



The Abbey



Gateway

4 February 2022

House Gymnastics - Head's Award - Poetry Winner



Cross Country

This week, Cross Country runners competed away at The Manor Prep School in Abingdon, across all age groups. This is a popular event with schools from a wide area, that is always fast and competitive, over a relatively flat course.

Our runners all went out hard with great determination and team spirit. Not



surprisingly everyone wasn't able to maintain their initially fast pace, although everyone did demonstrate commitment to finishing and hats off to those who were new to competition and will hopefully come back for more!

There were some particularly strong Abbey performances from Ria, finishing in 1st place in U8; Alice, overtaking fellow athletes in the latter stages to gain 2nd in U10, and Araliya fighting hard to gain 5th in U11.

Mrs Orr

Heads: Connected

In praise of curiosity

To start simply: learning is the best part of living. Every day, every week, every year, throughout our lives, we learn. Every new experience; every repeated joy that lands differently because this time round we are older and we respond in a new way; every challenge we overcome - we learn.

Sometimes we learn something new and delightful; sometimes we learn what we don't like, and shape our life more closely around the familiar things that matter. But all the time we are finding out more about what it is to be alive.

[Read more](#)

Online Chess Tournament

Last Wednesday, eight of our chess players took part in the third 'She plays to win' online chess tournament for girls teams this academic year.

With over 110 girls across the UK taking part, including 40 teams, The Abbey once again performed extremely well by finishing 2nd.

Two of our players were also in the top 10 highest scorers on the night. So congratulations to The Abbey Chess team once again.

Mr Hills

For weekly events and reminders, please go to your [My School Portal account](#)

This week's Heads Connected: [In praise of curiosity](#) by Will le Fleming



House Gymnastics



House Gymnastics this year was open to Upper II students and was a culmination of a term's work with Miss Steele during a weekly lunchtime club.

Gymnasts competed mainly in pairs in two categories in front of four judges, along with other Upper I and Upper II students, with Lower I's keen to catch a glimpse from the open doorways, all inspired by the performances. The students choreographed their own routines to 'Symphony' by Clean Bandit, including a number of specific criteria such as rolls, travel, jumps, balances, weight on hands and an element of surprise! Their creativity shone through in their interpretation of the music and especially in the use of colourful rhythmic gymnastic ribbons.

The judges deliberated in awarding their results and all commented on thoroughly enjoying the performances. In one

category, the positions were 1st - Jinxin (Kensington), 2nd - Alice (Carrington) and 3rd - Anvitha (Ducat).



In the other section, the gymnasts all worked in pairs and the winners were Bella and Samar, with Livia and Elizabeth in 2nd and Lucy and Emily in 3rd.. Well done to all entrants for their hard work and commitment.

Mrs Orr

Inspiring Art



Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red 2014 by Paul Cummins and Tom Piper.

The piece at the Tower of London marked 100 years since the start of the First World War.

888,246 ceramic poppies progressively filled the Tower's famous moat between July and November 2014.

Each poppy represented a British Military fatality during the First World War.

Miss Harris

Upper IV Fair Trade Market

In Geography this week, we had a fair trade market to learn more about what fair trade is and how it works. Each group chose a food category and had to design a poster, leaflet and bring in an example of the product



Our group selected snacks and biscuits. We learnt that some brands support fair trade and this makes their product slightly more expensive than normal. This means that the workers and farmers who produced the ingredients get a set amount of pay each month. This is good because it ensures that the workers can make a living without worrying about money and they are less vulnerable to poverty.

