With the exam season now firmly behind us, children and families are doubtless looking forward to the summer break. GCSE and A level exams have progressed without a hitch this term and we anticipate, once again, an uplift in results to build on the improvements that were made last summer. For those students moving on to university or to fresh challenges elsewhere, I offer you my very best wishes and those of the whole school community.

I hope all our students have managed to have a productive term which has culminated in Activities Week, Sports Days, Arts Week and Work Experience for Year 10. Once again, I cannot pay tribute highly enough to our team of dedicated, professional and committed staff who work tirelessly in the interests of the children and afford them such wonderful opportunities.

In terms of school priorities, academic progress is only surpassed by ensuring that your children and our staff remain safe at school. To that end, and given that we are a very open site on a busy main road we are investing heavily in new security gates which will be installed over the summer break at both entrances to the site. Recent events in Bradford with the stabbing of a supply teacher have led me to remind students that possession of knives and offensive weapons will result in an immediate permanent exclusion from the school. Protecting the whole school community is of critical importance.

We also go to great lengths to ensure your child is safe when they are online with lessons about internet safety coupled with a sophisticated filtering and monitoring system at the school which allows all online activity to be traced back to an individual. I hope you will find the guidance in this issue useful in helping you to monitor your child’s activity on the internet. Thankfully, incidents of child grooming, radicalisation and exploitation of young people remain rare but we must all remain vigilant.

Your child’s safety on the roads is my greatest concern. Despite frequent reminders to young people that they are not invincible I still receive too many calls from anxious members of the public, some of whom are quite shaken having come close to knocking down a child due to either the child’s inattention or careless behaviour. Please do stress to your children the importance of being safe on the roads and respecting other road users. I say the same thing to all of the other youngsters before they leave every summer – “Stay Safe and see you all in September.”
E-SAFETY

Mr Forbes, Head of ICT
Bronte

The Internet is an excellent resource, whether it is for socialising, gaming, talking to people or searching for information. It has become an accepted way of life for our teenage population to keep in touch with their friends and it is commonplace to see today’s teenagers walking around with a mobile phone in their hands.

For parents and carers it is often reassuring that their child has a mobile phone with them when they are out and about with their friends enabling them to get in touch if they are going to be late home or being able to contact them in an emergency.

However, some parents remain unaware of the dangers that internet access can pose to children and think it will always happen to someone else’s child. Cyberbullying, grooming and children accessing inappropriate websites are real threats that we should all be aware of.

It is certainly more difficult these days to keep track of what children are up to on their portable devices and keeping up to speed with the rapid developments in technology can sometimes seem daunting. However, this should not deter parents from being involved in their child’s online life.

It is important that parents and carers keep themselves up to date with their child’s developments online. A popular phrase we regularly hear at parents’ evening is that children spend hours on the computer at home and when parents have a problem with their computer it is their children who they turn to fix it. Why not let the younger people educate the older generation?

Children of today have a wealth of knowledge about modern technology and as part of their curriculum they are made very aware of the dangers being online can bring, so I would encourage parents and carers to engage in conversations about their internet life.

Some suggestions of topics that you may wish to discuss are:

- Privacy Settings on their social media sites to make sure they are aware of who they are sharing information with.
- Think about what information they are posting about themselves or others and ask if this is putting them at risk in any way, particularly with regard to personal information.
- Remember, once the information is out there you have handed over control and it is virtually impossible to retrieve it.
- Remember there is no guarantee that the person you think you are talking to is actually that person.

The Internet can provide hours of entertainment for families and by taking a few simple steps to protect yourselves online, there is no reason why this should not continue.

For further information about how to stay safe online please look at www.thinkuknow.co.uk which provides access to an excellent range of resources for people of all ages about how to stay safe online.

' Take a few simple steps to protect yourselves online' 

100% ATTENDANCE

Mr Smith
Assistant Headteacher

Sam Hill Year 11 who has achieved 100% attendance every year since starting Year 7

It is a real achievement to gain 100% attendance in a school year and this year we are pleased that two of our Year 11 students, Sam Hill (Brunel) and Ryan Convery (Elgar) have both achieved 100% attendance every year since they started in Year 7.

This is a truly outstanding record and one that both Sam, Ryan and their parents should be justifiably proud of. To attend every single day over the course of five years shows great commitment, strength of character and a certain resolve that we would all be grateful for. Sam and Ryan were both awarded with an excellent attendance trophy at the Year 11 Prom.

