving their knowledge of Aural analysis and the various set works they study for the exam.



We gained a lot from the trip and we would all like to thank the music department for organising such an event for us as it allows us to be even more prepared for our forthcoming assessments and examinations. It really was a useful experience!



# Instagram Photography Competition

*Written by Mrs Stanton*

The winning entries for the Winter Instagram photography competition have now been selected by the Senior Leadership Team. Congratulations to Iqra Shahul 7V whose photograph was chosen as the overall winner and to Amaan Khalid 10K and Nikasa Dewan in 7S who came joint second.

It is now time to start taking photos for the next competition; Yes you've guessed it, the theme is Spring!

The closing date for the competition will be **Monday 9th May**

Email entries to [emmastanton@lgs.slough.sch.uk](mailto:emmastanton@lgs.slough.sch.uk) and look out for your images being posted on the @lgsartists Instagram feed.



## The winning Image!

Misty morning by **Iqra Shahul 7V**

**Amaan Khalid 10K**, was joint runner up with this shot taken on the school visit to Iceland



**Nikas Dewan 7S**, was joint runner up with this image of frosty grass