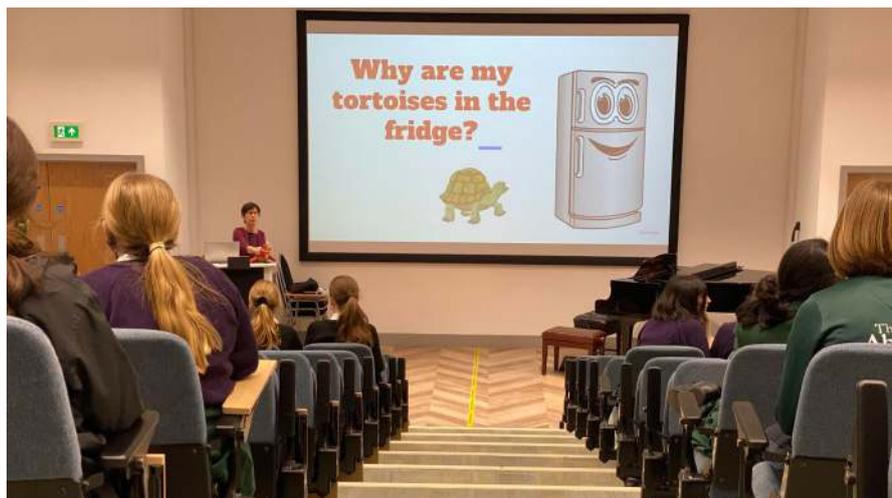
In our class, there were some amazing examples of fair trade food, for example, Molly, Saffron, Sophie and Dani made some homemade brownies, a chocolate tart and a large chocolate bar. In another group, Shefali made some homemade scones with apricot jam. I think this was a really fun way to learn about fair trade.

Hannah, Upper IV

Our group decided to find out whether fair trade products were better than the equivalent non fair trade products. We looked at the price, the ethics and the overall taste of chocolate, by completing a blind taste test, to judge whether we preferred the fair trade option. We also made a poster for our stall and a leaflet that explained the impact of fair trade chocolate on the farmers, the producers and the consumers. Overall, we decided that the fair trade chocolate was better, Siena, Ava and Alice Upper IV



Curiosity Week



class came back with lots of opinions and questioning each other in a friendly manner. We have had lots of fun challenging our brains with these controversial debates. It kept us busy with the task but entertained us with research at the same time. We are grateful for this opportunity.

Christine, Raelyn, Diana and Navya in Upper III

Overview from Upper III

I have been learning about a lot of stuff during this week. The week has gone really quick and I have been doing my own research about a famous woman, a type of bird and a character from a book.

For a whole week, the school has been encouraging students to be led by their curiosity.

Years 7-9 have had no homework, allowing them the time to investigate an area that they are curious about. With guidance about how to get started, it has been over to the students to follow their own questions and make new discoveries.

There have been various events around school happening all week to drive this curiosity. Staff have been giving mini-lectures during lunchtime, presenting for five minutes on an area of their choice with topics ranging from time travel, empathy and the invention of madness to boy bands and warrior penguins armed with lasers patrolling the edges of a flat earth. Quite a range!

There have been dives into subjects within lessons; students have been exploring new material or taking a moment to investigate some of the interesting topics within a subject that we do not always get to consider within the curriculum.

It's been an environment of exploration and independent learning and students have enjoyed having the opportunity to follow their own topics of curiosity. Hearing



about what they have been investigating in their own time has been great fun and very illuminating with a true variety of research under way including history and the holocaust, frogs, teeth enamel, and different types of tea!

Mrs Pettet

Overview from our scholars

As academic scholars, we gave presentations to our class for Curiosity Week. They were based on debatable questions such as 'Are plants more important than humans?' and 'Could we live without laws?' We thoroughly enjoyed presenting our projects to our form. There was a lot of discussion and everyone's thoughts and ideas were included. Our

I have learnt about a character called Heidi and researched her from a book. I have learnt about her personality and how resilient she is when she was taken away from her grandfather. I have also learnt about how hardworking she was when she was trying to learn to read and write. She also was very kind as she was trying to save some bread rolls for her granny, until she got caught by the housekeeper.

I have also researched BBC Bitesize about a famous woman called Florence Nightingale. She looked after a lot of patients and she was considered as the Lady of the Lamp as she looked after patients at night, while carrying a lamp. She inspired a lot of women to be nurses like her and we still give out rewards to the women like her. That is how we remember her. I have also found out that she met Queen Victoria.



