

THE TCS Tribune

Achievement • Excellence • Integrity



Issue #24 - Spring 2025



Testbourne Community School

Achievement • Excellence • Integrity



Dear valued Parents, Carers, and members of the community,

Welcome to the 24th edition of the TCS Tribune. This is our termly magazine dedicated to sharing the activities of the students and staff in our wonderful school with our wider community.

This term has been packed with curricular and extra-curricular activities. We have entered teams into the Basingstoke Engineering Competition, had a trip to the Oxford Chemistry Teaching Laboratory, as well as to Poetry Live. We had our annual Dragon's Den competition, and many sports fixtures and successes- we've been involved in the Rotary Stem Challenge, visited Berlin and had our inaugural ski trip, and so much more. As usual, you can read about all of these and more in the following pages of the Tribune.

As you know, our Year 11 students are busy preparing for their GCSE examinations. The year group have been exceptional throughout this academic year in both their focus and behaviour. They have recently completed their second set of mocks and have received their results in a presentation as close as possible in format to the real Results Day. This gives them a taste of what it is like to receive those all important envelopes in August. They just have one final push of effort now to achieve their best in the final exams throughout April, May and June and we all wish them the best of luck.

Earlier this term, we had also had our Open Morning for existing parents. This is a fantastic opportunity for parents of children currently attending the school to experience the school during normal working hours. Parents were very complimentary about how calm and productive the school is and had a great deal of praise for their student guides who showed them around and answered questions. Please look out for further opportunities to visit. Although we know it can be difficult to take time off work, we think it can be a very valuable experience for all. In addition to our open mornings for our current parents and carers, we also have regular SLT (Senior Leadership Team) surgeries. If you have an issue or question and are not sure how to resolve it, a surgery appointment can be useful to put your mind at rest and help you to address the situation. We offer SLT surgeries every half term so look out for the invitation to book your place on the next one.

This term also saw us have our Executive Student Leadership Team interview. Mrs Muddle and I were joined by one of our governors, Claire Ellis, to form the interview panel. As is the case every year, we were incredibly impressed with how well prepared and how articulate the candidates were. Each of them brought unique characteristics to the role so we decided, after much deliberation, to appoint them all to the senior role. Their names are Nathan Partridge, Chanuli Watta Waduge, Sophie Burton, Oyebola Adeniyi, Evie John and Ava Selwood and we offer our congratulations to them all. We tried to give the candidates a genuine interview experience and they performed better than some adults in a similar situation.

As you are aware, each half term we recognise students for consistently demonstrating our Standards of Excellence by presenting them with a Headteacher’s recognition letter. These Standards underpin our ethos and expectations in the school and are Kindness & Respect, Honesty & Integrity, Ambition and Leadership.

Autumn 2

Beth Cann
Max Wingfield
Flint Hopkinson
Lily Dowling
Shuan Michael Valderama
Mia Lockley
Jayson Akaffou
Robyn Hadfield
Finley Cox
Matilda Barton

Spring 1

Annable Davis
Thomas Powell
Jack Chafer
Ellie Binfield
Morgan Mason
Joy Lebentz
Fred Lomax
Asha Torrens
Evie Baker
Thomas Smallridge

Additionally, you may be aware that we have “Hot Chocolate Friday.” This event is a weekly recognition event for students who have demonstrated exceptional effort in their learning and in modelling the Testbourne Standards of Excellence. This term, the recipients of Hot Chocolate Friday have been:



Amber Ball	Aiden Jenvey	Louie Casey-Brown	Pitsinee Boonleam
Leo Chandler	Luke Waako	Dylan Peacock	Amy Robinson
Leon Thomson	Oyinkansola Bada	Jack Chafer	Lola Johnson
Lily Dowling	Catherine Eadsforth	Daniel Smith	Alfie Stickland
Lochlan Williams	Jasmine Owen	Ruby Etherington	Lucas Judge
Serafina Foxbatt	Cameron Marrocco	Chloe Hillier	Poppy Taylor
Scarlett Yeck	Sam Orange	Chanuli Watta Waduge	Vanya Mykhailetskyi
Zoe Allen	Nathan Partridge	Thomas Powell	Caitlin Phillips
Devesh Kumar	Ellie Binfield	Annabel Davis	Zach Brown
Grace Carey	Izzy Reeves	Thomas Smallridge	Jasmine May Jowett
Zak Stephenson	Holly Walker	Taylor Kirk	Elle Williams
Tajay Samuda	Lewis Nye	Millie Green	Felicity Hall
Victoria Wykes	Sophie Noble	Robyn Featherstone	Naomi Fisher
Jayson Akaffou	Sophie Zealley	Sophia Rowland	River Bettesworth
Rex Stuart	Grace Smeeton	Analeigh Cockerell	Edward Hollis
Emily Moore	Jana Dunford	Aimee Davis	Nicolas Quiroga
Xander Wright	Sami Dunford	Morgan Mason	Harry Barlow
Luke Sanderson	Alana Stafford	Jacob Rose	Sophie Brown
Isabella Price	Oakley Williams	Ewan Ralph	Joseph Gumn
Grace Routley			

All that remains is for me to wish you a very happy Easter break. We hope that you get the opportunity to spend some quality time with friends and family and we look forward to seeing your children at the beginning of next term.

