



# NEWS@COM



The Magazine of Comberton Village College

ISSUE 64, WINTER 2023

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# Forum for student views

Six students took part in the first Cambridgeshire Student Forum of the year, organised by Unloc and held at Long Road 6th Form College last month.

This is the second year that Comberton has worked alongside Unloc to promote students' voices and Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Forum (CSF) is a programme which connects school councils and student unions from across the area, building a platform for young people to develop into local changemakers while developing student voice across Cambridgeshire. The six Comberton representatives will be working collaboratively with other students from different institutions around Cambridgeshire and will be enabled to play an active role in bringing about change which will affect all young people. Thanks to CSF, more students across Cambridgeshire are empowered to have their say, both independently and collectively. Here is feedback from some of the CVC students who are taking part in the project this year:

"The first Unloc summit was an amazing opportunity to meet new people and work on issues that impact students today. There were students from a range of schools and different year groups and this meant there was a spectrum of ideas and views. I learnt many things, such as public speaking and teamwork skills, about how to write and brainstorm ideas within my group about the presentation I was working on. I really enjoyed all the activities and learnt so much. It was an incredible opportunity and can't wait to work more on it this year." **Clemence (8R)**  
"It was a really enjoyable introduction to what we can expect from our upcoming



**GIVING STUDENTS A VOICE:**  
**Comberton pupils attended the first Unloc meeting of the year.**

work at Unloc. It provided a wonderful opportunity to meet the staff and new people from different schools, as well as identifying our groups to collaborate in and I gained valuable insight into different potential ideas. A really positive opening and I'm looking forward to what the future brings!" **Seren (9V)**  
"The Unloc Summit was a very enjoyable experience. I really enjoyed working with students from other schools and learning about different experiences of student voice. It was a wonderful opportunity to develop my teamwork and communication skills, and I am looking forward to continuing the forum through the year." **Abigail (12KS)**  
"The first Unloc Summit was completely different to what I expected — I was incredibly happy to walk in and meet so many people who shared my same enthusiasm and energy for trying to make the world a better place. It's really given me confidence to speak up about my opinions, knowing that there's so many other people out there who are doing the same." **Joshua (12JD)**



## Judges recognise resilience

Comberton student Kai has been given a special mention in The Duke of Edinburgh's 'This is Youth 2023' awards. 'This is Youth' recognises and celebrates the stories behind the DofE Award and showcases young people rising above challenges they face.

There were eight different sections — Digital Creative (Innovator of the Year), Environmental Champion (Plant Protector of the Year), Community Impact (Change Maker of the Year), Leadership (Trail Blazer of the Year), Teamwork (All-stars of the Year), Resilience (Boundary Breaker of the Year) — as well as categories for adults who support participants; Inspirational Adult (Life Changer of the Year) and Exceptional Service (Torchbearer of the Year). Kai (11B) has Graves' Disease but is determined it won't define or restrict them in life, despite battling invisible but debilitating symptoms.

They believe in always "moving forwards,

setting challenges and helping others along the way" and was given a special mention, essentially named as one of the runners-up, in the Resilience section.

Kai began their DofE journey as a way to feel independent and embrace adventure. Despite not knowing how they would feel moment to moment, Kai fully welcomed the challenge of their Expedition section and took up the gauntlet of map-reading and motivating others in their team — no easy feat, especially when they were feeling unwell themselves.

Kai's Volunteering section — coaching at a netball club — has been revolutionary in their life, making them realise their passion and "new-found confidence" for coaching younger children and teaching in general.

Now Kai is looking forward to continuing working for their Silver Award, meeting new groups of people and making new memories.

"I enjoy the flexibility of doing my DofE — it isn't prescriptive at all," said Kai.



**EXPEDITION SECTION: A welcome challenge.**

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**NUMBERS GAME:** The six wives of Henry VIII compete to see who had the worst life.

## Six of the best . . .

Every time we put on a school production, the students of CVC never fail to impress and the recent performance of 'Six: teen edition' was no exception, far from it.

As a student-led production it was an incredible display of acting, singing and dancing which the cast and production team only had nine weeks to complete. The show introduces the six leading ladies, each giving a run-down of her history (or herstory) with King Henry VIII.

The premise was that each wife will sing a song explaining why she had the worst time of it with the notion that the audience at the end will crown the victor (or loser?) who suffered the most.

The student director, Darcey (12SC), worked incredibly hard not to focus on the misery of the narrative, instead offering a surge of female empowerment in the spectacle of the show.

It was always intended to stick true to the internationally-acclaimed show's style where it is far more of a concert than a musical. The tone was set by the opening number, 'Ex-Wives'; the sparkling costumes, which were simply stunning among the dazzling lighting design that was put together by Leyton Russell, a technician at The Junction. The highly impressive production quality remained throughout as each queen had their own solo, supporting each other with backing vocals and literally dancing for their lives!

Iszy (13CR), as the choreographer of the show, did not hold back, challenging the cast with a mesmerising mix of styles that allowed every moment to explode with

a powerful energy. All of this was accompanied by a cheeky script that was littered with catty one-liners and antagonistic commentary through which the cast offered a vibrant and fun-packed performance that left the audiences on their feet, singing and dancing.



**DAZZLING:** The sparkling costumes and incredible lighting contributed to an amazing production.

The ensemble was exceptional, there was no space between them. Sophie (12WG), as Catherine of Aragon, opens the 'competition' with a fearless offering of 'No Way', from which the feistiness is then picked up by Connie's (11I) outstanding Anne Boleyn (fondly referred to as BoBo). Connie's playful and mischievous character brought a youthful energy to the proceedings with a competitive edge and onstage selfies to boot.

Naomi (12RA) played the heartbroken Jane Seymour to incredible effect, with her power ballad 'Heart of Stone' providing the perfect change of tone and pace.

Then came Phoebe (13SA), who raised it once more as Anne of Cleves with the superb song, 'Get Down', full of sass and attitude.

There was never a danger that by the time we got to wives five and six that the energy was going to wane.

Even when these two wives arrived in the story as arguably the lesser-known queens, they did not falter.

With Molly (11M), almost stealing the crown as an exuberant and outrageous Katherine Howard, and then Ellie (12MR) taking things in a different

direction as Catherine Parr, the survivor, who doesn't want to play this game but delivered a spellbinding vocal with 'I Don't Need Your Love'. The show was simply divine!

## Cast are treated to a West End masterclass

The cast of 'Six' indulged in a day of West End royalty, when they were joined for a six-hour rehearsal by performer Vicky Manser.

Vicky, who is a musical theatre performer and singer songwriter, was originally Katherine Howard in the West End production of 'Six', but who, over time, has also performed as all six of the wives of Henry VIII in the musical.

The workshop was really a turning point for the cast and the show as a whole.

Throughout the day Vicky offered advice to each of the ensemble about their

characterisation, looked at the intentions behind the choreography and gave a masterclass in vocal techniques, which was sublime.

The support and confidence that the workshop offered our cast was incredible, and they would all like to thank her for the invaluable advice and inspirational day's rehearsal.

We now look forward to future visits from Vicky as we aim to set up a series of masterclasses in Musical Theatre over the course of the academic year for students of Comberton.



**EXPERT HELP:** West End performer Vicky Manser works with the cast in a six-hour rehearsal.

# And now for something

On 16th and 17th October, the normal timetable for all pupils in Years 7 to 11 was collapsed and they had the chance to undertake some different kinds of learning activities.

These two Curriculum Immersion Days enable pupils to be 'immersed' into the curriculum in a different way. Year 7 pupils experienced a variety of sports (see separate article) and extended science tasks, in which they completed a crime scene forensics investigation into the 'murder' of Head of Science, Dr Smith (don't worry, she's actually fine).

The students listened to the initial call to the police made by Dr Harding identifying key suspects from within the science department. They then watched videos of police interviews and took notes to help their own investigation.

Students then carried out a series of scientific investigations to help identify the culprit. They used chromatography, flame tests, burette chemical test and pH testing to attempt to solve the crime. They then looked at all their data and came up with their prime suspect to the murder. The students thoroughly enjoyed the day and learnt some key analytical techniques as well as developing their skills at analysing data and drawing conclusions.

On one day, Year 8 pupils were able to choose from a menu of MFL activities, including having a go at capoeira, and Afro-Brazilian dance, learning about ancient Italy, studying Mandarin, playing in a Samba band and doing some fun MFL-related crafts.

Rhyleigh-Rose (8C) said: "In our Samba lesson, we explored the ideas behind the Carnival hosted in Brazil. We attempted to play many Brazilian instruments such as the surdo drum and the tamborim. We made some Carnival-themed headbands with feathers and gems, and we even tried learning some Portuguese.

"We also paraded with the samba instruments on the backfield for people to hear. It was a lot of fun and I hope to do this again another day, but for now, tchau!"

Hafsah, Ava and Mia (all 8C) reported: "Thirty Year 8 students took part in the Samba curriculum immersion day. The day started with doing a quiz to help expand our knowledge on Brazil's culture and the origin of Samba. We watched some videos on how the parades are set up, and what happens on the day.

"Next, we made some colourful headbands with different craft which would be perfect to use in a Samba parade. We played some different Samba drums and various other instruments, experimenting with different rhythms and playing some games. Then, we tried speaking some Portuguese words and communicated using them. We then had a parade, showing off our hats from earlier and playing the instruments around school."

Those who chose Ancient Italy learned about Pompeii and Gladiators, while making mosaics and decorating gingerbread men.

On the other day, the year group enjoyed a field trip to Walton-On-The-Naze to carry out Geography fieldwork, looking at coastal erosion.

Zac (8R) said: "Year 8s went to Walton on the Naze to look at the process of erosion and the sea defences in place. It was very informative but fun at the same time! I really enjoyed looking at how far the pillar boxes were out to sea.

"It was amazing that less than 100 years ago they would've been a long way inland but now are barely visible above the waves! I also loved going to the café to round it off. Thank you Comberton for taking us."

Year 9 students spent one of their days in maths where they took part in sessions on maths in everyday life such as finance and probability in games. They also did some more practical lessons where they explored the idea of a regular 3D shapes



**DETECTIVE WORK:** Students used science to solve a 'murder'.



**SENSES ON TEST:** Blindfold challenge on the PE day.

## Seeing activity in a whole new way

The PE department were excited to welcome nearly 300 new Year 7 students to their first Curriculum Immersion programme.