The link between attendance and attainment cannot be ignored and an attendance of 99% and above is our figure at Tewkesbury School. There were also more than 60 other Year 11 students who achieved an average of 97% attendance since joining Year 7.

These students have demonstrated that, with real tenacity and positive outlook, this figure can easily be achieved. An unblemished attendance record is testament to the model students that Sam and Ryan are, and I’m sure that this recognition will be a springboard for future success.

CARE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Miss Willoughby
Assistant Headteacher

All Tewkesbury School students may, at times, require specific or additional help in meeting their needs. We are fortunate to have a range of skilled practitioners who can help support children with a range of issues including those that are personal, behavioural, psychological or social. The Tewkesbury Learning Centre (TLC) contains experienced staff who can deal effectively with many of these issues or, alternatively, refer children to our school counsellor, school nurse or other external services. These services help to ensure the emotional well-being of children at the school.

What does the TLC do for students?
The TLC is a support centre for a wide and varied range of students, including those who may need to be reintegrated having been absent from school for a period of time or those who need additional support in a school environment. Students are usually in the TLC on a full or part time basis over a period of time, depending on their circumstances.

The TLC is the base for the following areas of support:
Young Carers - Ongoing support is given by Mrs Jones to the school’s 34 young carers. This support includes using the TLC as a place to escape or rest and often just to have a listening ear.
Service Children - Students who have relatives in the armed forces may need additional emotional and practical support at varying times from Mrs Perry.
Gypsy, Romany, Traveller Students - GRT students are also supported by Mrs Perry, who meets them as and when there may be a need, or if there are issues or concerns.
Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator – Bullying incidents are investigated and dealt with by Mrs Marsh, who works with the pastoral team to resolve issues.
Supporting students - Students who are in need of help re-integrating in to school after a period of absence or injury also find the services of the TLC appropriate to their needs.

This links TLC with a wide range of outside agencies to support students and their families for a variety of reasons.

A current Year 10 student who has received support in the TLC said, “I became unwell in October 2014 and reached a bad point in January 2015 where I didn’t feel that I was able to come to any of my lessons and wanted to move to another school far away as I was very unhappy. But with the help from the school and outside organisations, I was able to stay in the TLC, where I could do my work away from the people in my classes, who I was too anxious to see and talk to. After that I was slowly able to go back into some of my lessons and now feel like I’m improving. I hope to integrate back into all of my lessons soon.”

With the latest news from Tewkesbury School on twitter, follow @tewkschool
Reception: 01684 292152 Email: office@tewkesburyschool.org
Website: www.tewkesburyschool.org
SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS ARE UNDERWAY

Martin Thomas
Director of Business Management

Security and safety in schools is a highly sensitive subject and one which is never far from the conscience of a Headteacher, facilities team and Governing Body, all of whom have roles to play in the implementation of effective school security.

As history has shown us, breaches of security in schools can have catastrophic effects and whether you are a parent or a teaching professional, the security of the school from a safeguarding perspective always remains very high on our agenda. Following some minor intrusions onto the site this academic year, we are looking to upgrade some of the perimeter security to the school and this will take place over the summer holidays.

Following a successful review of a number of security firms, we have decided to work with G4S to implement motorised gates and static fencing at the east and west entrances of school. We are also working with them to install an access control system to secure all external doors to school blocks.

The access control system will be controlled by software that will allow all external doors to be secured at scheduled times of the day. They will secure each block when the entrance gates to the school are open for public use, when students are in lessons and during holidays. Each door will have a card reader that will be controlled by the same cards that the students and staff use for cashless catering and photocopying. All doors will be locked using a magnetic door lock but will also have push buttons to exit along with emergency exit buttons.

G4S will also be installing motorised entrance gates for vehicles and pedestrians at the east and west entrances to the school. The east entrance, closest to the motorway, will be protected with a gate for both vehicle and pedestrian control. Fencing will follow a line to the rear of the car park for staff parking and a dedicated parking area for visitors will be allocated.

The west entrance will be protected with gates for vehicle and pedestrian control with fencing running from the new gates to the caretaker’s house and down the path joining the existing school building.

The entrance gates will be open until 08:35 in the morning to allow students to be dropped off and reopened at 3:15 in order for students to be picked up.

We look forward to working with G4S in helping us continue to make Tewkesbury School a happy and safe environment for our students and staff.

CYCLE SAFETY

It’s great that so many of our students choose to cycle to school each day and we are fortunate to have many cycle routes surrounding the school area that can be used by students to get here safely. Every year, students in Year 7 are offered the chance to take part in the Bikeability Scheme which is delivered in partnership with Gloucestershire Road Safety. This year, 28 children signed-up to do the level 3 scheme which aims to further their confidence when making journeys on busier roads.