The other thing that I have been curious about is a bird called the Golden Eagle. I have researched the bird on BBC Wildlife. I have learnt that they are found in the Northern Hemisphere. They are a protected species although they are sometimes killed illegally, including abroad. Females are 20-30% bigger than males. Adult eagles are dark brown. The scientific name for Golden Eagle is called *Aquila chrysaetos*.

Manaal Upper III

Chinese New Year



Upper Prep students shared their Chinese New Year celebrations and stories this week.

Zifei commented, "We celebrate Chinese New Year by getting together and eating a big meal. We celebrated Chinese New Year in class by handing out sweets and telling stories"

Lower I celebrated Chinese New Year with students learning about the year of the Tiger.

They also participated in Chinese dancing and created beautiful dragons! They had a fantastic day and were sent home with a traditional fortune cookie.

Whilst at the Senior School, students at the Chinese Language Club also joined in the celebrations.

National Storytelling Week

Upper I welcomed the opportunity to cosy up in the Library and share a story with a friend during National Storytelling Week



Nursery Visit



On Monday the Nursery children visited The Green Man Sculpture Trail at Tarman's Copse in Bracknell to search for wooden sculptures hidden in the woods.

Many were curious as to who had created these wonderful pieces of art - Zaya thought it might be another sculpture by Andy Goldsworthy!

The children used their 'I Spy' cards to tick off the sculptures they found, with the striking green eye becoming a quick favourite.



Young Enterprise: Candella



Our company, Candella, is making sustainable candles using recycled wax for different events throughout the year like Christmas or Valentine's Day.

We decided to use recycled wax as we want our company to be as sustainable as possible.

To do that we are using recycled wax and jars, as well as using recycled bags and paper to wrap our candles in. This stops us having to buy lots of new jars and wax and also means old jars and wax can be reused.

Managing Director - Natalia
instagram - [@ye.candella](https://www.instagram.com/ye.candella)
email address - ye.candella21@gmail.com

Meet the Peris: Florence Petit-Sibley

The Abbey Music department is very fortunate to be supported by a vastly experienced team of peripatetic teachers.

In this feature, we get to know one of them a little better:

Name: Florence Petit-Sibley

What instrument(s) do you teach?
Cello and piano

When did you discover your love of music?

Music has always been part of my life as my parents and siblings played music to varying levels. It was natural that I fell into it.

I knew I wanted to become a professional musician when I was a teenager: the more I played music the more I wanted to do it!

What advice would you give to young musicians?

Work hard but smartly, and take care of your physical and mental health, just like sportsmen and women do. Even more importantly, remind yourself of why you love it!

What is your favourite piece of music and why?

I do not really have a favourite piece of music as there are so many different styles!

At the moment, I am discovering rarely heard and performed cello pieces from the 18th and 19th centuries such as a cello concerto by Johann Hasse, and cello sonatas by Bononcini. Check them out!

What is your funniest musical moment?

I participated in an outreach project at the Wigmore Hall called Chamber Tots. We were about to have a session with toddlers. One of my colleagues played the theorbo - a very long necked type of guitar from the 17th century.

Before the children came in, my colleague hid in a cupboard. We presented our different instruments until there was only his instrument left to show.

"Shall we open the cupboard to find out what the last instrument is?"

"Yes!" screamed the group.

We opened the cupboard and he came out very, very slowly, with the end of the instrument first. Children were making impressed noises as it got longer and longer. He finally emerged fully from the cupboard after much laughter from everyone! (have a look at a picture of the theorbo!)



What is your most memorable musical moment?

My husband, who plays classical guitar, and I played regularly in care homes, hospitals and hospices.

One day, we played at a London hospital and went from ward to ward for everyone to enjoy.

One very elderly and frail lady had a room on her own. She did not move. Her daughter did not wish to have music in her room but the person who had hired us persuaded her to let us play.