Best wishes,

Mr Jon Beck
Headteacher

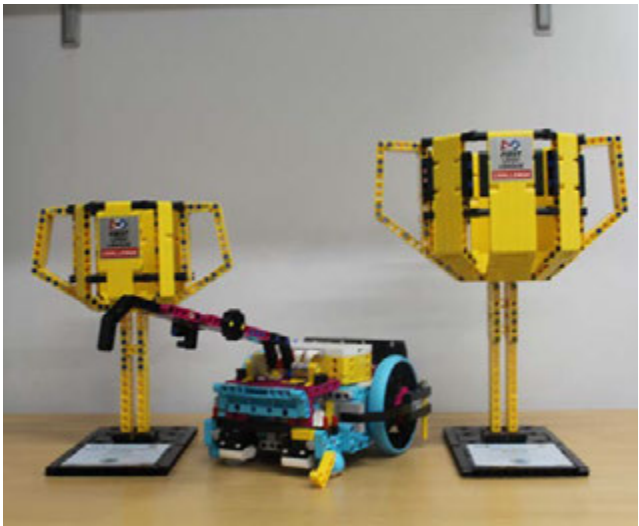
Lego Robotics League 2025

TCS is proud to announce the outstanding achievements of ten Year 8 students at the first Lego League regional tournament, which was hosted by The National Motor Museum in Beaulieu. The event saw students from six schools compete in a series of challenging tasks, showcasing their skills in designing, engineering, and teamwork.

The competition required students to design, build, and program a Lego robot to complete various missions. The team also undertook an innovation project to address the question:

"How can we explore and research the deepest depths of our ocean?" The students responded by creating a model of an underwater station, accompanied by a short stop-motion film.

Throughout the tournament, the team participated in three robot mission games and presented their project to a panel of judges, who evaluated their robot's design and build. Testbourne Community School's team of ten students excelled in all aspects of the competition, earning both the Robot Performance Award and the Champions Award.



This remarkable success highlights the dedication and hard work of the students and their commitment to STEM education. Testbourne Community School looks forward to continuing to support and nurture the talents of its students in future competitions.

"The students have done incredibly well over the past four months, learning important STEM skills like programming and engineering, as well as how to work as a team. We are really proud of all that the students have achieved."

- Mr. Wingfield





World Book Day

This term, TCS celebrated World Book Day, a global celebration of books, stories, and the magic of reading that's held annually on March 6th, with fun activities that promoted reading and storytelling. This year's theme, "Rediscovering the Power of Stories," encourages readers to reconnect with tales that have shaped our lives and inspired us to dream bigger.

KS3 students enjoyed a cliffhanger-filled story book, 'Underlay Underlings' by Joseph Coelho, and also watched videos of authors discussing their own books. Book tokens were distributed, to be used to purchase this year's £1 books or contribute towards another book. Plus, the school library has fresh new titles for students to explore, including collections like Read for Empathy and Women's History Month.

World Book Day is more than a celebration, it's a reminder of the power of books to educate, entertain, and connect us. Please come and check out the many new and classic books in the school library and find your new favourite.

News From The Library

There have been lots of exciting activities taking place in the library this term. The stock has been updated with many new books from the School Library Service. There have been displays to help celebrate and promote, Reading for Empathy, Women's History Month and LGBTQ+ History Month. We have created, 'If you like,' displays to help support students choose similar books to series they might have enjoyed, like Alex Rider, Goosebumps and Heartstopper.

During lunchtimes we have introduced two quieter days, 'Mindful Mondays' and 'Wellness Wednesdays,' where students are encouraged to read quietly or take part in mindful activities. We have expanded the range of board and card games that children are able to borrow during their break time. We have also set up a puzzle library, which has been a very popular addition.

In KS3 we have been taking part in various creative writing projects during literacy lessons. Our Year 7 pupils took part in the National Literacy Trust Storytelling Week project with author Steven Camden, where they discovered how to create characters and map out stories to help them to write their own tale. Whilst our Year 8s completed the Grim Tales Challenge and took on the tricky task of writing a twisted fairytale in just 100 words.

Finally, if you are spring cleaning and come across any "lost" library books in your child's bedroom, please ensure that they are returned to school as soon as possible. There is currently just under 500 overdue books that other students are waiting to read.



CREST Club Oxford Trip

In January, four CREST Club students were invited on a day-long trip to the Oxford Chemistry Teaching Laboratory as part of the Top of The Bench Thames Valley regional heat. The goal of this event was to collaborate as a team in order to successfully, and as independently as possible, conduct a chemistry based practical investigation.

Jack has written an account of the challenge:

“When we first arrived at the facility, we were given a short briefing on what our task was – to identify and diagnose illnesses and medical conditions in four unlabelled urine samples. Soon after, we entered the laboratory, and the challenge began.

We worked in teams of 4 and were given access to several laboratory machines and apparatus, for example, a fume hood, vacuum filter, melting point machine, and various other instruments. We used mostly GCSE Level, a few A-Level and even some first-year degree level techniques, which included chromatography, use of a UV lamp, separation techniques and data representation/recording on a graph. We worked tightly and cohesively as a team to complete everything and were able to work well together. We were given a time limit of 5 hours, and we successfully completed most of the main tasks, though there were still a few parts left to do.

After the challenge, we saw a presentation from a Chemist working in the explosives industry. The presentation covered her own education and career path, as well as lots of information about the industry as a whole. It was an extremely interesting and enjoyable presentation to watch, and it showed us much more about careers in Chemistry than we had seen before.

It was certainly a difficult challenge, but also very fun, and an incredible experience to be given. Our team did not win, but all our given answers were correct, and I am very proud of myself and my teammates to have been able to perform so well.

If you are in Year 9 or 10 and would like to get involved in CREST club, where you investigate a project of your choice, please see Mrs Romain in Room 30 for more details.”