Over the two days students tried a number of different activities and sessions planned to give them a different view of the sports they perhaps are used to taking part in each week.

Students were encouraged to demonstrate and use different skills in each of the activities. One

of the most popular activities undertaken was Nerf Blaster — students were assigned teams in which they battled it out to overthrow and defeat their opponents in a number of game modes.

Another new activity to Comberton was Kin-Ball, again students had to come together and use teamwork to keep a very large inflatable ball off the floor while also outsmarting the opposing teams to win points.

It was great to see how quickly students were able to pick up the new activity and implement tactics as a team.



**OPPORTUNITIES:** To try new sports and activities.

For some students it was their first time trying fencing. Students were taught the basic skills, rules and tactics before challenging each other to a duel!

Pickleball was another sport which many students said they had seen being played online, but had never had the opportunity to play themselves.

They spent the first part of the session getting



used to the rules and learning how to manipulate the way the ball flies through the air before competing in matches.

Students then headed out to the forest where they put on their blindfolds and helmets ready to test their senses. They had to rely on communication and feel to manoeuvre around the pre-built obstacle course.

As teachers, we would say this was one of the

funniest activities to run as we got to watch them try and work their way around the differing terrain.

Finally, students took part in a Halloween-themed dance class.

The external dance teachers were brilliant, and students thoroughly enjoyed throwing the zombie-like shapes.

In all it was a very enjoyable couple of days for both students and staff involved. We would like to thank all of Year 7 for being brilliant and giving all the activities their best shot.

George Anderson, PE Dept

# completely different!

or used paper to build the strongest bridge.

In English Each class was given a country to make an advertising campaign for, for the 2024 Olympics. Amber (9E) said: "I loved how the whole class came together as a team by taking time to make so many creative designs, especially when we photoshopped a famous Korean pop star holding the merch we made. The whole class wanted to win and after presenting our poster, we found out we had and were rewarded with sweets Everyone really enjoyed the day."

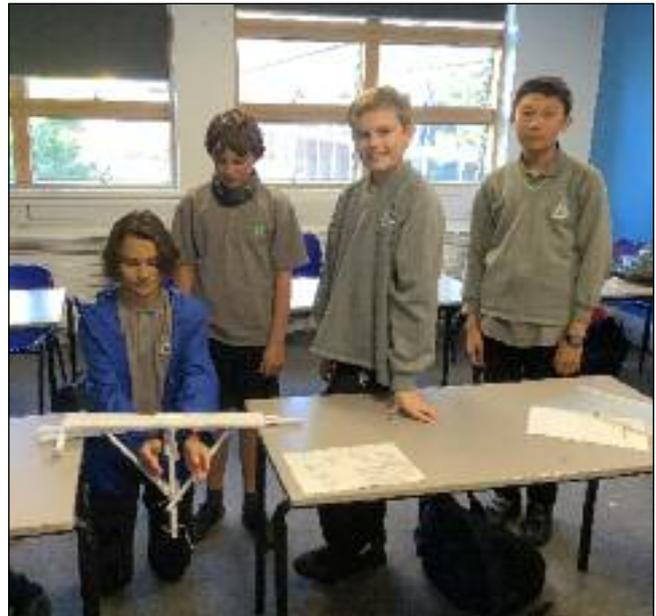
Year 10 had a varied programme: On Monday, they learnt about refugees, the Holocaust, civil rights and our democracy as part of their RPE curriculum. On Tuesday, they studied a wide range of PSHE and personal development themes as part of their wider Key Stage 4 curriculum, including the dangers of gambling, sexism and misogyny (see separate article).

We also welcomed more than 40 employers to talk to Year 10 pupils about opportunities in a range of fields at our Careers Carousel (see separate article). Being able to offer this meant that there was a whole year group 'class' of 300 pupils — a tall order for anyone.

The students all showed high levels of engagement and maturity; they clearly appreciated this opportunity, which was a delight to see.

Those year 11 pupils studying arts and technology courses had time devoted to their practical performance or coursework, while the other pupils had the opportunity to develop their team-working skills, hone their revision techniques and learn how to manage their money.

They also worked on completing their bronze 'Inspiring Digital Excellence Award', a computing qualification, by achieving credits in aspects such as staying safe on-line, Artificial Intelligence and Fake News.



**SEEING MATHS DIFFERENTLY: Year 9 bridgebuilders.**



**SPEAKING OUT: Scott Davies talks from experience about gambling addiction.**

## Spotlight on gambling

During their CI Days, Year 11 students received a presentation from Scott Davies, of Epic Risk Management, which aims to educate and tackle problem gambling and the resulting impact on mental health, relationships, finances and more.

Scott, a former professional footballer became addicted to gambling, was a really engaging speaker. He openly and bravely shared his own experiences and it was a really thought-provoking session.

Additionally, the Army gave some Year 11 pupils an idea of different career pathways in the Armed Forces, and then put them through their paces on the field with some team-building drills, including military style forfeits when they slipped up! Good teamwork saw

pupils successfully transporting (decommissioned!) rifles and ammunition across an obstacle course.

Both Year 10 and some Year 11 did a 'Free and Equal' Workshop with Peter Radford of Beyond This, looking at the problems of misogyny and sexism and how we can combat the attitudes that feed into these behaviours. It was an important workshop that made students think and question the norms that they have grown up with.

For Year 10 there was also what was possibly the biggest Careers Carousel in CVC history! More than 40 employers gave pupils their insights into working in fields as varied as the Police Force, Early Years Childcare and Hospitality.

## Chance to check out career paths

Year 10 pupils developed their knowledge of a number of different careers options and pathways at a huge Careers Carousel that attracted 41 different employers.

Employers brought a wide variety of objects, presentations, photos and ice breaker games to engage with pupils, bringing an interactive element to the carousel and giving them an opportunity to consider work experience placements for July.

A wide variety of industries were represented including the Police and Armed Services, and a number of alumni and parents spoke about their professions.

Jason Mashinchi, who left CVC in 2013, talked about Cambridge Kinetics, a software engineering start-up he founded which helps clients with building mobile apps, industrial web applications, and customising their flagship product Kinabase for specific use.

Pupils enjoyed learning what some parents and carers' professions involved. Jennifer Zerk spoke about her career path in consultancy that provides information, research and analysis on business and human rights. She has been providing consulting services to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for more than 10 years.

Most of the companies attending the carousel had offered work experience placements in the past and students were able to chat through the options with the likes of Irwin Mitchell LLP and Cambridge University Press and Assessment. They were able to find out about apprenticeship opportunities. RG Carter, one of the largest private, family-owned construction companies in the UK, with a local office in Comberton, spoke about the range of craft and management



**AMAZING LINE-UP: Of company representatives at the Careers event.**



**IF THE CAP FITS: Sizing up a career.**

apprenticeships they offer. These cover many roles, including project managers, quantity surveyors, carpenters, plumbers, electricians and bricklayers.

Well done to all of our Year 10 pupils for engaging well with the employers and their great behaviour at the event and thank you to all of our employers for attending the event. We really appreciate your help and support in putting these events on for our pupils.

If any parents, carers or alumni would like to get involved in future career events, please email me at [flawson@combertonvc.org](mailto:flawson@combertonvc.org)

**Fay Lawson, Career Guidance and Development Lead**

# Inside the writing room

The bestselling author, screenwriter and producer Andy Briggs was warmly welcomed to give talks to Year 7 in the library this term, as part of our work to promote reading and writing.

Andy was hugely enjoyable to listen to, talking about what being a writer involves, in particular collaborative writing such as for graphic novels or for the screen. It was fascinating to hear how writing rooms operate!

He also told us about his research trips, answering many important questions such as:

- What is a banana?
- What does a gorilla smell like?
- What is it like to walk up a volcano?
- What do you need to watch out for when riding an elephant?

Our Year 7 students had been each given a copy of one of his brilliant Inventory series books in July as part of their transition to Comberton VC.

It has been widely shown that having access to books at home has a great impact on pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and life outcomes, yet the National Literacy Trust report states that in 2022 roughly 1 in 15 children did not own a book of their own.

Andy was really pleased to be associated with our initiative and happily signed



**AN AUTHOR'S LIFE: Andy Briggs shares his experiences with Year 7 pupils.**

lots of pupils' books before he left.

We have certainly seen great interest in his books and many others in the library as Year 7 have found their way to us this term!

## Competition winner will 'appear' in novel



**WINNERS: As chosen by author Helen Moss**

At the end of last year we were delighted to welcome local bestselling author Helen Moss to deliver a series of creative writing workshops to Year 8 pupils.

She also set them a competition, the winners of which were awarded their prizes this term. They were asked to: "Write a scene that shows a character reacting to something that they think is REALLY unfair."

We had a lovely range of entries which featured some highly imaginative scenes, including simple board games, boys frustrated at not being allowed to play netball, and fury at being unable to submit an entry for a writing competition!

Our overall winner was Eve (9B), who won a signed copy of a book by Helen, and will have her name immortalised as a character in Helen's next book 'The Ghost Hotel Handbook'.

Eve's entry was judged: "A fantastic piece of writing with a distinctive 'voice' — this scene powerfully conveys Eliza's frustration at having to 'take over the empire' — full of detail and emotion and interesting interactions, and it conjures up a whole background world. It really makes you want to read on and find out more. I loved everything about it."

The three other winners were Bella (9O), Soren (9R) and Nancy (9R), all of whom also won a signed book and some wonderful feedback about their writing.

## Donated books are huge boost to library

The School Library would like to extend a huge thank you to the families who were able to generously donate books to us as we approach Christmas. Their contribution will benefit the whole student body by enriching our stock, keeping it fresh and relevant to all.

The Library keeps an Amazon wish list throughout the year, and we add titles requested by students and teachers on a rolling basis, as well as titles recommended by library, education and literature professionals.

We use this list to inform our book purchasing at various stages of the year, but as budgets have been tightened in recent times we have been very grateful for donations from those families in

a position to do so.

It has enabled us to retain some of our other services such as our online subscriptions, magazines and eBooks, and to broaden the variety of books available for reading for pleasure.