Milly Smith, Year 7 (Bronte) took part in the course. “After successfully completing my sponsored postcode hunt and bike ride last year, I decided to put my name down for the Bikeability level 3 advanced cycle training at school. In Year 6 I completed level two and I enjoyed it very much. The course lasted for 2 days, the first day was warm and sunny, but unfortunately day 2 was very cold and windy! Despite the bad weather we kept going and cycled more than 10 miles. I was on my own with one of the cycle instructors, Mrs Jennings. I liked this because it helped me to progress further. On day one we cycled around Wotton-under-Edge and I learnt how to safely ride on a round-about. This was difficult at the beginning but once I got the hang of it I found it easy.

On day 2, we cycled around Pirns Park and stopped at the shops and got some sweets! Then we cycled through Tewkesbury Town and the High Street. There were many occasions where I was first at the traffic lights with a big queue of cars behind me. Before I took this course, I would have been very nervous around cars when I was on my bike but what I have learnt has given me more confidence. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed doing the Bikeability course and have taken away with me some great tips on how to ride safely. I am very thankful to Mr Mannings and Mrs Jennings for the great opportunity and would say that any future Year 7’s should give it a go!”

ROAD SAFETY

WALKING

- Walking to school is healthy, doesn’t cost anything and it’s great to walk with friends.
- Remember that friends, music players and mobile phones are a distraction when crossing the road. Please make sure you stop and check that the road is clear before stepping out.
- Be aware of other road users, pedestrians and cyclists and do not obstruct them. Don’t take short-cuts or trespass through neighbouring properties or businesses.
- The Ashchurch Road is particularly busy at the start of end of the school day and you should always use the pedestrian crossing at the school gates.

CYCLING

- Around half of cyclists’ injuries are to the face and head, so wear a properly fitting cycle helmet and make sure you do it up!
- In the winter make sure you have lights for your bike and wear high-visibility clothing.
- Know your route and how to tackle any tricky junctions or busy roads; use the cycle paths wherever you can.
- Don’t wear headphones whilst cycling.
- Consider doing the Bikeability Scheme in Year 7. This builds on the level 2 training in primary school.
- Maintain your bike — local bike shops offer maintenance checks.

YOUNG GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Tayler Saunders
Year 9, Hodgkin

When the staff in the TLC referred me to work with Young Gloucestershire and I was told I would be taking time out of my lessons to work with them, I wasn’t sure but I have really enjoyed the experience.

It’s been great to have a session on my timetable that is a bit less academic and focuses on me as an individual. The youth workers are really upbeat and even a bit silly; it’s like taking all my favourite teachers and putting them together!

I would say I’m a smart person who likes to work hard. But I know I can get frustrated and overwhelmed too easily. I have often given up on things thinking they are too hard but I regret it later.

The sessions with Young Gloucestershire have helped me to react differently and to not get so stressed. Working in a group, we talked about methods to control our anger and how to calm ourselves down. For me — I listen to music. I now realise that a lot of the things that used to upset me are just silly and little.

The sessions have really helped me to understand more about the way I feel and to think about how I can react in certain situations. I feel that I am a more patient person now, which is helping me both in school and at home.

Tewkesbury School. Aspiration Challenge Excellence Values Community
GOING, GOING, ALL GONE!
TEWKESBURY SCHOOL AUCTION OF PROMISES

Mrs Whybrow
Commercial team
The Auction of Promises which took place in April was a great success and raised an amazing total of £4,509.93.

All the promises, donations and raffle items were generously donated by local businesses, parents, community, governors and staff. The evening, which was run by a team of Sixth Form students, saw the audience gather for an exciting, fast paced auction of 53 ‘promises’. A wonderful, luxury hamper was also raffled during the evening and the lucky winner was a parent. There was a great atmosphere on the night and the event was enjoyed by all who attended.

The money was raised to purchase more outdoor seating for our students. We’re pleased to report that new benches have already been purchased and installed for students to enjoy during the fine weather this summer.

