The theme gathering our thoughts together in this edition of The Elm is Family and when we start thinking about that then I think it is safe to say that the variety of models you can have for a family is vast. Visitors to Wychwood comment on the family atmosphere here almost more than on anything else and we are really proud of that because Wychwood does get into people's bloodstream like the genes that define a family in biology. Some girls fight against that and some accept and revel in it. Many do not take a whole lot of notice until they have left, discussed their schooling with people who have had different experiences and realised that what a Wychwood girl finds normal is, in fact, extraordinary.

So what is a family? We all are like small seeds sown in the ground: as we grow, our relationships grow too and we become part of a complete garden. A family is a group of people who will not be afraid to judge you. They might point out your weakness(es) but they are the ones who will also be there to help you to overcome them. When you are really struggling, the members of your family will give you the strength you need. Families expect the best out of you, but not necessarily immediately. If you are unable to deliver it, they will guide you to a place where you can deliver, if you will go with them.

A family will open your eyes to the infinite possibilities of this world and will gently push you out into that world to find your own path. That, for me, includes all the people to whom I am related by birth and marriage, but also people to whom I am not related at all, but who have become part of my garden. Of course members of our families are very good at knowing exactly how both to outrage us and how to manage our outrage – the shared experiences, knowledge and background mean we have an insight that no one else can.

At Wychwood the garden is growing all the time and its strength is in the mix of girls and the extent of the reach. At the beginning of the year we revamped the Welcome to the New School Year evening to include information from each form teacher followed by parents' drinks in the Hall. We were thrilled that so many of the Wychwood family came to that, the crowd in the Hall was huge and the questions that were asked helped us to know what it is that parents need to know. The families that have come in this year have thrown themselves into being part of the Wychwood family alongside those families already here and the integration we see this year, and indeed every year, has added so much to our shared experiences.

Just like any family, once you are part of the Wychwood family, you are here for life no matter where you happen to be in the world – the WA continues to go from strength to strength in its new form under the leadership of Johanna Stephenson. WA members encompass everyone who has a relationship with Wychwood, not only former pupils, but also former staff, former governors and former parents. Our most recent meeting was characterised by the remote attendance of the WA treasurer who is on an extended trip around the 5 continents and who was with us via the magic of the smartphone. We were in the Red Room while she was on a beach in Paraguay and the room was flooded with tropical birdcalls throughout the meeting!

Families are at their best at testing times and we were inspected this year, gaining a Good for Academic Work and an Outstanding for Pastoral Care – the parents and staff and girls all played their essential part in this and we were delighted with the Outstanding and know which hoops to jump through in the new inspection regime in order to gain the excellent for.
Academic Work next time. I am convinced we deserved it this time round as well! It was a busy week, but the pride exhibited in the school was heart-warming and the girls demonstrated their strengths comprehensively and very effectively. We were fully compliant as well and that takes a great deal of continuous, usually unseen and unrecognised work in all the support staff departments without which no school can function.

For me, the three events that have exemplified the Wychwood family most of all this year were Wychwood Remembers, Anne of Green Gables and the Friends of Wychwood fashion show. All involved adults and girls ranging from 11 to more than 80 years of age, who worked together to produce remarkable events: the girls were creative, they imagined and they innovated. A large number of staff and (grand) parents were involved in all the aspects of putting these events on – they supplied the vision and they acted as costumiers, tech magicians, models, organisers, coaches of language and intonation, teachers of singing, dance and declamation. There were those who supported the organisation by producing programme, those who made the hall work and cleared away afterwards and those who welcomed our guests. As I said to the girls, ‘When anyone asks you what excellent education is all about, what striving to embody a vision is all about, what leading a team is all about, what perseverance is all about, what not compromising is all about and what the value is of taking part then, can I remind you that you have seen all of these in action.’ After Wychwood Remembers I was very proud on the girls’ behalf to receive the e-mail quoted below from Lieutenant Colonel Graeme A McDonald OBE. The Lieutenant was our guide in 2016 when we visited the Somme and is a veteran of many Remembrance events, not least the annual celebration in the Royal Albert Hall on Armistice Day:

Dear Andrea,

I have deliberately written by email as I hope that it may make it easier for you to distribute this to the Wychwood Family!

Last night was utterly memorable. As we left, I remarked to Harriet that you could have performed that at the Albert Hall and filled it for a week. It was profoundly moving, perceptive and perfectly balanced, in a way that I have never before seen in any school production of any sort. It was, undoubtedly, one of the best things I have ever seen and we left with the sense of having been so privileged to join you; we actually said little on the way home, consumed as we were with our private thoughts and emotions.

I think we were especially struck by the balance of poetry, prose, music and dance – all so beautifully given – and by the sheer composure and professionalism of the girls. It was wonderful to see such confidence and commitment in a bunch of young women who so obviously wanted to do their very, very best. Boy, did they carry it off!

I cannot thank you enough for including me. It was also the greatest pleasure to renew the friendships made on our trip to the Somme and we must try harder to keep in touch. But, most of all, please thank your fantastic bunch of directors, musicians, poets, songsters and players – and the many others who must have played a part – for such a magnificent and perfectly judged evening of Remembrance. Truly, “Not Forgotten”.

Yours ever,

Graeme
The Friends of Wychwood fashion show brought our real families into Wychwood to show that age cannot weary us and can model (literally) courage, beauty and elegance. The girls gained another tranche of subliminal understanding that the essence of an enjoyable evening is organisation, excellent food (as always – thank you Wendy!) and co-operation and teamwork in clearing up afterwards.

Anne of Green Gables fielded not one, but two casts bursting with talent and the will to do their very, very best. They did so well that we viscerally experienced that well-loved story with them and felt the pathos, the bravery, the orphan’s need for love and acceptance and her gratitude that others appreciated her achievements. Matthew’s death meant there was not a dry eye in the house on either night and I do not know of many school plays that could generate that level of audience engagement.

In all of these events the girls were at the heart of what we did and we could enjoy and appreciate their innate and learned talents while marvelling at their ability to move forward. They glowed and revelled in that appreciation and they learned and grew – what else could you want for the young members of a family?

Mrs A Johnson, Headmistress
“During my first year I did lots of things that I don’t think I would have done without the encouragement of my friends and teachers. Previously, there were lots of things, lessons in particular, that I was very negative in and in which I would have given up easily, but now I persevere. One of the lessons I really enjoyed was testing reactive metals in Chemistry. Being in the school production of Anne of Green Gables was an amazing experience and I think it brought everyone a lot closer. One of my favourite aspects of Wychwood is how you have friendships throughout the school and not just in your year group. There is always someone to share a problem with. I am very excited to continue life at Wychwood!”

Caitlin Masey

“We have been on many trips, but I really enjoyed Thorpe Park. I won a huge bear from a game and I loved eating hot-dogs and drinking slushy with my friends. Golden Ticket night was also really fun because we played lots of games, made our own pizzas and then everybody squished in the hall and fell asleep as we watched Titanic.”

Katya Bellers

“There have been many great moments this year. I nearly cried when I finally got my first alpha from a chemistry lesson. It was a subject I had struggled with previously, but now I love it! Taking part in the school performance of Anne of Green Gables was also challenging, but I was sad when it was over. When I look back I am proud of what I achieved and I now have the self-belief that I can achieve anything!”

Diana Mukhametzyanova

“My favourite thing that happened this year was playing in the snow with my friends. It was so fun when I filmed Lizzie doing a back flip on to the snow. So far I think my confidence has improved a lot and I have made many new friends.”

Verity Gray

“I enjoyed a lot of things in Remove, but the thing I enjoyed most was going to Young Voices. There were lots of people there, which made it exciting. I have never sung with so many people. What made it more special was that at the beginning of the year, I would not have gone. It was fun to go on the bus with everyone in Remove, Inters and LTs.”

Caitlin Logan

“My first year at Wychwood has been great. Not only have I learnt a lot from my lessons, but I have also made so many friends from my own year group and throughout the school.”

Elizaveta Smirnova

“Despite the fact that I cried for a majority of the trip because I was homesick, I really enjoyed our bonding weekend in Wales. I enjoyed the climbing wall as I made it all the way to the top – although getting down was much more problematic!”

Celestine McCauley

Our First Year at Wychwood

Caitlin Logan

Elizaveta Smirnova

Celestine McCauley
“This year at Wychwood School has helped me become more independent and helped me to work with new friends in a positive way. One memorable time was when it snowed and we all made snowmen. It was really fun, but I must say, it was extremely cold.

At the beginning of the year we went on a bonding trip to Wales which helped us get to know our own year and those in the year above. We have had our ups and downs this year, but now we get on well. I have loved this year because it was a great opportunity to make great success in work and friendships.”

Cornelia Taylor

“Something that I love about Wychwood is that my friends are in many different years. Something that was so fun was the Golden Ticket night in the summer where girls from Remove to UTs had a big sleepover in the hall. The next day we went to Thorpe Park. Overall I think that my first year at Wychwood was great and I found many new friends.”

Bianca Tozzi

“This year I have enjoyed doing the Crest Award. In Crest I am making bath bombs and I am testing them and adding things like flowers and glitter which will affect how long they fizz. One great memory of the year was seeing with my old friend, Lucia, again. It is great that we once again go to the same school and our friendship is so strong!”

Cora Greig

“When we first came to Wychwood we went on a bonding weekend with the Inters. We had lots of fun but one of the things that stood out was on the obstacle course! During this year I have become more independent and made new friends. One of the things I value most is my friendship with Cora.”

Lucia Balhetchet

“This year I have really enjoyed the variety of trips we have been on, particularly the PGL trip and Young Voices. I enjoyed the PGL trip because we got to try activities we had never done before and challenge ourselves and I got to know the rest of the class. I enjoyed the Young Voices trip because of the energetic vibes. It was amazing!”

Kira Webb-Johnson

“This year I have enjoyed drama and art the most. I liked being a horse in the cross-curricular play about the Georgians. My favourite trip was the Shakespeare Festival at Oxford Castle. I also love the swing!”

Fei Ya Pu
On behalf of the Study, I would like to share with you some of our amazing moments of from our first year in Wychwood Sixth.

Study I in the 2018-2019 academic year was a mix of girls who did their GCSEs in Wychwood, as well as several new girls from other schools and countries. There is such a nice blend of different nationalities and personalities of girls in the form. The first day of school was always frightening for me personally, and stepping into the Study common room on the first day of school was surprisingly no different, despite the fact that I had already spent three years at Wychwood. I was not familiar with any of the other Study II girls and the environment of being in Study, but luckily the first day of school went very smoothly.

The second week of school all the Study girls were invited to the Welcome to Wychwood Sixth Dinner, where we all glammed up and enjoy fine dining with members of staff and our progress tutors. That night, we all got to know more about each other, as well as gathering some ideas on plans for our future.

We also had a Hub Challenge day that week, where all the Study girls enjoyed various activities on the lawn. Personally, I think this was the day where everyone bonded together. Through games such as setting up a delivering tube to carry a ping-pong ball from one side to the other with various different delivery tubes, we learnt to communicate and listen to our teammates, despite some minor arguments and a little misplaced mistrust!

As Study girls, we get many opportunities to learn about different cultures and explore the world. Some of our Study girls went to Copenhagen earlier in the year for a cultural trip where they visited famous tourist attractions, as well as interacted with the local students. Some of our girls are still in touch with the local students in Copenhagen!

Later in the year, girls who study art-related subjects got the chance to explore the beauty of Paris, and those who study English literature went to several theatre trips where they enjoyed performances on the texts they have been studying.
In Study I, everyone is involved in the Young Enterprise programme, where we set up our own enterprise and run it for an academic year. This year, my fellow Study I girls and I set up Sharing Hands, a social enterprise business where we raised money for the rough sleepers in Oxford. We were very enthusiastic and made our own gift cards and tote bags to sell in various occasions, both in-school and in different trade fairs outside of school. At the end of the year, we successfully raised over £1400. We bought 30 sleeping bags and 27 roll mats and sent all to Oxford Gatehouse, a charity based in Oxford with which we collaborated. They are responsible for sending the necessities out to the rough sleepers in Oxford. Although it is not a profit-making business, all of us felt pleased as we have helped people in need in our local area, as well as creating a significant influence on the Wychwood community. We sincerely thank everyone who supported Sharing Hands this year.