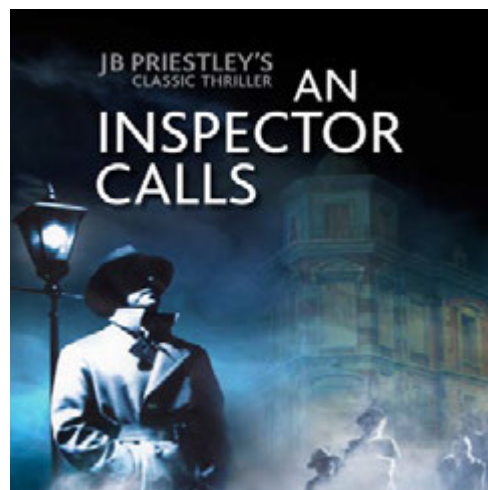
Jack, Year 10



"I Don't Play Golf!" - An Inspector Calls Trip

The trip to see "An Inspector Calls" was an overall great experience. The bus trips to and from Southampton went smoothly, and the play itself was fantastic. The pyrotechnics were surprising, and nonetheless appreciated, and there was an appropriate reaction to the "I don't play golf" line. The experience offered useful insights to be used throughout my English Literature GCSE, such as new interpretations of characters. In conclusion, the play and trip was an enriching and useful experience, and I would highly recommend it to others.

- Dan



Poetry Live! in Oxford

TCS returned to Oxford this term for 'Poetry Live!', where students can listen to and interact with writers presenting their poems, giving context to their GCSE literature work and inspiring creativity. Here is a review of the trip written by a student:

"I attended Poetry Live in Oxford and found it to be an experience that redefined my perception of contemporary poetry; to behold the raw fervour and emotion wrought in every line gave the poem a certain embodiment that could extend beyond the bounds of a mere textbook.

I was fascinated upon hearing the poignant stories that compelled the poets to write their pieces. One that previously resonated with me was the poem Remains. These stories provided an alternative perspective on the implicit meaning behind each poem and by providing more context allowed me to make experiences of my own to apply when it comes to my GCSEs. The experience was immersive, which I can now apply to my responses in class. The poets were entertaining, with performances varying from morose and melancholic to pure comedy, with some poets breaking out into song.

One thing I found most useful was hearing the AQA English examiners analyse the effects of language in a thought-provoking and insightful way, through which we were shown different examples of responses. It was interesting to see how to plan and structuring answers."

- Evie



Ski Trip 2025

In February, a group of Year 8 students travelled to Italy to ski at the Artesina resort. The journey began with a coach journey over the channel, followed by 5 full days of skiing. Despite the foggy weather at times, students got the opportunity to ski down a range of mountains, from beginner tracks to the steepest slopes.

Each group ventured to amazing viewpoints and saw unforgettable sights, including an evening of night skiing under floodlights, engaging in the local culture through shopping and eating. When the fog cleared, it brought blue skies and heat, creating the perfect end to an exciting week. It was a packed adventure of teamwork, skill-building, and, most importantly, fun.



Chloe in Year 8 has written diary entries recounting each day of the trip:

Day 1: Travelling

The trip began with a 22-hour bus journey to Artesina, with lots of singing, followed by lots of sleeping. Once we got there we separated into our rooms and unpacked before dinner.



Day 2: Foggy Start

Breakfast was buffet style with an assortment of pastries and cereal. Around 8:30am we were called to get our ski equipment; boots, skis, poles and helmets were all fitted and ready to go. The first few days were a white-out, so each group had to stick closely together. My group (the top group) went down a black slope on the first day, some of us accidentally bombing it! After a lunch of steak haché and chips, we went out for our second lesson. My group were taken above the clouds on a 1.4k button lift to the highest point of the resort! The views were amazing. In the evening, we had a competition for how many pizzas we could eat. I managed to eat 5, however one of the boys managed a whopping 18! Each evening, we would hang out in the common room before lights out.



Day 3: Artesina & Shopping

It was an early start for us on Tuesday: up at 6:30am and breakfast at 07:00am. By now, everyone had discovered how uncomfortable ski boots could be. We got ready to go and travelled 3 hours over to another village to continue skiing in clearer weather. No comment on the amount of falling over despite the clear slopes. We came back out after a lunch with Mr Spaul joining us on the slopes. We started skiing quickly, challenging Mrs Romain to do the same. We went shopping in the evening for clothes and well-earned food. All shopped out, we went back to the hotel to get some rest.



Day 4: Dancing & Quiz

Wednesday was a late start. Thankful for the extra sleep, we were energised for the day ahead. After breakfast we kitted up for another day of skiing. It was foggy again, so morale was a bit low. My group managed to raise the mood with a speaker in one of our backpacks. We all kept skiing to stay warm until lunch. Because of the challenging conditions, our instructor decided it was time for a hot chocolate break. With the extra sugar on board, we had a snowball fight and buried one of us in snow, getting it absolutely everywhere. Zooming past the other groups while dancing to our music was one of my highlights! All tired and ready for warmth, we headed back for a quiz, with a prize of hot chocolate up for grabs.

Day 5: Night Skiing

Thursday was another early start, but the first sunny day so far. We tried new slopes, and helped a snowboarder find their dropped phone. At the end of a new black slope was a gondola. On the gondola, one group was swung side to side and up and down, while being suspended in mid-air. Some of us loved it, but some of us felt rather ill. After lunch, it was so warm that we put ice down our backs to cool down! Freddie taught us (and showed off his carving skills. After tea, we helped to load the coach with our gear and set off on the 20-minute ride to the lit slopes for night skiing. We turned our music on and skied down past the teachers. We even had a go in the snow park with the boxes and big jumps. The slopes looked incredible, and we never wanted to leave!