Ian Coleman, Chair of Governors at the school said, “We are all delighted with the success of our first Auction of Promises which raised a fantastic sum of money. The Governors would like to extend their thanks to everyone involved in organising the event, donating the promises to attend and bidding on the evening. This money has already had a direct benefit to the students in helping to provide additional outdoor facilities”.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE SPONSORS:
Businesses:

Teachers, parents, governors and community:
Alison Heik, Andy Steele, Charlie Gardner, Claire de Gannville, Gail Evans, Andy Cornwell, Simon Mills, Annette Kinahan, Helen Butt, Ian Coleman, Jane Graham, Julie Bridge, Vicky Deans, Howard Davis, Julie Fay, David Graham-Kevan, Stuart Lockwood, Val Faulk and Peter Flemming

and our students have raised an amazing total of £9120.19 for various charities since the start of this school year! The charities are: Children in Need, Red Nose Day, Wear Pink Day for Cancer Research, Wear it Red Day for the British Heart Foundation, Guide Dogs, Paddle Power for Levana Hanson and the Midlands Air Ambulance.

Well done to our caring students for raising such an outstanding amount of money which can really make a difference to the lives of other people.

CHARITABLE EFFORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

£9120.19

OUR YOUNG ROWERS TAKE CENTRE STAGE

Mr Gardner
Elgar
For the senior rowers serious training has had to come second to revision for exams during the early regatta season. Their mantle of success however has been well and truly taken over by our up and coming stars.

With AB Severn Rowing Club, the junior crews have raced at Evesham, Avon County, Trentham and Bridgnorth Regattas where they have won between them no less than 33 events as well as the £500 Victor – Ludorum prize at Trentham.

Will Sayers (Year 8, Priestley) has had an outstanding season winning with his partner from Pershore in the double sculls and in the quadruple sculls on several occasions. Will and Todd Rothwell (Year 8, Brunel) met in the final round of the J13 single sculls at Bridgnorth where Will prevailed in a very hard fought race by the narrow margin of three feet.

J14s Maisey Hack (Year 9, Keller) and Anna Surman (Year 9, Bronte) having shown great promise at Avon County and Trentham, triumphed at Bridgnorth in the J15 double sculls and then went on to win again as part of the J15 quadruple sculls. Will Goates (Year 9, Priestley) also won at Bridgnorth in the J14 quadruple sculls as did Jenna Roberts (Year 12, Priestley) both in the J18 single and double sculls. Jenna will go on to race at the National Junior Championships at Stratheclyde later in the year.

Our thanks go to Brian and Jay Curtis from AB Severn Rowing Club for their hard work and continued support of our young people. Anyone interested in taking up rowing can contact them on absevern@globalnet.co.uk, or speak to Mr Gardner at school.

HEALTHY LIVING AND LEARNING AWARD

Miss Willoughby
Assistant Headteacher
Tewkesbury School’s PSHE team, who deliver lessons on a range of personal, social and health related issues are delighted to have gained the Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning Award for Tewkesbury School. The Award is in recognition of the excellent projects and resources that the school has implemented and delivered to our young people. Examples include the Dementia Project and Volatile Substance Abuse training for Year 8 students. In order to get the accreditation, we had to do a full and detailed review of our PSHE programme and evidence that the programme had made a difference to our students’ learning and understanding of healthy living.

Healthy children do better in learning and in life. The aim of Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning is to help children and young people achieve their full potential and lead long, healthy, happy lives. Taking part in the GHLL programme has enabled the school to support our young people to make positive changes in their behaviour to improve both their physical and mental wellbeing. We received the award plaque on Thursday 25th June at a special event at Kingholm Rugby Club.

CHURCH BELL RINGING

Mrs Taylor
Learning Support
Looking for a new hobby? How about giving church bell ringing a try?

There are lots of churches in the local area where you can have a go such as Tewkesbury Abbey, Iwning and Ashchurch. It’s free, suitable for young people and adults aged 11+ and can easily become a hobby for life.

You don’t have to attend church services to become a bell ringer but you do need to be available to attend one practice per week (7:30 – 9:00pm) and to ring for at least one Sunday service each week.

Please speak to Mrs Taylor in Learning Support if you are interested.
GOING FOR GOLD!

Mrs Conn
Duke of Edinburgh’s Award

In April, Tewkesbury School held a Presentation Evening at which successful participants from the school’s Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Programme were presented with their Awards at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels by Amy Durant, former student and holder of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Gold Award.

Following a talk by Amy Durant on her experience of being a Gold Award holder, 43 pupils were presented with the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh’s Award and 8 with the Silver Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. Five pupils who achieved the top Award, the Duke of Edinburgh’s Gold Award, were given certificates recognising their achievement. They will be invited by the Duke of Edinburgh to attend a Gold Award Presentation at St James’ Palace where they will be presented with their Gold Awards in the presence of the Duke of Edinburgh. These successful participants are Brad Allen, Liam Atkins, Lucy Hall, Rachel Hamilton, Natalie Minter and Jason Sadler.