In my opinion, coming into Wychwood Sixth from Shell was indeed a huge step, everything was quite unfamiliar to me at the start, despite the fact that I have been here since LTs. Yet, I felt very welcomed on the first day of Sixth form, and I am sure all my other lovely Study I girls felt the same. As a sixth former, we are given more responsibilities as well as freedom that we would not have been able to get in the lower school. Members of staff depend on you more and younger girls look up to you as role models. I thought of the time when I first came to Wychwood, finding the Study girls very intimidating to talk to. However, now that I am in the situation where I am one of the Study girls, I am able to say that the younger girls are not intimated and there is no such gap between Study girls and the rest of the school.

Study (sixth form) in Wychwood is a balance of studying, playing, and an enormous amount of laughter and happiness. I must say every one of us enjoy Wychwood Sixth and these moments will shape our future and remain in our memories forever.

Betty Sek, Study I
This year has flown by in the boarding houses. It seems like only yesterday that I started as the 2&4 Housemistress. Starting a new job is nerve-wracking at the best of time. However starting during an ISI inspection certainly makes for an interesting week!

Being in a boarding community allows for girls to bond further and support one another. This was demonstrated to me in my first few weeks as I was welcomed aboard and witnessed the close relationships already formed within the house.

One of the many benefits of boarding is the access to the school during the evening and at weekends. The girls have taken full advantage of both the teaching staff and GAP Assistants for help with prep and revision. Having the GAPs in the boarding houses in evenings adds to the atmosphere. The girls get them to join in with games and learn about the different cultures and schooling they have had.

At Wychwood we celebrate the diversity of our students. This year the kitchen staff put on a wonderful meal for Chinese New Year. The girls each had a fortune cookie and red envelope with chocolate bank notes inside. We finished the evening off with sparklers on the lawn.

Each term each of the year groups runs an activity for the rest of the boarders. These can be a little chaotic, but are always full of enthusiasm and fun. This year they have ranged from a murder mystery, to a treasure hunt and charades. I have never seen girls so excited to see how many sweets can be hidden in the library. Not all of them were found on the night and I heard some day girls had a nice surprise the following morning!

Wychwood allows the girls' talents and passions to shine, from Wychfactor to the Friends of Wychwood fashion show. Through these events the boarders mix, share and create together and hidden talents are always revealed! Seeing the girls being supportive, encouraging and celebrating achievements together is heart-warming.

We have had 3 Golden Ticket nights this year. This is a wonderful way for our boarders to have friends for a sleepover and day girls to have a taster of boarding. There is such a buzz during the run up to a Golden Ticket night. Games are played and films watched with popcorn. The summer term Golden Ticket was a big weekend. Almost half of the school attended and it was followed by our fabulous trip to Thorpe Park. Unsurprisingly the girls are already asking about the next Golden Ticket night.

One of the many traditions in boarding is the annual Christmas tree decoration. The girls each sign a bauble with their name and the year. The excitement when they remember old girls and see their name from years before is delightful – the hot chocolate and marshmallows help too!

Pancake day 2019 in 2&4 will go down as the year Miss Frame tossed and dropped her pancake on the floor, although there is luckily no video evidence of this. Do look on the school Instagram account to see all the videos. I am sure this will become a tradition in years to come.

During exeats some of the boarders stay and, whilst it is a more relaxed weekend, they often ask to cook a meal and work together to create a menu. During these times, the kitchen is a hive of activity and they create some delicious meals.

During the weekends the teaching staff organise a full programme of exciting activities. This year, to name but a few, there have been visits to Blenheim Palace, the Snow Zone at Milton Keynes, the Ashmolean, Crocodiles of the World, Quest Oxford, Cosmo restaurant (twice!) and the trampoline park, as well as the cinema, ice-skating, kayaking and a range of craft-based activities. They are certainly kept busy!

I look forward to seeing what the next year brings.

Miss A Frame
Study Cultural Trip to Copenhagen

A group of the Study students accompanied by Dr Williams and Mrs Johnson enjoyed a long weekend in Copenhagen.

The purpose of our visit was multifold: to create a stronger unity between the two Study year groups, to enjoy the culture of Copenhagen and to visit our partner school, the Copenhagen Open Gymnasium and experience education from a Danish perspective. Despite a grim weather forecast (which thankfully failed to materialise) and an unbelievably early start, Wychwood spirits remained high. We started by viewing Copenhagen from above; although blustery, the view from the top of the Rundetårn was spectacular. We were following in the footsteps of Tsar Peter the Great who had ascended the spiral, cobbled ramp on horseback in 1716. A glass floor above the hollow core of the ramp was only for the brave who stared down into the abyss below. Having gained our bearings, we walked along the beautiful old harbour of Nyhavn to catch a waterbus. Our destination to visit Hans Christian Anderson's Little Mermaid was only two stops away. But unfortunately we took the bus in the wrong direction, although this enabled us to view the city from the water and we were able to appreciate much of the exciting new architecture including the Opera House and the Royal Library Black Diamond. Sadly, when we finally got to our destination, a downpour prevented us from seeing the Little Mermaid so instead we took refuge in the Design Museum where we marvelled at the vast array of stylish Danish chairs.

Saturday started at the Amalienborg Royal Palace, an exhibition of the past 150 years of the monarchy. The very open and friendly atmosphere possibly explains why the Danish Royal family are so popular. We came out to watch the changing of the guards, not quite up to British standards, but impressive nevertheless. Another downpour ensured that we had the time to admire the magnificent dome of the Marble church and gave all an opportunity to brush up on their architectural terminology. Hunger took us to the mouth-watering pleasures of the Torvehallerne; the covered market is a food-lover’s treat. Sadly we found Denmark expensive, which helped to curb our greed but didn't completely stop us from sampling their fare. We walked though the Botanical gardens and into the Danish National Gallery famed not only for its

“To move, to breathe, to fly, to float,
To gain all while you give,
To roam the roads of lands remote,
To travel is to live.”

collection but also for the stylish modern extension, which is linked to the gallery by open bridges.

No visit to Copenhagen is complete without a visit to the ‘freetown’ of Christiana, a safe haven for hippies and nonconformists. The well priced jewellery stalls were a perfect magnet for Wychwood students. On Sunday afternoon, there was another opportunity to shop. Sephora, the beauty and cosmetic emporium, was a firm favourite and conveniently positioned close to the hostel but with an unfavourable exchange rate, there was more looking than spending. On Monday, we visited the Copenhagen Open Gymnasium. The students enjoyed experiencing the Danish education system, sharing lessons with their counterparts. The classrooms were stylish and open spaces with exquisitely designed furniture where the students were not learning in a tradition way but through a number of innovative methods. ICT was an important learning platform with pupils working solely on laptops, not a sheet of paper or book to be seen. The open-air classroom on the roof and the media studies theatre were impressive facilities. We all felt that we had forged good friendships and look forward to welcoming the Danes back to Wychwood in November. We made a final museum visit to the Rosenborg Slot to view Denmark’s Crown Jewels before heading back to the airport. It was a busy but thoroughly enjoyable trip to this stunning city, which seamlessly unites the traditional and the new and where the notion of design is ingrained into its culture.

Dr J Williams
On the morning of Friday 12th October, the LTs faced the wrath of Storm Callum and headed to a very wet and windy Bristol. Braving the elements, we began with a whistle-stop tour of some of Bristol’s most interesting street art, learning all about the cultural background of the art and how the city at one time fought against it but now embraces and celebrates it. We then had the opportunity to learn more about the artistic process with a very enjoyable spray-painting workshop. The afternoon was spent exploring ‘We the Curious’ – Bristol’s renowned science museum, the highlight of which was the ‘Autumn Stars’ 3D show in the planetarium. After an incredible dinner at Zaza Bazaar, where we indulged in Asian, Indian, Italian, Japanese and Jamaican food, we went to the theatre to see ‘Madagascar, the Musical’ – which was a lively and hugely entertaining stage version of one of our favourite childhood films.

Although the rain had eased the following day, our experience of climbing the rigging of the S.S. Great Britain was cancelled. Instead we explored the fascinating and innovative Brunel exhibition before our interesting tour of the ship. After a quick look around the gift shop we caught the bus up to the Clifton Suspension Bridge, which was quite literally hair-raising as it bounced in the strong gusts of wind. After a very welcome stop for ice-cream we headed back to the youth hostel, exhausted after our whirlwind weekend.

“On the Bristol trip I enjoyed getting to know the new girls. I loved seeing all of the Banksy art work and spray painting my own canvas. I loved the whole trip!”

Isabelle Dalton-Parker

“Our trip to Bristol was a fantastic opportunity to make new bonds within the form. I spent time with people I never thought I would become close with.”

Rebecca Smith

“My favourite part of the Bristol trip was when we went to see the Clifton suspension bridge. It was thrilling as it was so windy on that day and the bridge was shaking wildly as we tried to cross it.”

Yichun Liu
When I arrived at Wychwood, for the first time I had to wear a school uniform for the first time of my life. I come from Switzerland and we never wear uniform. It took me several weeks to get used to wearing the same thing every day.

On the first day, I met my house sister, Izzy, for the first time. She was very nice and presented me to the whole class. Unfortunately, despite her enthusiasm and the form’s warm welcome, I did not understand much of what they said as my English was still quite poor.

One of the really nice things about my year at Wychwood was that I made friends from all over the world – not only England but also China, France, Portugal, South Africa so I have learnt about many cultures. My Chinese friend taught me various words in Chinese which I hope to try out during my trip to China in the summer.

I learnt a lot during my year, especially English. My teachers Mrs Kirby and Miss Bettridge taught me ever so much. Now it is really nice to be able to just read English books without even noticing that it is not my native language. At Wychwood I had a lot of new subjects that I hadn’t studied previously, for example: chemistry, physics and biology. I enjoyed all of these new subjects especially chemistry experiments – both those that worked and those that didn’t!

One of the benefits of coming to Wychwood is undoubtedly the cookies served at break time! They are of exceptional quality. The donuts also have to be mentioned, being almost as tasty as the cookies.

I was very surprised to see that there were so many trips and additional activities after school at Wychwood. These were always a lot of fun. For example, we went to an event called ‘Young Voices’ in Birmingham where we sang with thousands of other kids. I also enjoyed Wychfactor, where my friends showed their talents. It was an amazing evening.

I really enjoyed my year at Wychwood and I hope to keep in touch with all the new friends I have made.

Lynn Stolz, Inters
Wychwood Remembers

Wychwood Remembers was a determined effort at a significant point in our history to showcase the talent of the girls, whilst at the same time to acknowledge the true sacrifice of those who gave ‘their tomorrows for our today’. It was a project that was more than just a role volunteered by a Deputy Head or an English teacher; it drew upon the very poems that had moved me to become said teacher and a childhood referenced by the forces, with a father in the Royal Air force and a grandfather in the Army. European poetry ensured that the languages of Italy, France, Germany and Russia blended together in a holistic display of unity as well as the blending of cultures of East and West through dance. In that one night we wanted to acknowledge the spirit of the Armistice Centenary, unite the nations of our community, celebrate our shared freedom and recognise our shared humanity.

The education of the girls through this holistic project was similar to that observed at the 2016 visit to the Somme. They came to understand the significance in their own time as what we were commemorating slowly dawned on a personal level and came to mean much more than a school project or trip or hymn practice. Collectively they understood they were part of something bigger, both within school and within history. The large audience on the night was testament to this, as was the fact that the project relied upon the commitment of two thirds of the school in performance.

The concept was obviously planned. Carefully crafted monologue competitions on responses to the armistice, poetry recitals on war poems, dramatic presentations of these and targeted hymns and musical numbers had been timed in advance. This meant that within little more than half a term of 2018 we were able to stage something very special. Music rooms soon reverberated with Russian song and other musical practice, the Hall became a dance studio for regular rehearsal of pupil choreography and girls who had never performed before agreed to showcase their talents.

Thanks to Mrs Walster and Mrs Constance for helping me to make this evening everything that it came to represent. Thanks to Mrs Johnson for trusting that we would succeed and for organising the much needed visit to the National Arboretum at Alrewas the following day! Fewer thanks to the ISI inspection team who arrived across the week of performance and rehearsal, although it made the task of proving ‘excellent’ social, moral, spiritual and cultural education a little easier, and demonstrated why it is a great privilege to work with the outstanding pupils at the excellent school that is Wychwood!