Day 6: Saying Goodbye

Friday was our last day. Everyone was exited for home but sad to leave. It was a bright blue sunny day, with no fog in sight. The top group were taken down the steepest slope, and no one fell over. After lunch, we went out for the last time, all the way over the mountain and jumped on a two-way ski lift to the last slope we hadn't yet skied! It was steep as it was being used for slalom training. The view was incredible! On our final way back to the hotel, we danced past the other groups to 'YMCA'. Lastly, we gave our instructor a parting gift and with that, we took off our boots and skis for the last time. We packed and prepared to leave the hotel. Everyone was sad to leave the resort and wanted to stay longer. After a long day we loaded up the coach and left for Calais.

Day 7: Home

After a night of patchy sleep, we were all ready to go home! On the way to the ferry, we had a shut border tunnel and a slight delay but eventually we were on the moving towards Dover. After stopping to switch drivers, we continued all the way back to Testbourne. When we got back, we said a big thank you to all the teachers, drivers and especially Mr Spaul and went home.

- Chloe



Pancake Day

We had a fantastic time celebrating Shrove Tuesday in the school canteen, thanks to our talented catering team who went above and beyond, offering both savoury and sweet pancakes with a variety of delicious toppings. The canteen was absolutely buzzing with hungry students (and staff) eager to dig in!



Easter Egg Food Drive

Thank you to everyone who donated Easter eggs for the Basingstoke Food Bank with the Trussel Trust. They have been delivered and the volunteers would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone at TCS. The egg drive was a big success, and we look forward to hosting further food drives in the future.



Basingstoke Rotary Engineering Challenge

In March, TCS took 12 students to The Basingstoke College of Technology to take part in the annual Rotary Engineering Challenge. Students were split into three teams of four and were given an engineering challenge - to design and build a device to launch a 'payload' from a platform vertically and through a hoop placed 3 meters above it. The intermediate team had to also incorporate a parachute to enable a safe landing. Clear communication and teamwork were imperative in achieving the most successful outcome. They were up against 30 other teams from local schools and colleges and had to impress the judges with their design portfolios as well as their tested device.

All students were a credit to the school, working tirelessly to achieve excellent results in both their portfolios and products. The judges and local mayor were very complimentary about the students and how well they stepped up to the difficult challenge. Very well done to all the students that took part.

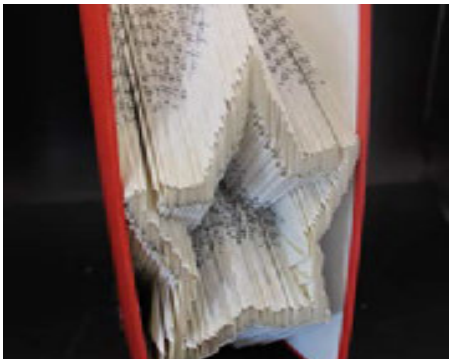


New Canteen Menu

Some changes are being made to the lunch time menu starting from the summer term! Please check out these changes on our website and digital signage in the canteen. There will be a vegetarian option served each day, and the menu will be on a 3-week rota.

Year 7 Book Art

- Andrew
Jaidon
Maisie
Dexter
- Harvey
Jace
Maddie
Flora





The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

47 Year 10 students are now a lot more skilled in First Aid and campcraft after a great training day in the sunshine on Sunday (09/03/25). Five sessions led by our team of volunteer leaders covered CPR, how to deal with bleeds and breaks, allergic reactions, heatstroke, what to do about ticks, snakes and more. At lunchtime students divided into 8 teams and practised cooking on camp stoves – 'quite tasty', 'too many herbs' and 'not enough cheese' were some of the verdicts on their pasta/rice and vegetable concoctions. All the teams also put up tents and found out what to bring (and what not to bring) in their rucksacks for expeditions. Thanks as ever to our amazing leader team for bringing all their knowledge and good humour to pass on to the students! We look forward to upcoming DofE sessions, keep an eye out for more details in the Summer Tribune.



Executive Student Leadership Team

In March, Mr Beck, Mrs Muddle, and Mrs Ellis came together to interview and select TCS's new Executive Student Leadership Team. Being in a prefect-style role, these newly appointed leaders will work as a team to engage with both staff and students, aiming to make changes and improvements to the school and our community. The interview process was tough, but each candidate demonstrated their skillset and passion tremendously, culminating in a very strong team, with each member having unique abilities and perspectives to offer. Three of our new Executive Student Leaders have shared their experiences with us:

Becoming an executive leader was both an honour and a challenge. The interview process required leadership, teamwork, and a commitment to improving the school and its community. The panel, which consisted of Mr Beck, Mrs Muddle and Mrs Ellis, was very professional but also supportive. Being appointed to this role is such a great responsibility and I'm excited to have the chance to positively contribute to the school. - **Sophie**

The interview process was a well-structured and engaging experience. I believe the series of questions help to get a better understanding of us interviewees. However, I believe the most helpful part was being asked to give a short speech about ourselves, providing an opportunity to highlight our strengths and share our personality. Overall, it was a positive experience that allowed us to showcase both our professional background and communication skills. - **Nathan**

Firstly, we had to apply for the role of prefect by obtaining all our teachers' signatures. After a few weeks, I received a letter telling me I was being considered for the role of executive leader and would need to present a two-minute speech, making me feel incredibly excited - although a little nervous. I delivered my speech and answered some questions in an interview format, so the panel could gauge my strengths. The next day, we were called in for the verdict which resulted in all of us being appointed as executive leaders, which was amazing! They thought we would work as an excellent team due to our wide variety of skills. - **Ava**

We look forward to the decisions made and projects lead by this amazing team and wish them luck in their new roles. We're sure you'll be hearing a lot from our Executive Student Leaders in upcoming tribune editions, and they would also love to hear your thoughts and ideas in future. Congratulations to **Ava, Sophie, Nathan, Oyebola, Cahnuli** and **Evie**.