We started playing *The Swan* by Camille Saint-Saëns, a slow and lyrical piece. To everyone's astonishment, this lady, who didn't seem to notice anything around her up to that point, started moving.

She raised her head, and started waving her arms gracefully, her hands making shapes and her eyes animated by passion. It was beautiful.

She had been a ballet dancer in the 1940s at Sadler's Wells in London, working to the highest level. Never underestimate who you meet and the power of music!

If you could meet any composer from any point in time, who would it be and why?

All the composers who were eccentric and did not conform to the image of the time, like Mozart!

Studio Sounds

Our first Studio Sounds of 2022 was attended by a very enthusiastic and encouraging audience, who clearly enjoyed the confident performances their daughters gave.



Fifteen students from Lower I to Lower III entertained us with performances on the piano, violin, cello and guitar. For some students this was their first time playing in front of an audience and it was a delight to share this landmark moment with them. Well done to all our soloists!

Poetry Competition Winner



In December, I entered a Poem called 'Sweet Solstice' to a Poetry Competition in Somerset in the age category 12-17.

There were over 600 entries and I have won the first prize. In half-term I have been invited to meet the poet who judged the competition (Pascale Petit) and get feedback on my poem.

As well as this, I will perform my poem, receive my prize and have my work published in a poetry book along with the '18 and over' category winner.

I am so pleased and I look forward to the outing!

Lily, Upper V

Junior School Head's Award

This week, Mrs Kaura was delighted to present the first 'Head's Award' to three of our Lower III students (Gianna, Amber, and Emily in LIII).

The Head's Award is awarded to students from Lower I - Lower III for exceptional academic attainment in Maths, English or Science.

Gianna, Amber and Emily were presented with the award in recognition of their excellent work in Science on Darwin's theory of evolution, investigating finches' beak adaptations.

Congratulations to all of you!



Getting To Know You: Desert Island Discs



This weekly feature gives us a little insight into The Abbey staff, and our next Desert Island Disc 'castaway' is Mark Lucas, Head of Estates.

Music:

Life on Mars - David Bowie

Brings back memories at school where I wore a brightly coloured checked Lumber Jacket

The Boxer - Simon and Garfunkel

My first stereo player came with a free copy of Simon and Garfunkel's greatest hits. I have been hooked ever since

Tubular Bells - Mike Oldfield

This was a unique LP that was really interesting and enjoyable. Everyone had a copy and it was amazing that one person could play all the instruments involved

Mr Blue Skies - ELO

This reminds me of nights spent playing the pinball machine in my local Youth Club

Bat out of Hell - Meat Loaf

We used to play this on our way to Bournemouth in the summer, driving

fast in my old 'H' reg Vauxhall Viva, hand painted blue with Woolworths exterior house paint

Bohemian Rhapsody - Queen

Just because

Dreams - Fleetwood Mac. (Stevie Nicks' version)

The harmonies are fantastic

The Prayer - Charlotte Church and Josh Groban

This is just a superb piece of music. Deep strong voice of Josh and the light, subtle Welsh tone of Charlotte

Book:

Encyclopaedia of Tae Kwon Do. I am A Black Belt 4th Dan and would use the book to continue my studies on the island

Luxury item:

Photo of my wife and two children

Modern Biathlon

In the long build up to the National Schools' Modern Biathlon Championships in March, Araliya should be feeling encouraged, and is to be congratulated for topping her cross-country success (see Cross Country article) with her performance at the Berkshire & South Bucks County Swimming Championships last weekend.

She was a member of two relay teams entered in the event and the 4 x 100m freestyle relay was especially exciting! Araliya was the third leg swimmer and the team of four came away with the gold medal. Congratulations!



Netball

For once the netball gods blessed us with a non-rainy netball day!

With a depleted squad, due to covid the U19's Abbey Netball team headed to Southampton for the Southern Regional Netball Finals.

A great start to the tournament saw the team win their first match. However a number of injuries during the next game meant that this winning streak was not to continue.

The students played well in high spirits, and finished a credible 4th in their table, with one win, two draws and two losses.