Ms B Sherlock
Student Reflections

“A little over 100 years ago, my great, great grandfather went off to fight in World War 1. He survived, but unknown to him brought back a deadly virus, Spanish Flu, which within a month of his returning killed his wife and only son. Later, he married again and he had another son, my great grandfather. My family has an heirloom, two of the shell cases that he brought back from the front lines, one of which has his name and regiment engraved on the base. It reads: CJ Newman Kings Liverpool Regiment.”

Elizabeth Newman, Inters

“For Wychwood Remembers, I took part in a dance called The Story of Bamboo directed by Ms Sherlock. This is the story of a kingdom in which there is a beautiful garden. The bamboo and the other plants lived happily with their master there. One day the master went to the bamboo and asked if he was happy to help him with something. Bamboo was delighted and agreed but the master wanted to cut him down. The Bamboo was confused and shocked at first but after struggling with what was to come he finally agreed. What Bamboo had not realised was that in cutting the wood and stripping it of its leaves and branches, the master could use Bamboo as a channel to help irrigate the field. This meant that new harvests came.

Through this performance we wanted to represent the Chinese soldiers who had dedicated their lives to the Great War. The unyielding bamboo represented the Chinese soldiers contented before the war whereas the master represented those who encouraged those men to fight for their cause. Their sacrifice brought freedom and new opportunity, like the channel that brought new harvests.

The dance moved into a prayer for peace, Make me a Channel of your Peace and then into a reflection of Rupert Brooke's poem The Soldier about dying in a foreign field that is 'forever England'. The Chinese soldiers died in foreign fields far from home and the final sequence was a ribbon dance with white ribbons, signifying remembrance in Asia.

Performing in this dance had a huge impact on me. I was the bamboo and throughout the performance I felt that selfless dedication of the soldiers. I felt grief for those who had sacrificed their lives for us.”

Yichun Liu, LTS

“Being asked to perform a dance for Wychwood Remembers was daunting at first especially as it would be the anniversary of Armistice Day. I do both contemporary dance and ballet out of school and so I asked my dance teacher if she would help my dance friend and me to choreograph a dance to the song The Call by Regina Spektor. The song itself is about saying goodbye to people and about going off to war. This seemed very suitable and so we decided to link the choreography to this subject too. The feeling on the performance night was very moving and all the individual pieces were incredible; from songs, to poems and even stories of relatives lost in the First
World War. I feel very honoured that I was able to perform and show my respects to those who gave their lives to us.”

Rosie Schofield, UTs

“My great, great, great grandfather, the artist Eugène Burnand, was a Swiss painter and illustrator. His final project was a series of 104 beautiful pastel portraits of allied World War 1 participants of all nationalities, ranks and faith.

His mission was to make a record of all who had contributed and many have commented on the humanity and respect with which the individuals are depicted. He chose the simple foot soldier from Burgundy to represent the humble yet noble French infantryman to open his series. He represented thousands upon thousands of his countrymen from all parts of France who obeyed the call to defend his homeland. He served in the 37th Division as you can see from the collar of his greatcoat – a division which took part in all the major battles of the war.

A unique body of work, he would have regarded everyone as part of God’s creation and he expected to find ‘that of God’ in every man and woman he depicted.

He is saying to us, all of these men and women united for what they believed to be right, and we owe them a debt of gratitude. It is a profound and humbling statement. It was an honour to speak about him at Wychwood Remembers.”

Poppy Kay, Study I

Somme 2016

“Being only in year 7 when we went to the Somme in 2016, I had very little knowledge about war except a few relatives that my dad had told me about. We spent hours on the coach going from memorial to memorial, passing through luscious cornfields that just seemed like any old view. Looking back now I realise they were so much more meaningful. One hundred years ago, the Battle of the Somme would have sprawled all over those fields with thousands of men fighting and dying on the same soil. It would have once been a sea of mud, dull and divided: a battlefield through which we then drove with liberty. As we gathered for Wychwood Remembers in October 2018, that trip took on a new and important significance to me.”

Emily George, UTs
The National Arboretum
“The day after Wychwood Remembers, we visited the National War Arboretum. There we learnt of sacrifices and events that aren’t talked about in the history books. One memorial we saw looked like an ordinary rock. On going closer we read that it was from a small French village that refused to give up Allied soldiers to the Germans. 400 of the villagers were sent to concentration camps and only 140 returned. This highlighted how everyone was touched by the war and how ordinary people made great sacrifices to save others.”
— Lauren Smith, Shell

“As I walked around the impressive central memorial for the Armed Forces and looked at the names engraved on the walls, each name I saw felt less like a statistic and more like a person. It was emotional. However, when I got to the more recent side and saw nothing but blank walls I was shaken to the core. The names from last year and the year before with fresh flowers recently laid by mourning family, I wondered what had lessons had been learned over the last 100 years. What struck me for the first time was that these soldiers were not fictional characters from a piece of literature or a film – they actually existed. I realised that all of them had dreams and worries and all of them died doing what they thought was right. When I put my hand out to touch a couple names carved into the walls, I realised that all of them were someone’s dad or sister or brother or friend and that someone out there is missing them. Here I was, a random girl who didn’t know any of them, crying because she knew there was someone each one loved that they had left behind, crying because there would be more names that would eventually fill those waiting walls of stone.”
— Anuoluwa Sofoluwe, UTs

“Shot at Dawn – I stood facing the statue of a young boy. He was blindfolded, the fear clear on his face. I knew there were six uniform trees behind me, standing in a line. I knew they represented the firing squad. I knew, each of the wooden posts behind the boy represented one of the men, killed for ‘cowardice’. I knew about all of it, but I could not understand. Every single one of those men, in their final moments had stood, blindfolded, facing death. I tried but I could not imagine how they felt blind, hands tied, knowing what was facing them - knowing that death was coming. These men, who had tried to get away from the hell of war, who had seen so many horrors and who had experienced things beyond human imagination, were called ‘deserters’, and shunned by society for being ‘cowards’ and murdered by their allies. In that moment the futility of the war and the sheer waste of life, the waste of life hit me. They were not just a paragraph in my history textbook; they were real. These men had died at dawn, killed by their own country. The wooden posts stared back at me now with more meaning.”
— Sophie Solovieva, UTs
In September 2018, Study I created *Sharing Hands*, a Young Enterprise social action project, with the aim to provide necessities to rough sleepers within the wider community. We strongly felt that we could embrace this opportunity not only to raise a substantial amount of money in support of Oxford’s rough sleepers but also to encourage thoughtful, directed action. Having sold our gift cards and tote bags at various events throughout the school year, we have raised approximately £1,436. This has enabled us to donate 28 high quality sleeping bags and 24 roll mats to The Gatehouse, a drop-in centre for Oxford’s homeless.

In just six months, we have organised a campout (in February!), participated in Youth Speaks, attended the Cowley YE Trade Fair and been present at a number of school events, such as the Christmas Fair and Performing Arts Evening. Our campout was definitely a highlight as it gave us the opportunity to share the fundamental goal behind our project with the lower school whilst singing around a campfire. The campout also gave us, as a team, a greater understanding of the plight of those sleeping rough and the drive to continue our efforts in fundraising for sleeping bags and roll mats – necessities we perhaps took for granted on the night.

As a team, we have been overwhelmed by the consistent generosity of teachers, parents and students who have supported our project either through buying one of our gift cards, camping out with us in February or even providing us with marshmallows. Our success has not only been a reflection of the power of teamwork, collaboration and perseverance but also the willingness of the school and its wider community to stand behind and encourage social action. We would also like to say thank you to Mrs Troth, our centre lead, and John Coffin, our business adviser, who have been there every step of the way with bucket loads of enthusiasm, support and advice. We could not have done this without you! Sharing Hands has given us all an insight into our own abilities to inspire action, which I am sure we will treasure for a long time. So, from all seventeen members of Sharing Hands, we would like to say thank you.

Anais Arroyo, Study I
House Hockey
On Sunday 24th February, I completed my first half marathon in Brighton with a time of 2 hours 13 minutes and 7 seconds. There was over 12,000 runners at the event with some athletes completing it in just over an hour which I find staggering!

As it was my first time completing a half marathon I was quite nervous. I was especially nervous about the start line and how it works as the runners are divided up into pens of their targeted time to complete it in.

Originally when I began training back in November, I wanted to complete it in 2 hours. However, as it got closer to the event I decided to set a more realistic time, which also allowed me to enjoy the experience.

As a result I decided to follow the 2hrs and 15min pacer, but I ended up ahead of them at the 6mile point. I wanted to complete a half marathon as my dad used to run marathons and I wanted to follow in his footsteps but I also wanted to achieve something that not many 17 year olds have done.

For my training I ran 3/4 times a week with one of the runs being my long run. In the beginning my long run started at 45 minutes and then each Sunday (the day I did my long run) I would increase my time by 15 minutes until I had hit the distance. Once I reached the distance I worked on trying to improve my pace by completing shorter runs during the week focusing on a faster pace.

Overall, it was a very positive experience and I don’t think I will ever forget the day. I have learnt a lot from this experience about how to train efficiently and the nutritional side of effective training. I hope to go on and complete more events like this in the future!

Matilda Gardener, Study II
Congratulations Tilly

Taekwon-Do

Wychwood Taekwon-Do takes place on Wednesdays during second prep. At the moment we have 8 girls training. They are learning to punch, block and kick and to maximise the power they can produce, through fundamental movements, sparring drills, pad work and patterns. They are developing their core strength, flexibility, agility and confidence. They are also learning the five tenets of Taekwon-Do that we strive to incorporate into our lives – courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit.

All the girls started as complete beginners – white belts (or 10th kup in TKD terminology) and those that started at the beginning of the school year have already taken two gradings and are now yellow belts (8th kup) which always feels exciting as the belt is a complete colour with no white on it!

The thing that makes Taekwon-Do particularly effective is that it does not matter what height, build, and gender you are, or what level of fitness or flexibility you have to begin with. It enables students to develop and maximise their own potential. It does not compare between students. It compares the student to their previous ability, not to their classmate’s ability.

In class, the students learn fundamental movements which with repeated practice develop a muscle memory so it becomes second nature. They learn sparring, including ‘promised’ sparring with partners to try out techniques safely and develop the correct movements, and through to free sparring which helps develop awareness of moving targets and speed of movement.

Taekown-Do is hugely good fun and we have the added benefit of me as the instructor having been taught by the founder of Taekwon-Do – General Choi Hong Hi. For the thirty years since I started training I have been regularly taught and graded by the first person ever to be promoted to 9th Dan Grand Master, First Grandmaster Rhee Ki Ha.

Mrs K Britton

I have been doing some form of Martial Arts since I was six. My parents believed that my siblings and I should learn self-defence in order to prepare us for any situation that could occur at any time in our lives.

I started off doing Karate with my siblings, even carrying it on when we moved to the other side of the world (Australia). I managed to reach black belt at 11 years old then I decided to challenge myself a little bit and do Taekwon-Do instead. Taekwon-Do is quite similar; it focuses more on kicking whereas Karate is more focused on the hand strikes.

I have now been doing Taekwon-Do for two years. I have been to the British Taekwon-Do Championships in April, coming home with a trophy for 2nd place in patterns (movements with blocks and kicks) against over 70 people. In May, I went the Welsh Taekwon-Do Championships, winning 3 medals: I won Gold in team patterns with my brother, 3rd place in fighting and 3rd place for patterns. It was very tiring and sweaty, but also very rewarding and I have met lots of people though these competitions.

Tilly Elliston, UTs
Thought for the Week

Every week at Wychwood School we have a designated ‘Thought for the week’. This is usually a quotation from a well-known figure past or present and from a range of cultural and religious traditions. The quotation then provides a stimulus and basis for the assemblies that week and the Tuesday tutor group reflection time. Often discussions spill over into other lessons too and are an excellent introduction to thinking about deeper issues. This year I have also started a weekly blog on our ‘Thought for the week’ which is available to everyone on the school website. If you haven’t yet discovered it then I invite you to take a look. A few examples are included here and I hope they might interest you enough to become a regular reader!

‘Night brings counsel’ (Late sixteenth-century)
If you saw this advert would you be interested?