The Duke of Edinburgh’s Trophy (In memory of Dr David Tustin) was awarded to former Year 13 student Brad Allen for his outstanding commitment to the school’s Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Programme. Mrs Tustin, who is the lead for the programme, stated, “I was delighted to present Brad with this Trophy as he has been such a reliable young man who has steadily worked his way through the bronze, silver and gold levels and is now a fantastic mentor for the pupils who follow him.” Of all of the successful Duke of Edinburgh’s Award participants, Mrs Tustin added “Achieving the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award is a fantastic achievement which shows great tenacity and teamwork. I am so very proud of each and every participant and grateful to all of my colleagues and assessors who support participants’ progress.”

Mr Watson also paid tribute to those pupils receiving their awards. He stated, “It gives me great pleasure to have attended the presentation evening to congratulate the pupils on their tremendous achievement. The continuing success of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Programme here at Tewkesbury School can be attributed to the calibre of pupil who takes up the challenge and the guidance they receive throughout the award programme.” Mr Watson also paid special tribute to Mrs Tustin for her role as leader. “Mrs Tustin has been leading the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Programme at Tewkesbury for 28 years. Her dedication to the young people is remarkable and I know there are genuine bonds between her, her team of volunteers and all participants.”

HONDURAS 2015

Ms Mead
Brunel

At the time of Kudos going to press, there will be seventeen intrepid students accompanied by Ms Mead and Mr Gowers on an adventure of a life-time – they will be spending 14 days visiting the cloud forests of Cusuco National Park, Honduras where they will help to survey one of the world’s rarest and most endangered forest types. Follow the school’s twitter feed for live updates and news of their experiences; a full report will feature in the next edition!

HALL OF FAME

Well done to our School Receptionist, Mrs Webster, who carried out a 10,000 ft skydive in April in aid of the Alzheimer’s Society. She has raised over £1,300 for the charity.

Congratulations to all Tewkesbury School students who took part in Strategy, the huge Scouting event in Cirencester held on 13th – 14th June. They survived the storms and mud to take part in a series of challenges. Particular congratulations go to Nerys Gardiner-Orton (Y8, Brunel), Maddie Messenger (Y8, Hodgkin), Emily Farrington (Y7, Keller) who were in the top all-girl group, coming 4th out of 252 teams. Well done girls!

Well done to Bridget Morris (Y7, Hodgkin) and her pet pig Acorn, Bridget entered Acorn into the Young Handlers and Guilt Gloucester Old Spot categories at the Royal Three Counties Show in June. It was their first ever show and they came away with a second place and three 3rd places; she was very pleased!

Our Titans Cheerleading team came 1st place in their competition in Newport in May. Well done to the team and coaches who have also been busy fundraising to support their competitions. They carried out a bag pack at Sainsbury’s, Cheltenham; in March they raised £840 and June raised £636 which all will go towards their future competitions.

Our Y9 students have been busy serving delicious refreshments at the Touching Souls Cafe at Tewkesbury Abbey three times this term. They’ve represented the school very well.

Well done to Y10 catering students, Rebecca Gazzard (Brunel) and Cameron Williams (Brunel) for assisting with the catering arrangements at the Town Mayor Making Ceremony in May.

Well done to our staff runners, Miss Waters, Mr Willgoss and Mrs King who ran the Tewkesbury half marathon in May.

Our Year 7 cricket team have had a very successful season winning fixtures v Bournside and Chipping Campden schools so far.

Well done to Y12 students Gemma Neil (Priestley) and Jade Rothman (Elgar) who have both been selected to attend the Sutton Trust Summer Schools in July and August this year. Jade will be going to Durham University to attend Sociology and Criminology whilst Gemma, who is an aspiring medic, will be attending a medicine summer school which will take place at Bristol University in July.

Congratulations to the following students on their achievements at the Cheltenham District Athletics in May: Conor Kearns (Priestley) – U17 Pole Vault Champion 3.50m (a new district record), Daniel Beasley (Priestley) – U17 High Jump Champion 1.80m, Ruth Brookes (Elgar) – U17 300m Hurdles Champion, Morgan Monk’s (Priestley) – U15 Shot Put Champion, Silver medallists: Freya Chapman (Elgar) – 200m 100m, Megan Betteridge (Brunel) – High Jump, Samuel Peters (Brunel) – High Jump Long Jump.