The School Library and Resource Centre is here for all CVC students, whatever their age or interests, and we hope that everyone can find something to interest, inspire, comfort or inform them.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the library can do so at:

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/XOLFV9X7FHE?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/XOLFV9X7FHE?ref_=wl_share)



**BOOKS FOR ALL: Donations keep the stock of books fresh and relevant.**



**CHOCOLATE, CHURROS AND CULTURE:** Students experienced all three on the Spanish Exchange to Zaragoza.

# Making magic memories

All the Year 9 students who took part in the Spanish Exchange to Zaragoza has gained more than just new Spanish friends.

As the trip was run jointly with Cambourne — many thanks to Mrs Shorten for all her work co-ordinating this — participants also now have a group of friends from a neighbouring school, which is also part of The Cam Academy Trust.

The 18 Comberton and 14 Cambourne students spent eight days in the Spanish city last month, leaving very early (3.30am) on November 15th.

The Spanish students welcomed them with a tapas-style lunch and then they organised a quiet first activity (a must after the long journey) where students were introduced to Roman Zaragoza by making mosaics.

On the second day, students joined their partners lessons and learnt more Spanish as well as Maths and Computer Science in Spanish.

At lunchtime, some went to have lunch at their hosts' home, some stayed with partners and had lunch at the school canteen.

It was strange to see that some students go home for lunch, but others don't. Not only that, but they have to come back to school after lunch!

In the afternoon, the Spanish students organised a sports event where we took part in lots of fun games.

At the weekend, each student stayed with their host families and did activities together. Some went to visit the area, other went on a shopping spree, or met friends and ate all day!

On Monday, after an activities-packed weekend, students went to Barcelona by coach.

A tour guide introduced the party to the city architecture and history. After lunch, they went to visit the Barcelona Football Club museum, which was fun.

On the last full day in Zaragoza, they visited El Palacio de la Aljafería and Las Cortes de Aragón. Then, they had 'churros con chocolate' for lunch!

On Tuesdays, the Spanish school finishes at 1 o'clock so everyone went to do

last-minute shopping.

Kate (9R) said: "I really enjoyed the Spanish exchange trip. I would recommend it to people because you can practise your Spanish loads and you can experience normal Spanish life which you wouldn't be able to experience if you went to Spain on holiday.

"At the beginning it was quite scary as my partner's parents didn't speak any English, but they were so nice and welcoming. We went to lots of places with school which included the Basilica de Nuestra Señora del Pilar, the Aljifería palace, Zaragoza and Barcelona. These were all really fun and interesting.

"With my host family we went to Zaragoza twice, went swimming, went to Puerto Venecia Zaragoza, the amusement park, got our nails done, watched her do speed skating, and met her grandparents.

"Lots of places I went to with my host family, I also went with people from school and their host families, which was really good because then I could spend time with my friends out of school and without exchange partners.

"I think that the pairing was really good because my partner was friends with my best friend's partner.

"My favourite part of the trip was Barcelona because we had a tour with a tour guide on the bus, which meant we could find out lots of information about the city.

"We also had two hours alone in a part of the city which was really fun because we could go shopping. We also went to Camp Nou which, even though I'm not into football, was really fun. My two best friends on the trip are really into football so it was really good to see what they're so interested in.

"I am really excited for my exchange partner to come back to England so that I can see her again and that I can show her where I live. I would really recommend this exchange because even though I was quite worried about going, it was really worth it. Everyone is so nice and you can see so many cool places."

## Event has a key global message

In October, the Languages Department held its 15th International Talent Evening in the Performance Hall.

Comberton VC has held the prestigious British Council International School Award for many years and this event is just one example of the college's commitment to working in partnership with schools and institutions across the globe and to developing pupils' understanding of what being a global citizen means.

Year 7s sang their hearts out as they performed their Spanish songs for the famous Spanglovision competition, readers from different nationalities read poems in their native language, Mrs Burgess' Year 8 French class performed a French song, Mr Waine's Year 8 German class sang a song in German and Languages Department staff read a poem in seven languages! The evening was a great success! 71 and 7N were the Spanglovision winners and were awarded a non-uniform day as their prize.

A huge thank you to the Languages Department for their hard work and to all the Year 7 pupils and their families for their support. We look forward to next year's ITE which we are sure will be another great event.



**TAKING A LESSON:** Language Leaders teach a primary school class.

## At front of the class

Year 9 Language Leaders have, in the last fortnight, taught their first of two lessons this year to primary school children.

The majority of the 23 budding leaders have chosen to deliver their lessons in Spanish although one group has chosen French and one German.

They had previously visited the school they are working in, meeting the primary pupils, who range in age from Year 3-6, at Meridian, Caldecote, Barton, Barnabas Oley or Coton.

Having planned, prepared and taught a 'Christmas' lesson this term, their second challenge, in the Spring Term, will be an Easter one.

# Religion in real world

We were lucky enough to be taken on a day trip to the Cambridge Mosque, St Barnabas Church of England Church and St Andrew's Street Baptist Church.

It was a really fascinating and exciting day where we got to see how the knowledge gained in our GCSE RPE lessons applied to real life places of worship.

Despite the rainy weather we were still able to enjoy the day to the fullest with the help of the wonderful guides, who gave us lots to do and think about.

We were given a full tour of the new mosque in Cambridge, which was especially interesting and relevant since we had just started our Islam topic; we learnt about the care and thought had gone into the design of the building and the intricate craftwork involved.

We also visited St. Barnabas Church and participated in an interactive timeline of Christianity. Finally, we went to the Baptist Church and were given a talk by the deacon about their beliefs and activities. Overall, a really varied and interesting day.

Barney (11T)



**BRINGING RPE TO LIFE: Students visited three places of worship.**



## Carol concert offers new insight

The King's College Carols trip was a once in a lifetime opportunity for all Year 11 students on the trip.

It was an amazing experience in which students had the privilege to hear carols sung and lessons spoken by chapel associates, the Mayor of Cambridge and members of local schools.

Our group was split between the Ante Chapel and main choir chapel. Both rooms were extremely beautiful and it was interesting to look at the ornate architecture of the chapel.

I enjoyed the interactive moments where we were invited to join in to sing along to songs such as 'Hark the Herald Angel Sing' and 'O come, All Ye faithful'.

As well as recognising songs like Silent Night, many were sung in the Old English language or were more traditional songs we had never heard before.

It was very interesting to hear these songs for the first time and to read the translations given to us.

Overall the trip was extremely interesting and helped me and my peers develop deeper understandings of the Christian celebrations at Christmas as well as being a memorable and exciting event for all.

Kai (11B)



**ANTICIPATION: Students head into King's College chapel.**

## Wide range of subjects are discussed

Year 11 took part in Core RPE day earlier this term about religious and sociological perspectives on families and relationships. During the day we covered Marriage and the Law, Buddhist, Christian and Hindu perspectives on marriage, gender equality, sociological changes to the family and relationships as well as hearing from a guest speaker from WCCYM about different Christian views on sexual relationships. We learnt about the definition of marriage, the law about marriage and divorce as well as discussing the relevance of marriage in modern Britain.

After our lesson about Buddhist beliefs, we could explain the beliefs of metta (loving) and karuna (compassion).

We learnt about different types of family in the modern world as well as the importance of families and different duties.

To finish off the day we had a lesson regarding



sexism in Christianity and women in leadership in the church.

As a year group we enjoyed this day and learning about the different perspectives on relationships across the world and learning about different religious way of celebrating marriage that we may not have heard about before.

Layla (11C), Core RPE Leader

Year 11 then had their final CORE RPE Morning on a frosty Friday morning in December on the theme of Crime and Punishment.

In class lessons, they discussed the aims and

effectiveness of punishment in our legal system, as well as exploring the ethical and religious arguments for and against the death penalty.

They also had the privilege of two visiting speakers. The first was a Prison Chaplain, who spoke about their work in prisons, giving insight into conditions, statistics in our country, and explaining the valuable and varied work chaplaincy services provide.

Our second presentation was from the Mizen Foundation, with Margaret and Barry Mizen (both MBE) sharing the story of their 16-year-old son Jimmy, who was tragically murdered in an unprovoked attack in 2008. They spoke movingly of Jimmy's story and their work, in his memory, for peace, hope and forgiveness, inspiring our Year 11s to be the change they want to see in the world.

**DAY AT DACHAU:**  
Hearing the stories of defiance and death.



# On the trail of the Nazis

In the early hours of a frosty Wednesday morning at the beginning of December, 50 Year 11 pupils excitedly gathered in front of the school ready to embark on four days of historical learning about the rise of the Nazis, opposition to the Nazi party and the Nuremberg trials after World War Two. Led by our tour guides, Rob and Andrew, we spent the first day orienteering ourselves in the city of Munich and understanding how the Nazi party had risen to be a political party with local support.

We saw the Bavarian royal palace and other pre-Nazi buildings to better understand the region and the socio-political basis of the area, drawing on our knowledge to suggest why the Nazi party and Hitler's early speeches might have appealed to the local populace after World War One.

While discussing the Beer Hall Putsch, 8-9th November 1923, pupils studied images of the Nazi party marching down the very streets we stood on. We considered how people might have responded to their demonstration against the Weimar Republic and how their actions might have appealed to some people.

The second day focused on the way Hitler and the Nazi party 'nazified' areas around Munich city centre.

We studied building where there were still signs of the swastika and discussed how the Nazis had made links through their architecture with ancient civilisations. Pupils were interested to see where Hitler's apartment had been before his rise to power as Chancellor, spotting signs of the historical Nazi trail which had been



**RALLYING:** Students at the ground where Hitler addressed up to 70,000 people in Munich

established and since removed.

This opened discussion around how Munich remembered this period of the city's history. Our guides also took us to the university to see where the White Rose Group, an opposition group, had distributed leaflets from the balcony as students left their lectures. It was very moving to hear and read of individuals who had challenged the Nazi regime.

Another emotional experience was our third day at Dachau concentration camp where we had a guided tour around the camp. We heard of stories of survival, opposition and of sad experiences of mistreatment and death at the camp. The cold weather also struck a nerve with us all commenting on how people survived the extreme conditions. It was a very hard-hitting visit.