“Amazing Breakthrough!”
Scientists have discovered a revolutionary new treatment that makes you live longer. It enhances your memory and makes you more creative. It keeps you slim and lowers food cravings. It protects you from cancer and dementia. It wards off colds and flu. It lowers your risk of heart attacks and stroke, not to mention diabetes. You’ll even feel happier and less anxious."

The good thing is that it costs nothing! This is an advert for the benefits of a good night’s sleep according to neuroscientist Matthew Walker in his bestselling book ‘Why we sleep: The new science of sleep and dreams’. Walker writes that we literally ‘risk our lives’ through sleep deprivation, so much so that the WHO (World Health Organisation) has now declared sleep loss an epidemic throughout the industrialised nations.

It seems that getting a good night’s sleep has never been more difficult though. We are routinely interrupted by passing cars, overflying aircraft, the ping of our iPhone and the lights from our constantly illuminated environment. Yet ‘there does not seem to be one major organ within the body, or process within the brain that is not optimally enhanced by sleep’. So getting a good night’s sleep really is very important.

It is also good for learning and memory and enhances creativity. Sleep provides a time in which the brain tests out and builds connections between vast stores of information. Such activity can bring new insights and moments of ‘breakthrough’ and help make sense of the words ‘sleep on it’, when we face what seems like an intractable problem. We may wake with a new perspective and see a way towards a solution.

Incredibly, the melody for one of the most famous songs ‘Yesterday’ came to Paul McCartney in a dream. It didn’t come out of nowhere, although it may have felt as if it had, but sleep precipitated the creative process. In the same way moments of moral wisdom and insight in many religious stories come through the dreams of individuals.

Night really can bring counsel but perhaps we need to create the conditions for a good night’s sleep first. So develop some good night-time rituals to get ready for sleep, cut down on distractions and importantly switch off all screens and tech!

Perhaps then you can luxuriate in the ‘Sound of Silence’ and welcome darkness as an ‘old friend’ and ‘a vision softly creeping’ will leave ‘its seeds while’ you are ‘sleeping’.

‘Diligence is the mother of good luck’ (16th Century)
Do you have a lucky mascot? Maybe it’s a cuddly toy, a crystal or even a special pair of lucky socks (or pants)!!? It seems even the students on University challenge have mascots for their teams, perhaps hedging their bets that if everything else fails, then maybe ‘lady luck’ can be harnessed to their benefit.

I remember thinking the same as I approached O Levels (yes I’m that old!), and for each exam had my lucky black cat perched on the desk in front of me. However, let me say now, it was not wholly reliable!
It is not luck that will help us achieve our goals but diligence which is the ‘mother of good luck’. This means that if that if you work carefully and constantly you will be far more likely to be successful, as if luck had come your way.

What is entailed in working with diligence was presented in a brilliant lecture recently by Dr Christopher O’Neill, which was attended by a group of Wychwood girls. Firstly he made it clear that outstanding achievement is not so much down to genes, teachers or parents (although these factors do play a part) but down to ‘YOU’!

So what can ‘you’ do? Well there are four factors that can tip ‘luck’ in our favour:

- **Putting in the hours… perspiration!** Edison famously said ‘Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration’. In other words, focused, sustained and deliberate work or practice is essential for everyone to achieve well.

- **Self-discipline… the super power of self control!** Stanford scientist, Walter Mischel, famously set pre-school children the ‘marshmallow test’ to see if they could defer the gratification of eating one marshmallow for 15 minutes, in order to win two. It turns out the ability to defer gratification is the single best predictor for later achieving better grades at school, earning higher salaries and being more healthy.

- **A growth mindset...** In other words, belief that achievement is a result of deliberate effort as opposed to a fixed mindset where you believe that you are born with fixed abilities and therefore effort has little effect. The power of ‘yet’… I can’t do it ‘yet’. But I will...

- **Finding your Inspiration to keep you going!** Motivation is like launching a rocket before it can take off. That means seeking out what inspires us, setting goals and taking encouragement from those who offer it.

Mrs C Crossley

The junior club is called Acorns and meets on Fridays during first prep. The year started off with a visit to the Oxford Museum of Natural Sciences for an exhibition correlating DNA results with historical data on migration to the British Isles. We then went on to study the etymology of British place names, and to draw maps of the waves of migration to Britain from prehistoric times to the Norman Conquest of 1066. The maps were displayed in the Red Room, which is where Acorns meets. Our exploration of Britain’s early past was completed at the end of term with a very enjoyable trip to York to see the Jorvik Viking exhibition and to visit a mock archaeological dig and a medieval town house, incorporating an exhibition on medieval alchemy.

In Hilary, Acorns started a new topic on big moments in science (paradigm shifts). Members of Acorns each chose to research a different inventor/discoverer who changed the world – Galileo, Magellan, Charles Darwin, and Enigma hero Alan Turing. The girls then were tasked with imagining how the world was before these individuals made their great discoveries/inventions and how our world view changed as a result of their work. We did some creative writing about the experience of living through such a paradigm shift and turned these pieces into newspaper front pages. A high point in the term was when Acorns joined with astronomy club and Study scientists to visit an exhibition on our Sun at the Science Museum in London.

In Trinity, Acorns are going out and about in the neighbourhood of Wychwood School to look for blue plaques. These are plaques fixed on the walls of houses in which famous people once lived. Oxford, unsurprisingly, has a very high percentage of these, probably the highest, along with Cambridge, in the UK. We are mapping the blue plaques and using these as a starting point to undertake some research on the contributions to science and culture made by our famous local residents.

Dr M Donald
Charlotte Kell

Poetry Competition

2019 Winner

The Feather

I held light: a beautiful leaf-shaped Feather, complete with little strands.
In shining colours it was draped -
I held it in my hands.

The rippling river lay beneath
Its flashing, splashing water
Which by the sun was lit with peace,
Nature’s most precious daughter.

It slowly and smoothly drifted through
My hands that were cupped together,
Then gently and graciously bid adieu,
My beautiful, falling feather.

And from the bank I watched it float,
As its edges curled around,
And it turned into a little boat;
In colours it was bound.

Marisa Thomas, Inters

2019 Runner Up

Sunny Day

Golden Minds write their lines
For those who never sing,
Across the lands, across the skies,
Far away where angels cry
Sits a girl in the hay,
Wallowing. She sways
From silver mists to blue rooftops
And the birds flitter away.
Comes windy nights in the open bay
A memory of old wished away,
One who only wanted to play.
A sunny day
For the golden minds who write their lines.

Tia Boyden, Lower Transits

2019 Highly Commended

The Wind

When branches shiver
When fallen leaves quiver
When there’s a murmur you don’t understand:
It’s me the wind.

When the birds can’t advance,
When dark clouds dance,
When umbrellas fly in the air,
It is me the wind.

When trees fall down,
When seas turn brown,
When in the ruins is your home:
It is me the wind.

Lynn Stolz, Inters
2019 Highly Commended

My Little Red ‘Ju Ju Car’

The car we voyaged in was a rusty jumble
Of bouncing springs, chattering windows,
jangling doors
And pockets filled with trinkets. The rumble
Of the engine was probably against the law.
The 2CV we nicknamed ‘Ju Ju car’,
Inherited by me; my mum’s second best.
In the other car, the best, my brother far
Preferred the sleek interior, fancy buttons and
headrest.
But my red ‘Ju Ju car’ had an atmosphere of
fiction,
Of dreams and escapades.
Left over sand and scatters of shells found on
The sea shore and memories that never fade.
That car was a symbol of happiness and joy to
me,
The second best car, my red 2CV.

Alice Stevens, Lower Transits

2019 Commended

A Childhood Dream

Ever since I was four,
Watching the clouds pass by,
I’d stare through the window in my
room:
I’ve always wanted to fly.
Even when I turned six
With my birthday cake to try,
I crossed my fingers, blew out the
candles
And wished that I could fly,
I’d dream of dancing in the air
Flying up, just me,
No rules or limitations,
Just floating, simply free.
Now I am older I know,
That it’s just a childhood dream,
A simple childish fantasy,
Of what I could have been.
I block out these fanciful thoughts
The ‘maybes’ the ‘what could have
beens’
It was just a childhood dream I say
A simple childhood dream.
But my dream has never died
It soars like a bird in the sky
Its wings balletic, spreading wide,
My dream is still alive.

Sophie Solovieva, Upper Transits

2019 Commended

Learn to Fly

Walking in my sleep
Like the naked trees
Will they wake up again?
Do they sleep, do they dream
Feel it as the wind
Starts to stroke my skin;
I am moved by the chill,
I hear the winter bird sing.

My tears are always frozen;
I can see the air I breathe;
Mist spirals all around me
Again and again.
Condensate, evaporate.

Lay me by the frozen river
Where the boats have passed me by;
I can’t sit still
But I can learn to fly.

I rest against my pillow
Like the ageing winter sun,
I only wake each morning
To remember that it’s gone.

So I drift away again
It’s to winter I belong
And I move as nature calls me
Back to dreams and nature’s songs
My tears are always frozen;
I can see the air I breathe;
Mist spirals all around me
Again and again.
Condensate, evaporate.

Lay me by the frozen river
Where the boats have passed me by;
I can’t sit still
But I can learn to fly.
I’ve learnt to fly;
I’m flying.

Rebecca Smith, Lower Transits
A Level Art
GCSE Art

Honor Bluff

Mai Thomas

Sophia Guilfoyle

Peony Ye
UTs Printmaking

Olivia Knowles

Lucy Mehta

Sana Asim

Olivia Zamora de la Pena

Joey Li
As ever, the Friends of Wychwood have been busy. I took over as Chair from Kate Lagden last summer and I would like to start by thanking her for all the time, energy and enthusiasm she contributed during her time at the helm.

The Michaelmas term is spent organising the Christmas Fair. I know it is an afternoon much enjoyed by many people. We experimented with a new layout, with more tables and chairs to sit and chat and to listen to the carol singing, which took centre stage this year. With more space and less crush, this helped create a suitably festive atmosphere. The Christmas Fair takes a lot of time, patience and energy from all of those involved in putting it on. Many thanks to Sheryl Parker for a great line up of stall holders and to everybody who pitched in on the day, beforehand and afterwards – Mrs Stacey is proving to be an absolute stalwart at tidying up, and we are always grateful for the help we get. Thanks also to Vicki Masey and Amy Rowland for buying, wrapping up, displaying and generally doing marvellous things with gingerbread houses. These were a new addition to the Fair and a great success, much enjoyed by the decorators, judges and general admirers. We raised just over £2,500 this year, an amazing sum, with 10% going to our chosen charity, The Good Shepherd Sisters, who support girls and women in Myanmar.

The Wychwood Fashion Show in conjunction with Olivia May at the end of the Hilary term was great fun. Hats off to all the models who volunteered to strut their stuff on the catwalk. Maisie Farrell, the manager of Olivia May, did an amazing job matching outfits to models based on a photo alone. There was a great spirit amongst the models with a lot of mutual encouragement and sense of fun. Huge thanks to you all, to Wendy for yet another delicious meal and to everyone else who helped. We raised just over £500.

The money raised this year has enabled us to buy the following so far this year, all requested by either staff or the girls: a cyclorama, the large seamless canvas screen in the hall; three new sewing machines for the Textiles department; a weather station for the Geography department; stage make up for the drama department; a new treadmill and a £250 contribution to the Study Ball.

Special thanks must be made to Siobhan Foley who has become the undisputed Queen of Second-hand Uniform! She has washed, ironed, labelled, and generally breathed new life into SHUS!

Noel Rainbird
I hope the irony of me standing in front of a room full of people talking about the benefits of being an introvert is not wasted on you. I had considered taking a leaf out of experimental composer John Cage’s book and instead of his Four Minutes Thirty-three Seconds piece of total silence, I was going to stand up here and say nothing for exactly six minutes just to prove a point. But that might have been a little boring. It could be that by the time I’ve got to the end of this speech, you might decide that six minutes of complete silence would have been infinitely preferable.

I thought I would start off with a definition. The Oxford English Dictionary defines introversion as: “The action of turning the thoughts inwards, i.e. to one’s own mind or soul, or to the contemplation of inward or spiritual things.” Now as someone who knows as much about spiritual things as I do about rocket science, which is slim to none, I’ll leave the spiritual side of things on the side of my metaphorical plate right next to the metaphorical broccoli.