June has been a great month for athlete Conor Kearns (Priestley). At the start of the month he won triple gold medals at Gloucestershire Schools Athletics. He also won the South West Championships in pole vault with a PB of 3.70m at the end of the month. His brother, Luke Kearns also got silver medal in the South West Championships.

Conor Kearns triple gold medal athlete

The Year 8 House Masterchef finals took place on 19th June. After a very close contest and an amazing standard of cooking by all who took part, the winners were Elgar House represented by Ben Kitchener and Chay Hawkins. Second place went to Alana Bee and Lauren Doyle (Hodgkin) and third place, Priestley House, represented by Amy Curtis and Jess Dash.

In June, Y12s Gemma Averiss (Priestley) and Emily Packer (Brunel) attended a conference with Mrs Bartholomew on the subject of ‘Working to Address Mental Health and Learning Disabilities in the Criminal Justice System.’ They were the only young people in attendance and were excellent ambassadors for Tewkesbury School. The event helped them to think about positive career experiences and work routes. They were confident and buzzing with enthusiasm after the event.
ENGINEERING FOR GIRLS

Catherine Towers, Cassidy Prasser and Beth Plummer

We took part in an engineering workshop for girls interested in an engineering career, this workshop was held by GE Aviation. The point of the activity was to get more females into working in engineering. The workshop lasted 3 weeks and 10 Year 7 girls took part.

During the workshop we learnt how to program a robotic arm so it would be able to play jenga! We started off by watching a short presentation which gave us an introduction to programming and engineering. Once we'd set up the robotic arm, we started with some simple tasks, such as picking up objects in the classroom. Next we started to use some more complicated programming where we could reverse the coding to repeat actions.

Gradually we began to play a simple game of jenga.

We experienced a few technical difficulties when we began, these included; being unable to access the software we had to use to programme, it was very challenging for us to reverse our coding as we couldn't repeat our starting position, meaning the robotic arm never did the exact same thing.

However, we all really enjoyed it and learnt a lot about programming and engineering. It was different to other clubs and was a good experience. We are going to be taking part in a competition on the 3rd July against other girls with the robotic arm. We all now have a greater interest for an engineering career in the future.

YEAR 9 RUGBY STARS

Mr Hobbs, Physical Education

Our rugby teams also had a good day at Tewkesbury School whilst walking around way and were fantastic ambassadors for they conducted themselves in an exemplary manner and achieved national success for both its results and engagement of the students. Credit far much of this is due to the support and commitment of many of the world-class engineering companies in the area.

Tewkesbury School, however, is not sitting back and is moving this strength back to the school site. We will be enlarging the provision to encompass more students who will now have discrete engineering classes in all years starting from when they arrive at the school at age 11. Students can now opt to follow engineering courses in Year 9. Formal qualifications at GCSE and Post-16 level will continue to take place with excellent intake at both levels. Tewkesbury School will continue to enhance our partnerships with local companies to ensure that the students’ learning experience is inspiring, relevant and will provide them with the vital skills to enter this career field.

YEAR 9 RUGBY STARS

Mr Hobbs, Physical Education

Keller

Gradedly we began to play a simple game

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career in the future.

Horticulture Students Create Garden of Remembrance

Ms de Glanville

Assistant Headteacher

Following their success at the RHS Spring Show at Malvern in 2014, our Year 9 Horticulture students were headhunted by Cheltenham Pet Crematorium to take part in a project to design a garden of remembrance at the new pet crematorium in Shannon Way, Tewkesbury.

Students visited the site in March to see how they could apply the design brief that requested the inclusion of texture, colour, private spaces and water. Plans and ideas were submitted at Easter and at the end of April, our students spent an entire afternoon planting the various beds and borders to help the garden take shape.

A grand opening ceremony took place on Wednesday 29th April. The students were highly complimented on their design which surpassed expectations and included extra elements such as a message tree on to which bereaved pet owners can post memories about their pets, a bug hotel and various bird boxes to encourage wildlife to the area, private benches where people can sit in peace and even a poop area for dogs who might visit the garden to give a farewell sniff to their departed sibling before the cremation takes place. Local farmer and owner of Cotswold Farm Park, Adam Henson, declared the crematorium officially open and praised the students for their thoughtful design and hard graft in creating such a peaceful memorial garden.