Our trip included a visit to Nuremberg to see where the Nazi war crime trials were heard. We saw the court room where surviving members of the Nazi party were questioned, evidence shown of war crimes and stories told us of their fate. While not part of our GCSE course, it was appropriate for our pupils to understand

what happened to key individual Nazi members at the end of World War Two. Throughout the trip, we enjoyed experiencing the Christmas markets with huge Christmas trees among snowy scenes! We soaked up the festive atmosphere, listening to choirs singing in the city centre, and trying lots of sweet treats. It was certainly a very memorable trip!

Sarah Higgs,  
Assistant Principal



**TEACHING ASSISTANTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Are you thinking about a career in education?

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

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



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

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

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

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



**WELCOME:** Chris Packham greets the student audience.



**THE VENUE:** King Edward's School was alive with colour.

# It's all about power!

A group of Year 10,11 and 12 students had a trip to King Edward's School in Birmingham to attend the Schools Climate Assembly in October.

The day began with a welcome talk before completing our first workshop. For CVC, this was hosted by the Ministry of Eco Education.

During this talk we discussed how the climate emergency is much more about power than we might originally think. We discussed different scenarios in which various people held power over others in the decisions they made to fight the climate emergency.

Students then heard from wildlife TV presenter and conservationist Chris Packham as he re-created a classical protest between 'oil lovers' and 'oil haters.' After this talk, we enjoyed lunch — which was, of course, all vegan and packaged sustainably — during which we had the opportunity to take a look at the Green Futures area where we heard from different businesses that are currently acting in



an eco-friendly way or acting in a way that we can fight the climate emergency.

After lunch we had our second workshop, which consisted of two guest speakers showing us a stimulation about reaching Net Zero. They also discussed what some of the impacts may be when we reach it.

Our final talk was a Climate World Cup where we heard from different member of King Edward's School Eco Council, along

with some expert guests, to decide which actions we wanted to put forward for the Schools Climate Assembly to work on for the next year.

The day ended with an opportunity to have a book signing and meet BBC presenter and cameraman Hamza Yassin (also the winner of Strictly Come Dancing 2022), Chris Packham or Dr Matt Winning, a comedian and environmental economist.

Lily (12FF)

## Chance to make positive change

At the start of the new school year an eco-conference was organised by Parkside Community College in Cambridge.

It was a good way to try make positive changes and 10 students from Years 8, 10 and 13 at Comberton took part alongside students from nine other schools.

It consisted of several activities, including talking to some members of political parties with representatives from the Labour Party and Green Party. We heard their views on current climate issues and events, which was very interesting.

At lunch we were provided with vegetarian and vegan food, which was very enjoyable.

After lunch we discussed how solar can be more affordable for schools. In this activity we learnt about a company that installs solar for free and the school can pay it off over a long time, which helps many schools across the UK.

At the end of the day, we had debates about ideas for a more sustainable lifestyle. After talking about an idea, we would vote to see if it was a viable option.

Overall, this was a great day, and we hope to have a similar event next year.

Reuben (8V)



**GETTING TOGETHER:** Students at the Eco Conference in Cambridge.



## Commit to making an eco difference!

As part of our effort to engage students on the climate and ecological emergency, we have created the Comberton Eco Award for Years 7 and 8.

This has three sections: Head, Heart and Hands. To gain the award students will need to complete the evidence document that can be found on the school website: <https://www.combertonvc.org/about-us/Eco-Team.php>

- **Head:** To complete a project with a 'solutionary' view on a topic. The idea is to take a topic — such as Transport, and to look at the issues behind it and how it can be made more sustainable in the future and present it in some form. This could be a PowerPoint, a display, a written report, a film or in any other format.

- **Heart:** To have taken part in a nature-based activity outdoors. The idea is to gain an appreciation of nature. This could include any of the following suggestions — to plant and grow something at home or at school; to take part in a nature-based activity — such as the RSPB garden bird watch or take photos of wild flowers or mushrooms in the local area; to do something practical to increase biodiversity at home or at school.

- **Hands:** To have taken an eco action. This could include any of the following suggestions — to reduce your carbon footprint by changing what you eat; buying less fast fashion and upcycling old clothes; learning how to repair broken items; organising recycling at home so that less goes in the general waste.

Applications should be emailed to [com-ecoteam@combertonvc.org](mailto:com-ecoteam@combertonvc.org)

# Planning for the future

**Year 13 students were given the opportunity in November to put the spotlight back on their future plans with a special day of progression-themed talks and sessions.**

The day aimed to build on the work that was carried out on February's Progression Day when the students, then in Year 12, were offered an introduction to the wide range of post-18 choices available to them.

With many now well advanced in their applications for university courses, apprenticeships and employment, the focus for November's day was on helping students to build for the future.

Guest speaker Jon Block, from First Intuition, Cambridge, launched the day with his talk titled 'Future Ready' in which students were given insights into the current employment landscape and invited to consider the skills, both personal and professional, that will enhance their employability, alongside a number of scenarios related to their working lives.

This was followed by a session on interview

skills, providing opportunities to discuss and rehearse approaches, using situations and questions that might typically feature in a range of interview contexts.

For those attending interviews as part of the UCAS process, further specialist guidance was offered in an additional session delivered by Madeleine

Williamson-Sarll, from Wadham College, Oxford. Students considering gap years were presented with some tempting possibilities in a talk by Stefan Wathan, from the Year Out Group, while for all students there was also a chance to spend time with their academic tutor to update plans and complete some futures-focused online activities.

The day rounded off with a fabulous opportunity to find out more about the nature of employment roles in different sectors at a specially arranged Careers Fair, where representatives from an array of businesses and organisations shared their expertise and answer questions.

Special thanks to our Careers Lead, Mrs Lawson, for coordinating this part of the day.

We hope that the day helped our Year 13s to take another positive step towards preparing for life beyond CSF and to plan for the future with confidence.

**Stephen Leggott,**  
Deputy Head of Sixth Form



**KEY GUIDANCE:** One of the topics covered was 'Interview Skills'.

## Careers Fair offers insight into work options

Students attended a Careers Fair in the Performance Hall last month as part of the Year 13 Progression Day. An impressive 41 employers and alumni attended and spoke to students about their careers, pathways available and apprenticeships.

We were delighted to welcome four alumni, who spoke about their experiences since leaving Comberton.

Oscar Barker attended on behalf of PEM, a team of accountants, tax and business advisers based in Cambridge. He works in Audit and Accounts and spoke to students about the pathways available to students at PEM after sixth form.

Gina Goodman, who left Comberton in 2004, travelled from Cornwall to share her experiences. She is now a lecturer at Falmouth University on the Marine and Natural History Photography course, with responsibility for facilitating underwater photography. Students enjoyed learning about the work that Gina carries out and her pathway to getting there.

Josh Hebditch talked about his career at The Bank of England. Josh finished Comberton Sixth Form in 2015 and joined The Bank on an early careers scheme, which he explained, and is now a Technology Assurance Manager and is based in London.

We also welcomed back Rosemary Sayle, who spoke about her experiences at the University of Bath and Amgen. She is currently on an industrial placement at Amgen as part of her Mathematics, Statistics and Data science degree at Bath.

Many parents and carers talked about their careers and the opportunities and we would like to thank them for their help and support with this event.

Rudolf Cardinal, professor of psychiatry and informatics at Cambridge University, shared his experiences in training as a doctor, working in general medicine and psychiatry in hospitals and conducting medical research.

Jennifer Zerk, from Jennifer Zerk Consulting, shared her experiences about her career path in consultancy that provides information, research and analysis on business and human rights. Jennifer has been providing consulting services to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human rights for more than 10 years.

Year 13 students learnt about the apprenticeships available at the companies which attended the careers fair. Many offer degree apprenticeships which provide the opportunity to obtain a degree, funded by the employer, while being paid a salary.

Charles River Laboratories is one of them. They are a contract research organisation that provides essential products and services to help pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, government agencies and leading academic institutions around the globe accelerate their research and drug development efforts.

They offer a five-year Level 6 degree apprenticeship, where successful applicants gain hands on lab-based experience in their Biology, Drug metabolism and Pharmacokinetics and Chemistry departments to directly impact the discovery and development of novel drug products. Students learnt about the apprenticeship that combines on-the-job learning, providing the opportunity to work with experts in the field, whilst studying for a foundation degree in Applied Bioscience.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary spoke to students about the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) they offer. This is a great opportunity for those who have not studied at a degree level to be entered on to a three-year degree apprenticeship which combines in-class learning and on-the-job experience. Students learnt they could earn while they learn, with starting salaries of £28,551, increasing to £29,751 after their first 12 months.

Thank you to everyone who attended the Year 13 Careers Fair. We really appreciate your help and support in providing these opportunities. If any parents, carers, alumni or businesses would like to attend future careers events, please get in contact via the following online form:

<https://comberton.typeform.com/to/NbA17FcS>



**IT'S GOOD TO TALK:** Students at the Careers Fair.

Fay Lawson, Career Guidance and Development Lead



**DIFFERENT:** This year has seen the introduction of a GeoGebra Club and a popular Dungeons and Dragons Club among others.

# New clubs spring up

At Comberton Sixth Form we have a large number of extra-curricular activities on offer, including a host of new activities for this academic year.

Some of the new activities include a very popular Dungeons and Dragons group (so popular they have had to go from one to two rooms to fit everyone in), a monthly Psychology Society, who have so far looked at optical illusions and non-verbal communication, a GeoGebra Club, which involves using programming to draw different designs, and an Engineering Club.

This is in addition to the clubs which are well established, such as the music groups, sports options, law and medical society and drama productions.

We have also entered four teams into the Institute of Civil Engineering City Zen competition for the first time.

The teams meet every Friday lunchtime and have so far completed four rounds of

a computer game involving various civil engineering-related challenges.

Last month we were lucky enough to have a visit from Paul Remblance, a civil engineer who was able to help guide students through the next phase of the competition, which is creating a video presentation of a solution to a local problem.

Teams are working on ideas around cycle transport, building a new bridge over the Ouse and a new train station; we're looking forward to seeing the final results. You can see full details of all the current extra-curricular clubs and support sessions on offer on our website:

<https://www.combertonsixthform.org/curriculum/wider-opportunities.php>

**Eleanor Jenkins, Head of Sixth Form**

## Charity fundraisers bring in the cash

The Sixth Form Council organised three successful charity events this term.