Year 11 Berlin Trip

January was a busy month for our Year 11s, a highlight being the impactful and insightful trip to Berlin. Over the 4 days, students experienced the dizzying heights of the famous TV tower, deepened their cultural understanding through interactive museums and reflected upon the past at Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Two Year 11 students have recounted their experience and shared their opinions of each day:

The Berlin history trip was a wonderful experience. We were able to look deeper at many of the places we've discussed in class, and get a closer view of the marks history leaves on our world. Each place gave a new depth to what we learnt and also served as a refreshing break from day-to-day schooling while still being an active learning experience. Our first impression of Berlin was a stunning view of the night lights from the plane, from which we could already see landmarks such as the TV tower, which we would get to visit. The first full day involved wrapping up warm before taking our first walk of the city of Berlin. I enjoyed the whole day. However, my favourite part was the visit to the Olympic Stadium, just as the snow was beginning to settle and deepen, providing a glorious view while we learned about the uses and design, both past and present, for the stadium.

My favourite part of day two was the bunker museum, where we were able to walk through a detailed tour of Hitler's rise to power, his actions, and ultimately, his death. I enjoyed immersing myself in the walls of information, reading, listening to, and seeing the many pictures. We were also able to visit the Reichstag building, looking over Berlin from the glass dome and discussing both its current and past use.

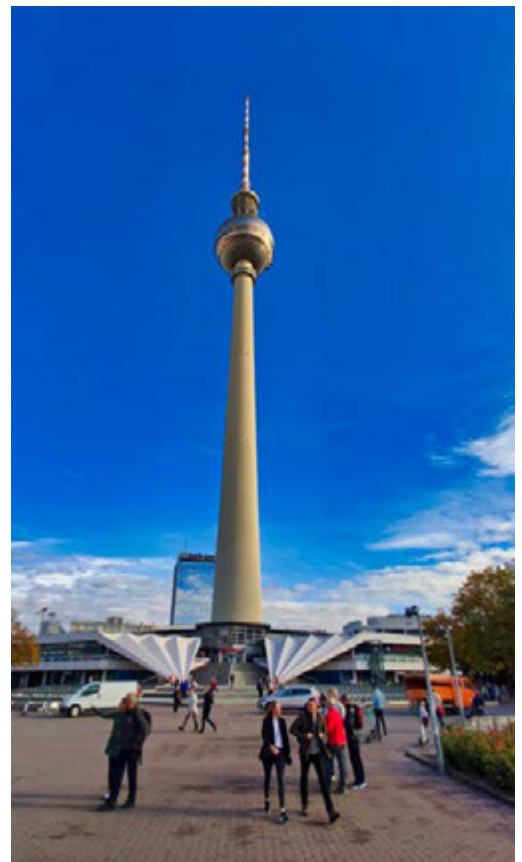




For me, the last day was the most impactful. We visited Sachsenhausen, the concentration camp, eerily nestled by a small town just outside of Berlin. The impact of the dreadful conditions faced in this area were heightened by the slippery ice and brisk cold, encouraging everyone to wrap up as warm as possible – an option unavailable to the victims of this camp. Seeing everything preserved and memorialised on the coldest day of the trip was a deeply powerful feeling. I had been taught in class, and read in books, about concentration camps countless times. But this had only given me the smallest impression of how it may have been.

After a beautiful sunset in the Berlin airport, our trip was over, having enriched my experience of history to involve more than just words to learn. Thank you to the teachers who gave up their time to give us a valuable experience for which I am incredibly grateful.

- Miriam & Rose



Year 11 Mock Exams

In March, Year 11 completed their second round of mock exams in preparation for the summer, and we are so proud of how they conducted themselves throughout the period. The exams gave students another chance to practise their exam technique and develop their familiarity with the exam rules and regulations whilst our excellent team of invigilators were on hand to help.

On Thursday 27th March, Year 11 had a mock results day, where they were able to experience collecting an envelope with their results, predicted grade, and attitude for learning score.

To help prepare for the final exams, subject teachers have run weekly Enhanced Learning & Knowledge sessions. 90% of Year 11 students attended ELK sessions during the spring term, revisiting key information and concepts to help them become more confident for their final exams. For students who opted for practical subjects, the spring term has seen them working hard to complete their coursework so it can be marked and moderated ahead of the deadlines for final submission to the exam boards. We've seen superb final dishes prepared by students in Food Prep & Nutrition, beautiful Art and Art Photography portfolios, and incredible attention to detail in DT and Engineering products. Well done to all our Year 11s for the hard work this term. We wish our Year 11s the very best of luck for their final exams.



For more information about the summer exams, please visit our school website. Year 11 students can find lots of useful revision resources on the subject pages on SharePoint, including knowledge organisers, past exam papers and mark schemes. Students also have free access to GCSEpod revision videos by logging in with their school Microsoft account.

SEND Information Afternoon

Tuesday 25th February brought in a flurry of parents and carers to TCS to meet with Mrs Gray (SENDCo), Mrs Sykes (Assistant SENDCo) and some of the SEND team for our SEND Information Afternoon. Parents were able to see the new Support Hub, Return2Learning Zone and ask questions about the support we can offer here at TCS. This event was held earlier in the day to allow parents with younger children to attend, following feedback from last years SEND Information Evening.

Thank you for all of the questions and the encouraging, kind comments about how we are supporting your young people; we hope you got as much out of the afternoon as we did meeting you.

We would like to signpost our SEND FAQ document, available on our website. We are aiming to update this in the Summer term, with further relevant detail about SEND at Testbourne.



Science Week

This term, TCS celebrated British Science Week with various interactive experiments and activities. The theme this year was Adapt and Change, and students were shown some exciting demonstrations of methane bubbles, screaming jelly babies, chicken dissections and the whoosh bottle!