Jason Cracknell, General Manager of CPC says, “I would like to thank the pupils from Tewkesbury School for all their support, help and enthusiasm in creating CPC’s Memorial and Wildlife Garden. It was a pleasure working with them in helping an existing green space to become a garden and a very special one at that. I hope the pupils have been inspired by their involvement and that they would like to continue their work in the garden as it continues to develop.”
CROSS-PHASE LEARNING IN SHARPER FOCUS

Ms de Granville
Assistant Head

Tewkesbury School already has a well-established transition programme that stretches from Year 5 to the end of Year 7 and, every year, the school receives many compliments about the events that contribute to developing the confidence of students as they move up to secondary school.

In Year 5, students visit for a day with their class and teacher; in Year 6 with their parents during Open Week, with either their mum or dad for the Partnership Learning Event at the end of June; with the whole cohort on the taster days in July and again on the first day of term for Year 7s only in September. In addition, some students attend our popular Summer School.

Gradually, the school campus and any anxiety shrink as the student’s confidence grows. The written material and support meetings throughout the summer term of Year 6 are well received and there are plenty of opportunities for new students and their families to talk to older students and staff. Transfer support does not stop when they arrive in Year 7 though. In the autumn term, we have an evening of advice for parents about supporting learning and dealing with social media. We also ensure that tutors contact home during this term to check everything is OK.

Once a child is happy and feels secure, they are ready to learn. With such a good induction programme our students quickly settle and make strong academic progress. Our links with our primary colleagues are continually strengthening and regular meetings with our partner primaries in Tewkesbury and the surrounding area are helping us to ensure that progress made up to the age of 11 is maintained and built upon as soon as possible. Cross-phase English moderation meetings mean that primary and secondary teachers agree on standards and are able to discuss teaching and learning technique. They also share information about which books are studied in class to avoid repetition. Our primary sports coordinator, Mr Luckwood, organises over 30 events throughout the year, not only for our partner primaries, but for all schools within the Tewkesbury District. From September 2015 our “Primary Tuesday Club” will offer science, English, maths and DT sessions in notation and local primary schools will be able to make bookings for small groups of their students to attend the sessions.

A new initiative relates to students’ writing skills across all subject areas. Before leaving Year 6, students will identify 3 areas they need to focus on in their writing. These areas for improvement will be reproduced on stickers that are placed on the front of all of their subject books so that students will be reminded that their writing targets apply not only in English lessons, but across the curriculum. Subject teachers will be able to see the targets and ensure students concentrate on achieving them. We are hoping that this initiative will encourage better functional skills in English. As school inspector George Sampson said way back in 1922, “Every teacher is a teacher of English.”

Once again, our annual Arts Week saw a varied programme of activities taking place in a week-long celebration of creativity and talent.

Activities included drama, dance and art workshops and an exhibition of GCSE and A level art work was shown throughout the week. During the summer term, Year 7 students worked on making a sculpture with the help of local artist Jane Calvert. This will be included in the Tewkesbury Medieval Festival on 12th July.

The highlight of the week was the school production of Godspell which took place from Tuesday 7th to Thursday 9th July. The show was brought to life by our talented and energetic cast which included students from across Years 8 to 12.

CLASS OF 2015

Pam Johnston
Sixth Form Administrator

Laura Goodwin (Elgar) and Nicole Sandford (Bronte). Emily Healey (Priestley) was awarded the “Greatest Contribution to Sixth Form 2015” trophy and Daniel Taplin (Brunel) was presented with the “Young Entrepreneur of The Year” Trophy. The service closed with the students and audience joining together to sing a rousing rendition of ‘Never Forget’ by Take That! This was followed by refreshments served in the Abbey.

Mrs Johnston said, “It’s nice to see the many families attending the leavers’ service and enjoying the moment of pride in their children. I will really miss this year’s Year 13 students and would like to thank them all for their enthusiasm this year. It’s been great getting to know each and every one of them and I wish them good luck with whatever the future holds”.

To see more images taken on the evening, please view our website gallery.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS WEEK 2015

Lyndsey Woodward
Marketing Manager

The show, which was composed from various musical parables from The Gospel According to Matthew and saw Jesus Christ recruiting a group of followers who he taught various lessons to using song and dancing. Playing the lead role of Jesus was Sam Strachan (Year 11, Hodgkin). John the Baptist was played by Ben Napper (Year 11, Bronte) and Mary was played by the talented Lauryn Williams (Year 11, Hodgkin). There were stunning performances from all cast members who were watched by an enthusiastic audience of proud families and staff.

The end of the week was celebrated at the lively and vibrant Summer Dance Show which saw over 150 young people from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 showcasing what they had been working on in dance lessons, clubs, competitions and workshops this year alongside guest performances from The Roses Theatre Youth Dance, Amy’s Basin Dance, Amy Flynn’s School of Dance and local Primary Schools.