The first was a bake sale in aid of Breast Cancer Research. It was wonderful to see so many students bringing in cakes to sell (and staff can confirm they were particularly delicious) and £104 was raised.

The second event was for Children in Need and the Sixth Form Council asked students to come in wearing their pyjamas and

onesies and bring a cash donation.

Seeing so many students in their pyjamas was certainly an interesting sight (many students said they'd quite like to wear their pyjamas more often as they were so comfortable) and a fantastic £124 was raised.

They also collected items for the Cambridge Foodbank's Christmas hampers, alongside students in the main school (see Page18).



**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** A bake sale raised £104.



**COMPLEMENTARY TALK:** Helped the study of Churchill.

## Another view . . .

Some Comberton history teachers and Sixth Form students went to a talk at the Cambridge Literary Festival, where we were lucky enough to listen to Andrew Marr interviewing the esteemed historian David Reynolds about his new book, 'Mirrors of Greatness' — a biography of Winston Churchill through the lens of other leaders who shaped him.

This was a fantastic companion to our Year 12 depth study of Churchill, and gave students a chance to think about different ways of remembering this hugely famous and controversial character.

## Expert's insights



**OPPORTUNITY:** To work with Polly Teale, A Level set text playwright.

A-Level Theatre Studies students spent the day with the British theatre director and dramatist Polly Teale.

As the playwright of their set text 'Brontë', this was the perfect opportunity for the students to develop their knowledge and understanding of the play and the complexities behind its structure and form.

As the Creative Director of the Shared Experience theatre company from 2000, Polly allowed the group to explore the union between physical and text-based theatre, which was highly impactful for them all; opening up their own theatrical practice with the vivid energy of live theatre and the unpredictability of the stage.

# On the beach — at last!

After our first attempt to travel to Dorset for the Year 13 geography residential fieldtrip was delayed by an unexpected minibus breakdown and Storm Ciarán (which closed the beaches in Dorset, along with causing damage and disruption to many other parts of the UK), we were delighted to make it South West the second time around.

Although we were expecting challenging weather for our December re-run, the rains of day one largely cleared to provide clear, bright, but very cold conditions for our remaining days of data collection.

Students were collecting data for their NEA (the 'coursework element' of their Geography A-level), looking specifically at coastal process and coastal management this year at Swanage and Studland.

Students normally have a choice of Coastal and Place (Boscombe and Corfe) topics to explore, but this particular time, none opted for the human element.

This fieldwork builds on the work we do in the classroom, and on our local study trip(s) in Year 12 and was appreciated by those who went.

Elliot (13JD) said: "It is great to actually visit the places we study in real life as this really helps the processes and landforms come to life."

Sophie (13MR) added: "Independent fieldwork is a great way to develop geographical understanding and apply theory."

In addition to this curriculum opportunity, geography students in Year 12 and Year



**HELPING PAW:** A curious dog watches students as they collect data on the beach.

13 have the opportunity to travel significantly further, with our planned educational visit to Costa Rica in July 2024.



**GETTING STUCK IN:** To collecting data and samples, with some guidance from local experts.

## Chance to see legal world from inside

I was lucky enough to be selected as one of 10 Year 13 students across the country to take part in a paid week's work experience at top-ranking law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom (UK) LLP over October half term.

The experience offered a truly transformative opportunity for students to:

- experience first-hand a fast-paced, professional legal workplace
- network with professionals at Skadden to learn more about both legal and non-legal (IT, HR, marketing etc.) careers
- practise using key employability skills
- increase understanding of the legal sector, range of careers and routes in
- join Skadden's work experience alumni network and stay in touch after the programme.

My experience at Skadden further piqued my interest in studying law, especially corporate law. It exposed me to a diverse range of legal fields, encompassing litigation, arbitration, and the intricacies of white-collar crime.

In addition by engaging in research assignments and honing my

skills through assessment centre practices the experience, provided invaluable insights into the solicitor's role.

My interactions with Skadden's accomplished professionals, in both formal discussions and informal office settings, offered a nuanced perspective on a solicitor's multifaceted responsibilities.

A specific interaction which stood out for me was a personal talk I had with John Adebisi (partner) in which he highlighted the importance of communication and interpersonal skills within the legal sector, stating that relationships within the business are what set apart the greats from the mediocre.

This exposed a whole other side of being a lawyer to me, one which required me to view the firm as a business and myself as a product. I thoroughly enjoyed my week there, especially when I was surprised with a cake and decorated desk on my 18th birthday, and feel it has really helped support my UCAS application to study law as well as making useful contacts for the future. I would definitely recommend the opportunity to anyone interested in law in the future.

Jeremi (13PG)



**TREAT:** An 18th birthday surprise.

## Support for university early entry

New Deputy Head of Sixth Form Laura Peacey has been working hard with our current Year 13 students who have applied for places at Oxford or Cambridge, or to study medicine, veterinary medicine or dentistry.

Their UCAS applications had to be submitted by October 15th and a number of those students also had to complete admissions tests in October and November.

Wadham College (part of Oxford University)

recently ran an interview skills workshop for all our early entry students and we have been very grateful to have the support of so many parents helping us to run mock interviews over Teams for these students too.

We wish these students the best of luck with their interviews and applications over the coming weeks.

Plans are also under way to support any Year 12 students who might be considering an early entry

application — the Medical Society recently had their first meeting of the academic year and we have arranged for a representative from Peterhouse (one of the Cambridge University colleges) to give a talk to any students who may be interested in finding out more about Oxbridge after school on January 4th. We are also arranging visits to both Oxford and Cambridge University in the Spring and Summer terms.

# Driven by Olympic dream

Comberton sixth former Edward was nine years old and yet to find a sport he loved when he came across a fencing class at his local school in Hardwick.

He then went to a 'try-out' day, had his potential as a fencer immediately spotted by Alan West, the former headteacher and long-time coach of Dragon Fencing Club, and the journey had begun.

Seven years later and Edward has just returned from competing in Cabries, France, for Great Britain under-17s.

And although he admitted what pushes him is the possibility of going to the Olympics, he has more pressing short-term goals in mind.

"I want to go to Saudi Arabia in the summer for the World Championships and to New Zealand for the under-17 Commonwealth Games," he said. "I am currently pushing for top four in GB, which is where I need to be for selection.

"I've had some good results this season starting with two third places in Manchester and Cardiff and a 27th in an international in Warsaw. Getting into the top 32 in an international is impressive."

Edward (12PG) is now in his final year in the under-17 category and is determined to make the most of it, having lost most of his time as an under-14 to restrictions caused by

the Covid pandemic.

"Last year I was just getting experience and this year I want to be competitive," said the 16-year-old who now trains at the Fencers Club in London three or four times a week as well as working in the gym at Comberton Sports and Arts and on resistance and weights at home.

"I've been training hard, including going to International training camps in Poland and Italy and have competed multiple times in international competitions in France, Italy, Poland, Hungary and Germany."

It's a tough regime that has seen Edward juggling his sport and his schoolwork – currently a BTEC in sport – across the globe. His parents, Andy and Sarah, have also made sacrifices to drive him to training and competitions, book flights and offer support. "The Olympics is my dream," said Edward. "It won't be any time soon but that's what pushes me – the journey and the aspiration. "It is hard to do all the training and competitions and study, but I take my laptop now and do it in the evenings. The college has been very supportive and all the BTEC teachers always ask me how I've got on. Also in Edward's plan, while he decides whether to aim for university in the UK or USA, is to become a coach.



**FIGHTING FORCE:** Aiming for the under-17 World Championships.

## New recruits put through their paces

In early October, we took a group of brave A-Level PE and BTEC Sport students to The Playground, an assault course based at Waterbeach Barracks.

The aim was for students to get to know each other better, work together as teams and prove their determination and resilience to complete the course.

The Playground assault course features a range of obstacles, including a 10ft wall, rope climb, 'Big Guy' monkey bars, ramp run and cargo nets, plus lots of muddy ditches!

Students were split into teams and tackled the obstacles with a Playground team leader guiding them around. It was soon clear that strength and power was needed to clear some of the obstacles, as well as the right technique, which many did not have! Some, however, really showed what they could do — Annie (12MR) used her



**OBSTACLES:** Students tackled a range of challenges.

gymnastics skills to easily clear the high beam, Luke (12RA) and Will (12KS) literally 'showed us the ropes' on the rope climb, Noah (12PV) easily defeated the monkey bars and Maddie (13RJ) just about avoided getting very muddy, no thanks to Mr Wilce.

Once the assault had been completed, we tried some challenges. First up was the timed course, with Mr Wilce making the whole course leader board.

We also had to navigate the course whilst holding a large tyre — my group handed me the responsibility of that one!

At the very end, it was time for cannon balls into a muddy, wet ditch. There was some truly impressive air time and equally impressive face plants! A great afternoon and a brilliant way to get to know our new PE and Sport cohorts.

Abbey Cotton, PE Department



## Mixed fortunes for student teams in cups

Comberton's sixth form teams have both enjoyed cup runs this term — but only the girls are still going.

The under-18 side, which includes players from Years 11-13, are into the

last 16 of the English Schools Football Association Arnold Clark Cup, thanks to wins against St Ivo (9-2), Samuel Whitbread Academy (4-2), and, most recently, 7-0 at Neale Wade, March.

The boys went out 7-0 to a Samuel Whitbread side, who had reached last season's under-16 final. Earlier they edged out Hampton College, Peterborough, 8-7 in a penalty shoot-out following a thrilling match which saw them lose a 2-0 lead as the match finished 2-2. They had previously beaten Stephen Perse Academy 5-0. They are now looking forward to their league campaign.



**ALL KITTED OUT:** The CSF teams have benefitted from sponsorship from Anglia Ruskin University.

The sixth form teams would like to thank sponsors Anglia Ruskin University, who supported the purchase of their kits.

● Full ESFA round-up — Back Page





**HELPING HAND:** Head of Music Ben Parker receives a donation to the piano appeal from The Friends of CVC



**BAGS OF MONEY:** Cash from the donation of unwanted clothes helped boost the coffers.

# Trust Fund helps out

The Friends of CVC Trust Fund has raised an amazing five-figure sum in one year to help students at Comberton.

With an influx of new parents, with new energy and ideas, the Fund amassed an amazing £12,461 since February.