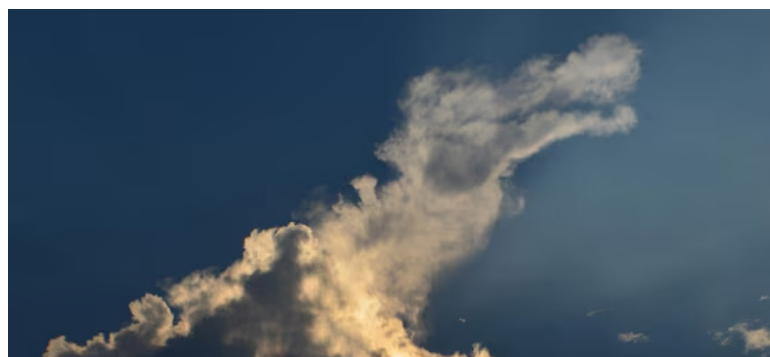
Students engaged brilliantly with the activities, and were given the opportunity to enter the national 'design a lab coat' competition run by Baylab and a school-wide element quiz.

British Science Week 2025 not only celebrated the wonders of science but also encouraged everyone to think critically about how we can adapt to challenges throughout our lives such as technological advancements and climate change. It was an opportunity to ignite curiosity and inspire the next generation of innovators. Here's to embracing change and shaping a brighter future!



A Poem

This term, we are thrilled to share a poem written by a student in Mrs Muddle's class in the style of 'Daffodils' by William Wordsworth, where students were tasked with venturing outside to find inspiration in nature and discover what makes us happy.



*Clouds
Clouds,
The little puffs of cotton
The silky white colour
The delicate placing
Each puff a different shape or colour
Silky white,
Graceful pink,
Ominous gray
Or stormy black
Each one a different story
A pirate ship
Or a dragon fight
Each so far away,
But also, so close.*

Written by **Elizabeth**

Parent & Carer Low Mood Workshop

On March 5th, TCS hosted its first Low Mood workshop for parents and carers. This was an online workshop aimed at giving parents and carers a greater understanding of the signs and symptoms of low mood and depression in young people, and provide some simple skills and strategies to take away and use to support young people who may be struggling with their mood. The workshop was mostly informative, with some optional opportunities for discussion, input, and questions via the digital chat function.

We aim to host similar sessions every term, so keep an eye out for future announcements, and please let us know if you have any queries or suggestions.



Children's Mental Health Week

Testbourne celebrated and acknowledged Children's Mental Health week from the 3rd to the 9th of February, with a range of activities based around this year's theme: Know Yourself; Grow Yourself. Assemblies were based around the importance of knowing ourselves and our emotions in order to grow, improve and be grateful for who we are and what we have.

Lisa Pascoulis, from The Molly Rose Foundation, facilitated a 'bags of happiness' workshop for Year 7 students which gave students the opportunity to reflect on the things that make them happy. Students could take their bags of happiness away with them at the end of the workshop so they can refer back to all of those happy things in the future.

Staff and students were also invited to wear a purple accessory on Thursday 6th February for a donation to The Molly Rose Foundation. Mrs Day, our Mental Health Lead, joined Lisa to hold a mental health drop in for parents and carers after school and Lisa facilitated a parent/carers workshop in the evening of Thursday 6th to further support parents/carers and signpost them to other mental health resources.

We have a wealth of mental health resources on our website, including leaflets and links. Please look under the 'Students' section for 'Wellbeing'.



Year 9 Options Evening

On Wednesday 26th February, Year 9 were invited into school for their Options Information Evening. This is always an exciting time, where students and their families get to find out more about the Key Stage 4 options process and the subjects on offer. A presentation regarding options and how students can make their choices was given by Dr Wilson and Mr Cooper in the Theatre Hall, whilst subject teachers were on hand in the sports hall promoting their subject and sharing some of the exciting things that students will study if they choose to continue with that subject next year. We are proud to offer a wide range of exciting options subjects at Testbourne. Our Year 9 students can choose from the following subjects for the next academic year:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Art | • Engineering | • Drama |
| • Art Photography | • Food Preparation & Nutrition | • Music |
| • Computer Science | • French | • Physical Education |
| • Dance | • Geography | • History |
| • Design & Technology | • Health & Social Care | • Spanish |

Students are guided to follow either the Russell or Open pathways for their key stage 4 options.

Students on the Russell pathway can choose from:

- Geography or History.
- French or Spanish (language continued from Year 9).
- Two other options subjects to study.

Students on the Open pathway can choose from:

- One of Geography, History, French or Spanish (language continued from Year 9)
- Three other options subjects to study.

All students must also pick reserve choices, in addition to their main choices, if it is not possible to allocate them to one of their first choices subjects when classes are timetabled. Allocations of option subjects will be confirmed with students in the summer term, with students receiving a letter of confirmation via their tutor. For more information about the options process, including a link to the Options Information slides and Options Information booklet, please visit our website.



Dragon's Den

For the last four years the Design Technology Department have been using the 'Dragons Den' format to help students to familiarise themselves with discussing their ideas and the various construction processes they use. Back in December, the Year 10 Design Technology classes were spilt into groups and given a choice of a challenges to create a project. In just over two short months, the groups had to complete a portfolio, product and presentation to perform in front of the 'Dragons'. This year the choice of challenges were :

- Securing and Storing Personal Possessions
- Playing Games
- Climate Change

Fast forward to March 2025 where the Dragons arrived in room 31 to view the completed presentations. We are grateful to our Dragons: Clare Scheckter, Ian Wingfield, Jonathan Worth and Barbara Watkins who gave up their time to provide observations and advice to the students.