Philosophy is more my thing and it was the famous French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre who once described hell as other people. Now whilst I would not describe you people as hellish, it’s fair to say – he’s got a point.

I think everyone can agree that we live in a noisy world full of annoying people shouting at each other— you’ve only got to look at the current president of the United States. Everybody is shouting! Whether it’s on social media, television, and radio or at school when you accidentally drop your friend’s new iPhone X down the toilet.

However, contrary to popular belief, being an introvert does not mean that you hate people or that you are socially anxious or shy. It just means being picky about who you want to spend your time with and valuing your own company. You should take this as a compliment because at this very moment I choose to spend my time with you – you’re welcome! I for one much prefer to go out with one or two very close friends than a huge group of mediocre acquaintances.

Speaking of acquaintances I’m sure we’re all very familiar with that special hell that is small talk, and yes, my day is going very
well thank you and I agree it is very cold outside. Small talk is nearly always not genuine and to be honest, no one really cares about someone else’s opinions about the weather, but we do it to make ourselves seem polite.

Many people might think that an introvert hates talking and therefore is incapable of holding a conversation. It is beliefs such as these that have given poor introverts such as myself a bad name. We are brought up to be extroverted and to come out of our shells. ‘Come out of our shells?’ Shells? So we’re snails are we? That’s not very nice. Just because I don’t want to be the life and soul of the party does not mean that I’m a terrestrial pulmonate gastropod mollusc. And as for the slime, let’s not go there.

On the other hand, after many years of introverts being made to feel as if there is something wrong with them it has become almost a trend to be introverted and *quirky*. Some very pretentious and clearly extroverted people like to claim they are very quiet and really *nerdy* and wear their so-called introversion like a badge of honour.

Even though introverts can come across as being quiet, we make brilliant friends because we are good listeners and prefer quality instead of quantity when it comes to friendships. We also notice things that others might not. Introverts are much more observant. You’ve only got to look at some of the greatest fictional detectives to see this. Do you think that Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot was an extrovert? I think not – you only have to look at that man’s moustache to see that he spent a lot of time in front of the mirror! Do you really think that Oxford’s very own Inspector Morse went into the mosh pit at Guns ’n’ Roses concerts? I don’t think so! As for Scooby Doo… Never mind, he’s a dog. Anyway, introverts think about things more and are more analytical which often makes us appear more wise which, of course, we are!

Being an introvert also has its health benefits as research in Japan has shown that introverts have lower blood pressure than extroverts. So being a life-long introvert could potentially make your life longer. Think about: if you never even got out of bed you might live forever! I exaggerate for comic effect but many comedians, writers, artists and creative people in general often find their inspiration from their introversion.

The fact is that some people are introverts, some people are extroverts and some people are ambiverts. But it seems as though the extroverts have got a much better press than the introverts. Now is the time for us introverts to fight back and show the benefits of being quiet and thoughtful. And snail-like.

But don’t just take it from me; many famous people have outlined the benefits of being an introvert. Jane Austen said: “I wish, as well as everybody else, to be perfectly happy, but like everybody else, it must be in my own way.”

American novelist Anne Lamott said: “Lighthouses don’t go running all over an island looking for boats to save; they just stand there shining.”

Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Carl Jung said: “Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakens.”

And finally, as Gary the snail in SpongeBob said… Well he didn’t say anything – he’s a snail!

Mabel Kinnings, LTs
GCSE Textiles

Peony Ye
When approaching the somewhat daunting task of rewriting schemes of work, I often reflect on the words spoken by former US President Barack Obama, quoted above. Whilst many things about the study of geography cannot change: rivers, volcanoes, and yes, even ox-bow lakes, the way in which we teach has changed beyond recognition. It has been my aim to encourage the girls to become curious.

Remove started the year by visiting the cartographic company, Lovell Johns based in Long Hanborough. There, they were shown the vast range of maps that are produced and how computers have revolutionised the mapping industry. This set the foundation for a year which has seen us cover everything from their local environment to the more global issue of plastic consumption. Bottled water was tested and few could see the difference between it and good old tap water. Work questioning the need was used as part of a protest to Costa Coffee who responded by sending each of the Remove girls a sustainable, reusable water bottle.

The Inters visited the Living Rainforest in Newbury. This allowed us to experience the plants and animals that exist in a tropical rainforest on a more accessible level. Plant adaptations were looked at, and understood more easily as we could actually see them occurring.

Thanks to a challenge set by Professor Danny Dorling, during his lecture (of which more later), the Brexit issue was examined...
and debated, with the girls wondering which EU country, if any, would be next to leave. Help was sought, thanks to Chris Mason of the BBC and Dr Alasdair Pinkerton, reader in geopolitics at Royal Holloway, and countries were selected. The girls then had to formulate opinions and debate their choices.

The year was rounded off learning fieldwork skills that will be built on at GCSE, when we visited the River Cole, near Buscot on a glorious summer’s day to measure river characteristics.

The LTs have studied a diverse range of subjects from crime to fast fashion, leading them to wonder whether indeed their clothes are destroying the planet. Earthquake proof houses have been built, Mars quakes have been detected, and coastal geography experienced. The girls visited Hengistbury Head, on what was intended to be a sunny June day, but ended up with the sort of weather I associate with my childhood trips to the seaside! Undeterred, the beach was measured and the effectiveness of the defences in place there were assessed.

Shell have not escaped the curiosity drive, with fieldwork to assess the success of the regeneration of the Westgate Centre, and to measure the downstream characteristics of the River Windrush.

My aim has also been to bring geography more to the wider consciousness of the school and to that end, Professor Danny Dorling, Halford Mackinder Professor of Geography of the School of Geography here in Oxford came to school to deliver a lecture on the Geography of Brexit. He delivered a fascinating and insightful expose into the statistical and geographical break down of the original vote.

The department has also acquired a weather station, thanks to the generosity of the Friends of Wychwood. Real-time statistics can be downloaded and this will be really useful when the Inters return in September to study the weather.

One of the most common things I hear on Open Days, is that ‘Geography was not like that in my day’. To me there can be no greater compliment. Yes, the girls still know how an ox-bow lake forms, but this and far more besides!

Mr P Humphreys

Gracie and I, as Head and Deputy Head of Citizens, were tasked with organising Wychfactor 2019. It was a job that required, at least on my part, more work than expected. It had at first seemed insurmountable and so my outlook was somewhat pessimistic. However, despite this and with help from all the Citizens and the fabulous acts that performed, the evening turned out very well!

The night started with an introduction to the charity we had chosen to support. Rachael Scott-Hunter talked to us about the Alexandra House of Joy which was established to support adults with learning disabilities and their families.

Mrs. Scott-Hunter’s speech was followed by a diverse array of talents, from dancing, to sock puppetry, to singing. Our capable hosts, Anu and Oli, who kept the crowd entertained throughout with the help of some well-formed puns, introduced each act.

Each act was wonderful and we could really see the effort that each person put into her performance. Judged by Miss Frame, Mr. Ilott and Mr. Holland, Isobel Evans won first place for her rendition of ‘I Can’t Help Falling in Love with You’, which moved the audience considerably, even bringing someone to tears. In second place were Elfie, Lucy and Leony with their version of the song ‘The Night We Met’ and third were sisters, Juliette and Olivia with their splendid dance. All the acts were of a very high-quality but a couple of my personal highlights were ‘The Band’ and Anu’s passionate ribbon dance. The night ended with the performers and audience joining together to dance to the Whitney Houston classic ‘I Wanna Dance with Somebody’ – a rousing end to a fantastic evening.

Amelia White and Grace Wilkinson,
Shell
La Salle des Énigmes

“We watched a French play by two professional French actors. They were incredibly skilled as they never broke character, even when everyone in the audience was laughing at them. It was especially funny when some girls in the audience were invited to join them on stage. The actors were very good at showing different aspects of their characters. It was a very well put together and humorous play.”

Emilia Moss, Inters

“The French play was about two characters in a riddle room who try to open the door between them by breaking the code. The actors were very professional as they stuck to their characters. I did not understand all the words, but I connected most of the words together and understood the play better than I expected to. I was slightly nervous when I was picked as a volunteer, but I loved it. I found it thoroughly enjoyable and would love to watch another play in different language which I am learning because I can practise and widen my understanding of the language.”

Mariam Alvi, Inters

Wychwood Trip to Les Misérables

On the 14th February, a huge cohort from Wychwood stood in the hall, eagerly awaiting the bus that would take us to London to see the long-running West End show, Les Misérables. Les Misérables or ‘Les Mis’ as it’s more commonly known, has become one of the world’s most popular and renowned musicals and I for one was excited to see if it lived up to all the raving reviews. As someone who had never watched the film, never properly listened to the soundtrack or read the book, I had absolutely no idea what to expect. The extent of my knowledge was that it was about the French revolution, there was a song called On my Own and that at some point a red flag got waved about.

Upon arriving at the theatre, we had the pleasant surprise of realising we had some of the best seats in the house, in the centre of the stalls. And then, the spectacle started.

Firstly, the staging. The staging was a miracle in its own right. The set was comprised of large barricades which took up half the stage. The barricades were works of art, and when in Act 2 they rotated on the stage to reveal the aftermath of the battle, many of the audience were left with open mouths as to how this feat of engineering was physically possible.

The score, from which most people know at least one song, was impressive. One of the stand out songs for me was The Confrontation between Valjean and Javert and of course the timeless and rousing classic, One Day More which made us all want to join the cast on top of the barricades!

Despite leaving the theatre feeling somewhat emotionally wrought, the show was fabulous and I am so glad that I have finally seen it and can understand what all the fuss was about!

Sophie Solovieva, UTs
The Students’ Climate Strike

The inspiration for students to go on strike from school came from Greta Thunberg, the Swedish schoolgirl who, at age 15, began protesting outside the Swedish parliament about the need for immediate action to combat climate change. Her powerful speech to the UN highlighted not only the urgent need for us to take action, but how little action the governments are taking to protect our planet. The strikes, of course, proved to be controversial but recognising the importance of young people having a voice in this issue, our school was very supportive.

On the day of the first climate strike in March, we arranged with Mrs Johnson for everyone to come to school wearing green and blue. We organised for a photograph of us standing in the shape of a heart to be taken. Everyone also donated £2 which went to support the environmental charity, Extinction Rebellion.

On the 15th of March, we got permission from our parents and from the school to join the second Climate strike in Bonn Square, Oxford. There were a lot of inspiring speeches. Many people spoke about the politicians in power at the moment. We feel strongly about this as they do not do enough about climate change. There is no longer any serious question about the reality of climate change so the fact that politicians and world leaders such as Donald Trump are denying it, as they undo agreements already made, is a very worrying problem. Their actions will affect us all.

There was a great atmosphere and in that moment it felt as if we could all make a change and persuade those in power to make significant changes. It was powerful to know that the huge numbers of people who turned up were there to support the same things we believe in.

We think that if people actually felt what the effects of climate change will soon be, they would now be fighting ferociously to undo the damage already inflicted on our planet. It is a hard thing to change our lifestyles because it is so easy to think that we are fine now. But we must take action. We will continue to support and fight for this cause. After all, what is the point in learning about a future that, if we don’t change, will never happen? This is the only power we have!

Marisa and Mai Thomas,
Inters and Shell
Form Plays
“Wrong Time, Wrong Place...”

The ultimate expression of the Wychwood girl; the silliest and yet most important event of the year; the coveted cups for creativity and craft: that’s right everyone, it was time for Form Plays 2019.

Desperate to present as a sophisticated and successful alumna, I rolled up in my brand new car, in brand new heels and brand new Gucci perfume. The second I arrived in reception, however, I was immediately an Upper Transit again. I reverted in stance and speech, but thankfully not attitude...

As a teacher myself, I felt an enormous sense of pride when Ms Jones described me as a “poacher turned gamekeeper” – I quietly reminisced about my scruffy, inappropriately shoed poacher-self.

Before you could say “major for uniform infringement”, the Remove had stormed the stage. An ominous tin-foil mirror loomed over the girls as they drifted in and out of different dimensions. It was a riot of confusion and sisterly love – only to end in a huge explosion killing everyone off. I was devastated to find out later that they had not foiled the mirror themselves but somewhat impressed that they had employed a technician to do it for them. Either would have been a good life lesson in my opinion.