More than half of that has come from the sale of preloved uniform, but there have also been corporate and personal donations, raffles, calendar sales, the Bags2School initiative and shopping via EasyFundraising.

This term £5,000 has been donated to the Music Department's Piano Appeal (see Pages 16 and 17), £4,000 to support Student Wellbeing and £1,000 towards the PE Department's upcoming Netball and Rugby Tour.

From humble beginnings in 1984, the Fund is now preparing to celebrate its 40th anniversary in March. It was established as a registered charity as a way to receive donations and legacies and until 2003, most

of the income arose from these, managed by the founder Trustees.

In 2003, the needs of the school changed, it urgently needed to find £4,000 to buy around 10 computers.

An appeal was sent out to all parents to join the Trust Fund to actively fundraise for these.

Twenty years on, one of those parents, Vijju Churchman, is now the Fund's chair and she has been part of the tireless behind-the-scenes efforts that, with the support of the wider community, has raised around £70,000 for a number of projects to enhance the experiences of Comberton students.

This includes acquiring two minibuses, outdoor playground equipment for The Cabin, defibrillators for the school and Comberton Sports and Arts, supporting CVC pupils' first trip to perform 10 shows at The Edinburgh Fringe Festival, a grand piano and an upright piano to highlight just a selection.

Now the Trustees are looking for inspiration for a special project to mark the 40th anniversary.

They welcome any thoughts and suggestions from students, staff and parents and would also be delighted to gain more volunteers willing to spend a few hours each term working behind the scenes or on event days.

You can contact any of the officers listed below for more information: Vijju Churchman (Chair):

[vchurchman@combertonvc.org](mailto:vchurchman@combertonvc.org)

Elisabetta G Robinson (Vice Chair): [elisabetta.g-robinson@friendsofcvc.org](mailto:elisabetta.g-robinson@friendsofcvc.org)

Lukas Benes (Secretary): [lukas.benes@friendsofcvc.org](mailto:lukas.benes@friendsofcvc.org)

Bryan Collins (Treasurer): [bryan.collins@friendsofcvc.org](mailto:bryan.collins@friendsofcvc.org)

Rachel Thaxter (Deputy Treasurer): [rachel.thaxter@friendsofcvc.org](mailto:rachel.thaxter@friendsofcvc.org)

Suzanne Jackson (Communications): [sue.jackson@friendsofcvc.org](mailto:sue.jackson@friendsofcvc.org)

# Ramen goes down best with judges



**WINNING WAYS:** Judges congratulate the top chef.

On Tuesday 5th December we hosted the local heat of The Rotary Young Chef competition.

We had a large number of applicants from Years 7-10.

They were tasked with planning, preparing and presenting a balanced and healthy two-course meal.

With Rotary Club chef Peter Senior and Jamie De Cruz, the Head Chef from the Gonville Hotel, judging, our contestants all worked tirelessly and some amazing dishes were produced.

The chefs were really impressed with

the skill level, and the work that had gone into the planning and practising of the dishes. There were three prizes, which went to:

Kiran(10V) for his 'best dish of the day'

Coireall (9R) was named overall runner-up behind worthy winner, who goes on to represent Comberton at the District Final at West Suffolk College in March.

That is Jessica Harvey (8C), who made a fantastic ramen dish followed by delicate lemon tarts.

Congratulations Jessica!

# Cause for celebration

Last month nearly 200 Year 7s attended a disco to celebrate the excellent start they have made to life at CVC.

Mr Herbert kindly took on the role of resident DJ and the Year 7s thoroughly enjoyed dancing to the music he put on.

They also had the chance to buy glow sticks and sweets from the tuck shop, so an excellent time was had by all.

Thank you the Year 7 team who volunteered their time to help at the event, as it wouldn't have been possible without them.



**DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY:** Year 7 enjoy a celebratory disco with Mr Herbert as DJ.



## CVC Music Department Piano Appeal

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



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

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



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

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



**CHRISTMAS CHEER:** The music department's winter concert.

# Winter concert shines out

The Music Department put on a Christmas concert that proved to be a dazzling showcase of musical talent and festive spirit.

The auditorium was filled to the brim as students from all years took the stage to deliver a remarkable array of performances.

The orchestra impressed with a powerful rendition of Beethoven's fifth symphony. The Year 7 massed choir enchanted with their harmonious and tuneful take on 'God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen,' and the Soul Band injected a Christmas flavour with their rendition of Mariah Carey's hit song.

The concert's repertoire, ranging from traditional carols to Big Band Jazz, reflected the school's

commitment to nurturing diverse musical interests.

The audience responded with warm enthusiasm, cheering on the performers, and tapping their toes to the rhythm.

A touching moment occurred as the Friends of CVC Trust Fund presented a generous cheque to the music department, highlighting the community's support for the arts.

This gesture, combined with the palpable sense of joy in the auditorium, made the evening not just a musical delight but also a heartwarming celebration of the season.

Altogether the concert was a resounding success, showcasing the school's musical prowess and

diverse talents, along with its strong sense of community.

● Not satisfied with their memorable performance at Comberton's Christmas Concert, Comberton Young Voices wowed a public audience again two days later at the Rotary Club's Christmas Carol Concert at West Road Concert Hall.

Director Kate Woolf led the choir in three Christmas numbers, a Winter Carol, German Carol Still, Still, Still and Christmas in Waikiki, the latter featuring an impromptu Kazoo chorus!

Performances from the concert will be featured as part of Cambridge 105 Radio's programming over the festive period.



## All that Jazz!

The Big Band performed at the Cambridge Jazz Festival on Sunday 12th November at Storey's Field Centre.

The performance was really well received by the audience and our student musicians were incredibly professional and sounded amazing!

They also had the opportunity to participate in a workshop with Ferg's Imaginary Big Band, where they developed performance and improvisation techniques.

Ferg brought in members of his ensemble and each section of the band participated in a sectional rehearsal with these amazing professional musicians and came together to perform a rendition of their piece 'Sun Dream'. Needless to say, the day was a roaring success!



**WELL RECEIVED:** The Comberton Big Band perform.



**NEW IVORIES:** A student tries out the first of Comberton's new teaching pianos.

## First new piano . . .

The Music Department has been boosted by the arrival of a shiny new upright piano.

This replaces one of our ageing pianos and will be used primarily to provide a quality instrument for 1:1 teaching and recording.

We are very grateful indeed to Liz Bland, the Friends of CVC Trust Fund (see Page 15), and to all of our school community for generously supporting our fundraising efforts. We are continuing to raise money towards a second instrument to replace one of the classroom grand pianos.

# Hampers are Xmas boost

Students and their families have helped bring some Christmas cheer to those who will find the festive season a real struggle this year.

Working in tutor groups in the main school, with backing from sixth form students who made individual donations, they have managed to fill an amazing 100 Christmas hampers for the Cambridge Foodbank. Each tutor group was asked to try to complete two hampers containing a number of specially selected Christmas items — ranging from chocolate to tinned goods, cakes to dried fruit, as well as shower gel or shampoo.

Sixth formers and staff added to the huge pile of goodies that was collected by Foodbank staff last week and which will now be sorted and given to families in the local area who rely on donations. Items not on the list which were also donated will be added to Foodbank stock.

Principal Peter Law said: "It has been great to see how fully students at CVC have embraced the opportunity to support the Foodbank's Christmas appeal.

"We talk a lot about our students being Caring, Confident and Capable and this is a wonderful demonstration of that!"



**GIFTS:** Some of the items donated by students and staff.

## Free courses on offer

Adult Education are running new courses for the spring term. The latest offering at Comberton, includes a free 10-week course in sustainable garden design, commencing on 31st January 2024. They are also running classes in creative mosaics, watercolours, Spanish conversation, and vegetarian Indian cookery. At Cambourne, adult education is also running free courses in

Beginners English (ESOL) and British Sign Language. These valuable classes provide essential social and communication skills, within the local community. Anybody interested in these classes should contact the adult education department based at CVC: [commed@catrust.co.uk](mailto:commed@catrust.co.uk) To see the full list of courses for the spring term please visit [www.combertonadulted.org](http://www.combertonadulted.org)



**FILLING UP:** The van is loaded with donations to the Foodbank.

 <b>FITNESS CLASS TIMETABLE</b>						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>BODY BLAST</b> 18:00 - 18:50  HANNAH	<b>YOGALATES</b> 17:40 - 18:40  SANDRA D	<b>FITNESS</b> <b>PILATES</b> 17:40—18:40  SANDRA D	<b>STUDIO</b> <b>CYCLING</b> 17:45 - 18:25  AYMEN	<b>STUDIO</b> <b>CYCLING</b> 17:30 - 18.15  JEN	<b>YOGA</b> 10:00—11:00  JENNY	<b>STEP</b> 09:00—10:00  AYMEN
<b>STUDIO</b> <b>CYCLING</b> 18:00—18:45  AYMEN	<b>LBT</b> 18:45 - 19:35  JEN	<b>CIRCUITS</b> 18:45— 19:45  TARA	<b>CORE</b> 18:30 - 19:00  AYMEN			<b>YOGALATES</b> 10:10-11:10  SANDRA D
<b>DANCE</b> <b>AEROBICS</b> 19:00—19:50  HANNAH	<b>STUDIO</b> <b>CYCLING</b> 19:45 - 20:30  JEN	<b>ZUMBA</b> 19:50—20.40  SOFIA	<b>PUMP AND TONE</b> 19:05—19:50  JO	<b>FITNESS CLASSES FREE OF CHARGE FOR MEMBERS</b> <b>NON-MEMBERS WELCOME : £6 PER CLASS</b> <b>CONTACT CSA RECEPTION TO BOOK ON!</b>  <b>TEL: 01223 264444</b>  MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE FROM £30 A MONTH - WHICH INCLUDES: UNLIMITED USE OF FITNESS SUITE AND FREE WEIGHTS ROOM AND FREE BADMITON COURT HIRE		
<b>CIRCUITS</b> 19:55—20:40  HANNAH						

# Chief Exec to step down

**Stephen Munday has announced his retirement from The Cam Academy Trust after more than 12 years in the founding role.**

Always passionate about providing the best educational opportunities for students in his care, the Chief Executive helped establish the Trust (formerly The Comberton Academy Trust) in 2011 through his role as Principal of Comberton Village College for the previous 10 years.