We are delighted to report that all of the students performed admirably. Most were not used to giving presentations and taking questions from unfamiliar adults but they rose to the occasion. The Dragons were sensitive, yet probing, with their questions, and did not let the students off lightly. The mixture of interaction and reaction was very inspiring for teaching staff to observe and offered an injection of self-esteem into the students that ensured this would be an experience they would remember for a long time, as well as helping students prepare for their GCSE coursework.



Year 10 have been working hard for the past 2 months on these projects. They have been loosely following the format of a piece of GCSE coursework to help them prepare for their actual GCSE which they will start in June of next year. Every student was asked the same question "has this prepared you for your final project in Year 11" and all them came back with a resounding: "Yes".



Netball

Year 7 & 8 Netball Overview:

We are very pleased with the progress made by all teams this year. Wednesday night training has been attended by many students enabling us to have the opportunity to enter 2 Year 7 teams into the league for the first time. Matches have been held throughout the term and the individual teams are going from strength to strength.

Year 7 Netball A Team Report

The Year 7A team have had matches against Wellington, John Hanson B, Harrow Way, John Hanson A and are due to play The Clere School for their final game. They have been led by their captain Lexi O’Hagan who alongside Flora Thomas has been scoring many goals every match. The competition has been tough, but the girls have risen to every occasion and fought until the final whistle has gone. Every member has played their part, and this has led to 3 wins out 4. We are excited about the future of this newly formed squad! **Results:**

TCS V JHB 12-4 TCS V HWA 8-5
TCS V JHA 4-16
TCS V Well 8-4



Year 7 Netball B Team Report

In the 7B Team, the girls shared the captaincy role throughout the season, with a larger squad who have rotated on and off to allow for the team-wide development. A special mention to Annabel D, who received The Player’s Player 3 times, awarded by our opposition school due to her ability to contest every ball that is fed into the circle. She is always alert and ready to move. In our last game the team progress was clear, in their ability to link the passes all the way down the court allowing Madison Nash (GA) to score an exceptional goal. **Results:**

TCS v RW 0-10 TCS V HWB 2-6
TCS v JHC 2-6 TCS V DA 14-4
TCS v JHD 8-4 TCS V Win



Year 8 Netball Team Report

Year 8 netball had a very good turnout again this season, just shy of enough for 2 teams but many students available for 1 team and some friendlies alongside. We have been entered into league 1. A special mention must go to the team who, despite losing to Harrow Way, showed fighting spirit and won the last quarter of the game. A great win against Wellington made up for previous losses and now just The Clere to beat. Thank you to Grace Merrit and Bo Dowling for helping rally the team’s availability.

Girl’s Rugby

Year 7 Girls Rugby Development Day

On Tuesday 11th March, 10 Testbourne students took part in a development session of rugby led by the Basingstoke Rugby coaches. 4 schools attended the day, and fun was had by all. The

girls thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to learn new skills and build their confidence further. It was great to see Flora, Maisy, Ruby and Holly running at speed and scoring tries during the competitive stage of the competition. Well, done girls, Rugby club is on every Tuesday and open to everyone, please come along and join in!

Years 8/9 Girls Rugby Development Day

Basingstoke Rugby Club invited several schools to come and take part in a training day event on the 25th March. The response was positive and over 40 students arrived to further develop their own skills and confidence. The girls were mixed into small groups so the coaches could focus on key skills including passing, rocking and offside. It was fun, informative and a brilliant time for all.



Year 7 Girl's Football

Our Year 7's participated in the Andover Schools 5 a-side tournament at Testbourne on Thursday 20th March. They played so well as a newly formed team and enjoyed all 8 of their matches! Ruby E was an excellent goalkeeper making lots of saves which helped us throughout the tournament. Brilliant goals scored too from Alexa A and Rosie R. A big well done to the team. We look forward to seeing you all play again the future!



Boy's Rugby

Year 7/8 Boys Rugby 7-a-side Tournament at John Hanson

On Wednesday, March 12th, two teams of determined Year 7 and 8 students took part in a 7-a-side rugby tournament at John Hanson. For many of the Year 7 players, this was their first experience in a competitive rugby match. The Year 7 team showed impressive resilience and determination, even though the results didn't always go their way. Standout moments included Archie V's exceptional tackling and Tom B's impressive passing. Well done, Year 7!

Meanwhile, the Year 8 team delivered outstanding performances throughout. They kicked things off with a 2-try victory over Wellington. The rest of the tournament saw tightly contested matches, culminating in a 4th place finish. A special mention goes to our amazing team captain Noah R for his leadership, and to Oscar W for his strong, physical play. Congratulations, Year 8!



Year 9 10-a-side Tournament at Harrow Way

On Thursday, March 13th, a group of Year 9 students travelled to Harrow Way to compete in a 10-a-side rugby tournament. The tournament began with a tough match against a strong Wellington team, with Testbourne unfortunately losing by 3 tries. However, the second game saw a fantastic turnaround, as tries from Harry P and Dallas H secured a 2-try victory over John Hanson. The boys demonstrated exceptional tackling throughout, with standout performances from Harry P and Morgan M.

In the final game against Harrow Way, Testbourne faced an incredibly tight contest, which was decided by a single try. Unfortunately, that try went to Harrow Way, after Testbourne suffered a significant setback due to injury. Despite this, the team showed remarkable resilience and great determination. A special thanks to Morgan M for his excellent leadership, and to all the players for making the tournament such an enjoyable experience.

Y10 7 a side Tournament @ John Hanson

Mr Moore worked his magic and we managed to co-opt 8 brave individuals willing to compete for the school, and they did not let us down! There were three games to be played in the afternoon, and anyone who has ever played 7's will tell you how exhausting it is on a full-size pitch. All 8 players deserve the highest credit for their bravery, tenacity, sportsmanship and good humour.