The Inters will always have my heart as this is the year I joined Wychwood myself. Their script was very well written with very clear stage directions. I could tell that they had benefited from a year’s experience of this. I was particularly impressed by their ability to edit and simplify their play at the last minute – it showed great self-sacrifice and prioritising.

The Lower Transits had gone full Carry On with their play; it was even appropriately set on an aeroplane! It was a Whodunnit worldwind of silly pun character names and fart jokes. The chaos absolutely worked and reminded me of the true essence of the form play.

UT CC worried me because they clearly haven’t progressed onto more appropriate teen TV such as Coronation Street and Tipping Point. Several very juvenile television characters rushed the stage in impressive costume and gait, as if they had closely studied these people on-screen. Despite the fact that the use of Spanish (Dora the Explorer, obviously) nearly induced me into pre-GCSE nervous seizure, I found myself fully devoted to finding out what happened to the missing monkey, so it was a very compelling plot!

UT LJ performed a play that felt truly collaborative. Many different topics featured such as art, Italian, science, love and
Justin Bieber. Their script was really clever – I sensed a slight, shall we say, remix of some teaching and learning buzzwords that were peppered throughout: slightly tongue in cheek, which I loved!

Shell FC gave us a hapless unlikely hero in our Colin. He fought a minotaur and survived, though not through his own doing – pesky Greek yoghurt-ruining things yet again! I was concerned that some cross-form collusion had happened as the other Shell form group ended with a fatal stumble too!

Shell MP had clearly anticipated my arrival and performed a Romeo and Juliet spoof. I almost forgot to watch the play as I was lost in the nostalgia of my LT self watching that gorgeous Romeo from the Zeffirelli version. The deadly rubber duck in this play snapped me back!

Study I is clearly full of Literature nerds and I loved this. They parodied all the Shakespeares they have studied while at Wychwood (which I was thrilled to discover is the same as when I was there ten years ago...) and paid respectful homage at the same time. Their Donald Trump was genuinely uncanny and had me paranoid about the possible spontaneous construction of walls sprouting around the hall.

Who doesn't love a limerick? The question Study II obviously asked themselves before writing their play. They showed us a useless bloke who tried to change himself to get women to like him. We all learned that we should never change ourselves for anyone. It is after all tradition for Study II to impart some leaving wisdom from their last Form Play effort.

I had a wonderful afternoon. It was infinitely better than teaching my year 8 last thing on a Friday and it was lovely to see everyone again. In the end, the LTs won me over for their quintessential form play, UT LJ wrote a very clever script, Georgie Lagden was the most frighteningly good actress and UT CC poured so much effort into the production and costume. I also received a lovely thank you card and gift delivered to my desk at work the following week.

Thank you so much everyone! What a relief to find that keeping up with the times hasn't deleted “That's SO Wychwood!” from my vocabulary.

Eppie Howard
ARTiculation

ARTiculation is a national public speaking competition designed to promote the appreciation and discussion of visual culture.

Heather won the school internal final with her presentation on Frida Kahlo and went on to compete in the regional final at the Ashmolean Museum Oxford, which she won against stiff competition. Over a thousand students entered the competition and Heather was one of only ten finalists. She represented our region in the final at Clare College, University of Cambridge. Her presentation praised by Dr Tristram Hunt, director, V & A museum for the depth of her research.

Frida Kahlo After an Operation - Is this the woman behind the mask?

I chose this work because Frida was of Hungarian-German and Mexican ancestry and much of her work encapsulated her confusion from a bi-cultural identity. Being half Spanish and half English, I have always grown up with the tension from having experienced both English and Hispanic cultures. Another reason for choosing this photograph was my interest in Frida as a feminist icon in the 80s. Her fame subsequently declined and has recently flourished again, I ask myself why? Why is she seen as an icon? There are images of her on mugs, t-shirts, badges etc. The bright, vivid artworks display her with her hair done up and elaborately decorated with flowers, wearing huge flowing Mexican dresses and in a social settings or in her ‘Casa Azul’.

The photograph is a seated portrait and her hair is not plaited with colourful flowers, in fact it is down and until I came across this image, I had not actually seen her with loose flowing hair. She is not dressed in her usual Mexican dress with her legs covered. She often hid her legs under skirts to cover any disfiguration following both polio and the injuries that resulted from a tram accident, in which splints or braces became part of her treatment. I can not help feeling that Frida has been caught off guard, in this photograph taken by her nephew, Antonio Kahlo.

Frida is resting after the operation and enjoying a cigarette. She is not painting, or dealing with the press or making a political statement, as she frequently does when in the public eye. Why is there such an affiliation with communism and communist leaders in her choice of dress?

Communism was close to Frida's heart and influenced her work enormously, yet it was not something that she usually expressed overtly in her dress. Her obsession with communism can be found throughout her diary. Frida was a feminist and had great vitality as a woman, which was radical at the time. She was free to paint what she wanted, unlike other Mexican artists whose sole focus was art associated with the revolution. She was open about her relationships including those with women, she was strong and defied medical expectations but, and this is surprising, she always depended on men.

She grew up as a Daddy's girl and would help her father with his photography. At school, her friendship groups consisted of only boys; she dressed in suits creating an androgynous appearance. It was while at school that she met the Mexican mural artist, Diego Rivera. Throughout their marriage, we see her complete idolisation of Diego. She comments in her diary how she wore Mexican dress because he liked her dressed in that manner. Their marriage was a stormy one.

Her separation from Diego some years later, cause her to spiral into a deep depression. I was fortunate to visit Frida's exhibition at the V & A, where I read her doctor's handwritten notes and was stunned by the number of anti-depressants she took. She was also addicted to painkillers and drank a bottle of brandy a day.

The pages of her diary display her mental dislocation as she layers one self-portrait on top of another. You could not get a
more visual representation of a woman who struggled with the tension between how she wanted to perceive herself and how she wanted to be seen by others.

The examination of three photographs helped to convince me of how much Frida manipulated her own identity and used a mask to create her identity. One was of Frida seated in her studio and dressed in a Mexican dress during a photo shoot. Her father appears to have caught her off guard in the second. She looks startled by the camera and is wearing trousers. It is as if she had not had time to prepare for the shot. The final image is a combination of the two. On her top half, she wears a Mexican outfit with an elaborate hairstyle, which is reflected in the self-portrait behind her. But as we lower our eyes, we notice she is wearing western trousers and is sitting with her legs apart in a masculine pose.

After researching the various depictions of Frida, you are probably wondering what conclusion I came to. Do I think she is a fake? Do I think she had a number of alter egos? Was she just experimenting? I have examined various descriptions of her self-portrayals from a variety of sources. Zamudio Taylor’s explanation is the one that articulates my beliefs most closely. It describes Frida’s image as her coping mechanism for portraying her fragmented and fractured body and persona. I think that at her core is a very distressed woman who was broken physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Was there just one Frida? An original Frida who remained the same despite the mask? After months of research, I have not found any consistency in her personality and identity. I do not think we will ever know the intricacies of her mind. She spent her whole life trying to create and understand her own identity. If she never knew who she was, then how could we begin to guess?

Heather Fitzgerald, Study II
Young Art Oxford

Azahara Fitzgerald

Rebecca Smith

Emilia Moss

Teresa Garcia-Ribeiro
History of Art & Photography Trip to Paris

The week before we left for Paris, events were conspiring against us. There was civil unrest as the ‘gilets jaunes’ had set fire to a number of luxury shops on the Champs-Elysées during their weekly demonstrations. The protesters who wear florescent yellow high-vis jackets are part of a movement that began as a fuel tax protest and has now morphed into a wider anti-government movement. Then there was transport disruption as Eurostar operated a reduced timetable because the French customs were on a go-slow and passengers were warned that they should only travel to Paris if their journey was essential. We wondered if we should abandon the trip. However, after seeking the relevant advice and with the support of Mrs Johnson, we decided to go ahead and embarked on (as described by Heather) ‘an awe inspiring adventure’.

We found an empty city with few tourists and an absence of the queues usually found outside the museums. We were welcomed everywhere with open arms. Nothing beats Paris in Spring and it was impossible to quash the enthusiasm of the Wychwood students.

Regina summed up the trip to Paris as colourful, inspiring and enjoyable. She was not only amazed by the richness of the art and architecture but also how she had the opportunity to learn more about French culture, including the importance of eating and drinking as was evident in the many vibrant cafés and restaurants found in the boulevards.

Our first stop was at the Musée D’Orsay, home to the French Impressionist artists, then on to Musée Rodin. This stunning collection of Rodin’s sculpture was Lissy’s favourite. She loved not only the sculpture, but also the tranquil setting of the beautiful house and the gardens. The interior of the house is adorned with highly decorated wooden panelling that echoes the ornate ceilings. Seeing sculpture ‘in the flesh’ enables one to examine the sculptor’s technique more closely. It was easy to identify the contrast in textures in Rodin’s The Kiss from the matt surface of the stone to the highly polished marble emulating skin. The garden café provided the perfect venue for a rest and a delicious hot chocolate as one enjoyed the setting and looked across to the dome of Les Invalides and the Eiffel Tower. The peace and quiet of the museum enhanced the experience.

The Picasso Museum was our first destination on Sunday to see the Alexander Calder and Pablo Picasso exhibition. It was Calder’s wiry kinetic mobile of the face of his wife Louisa that he nicknamed Medusa that caught Zoe’s eye. The exhibition explored the sense of void that is evident in the abstracted figurative work of these two great artists.

Marsela enjoyed Musée Marmottan, a stunning old hunting lodge near the Bois de Boulogne that houses an impressive collection of Impressionist works. An exhibition of ‘The Orient of Painters, from dreams to light’ was an added bonus.

Our visit on to Frank Gehry’s Louis Vuitton Foundation was one of the most popular. Poppy loved its position in the jardin de d’Acclimatation, a children’s amusement park which included a zoo. She was amazed by the sheer scale of the building made...
from glass and the variety of the works displayed in the large open gallery. It was the architecture shaped like an iceberg that wooed Tara as the large glass walls allowed a variety of views including one out onto an area where horses were performing dressage. It was not only the visual impact of the architecture that impressed Heather, but also its juxtaposition with the monumental stepped waterfall and the tranquil stream below. The powerful sound of the running water echoed through the complex curves of the glass structure.

For both Heather and Marsela, it was the installation, Infinity Mirror Room by the Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, that had a lasting impact. As part of the experience, four people went into the small room that was about the size of a disabled loo. The floor was covered in a sea of white and red polka dot cushions. All four walls were covered in mirrors and after spinning around
a few times it was hard to establish one's bearings. Although one knew that the room was small, the mirrors gave the appearance of the room going on forever. It was both a liberating and yet a suffocating experience; your senses were completely confused by the kaleidoscopic vision.

The building was also a favourite for Jem who found the architecture of fragmented glass forms inspirational as a photographer. Each floor had a different focus, showing different types of modern art from neon lights to a colossal rainbow-chequered canvas. From the open terrace on the top of the building, there were magnificent views of Paris enhanced by the bright sunlight. In the basement, there were bright yellow coloured panels with a mirrored side, which reflected the pool of water at the base of the waterfall.

On our final day, it was the peaceful gardens of the Palais-Royal with Daniel Buren's site-specific installation of black and white columns that provided an aura of peace before we entered the Louvre. The sheer size, scale, crowds and volume are always overwhelming but it is a museum packed with so many important art works that it cannot be omitted. Relieved to escape, we headed up to the Boulevard Haussmann and with a few hours left we were able to indulge in retail therapy.

Regina concluded that she had enjoyed the opportunity to visit so many museums and galleries, but also felt that the trip had provided her with an introduction to the city and the confidence to return again as an independent traveller. Tara rated the visit amongst one of her most favourite and one she will never forget.