During his tenure, the Trust has increased in size to now include four secondary schools, two sixth forms and seven primary phase schools in South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon, with one just inside Bedfordshire. He has overseen the establishment of Comberton's sixth form as well as the building from scratch of Cambourne Village College as a free school. A sixth form opens there in September 2024. Another primary school, Fowlmere, is due to join the Trust early next year.

Stephen, 59, a huge advocate of Henry Morris who established the village college system in Cambridgeshire, said: "It has always been an absolute pleasure and privilege to have been able to oversee The Cam Academy Trust.

"Best of all has been the wonderful opportunity to work with so many very good people, who work so well and with such dedication to ensure great education for all our pupils in all our schools."

"I know that the Trust will go from strength to strength moving forward. The clear joint view about what education is all about is really central to what and who we are. That remains regardless of any particular person."

The board of Trustees are now preparing to appoint a new Chief Executive with Stephen's retirement set for the end of March.

Chair Sue Williamson said: "Stephen not only initiated the formation of the Trust but has laid excellent foundations for its future development. He is deeply committed to improving the life chances of all young people by not only providing a broad curriculum but ensuring that there are numerous extra-curricular activities for all.

"We are determined to recruit an outstanding candidate to ensure this work continues."

Stephen, who graduated from St John's College, Cambridge, with a degree in economics was drawn to teaching initially, by

his own admission, because he was not drawn to the careers often suggested to Economics graduates.

He said: "It subsequently developed into a strong conviction of the remarkable importance and value of the teaching profession.

"I would not hesitate to recommend it, whilst confirming it is very hard work and has its meaningful challenges. There is little to beat seeing a young person develop an understanding and even a love of what they are learning."

Stephen was awarded a CBE for services to Education in the 2013 New Year's Honours, having spent several years as a designated 'National Leader of Education' as well as serving on a range of advisory boards for the Department for Education.

He went on to become President of the Chartered College of Teaching and was appointed as their first Honorary Fellow last year when his presidency ended.

He remains a Director on the Board of the Cambridge United Foundation, a nod to his passion for sport, in particular cricket and golf.



**BOWING OUT:** Stephen Munday will leave the Trust in March.

## Primary poised to join Trust next month

Numbers of local primary schools have been expressing an interest in joining our Trust.

The general approach of the Trust is to seek to accommodate such approaches whenever that is at all reasonably possible.

We aim to have a community and locality-based approach to education and schooling, so local primary schools joining our Trust can further strengthen that aim.

There is the potential to work more powerfully across school phases through this and provide quality education in local areas for pupils of all ages.

The school currently closest to formalising its move into the Trust is Fowlmere Primary School. It is a named partner primary school of Melbourn Village College, which has been part of the Trust for many years.

The Advisory Board of the Regional Director's Office has approved the school joining the Trust and all the necessary processes are being undertaken to enable that to happen.

It is very much hoped that the school will be in the Trust from January 2024. As often, there are some ongoing processes relating to leases and certain other legal matters that are having to be worked through at this late stage, and they do have potential to delay the precise date.

We are all working hard to overcome these things so that January can be the confirmed start date. Come what may, a point early in 2024 will be when this happens.

We all want to welcome Fowlmere Primary School into the community of schools that make up our Trust.

We look forward to their contribution and how we can support the provision of excellent education for all pupils at the school.

We will also welcome further discussions with local schools seeking to join us at other points in the coming year.

Stephen Munday CEO



**NEW MEMBER:** Fowlmere Primary is due to join the Trust in January 2024.



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# Bourn at the double

**Runners from Bourn Primary Academy did the double at the annual SCSSP Small Schools Cross Country competition at Milton Country Park.**

They not only easily won the team competition for Years 3 and 4, but also grabbed a share of the Years 5 and 6 trophy, after finishing on the same points as Girton Glebe.

Only schools who entered teams in all four races could contest the team events but that still meant 11 schools in each category battling for top spot.

Victory in the younger age group came thanks to three runners finishing among the medals as Bourn accumulated 129 points — to finish more than 100 clear of second-placed Haslingfield.

Bourn's winner was William in the Year 3 boys' race, while Jessie picked up silver in the girls' race for the same age group.

There was also silver for Year 4 Yasmin. Among the older pupils, Albert raced to victory for Year 5 and Ella was third in the Year 6 competition.

There were also podium places for two Year 5 girls attending Comberton's partner primary schools: Rosa, from Haslingfield, taking top spot and helping her school to third overall, and Evelyn, from Coton, finishing second, with her school fifth.

Two Year 4 boys from Dry Drayton also picked up medals, Jack winning the race and Fergall finishing third, while Chester, from Barton, also collected a bronze behind William in the Year 3 race.

Partnership Manager, Claire McDonnell, said: "It was great to be back at Milton Country Park for one of our favourite events of the year. It was lovely to see so many schools and children taking part and there was certainly lots of grit and determination on display as the children took on the two-lap course.

"It's always great to hear the children cheering and encouraging their teammates

as they come through to complete their first lap before winding their way back through the trees and round to the finish line.

"There were lots of great individual and team performances on the day and it's nice to see two new schools winning the event for the first time, as well as other schools managing to field a team in all of the races for the first time."

At the large schools' event at the end of last month, there was also notable success for pupils at Comberton's partner primary schools, with Hardwick & Cambourne and Caldecote each collecting a silver and a bronze.

For Hardwick, these went to Dexter in the Year 5 boys' race and Kassia for the Year 3 girls, while Freya and Molly were second and third respectively for Caldecote in the Year 5 girls' race.

Neither school could make an impact on the team leaderboard where Histon and Impington schools dominated, Brook retaining the older age group trophy and Park winning the younger one for the first time, in only their second year in the competition.

Ms McDonnell said: "This is our biggest event of the year and a lot of planning and organisation goes into it by the whole team. But it makes it all worthwhile when you see the smiles and enjoyment on the children's faces and the sense of achievement they feel. Lots of them told us how they felt really happy and proud of themselves and pleased to represent their school.

"We couldn't have delivered this event without the support of sports leaders from Bassingbourn and Comberton Village Colleges who acted as sweep runners, led the warm-up area and helped with the finish line, and a group of uniformed services students from Cambridge Regional College, who marshalled the route. A big thank you to all of them."



**BOURN TO RUN: The school's trophy winners.**



**THE RACE IS ON: Action from Wimpole Hall.**



**MEDAL DELIGHT: CVC Cabin students finished in third place.**

## Fun intro to football

Dry Drayton and Coton were among 14 schools who took part in a fun afternoon of football for Years 3 and 4.

The event at Linton Village College was designed to introduce new players to the game and give them the opportunity to represent their school in a friendly competition.

Matches were 7-a-side with roll on, roll off subs with teams getting to play against lots of different schools in quick seven-minute matches. With the focus of the event being on providing an introduction to competitive football in a really positive and fun environment the results of the matches were not recorded.

Instead the children were asked to score their opposition based on their teamwork, fair play and their team/individual skill.

These scores were then collated and at the end of the afternoon awards went to Foxton, Linton Heights and Histon & Impington Park.

Histon & Impington Park, who scored the most points across all three categories, were presented with Cambridge United rain jackets, donated by Cambridge United Community Trust.

## Rising to the Challenge . . .

The South Cambs School Sports Partnership, in partnership with Panathlon Challenge, ran two events for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) this term.

Panathlon is a national charity which gives thousands with SEND the opportunity to take part in competitive sport. The pathway begins with local events leading to county finals.

Both events were hosted at Impington Village College, where Year 9 Cabin students from Comberton made up one of the five teams competing in the secondary schools' Panathlon Challenge Xtend for KS3.

They worked together to score points for their team in sports such as athletics, boccia, skittles, new age kurling and table cricket and returned with bronze medals and smiles.

Winners were Gretton School, who now go forward to the county finals in March.

Earlier in the day, Hatton Park won the primary event. They, too, go on to the country finals.

Partnership manager, Claire McDonnell said: "Events like this are about developing new skills, forming new friendships, boosting confidence, and most importantly having fun and I definitely think all of that was evident."



**TRIUMPHANT:** Comberton's Year 9 rugby players.



**GOOD WIN:** For the KS4 team against The Leys School.

# Title delight for two teams

**Comberton's Year 7 and Year 9 team are the Cambridge and District rugby champions in their age group.**

The Year 9s won the title after three impressive victories, first beating Impington 35-0 and then St Bede's 25-0 to go into their final game having not conceded a single point. This was backed by some excellent handling and some fine ball-carrying.

That changed in a much tougher final game, against Bottisham when, with fatigue setting in, they had to dig deep to win 20-10 and secure the title.

Special mention to Nhial (T), who scored more tries than Head of PE Michael Wilce could count, but congratulations to the whole squad: Milen (O), Will (E), Max (V), Doruk (C), Josh (V), Henry (T), Chris (B), Rowan (V), Forster (I), Denis (B), Harry, Alex (E), Nhial, Tom (B), Max (E) and Euan (9R).

Year 7's tournament victory was the highlight of an excellent season especially when, for many, it was their first experience of playing competitive rugby.

They have had a good number of students turning up to training every week, allowing them to spend time building up the individual skills and creating an excellent team bond.

This was shown in their first competitive match, played as a tag format against Bassingbourn VC. The Comberton boys played fantastically together, and with some standout individual performance, were victorious.

From there, they went to the District event at Shelford RFC on their 4G synthetic pitch.

Again, the team took what they had been working on in training and applied it to their matches, with some outstanding tackling and rucking.

The team played three matches in the group stage and were unbeaten to progress to the final to face a favoured Impington side.

Comberton stayed focused on their

game plan and showed great teamwork and skill to overcome the odds and walk away champions.

After yet more training and hard work, they faced our toughest test of the season with an away fixture to The Perse school, who, with exceptional facilities, coaching and large amounts of training time, were always going to be difficult opponents. On the day they were too strong — CVC were on the receiving end of some excellent passing and running. However, they dug in and kept trying, which shows real team commitment.

With the makings of an outstanding team, they are eagerly looking forward to next year.

The Year 10 team enjoyed a great afternoon in October for lots of reasons including playing 7s for the first time, demonstrating determination when faced with difficult challenges and finishing third overall in the district.