The first game was against Harrow Way. HW kicked off and with a squad of 12 were able to change players frequently. A reshuffle of our troops and some tactical insights from the coaching team led to an improved second half performance. The introduction of Dylan M proved to be an inspirational selection from captain Quinten B as he produced some dazzling footwork, weaving his way through the HW players. **Final Score: HW 37 TCS 0.**

Second up were Wellington, who had even more players to choose from. The impact of recognition points for tries scored seem to spur the boys on. Ed H ran powerfully and captain Quentin B was superb, Dylan continued to dazzle, and Tom R and Ollie R grew in confidence. **Final Score: WE 20 TCS 12.**

The final game was against John Hanson, and we were tied for two tries at half time. They also had a squad of 12, a big difference for the tired TCS boys. **Final Score: JH 30 TCS 15.**

Year 9 Boy's Rugby 7-a-side Tournament at John Hanson

A depleted Year 9 team took to the field with only 7 players, this was a tough assignment against the other schools with much bigger squads. Opening against Harrow Way, the boys failed to capitalise on the chances they created. Fortunately, the excellent Morgan M was there to steady the ship and lead TCS to a hard-fought win: **12-10.**

Lastly, the fixture with our hosts. The TCS boys struggled to contain the power of John Hanson's team, who became winners of both the game and the competition. Well done to our Year 9 boys for their hard work and determination throughout the tournament!

Year 9 Boy's Rugby 15-a-side Friendly vs John Hanson

On Wednesday 12th February, we made a trip to John Hanson for a 15-a-side match. We started on the back foot, conceding two early tries. Some inspiring and motivational words from Mr Spaul encouraged the boys and they quickly rallied. The boys managed to score two quick tries, making it 14-10 at half-time. The second half was nothing short of perfect: the boys displayed some phenomenal, aggressive rugby. Led by an inspired performance from Ted V and Morgan M, the boys supported each other and kept scoring tries, ultimately resulting in a 39 – 14 win. It was outstanding!

Girl's Cricket

Girls cricket here at Testbourne is becoming increasingly popular due to so many girls now playing for clubs outside of school. Thursday Lunchtime Club has been very busy as a result of this, and we have been able to field 3 teams for this year's ECB indoor competitions.

U13s Girls Cricket

Two wins out of three matches for the U13 team. A loss to Farleigh School was then followed closely by a win against John Hanson. Regular training has enabled our girls to perform expert bowling, which showed in the final game against Toynbee school where all the girls took wickets! We are excited for the summer tournaments and ECB Cup, which we are entering both the hard and softball for the first time due to the number of students playing hardball outside of school.

U15s (Team 1)

Team 1 travelled up to Farnborough Hill School and played Farnborough and Lord Wandsworth College. After losing narrowly to FH in the first game, the girls beat LWC.



U15s (Team 2)

There were 2 separate fixtures for Team 2. The first saw a narrow loss to St Swithins and Kings. We then headed to Toynbee, where Alaia took 4 wickets in the first over, including on a hat trick ball: 3 were clean bowled! Toynbee put on 33 but good bowling from their girls saw us out 5 runs short.



Year 7 & 8 Basketball



Cross Country

Testbourne hosted the District Cross Country event in January. It was a dry day, with a record number of students taking part. Several Year 10 Sports Leaders helped to marshal the younger students. The first race was for Year 7 girls: two laps around the TCS field, a tricky course with the large hill to conquer at the start! The girls dug in and were led back home by Flora T, who finished in 5th, followed by Megan S 7th, Holly M 10th and Isla P 11th. The girls finished in 1st place overall. They were supported by Ella B who finished in 12th place, Catherine E 13th, Ismay W 15th and Pheobe S 20th. Overall, the team finished in 5th place. Testbourne was fortunate to have another team in this race and congratulations goes to Anna Q (22nd), Neave S (24th), Lexi OH (27th) and Willow B (28th).

The Year 7 boys' race was very competitive. Ralph R ran well and finished in a very respectable 4th place, supported by Spencer K (18th), Tal C (19th) and Tom B (22nd). The boys motivated each other to push until the end and the team also finished 5th overall. Archie V finished very close to Tom in a respectable 23rd and he was supported by Issac MD (27th), Leo CJ (29th) and William C (30th). It was great to have all the boys representing their school in this tough event.

The next race of the day was Year 8 girls. This had an increased distance in comparison to the Year 7 course and, right from the very start, runners were faced with an immediate incline followed by sharp corners. The first Testbourne student home was Emily G in 6th, followed by Alanah S (11th), Sophia M (12th) and Ruby C and Shayla A in 14th and 15th respectively. Great teamwork!

The last race of the day led to a very exciting result for Testbourne. Jack C came 1st; he led from very early in the race with the gap growing continuously. He looked relaxed, calm and took every stage in his stride! This was an outstanding result for a young man who hasn't long started his training at an athletics club. Jack was supported by Oscar B (4th), Devin R (6th) and Oliver N (14th). Charlie LP (16th) and Max G (17th) were also in the mix. It was a great team performance! We would like to say thanks to all the Year 10 students: this event would not have been a success without you.

As a result of performing well at the district event, Testbourne took 10 students to the Hampshire Cross Country event at Down Grange. Students had done incredibly to qualify at the Districts earlier in the year. It was glorious sunshine all day and fantastic running conditions. At the Inter Counties, Jack finished 34th after another amazing race. There were over 100 runners and at many times in the race the course narrowed, making it very difficult for the athletes to keep their pace, their position, and remain on their feet. We are all incredibly proud of Jack for what he has achieved, and we are very excited to share his success with the Testbourne Community.





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