Dr J Williams with contributions from Heather Fitzgerald, Regina Stolyarova, Alicia Sandy, Marsela Skenderaj, Jemimah Calfo, Zoe Chen, Poppy Kay and Tara Minoli-Taylor

The advantage of studying History of Art in Oxford is access to the galleries and museums in the city. We visited Jeff Koons' exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum that displayed seventeen of his works, fourteen for the first time in the UK. Love it or hate it; it provided the art historians with an interesting exercise in exploring his work. The first work was an orange basketball suspended in a vitrine of distilled water and a small amount of sodium chloride reagent called One Ball Total Equilibrium Tank. The concentration of the solution is such that the ball neither floats nor sinks. In Gazing Ball (Belvedere Torso), and Balloon Venus (Magenta) the spectator and their environment visible in the reflection become part of the exhibit. Koons has subverted the use of materials; the enormous Seated Ballerina appears to be made from dainty shiny glass but instead has been created from mirror polished stainless steel. The final word is best left to Koons: 'I had no idea about the power of art until my first art history lesson in college. Art so effortlessly connects you with all the human disciplines. It is about the removal of judgement. Art is not about high art - you don't have to bring anything to it apart from who you are'.

Dr J Williams
It has been a competitive year as far as science has been concerned and we have seen some ambitious and impressive performances. Early October saw a week of challenges celebrating National Space week. Students competed to build and fly the best compressed air rockets, test their knowledge of our solar system in the Big Space Quiz and design and construct from Lego a structure fit for Success in Space.

This gave the UT and Shell students involved in the UK Space Design Competition Team all the impetus they needed to prepare and deliver a stunning performance at the Oxford Regional Heats where they teamed up with Chipping Norton School to design and present a bid for a settlement on the surface of Europa. Our team was the youngest in the entire competition and showed much promise for the coming year.

Space continued to be a dominating theme towards the end of the Michaelmas term when the lower school partook in a master class from the National Space Academy with the LT students seeking out valuable information from the Space Academy on their Geography/Science cross curricular project on Mars Quakes and the use of seismometers in the INSIGHT mission.

The Hilary term was not without its competitive element either with a team from Remove and Inters competing in the Salters Festival of Chemistry at Oxford University in which they had to complete a whole range of analytical experiments to solve a mystery as well as designing a chemical timer with minimal instructions and assistance.

British Science week also fell in the Hilary term this year and Wychwood celebrated with activities on the theme of Journeys. Students competed by investigating a series of different journeys. These included a journey through the desert in which they aimed to build the tallest tower to stand on sand using the fewest resources, a journey to the afterlife by trying their hands at mummifying oranges and a journey from alchemy to chemistry by the creation of ancient perfumes.

Trinity term saw UT and Study I chemistry students participate in the Royal Society of Chemistry’s “Spectroscopy in a Suitcase” workshop in which they analysed spectra and even generated their own using spectrometers from the University of Oxford. UT physics students investigated motion and forces with an exciting trip to Thorpe Park, and Study I biologists participated in a residential trip to perfect their field work and practical skills.

Throughout the year a number of students have worked tirelessly and individually outside of lessons to complete a CREST award project. This is the first year Wychwood have participated in this STEM qualification and the students have excelled themselves designing rigorous experiments, making adjustments as they came up against challenges and analysing data to draw valid conclusions. One brave student even gave a presentation to the entire school about her work and appealed for volunteers to participate in her experiment. We hope to see more CREST scientists next year.

The Science Department
This year we invited students who would like to reflect on their travels and to write about a place in which they have been touched by the beauty or fragility of the natural world – a place that has left them in awe, awakened their soul and enlightened their spirit!

World Book Day
Writing Competition

Junior Winner
A Weekend in Paris

The angelic clouds hang above the palatial buildings along the cobbled streets and cast shadows over the passing cars. Gentle laughter and the clatter of teacups from crowded cafes float up the River Seine where smitten sweethearts tie locks onto the Pont des Arts. The bright sunshine ricochets off the windows. The buildings become like lanterns. The Champs Elysees strikes a pose for the entranced tourists and the Eiffel Tower watches over her city like a mother over her child.

Mabel Kinnings,
Lower Transits

Junior Runner Up
Lightening Strikes

Leafless trees shiver in the cold, using their long arms and fingers to enshroud a forgotten pathway that leads to a hill of huge, heavy rocks that block the ocean’s anger from invading the land. As I look outwards, thousands of little sea snails cling to the rocks for their dear lives. The vast ocean spits at me, warning me to keep away. But I stay. I realise dark clouds are towering over me. Bang! Lightening strikes. Just amazing.

Katya Bellers,
Remove

Junior Runner Up
Cat Bells

My reflection in the puddle stares at me thoughtfully. I see the soaring hills coated in blues of hikers in the distance, way up above. Rain from the dense, discoloured clouds begins its swift descent upon me. Its piercing percussion patters against the coarse ground as I proceed into the bitter cold of the hills. The familiar, pungent fragrance of luscious greenery arouses my senses. Despite the rain, the peace of the crisp, gentle leaves grazing my ankles uplifted me.

Isobel Evans,
Inters

Junior Highly Commended
Togo Bay Beach

As I step down the sandy incline, waves lapping at my feet, I hear the soft swishing of the palm trees behind me. The midday heat burns down on my back, white-hot. The silvery sand sparkles like crystalline ice, reflecting the harsh glare of the sun. A soft breeze rustles through the trees to the tinkling melody of the tropical birds above. The turquoise sea opens up before me and the sun glinting off the small silver fish flitting away.

Layli Ghanea-Hercock,
Lower Transits

Junior Highly Commended
Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya

It’s lights out and away we go! First straight, lined with tropical palm trees bearing crowns of leaves like laurel leaves. Then into the first turn, twenty engines snaking the track. In convoy, V6s revving, vroom vrooming. Parakeets fleet freely, cheep cheeping, circling the city. Round the distant Sagrada Familia and back along rumble strips and over chicanes. Spectators spot a spectrum of red, orange, blue, turquoise as they watch the spectacle of spluttering cars – who do you support?

Rebecca Smith,
Lower Transits

Junior Highly Commended

The rocks lay close together as if to defend from the dusk-coloured sand, but they were still played upon by the very weak breeze. The wind was whistling through the rocks and what was left of the scorched grass, almost mimicking the birds’ urgent calling cries. The sun blazed down upon us. The cars could be heard in a distant hum as they fled from this desert of a place.

Caitlin Logan,
Remove
Junior Highly Commended
Malaysia

The familiar, humid, heavy heat; the vibrant coloured streets; the candy-floss clouds that smudge across the sapphire skies; the raindrops that splatter onto my face; the spicy foods that sparkle and glaze; the melted people like tomatoes; the towering trees dance through the boiling breeze that strokes the skin softly; the vast mountains that send goose bumps scuttling over my body; the beautiful, joyful language that sings through the scorching streets. Malaysia. A promise of light illuminating the darkness.

Leony Ye,
Lower Transits

Senior Winner
A Café in Turkey

We sit on the faded carpet, steam eddying off the crystal glasses of tea to condense on the rattling windowpanes that clink and chime discordantly in protest against the gale. A stray dog lopes outside the window. Moonlight glistens off its silvery fur, ruffled by the wind that susurrates softly to the accompaniment of the faint evensong of the birds as they settle for the night, despite the bracing wind that bends the branches of their precariously perched nests.

Amelia Ghanea-Hercock,
Shell

Senior Runner Up
My Small Corner of England

Under the waning moon, a gentle breeze drifts blades of emerald grass across the meadow. Lustrous stars above gleam. Their divine faces gleam down through the fading light. As if entranced, I stand rooted firmly to the ground. A ripe, rosy apple lies before me, its flushed skin blushing. Violets doze on the verdant blanket – perfect petals resting their faces. Insects chirp disrupting the silence of the dusk, their ballads forming a melody through the cool air.

Alice McMahon,
Upper Transits

Senior Highly Commended
Paradise

Ripples form from the warm breeze, lapping gently against me. White stars glitter, reflecting strips of silver light onto the black sea. A red moon rises creating an eerie silence. Occasionally, a shoal of silver fish appear, flitting through the air like beads of light before being engulfed by the waves. Deep in my heart’s core, I can almost feel the presence of my younger self kayaking along the everlasting golden trail cast by the orange setting sun.

Evie Wessel,
Shell

Senior Highly Commended
A British Summer

Peace after a summer storm sweeps over the landscape. Whispers echo around the surrounding hills; a flock of scattered sheep bleat. The sound ceases as they feed on the dewy grass beneath them. Steady plops of rainwater plummet from a gutter above and splash into a water butt, over time filling and trickling over the edge onto the glassy pavestones below. This fresh atmosphere creates a breath. The leaves on the apple tree sway thankfully in relief from the humidity.

Rosie Schofield,
Upper Transits

Senior Highly Commended
Iceland

Jeeps crawl through the snowy caps of Reykjavik. Inside, children transported in their confining seats. Sharp accents from the native drivers burst through the mundane talk, and then coloured coats pour onto the bleak snow – a palette of vibrant paints dabbed onto pristine white. The snow cushions the children’s chatter translating it into sweet muffles. Cold kissed cheeks are rosy and clouds engulf those who stand still. Peaceful, yet isolated. All around us permeates the vastness and intimacy of Iceland.

Tilly Elliston,
Upper Transits

“In travel, in the beauty of nature, we touch the eternity – the beauty of our souls.” Amit Ray
A Level Photography

Jemimah Calfo
GCSE Photography

Peony Ye
Computing

Change happens very quickly in the computing world. This academic year we have seen Tim Berners-Lee celebrating 30 years of the World Wide Web, Facebook and Mark Zuckerberg getting into some hot water with issues relating to data mining and 5G is creeping up on us very quickly! From Remove to Shell, these have been hot topics for discussion in computing lessons in between learning to use HTML to write a web page, creating an app in AppShed and making games in Kodu!

Contrary to latest national reports, Wychwood has not seen a ‘steep decline’ in numbers choosing GCSE Computer Science and we congratulate our first cohort of students to sit their GCSE this summer.

The year started with a cross-curricular trip to The Science Museum in London. We started with ‘Engineer your future’ where we got into the role of problem solvers by completing tasks such as working out the logistics of the baggage carriers at a busy airport and ensuring commuters got from one station to another! The Information Age gallery depicted the metamorphosis of technology over the years and then watching the growth of superbugs was a little scary to say the least. The Wonderlab with its friction slides, dry ice cauldrons and weird heat sensors to find out who was hot and who was not, meant there was something for everyone.

November marked the now annual Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge. Thirteen girls from Inters to Study II wracked their brains to solve problems and Rebecca Smith and Emilia Moss managed to go through to the next round – quite an achievement! Professor Newman had us all enthralled with what seems like the limitless opportunities of AI at the Wingfield Digby lecture and then afterwards we all got to sit in a seriously cool driverless car!

Safer Internet Day this year focused on ‘consent’ on line and asked the girls to examine what they post on line and the effects that it can have. The LTs designed their own apps and created some excellent mood boards that were ‘blind judged’ by our own marketing director, Mr Holland. He was impressed by the array of different creative ideas and found picking the top three quite a task. In the end, Go Gaming, Halal Memes and Sunny Skincare were the winners. He felt that simplicity, fun and information were the key to success. We hope that next year he will be joining us in the classroom to give some top tips!

Mrs M Stephenson

The National Museum of Computing, Bletchley Park

On Wednesday, 12th June the Inters visited The National Museum of Computing. We spent the morning learning all about the history of the place. We were even able to take a look at the famous Enigma Machine and the perhaps less well-known Bombe machine. It was unbelievable to think that all these machines played such a vital role in WWII. We were shown how data storage capacity has changed. Rob, our tour guide, said that he thought that by 2050 any ordinary mobile phone would be able to hold up to a terabyte of data. Imagine that, but what would we do with all that data?

After lunch we tackled the Turing Challenge and used old computers to create a game called Snake in Basic. We had to press the keys hard and it was quite strange as some of them were in a different place! Once we had completed writing the program, we all got to have a go at playing the game and it became quite competitive! In the end it was Rhyme who got the highest score of 311 seconds and Wanling managed to successfully hack her program!

We left the museum with a much better understanding of the impact that technology had on past events and with curiosity and wonder about what will happen in the future. One thing is for sure: we will store far more information, but what we store it on will be far smaller!

Elizabeth Newman, Wanling Gu and Emilia Moss, Inters
Lessons from Auschwitz Project

Since 1999, over 37,000 students and teachers have taken part in the Holocaust Educational Trust’s groundbreaking Lessons from Auschwitz Project. Based on the premise that ‘hearing is not like seeing’, this four-part course (including a day visit to Poland and Auschwitz) explores the universal lessons of the Holocaust and its relevance for today. The LFA Project aims to increase knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust for young people and to clearly highlight what can happen if prejudice and racism become acceptable.