The boys played some excellent rugby and only grew in confidence as the day went by, although four games on the bounce took a heavy toll on energy levels. The team represented CVC very well and gained a lot of respect from the other schools despite losing the final decider game to Impington Village College.

Later in the term a combined KS4 team — though mostly Year 10 — narrowly beat The Leys School.



**SUPER START:** The new Year 7 team won the District title.

The team braved the cold conditions and despite less preparation time than their opponents, demonstrated their commitment and dedication to come out on top. A particular well done goes to try scorers Fin (11C), Lucas (11B) and Kyle (11B), who touched down twice.

Coach Johnny Berwick commented: "The group of boys across both year groups have gelled together well in the time spent training and are a credit to the school. They play two more fixtures when they face The Perse in the New Year."

# Seven battle through to county round

Thirty-four CVC pupils competed in the District Cross Country Championships at Netherhall School against various secondary schools from the Cambridge area.

On arrival, we were immediately struck by the memory (or surprise) of this colossal hill which would significantly impact the run. And that was without the cross wind that athletes would have to contend with.

The course appeared complicated at first sight, but it was soon clear that there were two types of lap; a large and a medium, which was 300m shorter.

To qualify you needed to finish in the first 16, do so and you had a place in the county championship in Peterborough in January.

The 'senior' runners (Years 12 and 13) ran first

with Emily (13RJ) finishing sixth to book her place in the second of the rounds which culminate in the national championships in the spring.

Next up were the boys in Years 10 and 11 where Alex (10E) and Kalle (10R) finished 11th and 13th respectively to book their tickets to Peterborough. They were followed by sole intermediate girl, Anna (10N), who snatched the final qualifying spot, in her race.

The junior boys (Years 8 and 9) followed where Henry (9T) was the only CVC qualifier. This was matched by Amelie (8N), who won the minor race 12 months earlier. In her first year as a junior, she took ninth with an impressive run

against many older runners. In the minor boys (Year 7) Zak (7O) placed 11th and qualified.

Well done to all involved for not only their effort in the run, but braving the conditions!



**TOUGH CONDITIONS:** For cross-country running but Comberton have seven qualifiers.

# Sports Leaders impress

The autumn term saw a new group of Year 10 Sports Leaders begin their journey of leadership... and what a start they had!

We are so lucky to have such confident and committed pupils.

So far they have led at three events; the Outdoor and Adventurous Activities festival, the Bee Netball tournament and at Wimpole Hall primary school cross-country events (see Page 21).

The netball umpires especially showed brilliant knowledge and understanding of the rules, as well as having good game management of players.

In addition, we had some very organised and efficient pupils on the score table, who ensured all the results were collated and inputted correctly — a stressful job when you have lots of primary school pupils desperate to know where they have placed!

At the Wimpole cross country event, the pupils braved really cold conditions! But they had important jobs to do, beginning with warming up all the primary school pupils before the race, which they also started. They were then at the finish line handing out place tickets.

This may sound simple, but with more than 1,000 primary school pupils running, it certainly was a challenge. However, they were outstanding and it was like having 16 additional members of staff at the event!

There have also been some exceptional pupils going the extra mile, assisting with after-school clubs and fixtures.

A big thank you and congratulations to Anna (10N), Kim (10C), Josh (10E), Oscar (10I) and Emily (10E), who have all been spotted on many occasions running clubs, or refereeing football games for our lower school pupils. You certainly are exceptional role models.

Rebecca Kingston, PE Department



## Coton set pace

Eleven teams from six schools contested the first round of the Bee Netball competition run by sports leaders at Comberton.

Split into an A and B division, the teams played each other in a round robin competition on a sunny October afternoon.

Coton won the A event and are undefeated going into the second round in March. Meridian lead the B team division going into the last round of local matches before the finals, where teams play in a competition according to their two first-round results.



**GOOD TO GO:** Sports Leaders arrive at Wimpole.



**ROLE MODELS:** Sports Leaders have been helping at clubs.

## Young netballers put on a great show

With more than half the squad still eligible for next year's under-16 tournament, Comberton are looking forward to the future after their run to the Cambridgeshire County Netball finals last month.

The Comberton squad — which includes more Year 10s than Year 11s — were among an elite group of eight teams contesting the event, having won the Cambridge and District tournament last academic year.

They took on Ely College and their opener and a confident Comberton won 19-2 — a great result in a match that was only 16 minutes long and which highlighted the accurate shooting from Brooke, Lily and Abi.

The hard work had clearly been paying off at our 'netball academy' training sessions. However, the next games pitted Comberton

against some very experienced teams from The Perse, Stephen Perse Foundation and King's Ely. While these games ended in defeat, there was

some brilliant play and some excellent defending and interceptions from Anna, Isla and Abbie G.

The final two games were against St Bede's and Sawtry, and Comberton ended the day with two wins, 8-4 and 10-7.

The girls managed to play the ball from defence to attack very cleanly, with some brilliant mid-court play from Sally, Chloe, Georgie and Olivia. Comberton eventually finished fourth, an impressive achievement with so many players still eligible to try and qualify next year.

Brooke was named Teachers' Player of the Tournament, while Georgie won the Players' Player of the Tournament accolade.

Well done to all.

Squad: Brooke (10M), Anna (10N), Georgie (10C), Lily (10R), Abbie (10O), Isla (10M), Sally-Ann (11E), Abi (11I), Olivia (11T) and Chloe (11N).



**COUNTY FINALISTS:** Comberton's under-16 netballers.

# Rider targets HOYS return

Teenage showjumper Lola is building her reputation as a talented horsewoman after qualifying for this autumn's Horse of the Year Show.

And she is on her way to booking a return visit after the first round of competition for the 2024 season.

The Year 10 student also has her sights on qualifying for Team GB and competing in the Junior Nations Cup.

Although she finished out of the placings in her first experience of the Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) at the NEC in Birmingham, she took plenty of positives as both her young ponies found the big stage quite daunting.

After warming up behind the scenes, competitors wait in a tunnel until the previous rider finishes. At that point the curtain goes up and the next rider heads into a wall of crowd noise, loud music and lights.

Despite her horses finding it all a bit overwhelming, Lola's riding was widely praised and she has now been asked to ride ponies for other people.

She already has her own two, Tempo and Toby, through to the second (and final) qualifying round for HOYS 2024 where only four go through each time.

Her path to the 2023 competition on Tempo was achieved by winning at the

Wales and West Blue Chip Pony Newcomers at the David Broome Event Centre in Chepstow in July.

Twenty-one of the original 77 competitors posted first round clears over the 1.10m track with the raised and shortened track in round two reducing the numbers to eight for the jump-off.

Lola (10E) kept a cool head despite the pressure of wanting to qualify for HOYS to win by 0.25 seconds on the 7-year-old Tempo, purchased in Ireland 15 months ago by dad Ashley on the recommendation of trainer Tom Vance.

He came back from serious illness which saw him spend three weeks at the vets and lose a lot of fitness and muscle.

She describes him as 'the pony of a lifetime' and said: "I have a special bond with a very special pony. He's a great character, always pulling funny faces, has a teddy toy in his stable and loves to throw all the rugs off the rug rack outside his stable on to the floor as well as emptying the grooming box looking for treats." Her other pony, called Toby at home, qualified at Bicton. Like Tempo, he has been produced by Lola herself, patiently teaching both of them the art of showjumping.



**NEW EXPERIENCE:** Rider and ponies competed at the Horse of the Year Show for the first time.

## Girls keep Comberton flag flying in cups

Comberton's under-18 girls football team are through to the last 16 of the English Schools Football Association Championships.

The squad of players from Years 11-13, several of whom played in the under-16 team which won the trophy on a memorable day at Stoke City's ground in May, now have their sights set on the under-18 Arnold Clark Cup after booking their place in the fourth round with a 7-0 away win in a wet and muddy match at March-based Neale Wade Academy.

Maddie (12MR), who is on the books of professional club Milton Keynes, scored a hat-trick and there was a goal apiece for Madison (13RJ), Rose (11V) and Bryana (13KS).

The free-scoring team previously knocked out St Ivo (9-2) and Samuel Whitbread Academy, from Bedford (4-2).

But they are the only Comberton team still left in the ESFA competitions after the under-13 girls went out in the fourth round of the 9-a-side Playstation Cup.

They lost 6-2 at Alameda Middle School, Bedford, having previously beaten Sawtry (1-0), Nene Park, Peterborough (6-1) and Jack Hunt, Peterborough (5-2). The under-16s saw the trophy slip away after losing 5-0 to Sawston in the third round, having beaten St Ivo 5-3 following a first-round bye.

The other girls team, at under-14, beat Netherhall 2-0 but were then knocked out 3-0 by Chesterton.

In the boys' competitions, two teams endured penalty heartbreak to end their interest.

The under-13s lost their cup game 5-4 on spot kicks to Chesterton after the match ended 4-4 and the under-14s went out to St Ivo 5-3 on penalties after a 1-1 draw.

They had earlier beaten Stephen Perse Foundation 2-1.

The under-15 and under-16 teams both had first-round byes but went out in the second, losing 3-2 to Soham and Bottisham respectively.

The under-12s, in their first season together, opened with a 5-4 victory over St Peter's in the 9-a-side competition, before losing 3-2 to the other Huntingdon school, Hinchingsbrooke.

The under-18 boys' run was ended in the fourth round after a 7-0 defeat by a very strong Samuel Whitbread Academy side, who were under-16 finalists last season.

This followed a first round bye, 5-0 win over Stephen Perse Foundation and a thrilling 7-6 penalty success against Hampton College, Peterborough, after the teams were locked at 2-2 at full-time.



**MIXED FORTUNES:** For the under-13 (top) and under-18 teams

● The under-13 girls bounced back from their ESFA exit two days later by reaching the final of the local English Football League Utilita Cup tournament, but it was not enough to keep them on the road to Wembley, with only the winners progressing in the seven-a-side tournament.

In the group games they beat Trumpington Community College 2-1, Castle Manor (Haverhill) 10-0 and St John's (Cambridge) 7-0. They went on to beat Soham 3-0 in the semi-finals to set up a rematch against Saffron Walden County High after the teams drew 1-1 in the group stage. This time the strong opponents won 1-0 to reach the next stage of a competition which has its final before the EFL Trophy final at Wembley next year.