All in all, it was a very enjoyable week and a perfect celebration to mark the end of this school year.

MOVING ON UP

Annabelle Lee; Year 6
Norton Primary

Hi, my name is Annabelle Lee but you can call me Belle. I am eleven years old and have a passion for imaginative writing, especially science-fiction. I’m currently in Year Six at Norton C of E Primary. My terrific teachers, Mrs Cook, Mr Sheppard, Mr Taylor (Keller), George Sheppard (Keller), are caring Mrs Cook, beautiful Miss Bussey and perfect Miss Packman. Our class is forever-growing with a total of thirty-four pupils.

This year I have been particularly proud of my progress in my handwriting. When I first joined the school my writing was awful, all my letters were different sizes and I couldn’t spell to save my life. However now my writing looks like Miss Bussey has written it. Watch out Miss B!

When I move on to the next stage of my hectic life at Tewkesbury School my goal is to make lots of new friends whilst keeping in contact with old ones and join as many clubs as humanly possible. I shall wish to join dance, cheer-leading and trampolining. Bring it on!

Tewkesbury School. Aspiration Challenge Excellence Values Community
Looking through recent stories in education to find inspiration for this article, I have to admit to dwelling more than briefly on the news that 40% of OFSTED inspectors have not had their contracts renewed, after being considered not up to the standard required. Without wanting to show too much sympathy, any assessment system that deems four out of every ten people as second-rate is harsh indeed.

However, that’s exactly what happens to Year 11 students every single year. The figure of 40% is broadly speaking the same proportion of students nationally who don’t achieve the benchmark of five or more A*-C grades including English and maths – the door that opens up access to many routes in Higher Education and beyond.

There are even upcoming changes that might actually reduce the number of supposedly successful students. New GCSEs are being made harder and a different grading system introduced to “raise the bar”. Students starting Year 7 in September will have less flexibility in the subjects that they study than current students – with all having to do a Humanities and a Modern Foreign Language as two of their options, regardless of interest or aptitude. Maybe the OFSTED inspectors have been let off lightly?

I have absolutely no problem with a relentless drive to raise standards but I do question whether constant tinkering with the structure of exams is the way to do this.

In my opinion, there is good sense in his argument. His view is that everybody has to stay in education or training until the age of 18. It is at this stage that their education record produces something meaningful that employers are actually interested in. In other words, the longer you stay in education, the less relevant GCSEs become.

He is particularly damning of the current system of vocational education and describes this route as a “restricted, unloved range of options” and “a social and economic own goal”. He goes further to say “Non-academic routes should be rigorous and different to academic ones, but not second best”.

I particularly like his view that, from the perspective of employers, the school system needs to teach skills beyond academic lessons, such as character and resilience.

He also calls for a school inspection system that recognises innovation, rather than an excessive focus on data. “Rebel head teachers succeed in spite of the system, not because of it,” he says.

No doubt this debate will rumble on but the good news is that we are absolutely committed to ensuring that every student gets the education they deserve to give them the best possible opportunities in life. If this means taking decisions that impact their education, well then we will do it.

The students really enjoyed the session and the chance to meet the different dogs. Along with raising awareness of guide dogs, the session helped to bring a message to students in that it’s fun to own a dog but they are a responsibility and require lots of care and attention. During the summer term, the Year 7 PSHE lessons concentrated on the causes and effects that blindness can have on the individual.

The children then set themselves a challenge to raise £1,500 which is the cost of training a guide dog puppy. A non-school uniform day was held to kick-start the fundraising and lots of other activities such as sponsored walks and silences took place. Special mention must go to Cameron Deans (Keller) who raised a total of £538 on his uniform day.

In May, our Year 7 students launched their sponsor a guide dog puppy challenge. They spent a fun afternoon off-time meeting various dogs and their owners. This was definitely a first for us to have so many dogs in school!

The students enjoyed listening to a talk from a guide dog owner and staff from Cheltenham Animal Shelter who talked about caring for pets and the work they do. The visiting dogs included Police dog Kaiser and Police drug dog Holly along with their owner who talked about training dogs to work for the Police and what the dogs do in helping to catch criminals. There was also Katie, who is a guide dog puppy in training with her trainer Jessica and a disabled guide dog and his owner. Year 7, Evie Mitchell brought her show dog to school to meet her fellow students. The students really enjoyed the session and the chance to meet the different dogs. Along with raising awareness of guide dogs,