This year Wychwood girls were invited to apply to take part in the project by submitting a short piece entitled ‘Why is it important to remember the Holocaust?’ All submitted pieces were exceptionally good and so it was difficult to choose who would be our two ambassadors. In the end it was decided that Scarlet Lopez and Georgina Lagden would participate and since their return they have shared the ‘lessons learned’ through a whole-school assembly, leading a class presentation and discussion with the LTs and now in their article for the Elm.

On the 19th of March we visited Auschwitz-Birkenau as part of the ‘Lessons from Auschwitz’ project. ‘Lessons from Auschwitz’ is an educational project run by the Holocaust Educational Trust. The objective of the project is ‘to explore the universal lessons from the Holocaust and its relevance today’. The project also helps young people to gain a greater understanding of the events of the Holocaust in order to encourage them to raise awareness of one of the most significant and well-known mass genocides in history.

The project consisted of an introductory conference featuring a survivor’s testimony, a day’s trip to Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland and finally, a follow-up seminar where we reflected on our experience of the day. The first conference that we attended taught us about pre-war Jewish life in Europe and began to deconstruct the stereotypes we may have had before about the Holocaust. Our educator also carefully informed us on how to prepare practically and emotionally for the visit. Most significantly, we had the privilege of hearing the inspiring testimony from Susan Pollak, a Hungarian survivor of Auschwitz who lost her entire family to the perils of the Nazi regime. Susan’s testimony was eloquently structured to portray her overall sense of hope and strength in the face of discrimination, despite suffering immensely in the camp. We left the conference with a different perspective on the events and began to develop our own queries and questions that we hoped would be answered on our trip to Poland.

After a long journey we finally arrived in Krakow, Poland where we continued to travel to our first destination of our trip. Our group arrived in the small village of Oswiecim, which is situated alongside the former Nazi camps. Before the war, the town had a large Jewish community where they thrived in trade and business alongside Christians and other Polish inhabitants. However, during the war the town was dominated by the Nazi command and many of the locals were forced out of their homes and resettled. In the town centre our groups discussed the normality of pre-Jewish life in Oswiecim and began to gain a greater understanding of the role of bystanders through looking at photographs of the resettlement of the Jews. At this time, the dehumanisation of the Jews began to feel more real to us and our anticipation of what to expect at Auschwitz grew.

We were a given a detailed tour of the remains of Auschwitz 1, which is known as one of the most infamous concentration camps of the Holocaust. As we entered through the main gate with the sign depicting ‘ARBEIT MACHT FREI’ we were transported into a place with towering red-bricked buildings and everlasting strands of barbed wire along the side. However, it was the exhibitions that were shown inside the buildings that humanised this seemingly empty place. One of the first significant exhibitions that we experienced was the room containing ‘The Book of Names’. The book spanned the entire room with four million names of the Jews who died in the holocaust, and an empty space for the remaining two million. As the statistics of the holocaust prove to be incredibly dehumanising and impersonal, we were told to pick a few names from the book on which to focus our attention.

As the tour continued, we felt the emotional impact of the visit began to increase and this was heightened by some of the rooms that we entered. One of the most memorable rooms to us was a large space containing the two tonnes of human hair that was found after the liberation of the camp. The piles upon piles of braids of different colours had a
profound impact on our group, and so we were given poems to help comprehend the reality of such a dehumanising event.

Other rooms that our group entered included the vast array of possessions including shoes, pots and pans and suitcases. Again, we were told to focus our mind on a specific item to consider specific individuals and why they would possess that specific item.

Another room that both of us found particularly emotional was a confined space that was dedicated to the mothers and the 1.5 million children who were murdered during the Holocaust. The walls were filled with chilling photographs of the children upon their arrival at Auschwitz. The pain and fear that was evident on their faces deeply resonated with us as young people. The last standing gas chamber remains in Auschwitz 1, which we were given the opportunity to enter. Even now it is hard to describe the macabre and claustrophobic feeling that we experienced. This marked the end of the emotional journey that we had experienced in Auschwitz 1.

Auschwitz 2, otherwise known as Birkenau, emphasised the vastness of the labour camps as it stretched as far the eye could see. Rows upon rows of wooden huts were situated around the central railway line that fell underneath the earie watchtower that marked the entrance to the camp. As we walked across the labour camp, we discussed specific testimonies from individuals that endured to live in such a horrific place. When looking at the everlasting rows of bunk beds, the simplistic showers and small toilets, we began to realise that this was not only a place where people died, but also a place where people lived. An object that resonated with us was a simple set of keys that were taken from a victim upon their arrival to Birkenau. Our educator pointed out to us that this person had the intention of going home after their resettlement. However, it was evident that the individual never returned.

At the end of our tour, we all gathered at the memorial in the camp to reflect upon the conclusions that we had made throughout the day and most importantly, to remember those who lost their lives. The Rabbi spoke eloquently about the importance of bringing our experiences to our everyday lives and expressed a strong sense of hope that remains within the Jewish community, despite suffering from the anti-Semitism that was evident in the 1930s and continues today. We came away from this experience with more questions than ever before, however the visit made us realise that these questions can never be answered. We understand that no one can truly comprehend the events that took place in Auschwitz, but visiting gave us a profound insight into the daily struggle of the victims of the Holocaust. It also humanised a very impersonal statistic and forced us to accept that the perpetrators were normal humans and therefore we are all capable of such atrocities. We both felt honoured to be able to return to normal life and reflect on our experience to others at a time when some people deny the existence of the genocide.

Ultimately, we felt incredibly grateful for the privileges that we have within our own daily lives and we hope to never forget what we experienced and learnt throughout the project. We would like to encourage people to take part in the project. As a young adult, you are emotionally and physically challenged, but it is vital to continue the memory of the victims and survivors of the Holocaust and support the work that the Holocaust Educational Trust continue to do.
This is an extract from the writings of Zalmon Grodowski, a holocaust survivor, which was found buried in the grounds of Birkenau after the liberation:

“Dear reader, I write these words in the moments of my greatest despair. I do not know, I do not believe, that I myself will live to read these lines “after the storm.” (...) Who knows if I will ever again behold a “free” man and be able to speak with him? It may be that these, the lines that I am now writing, will be the sole witnesses to what was my life. But I shall be happy if only my writings reach you, citizen of the free world.

Dear finder, search everywhere, in every inch of soil. Tens of documents are buried under it, mine and those of other persons, which will throw light on everything that was happening here. Great quantities of teeth are also buried here. It was we, the Kommando workers, who expressly have strewn them all over the terrain, as many as we could, so that the world should find material traces of the millions of murdered people. We ourselves have lost hope of being able to see the moment of liberation”.

Zalmen Grodowski

Scarlet Lopez was awarded the Heather Tranter Bookshelf Award at the end of the Trinity Term 2019. This very special English department prize rewards departmental commitment and extra-curricular engagement in a girl’s time at Wychwood. It has not been awarded since 2017.

Scarlet is academically able and she knows how much we rate her written and academic ability, but this is not an award about that. It is now time to recognise her overall engagement in and commitment to the English department.

Scarlet came in Remove as our new creative writing scholar, having brought an outstanding body of work for her age to our first meeting. Currently a senior scholar she has always enjoyed writing prose pieces, some of which we know have been published. It is unsurprising that much of her involvement in department activities has been through creative writing and she has been in the Inklings since Remove. In Study I she co-ran the Inklings club giving back to the younger girls. She also offered GCSE Literature support for Shell pupils in advance of their GCSEs this year. These gestures of service are significant factors in her receiving this award. Scarlet has written for ‘The Elm’ magazine; has occasionally entered the Charlotte Kell poetry competition and was Highly Commended in the LTs with her poem ‘The Sea’. She has been successful in World Book Day Writing competitions and she was also a Chairperson for her Youth speaks team that went through to the zone finals with exemplary public speaking skills.

A quiet and understated, generous, kind and considerate departmental all-rounder Scarlet is a very worthy recipient of this award. Well done, Scarlet!
Drama

It has been a busy year for the performing arts and I have been so impressed by the level of participation and enthusiasm I have witnessed. As a new girl, I have also been completely bowled over by the fabulous welcome I've received from staff and girls alike. Thank you for making me feel at home.

In November we had Wychwood Remembers – an outstanding moving tribute evening and a fitting way to mark our respect for those who fought for our freedom. It was the first time Drama Club had performed together and I was really proud of their teamwork and their performance.

In the Michaelmas term the Study Shell and UT Drama went along to The New Theatre to watch the London touring production of Blood Brothers. It was a great show, of particular interest to the drama GCSE girls who are now able to review the show for their exams.

In December we held auditions for Anne of Green Gables and I was so impressed by the bravery and commitment of the girls who went through that process. As there was so much talent at the auditions, it made choosing main parts really hard, so we made the decision to do the show over two nights and double the cast!

We had a record number of candidates entered for this year’s LAMDA examinations. It was a long and exacting day and the girls did exceptionally well to manage the demands of the day and of the examiner.

All of the girls received pass grades – eleven passing with Merit and two passing with Distinction. Congratulations to Mabel Kinnings and Ella Arroyo who both passed with Distinction.

The following girls were awarded their LAMDA medals:

- Bronze Medal winner: Grace Wilkinson
- Silver medal winners: Rosie Moss, Viktoria Boehner, Ella Frost
- Gold Medal winner: Ella Arroyo

The Performing Arts evening was a splendid evening, with musical performances, solo and duo drama pieces and dance. The girls were very professional in their approach and really supportive of each other on and off stage.

In March came the Form Plays. At last I got a chance to witness this much-talked-about event! As the girls themselves were responsible for every aspect of the plays, I was able to sit back and enjoy the results. I was so impressed by the energy and the chaos and the fun that this event generated and can now see why it’s a highlight of the school calendar.

Also in March, our Shell Drama group performed their examination pieces Things I Know to Be True and Five Kinds of Silence to an invited audience and the external examiner. I was delighted by their performances, but mostly delighted by the girls’ professional and thoughtful handling of some very hard-hitting material.

In May, we finally headed off to Canada for our musical about a lively little orphan girl who turns the sleepy town of Avonlea upside down. There was a cast and crew of about 40, it is fair to say that our production of Anne of Green Gables was a resounding success.

I had no idea when I joined the school just how much enthusiasm and talent there was at Wychwood. It is such a joy to work with you and watch you perform knowing, as I do, how important these skills are now and how important they will be for you in the future. Thank you for a fabulous first year!

Mrs M Constance

“On November 8th, Wychwood remembered those who had fallen during World War I by holding an evening of music, dance, poetry and speeches. The drama club performed a dramatization of the poem Dulce Et Decorum Est by Wilfred Owen. The performance was set to music and presented a young soldier who could not find his gas mask and was being suffocated by toxic gas. It showed the immorality of war through movement by depicting these horrific experiences of life on the frontline. We divided the performance into two parts with the second part showing what could have happened if the fallen soldiers had returned to their families.”

Mabel Kinnings and Leony Ye, LTs
In May, Wychwood presented the Musical of Anne Of Green Gables, a story about an orphan girl who ends up at the home of two elderly siblings, Marilla and Matthew, who were expecting a boy. However, they decide to keep her and the story is about how she grows up and learns what it means to have a proper family.

Girls from Remove to Upper Transits auditioned for singing and acting roles. A few weeks later, we found out our parts, and to be completely honest, I wasn’t expecting to be chosen for a main part, so I was very enthusiastic about getting the part of Anne. I remember running into the dining hall with my letter to tell my classmates that “I got Anne! I got Anne!”

We were given our script before the Christmas holidays so we could start reading through it and understanding the concept of the story and our parts. Rehearsals would be on Thursday after school and most lunchtimes.

And so it was. Nearly every lunchtime, Mrs Walster would tirelessly teach us our solos, duets, trios and group songs in the music room.
I remember the first rehearsal on a Thursday afternoon. We went into the hall and grabbed a chair each to make a semi-circle around Ms Constance and we ran through our lines, alternating between Blue and Red groups for there were two casts to perform over two nights.

The rehearsals continued and it was beautiful to see the play coming together – costumes, props... but the only problem we had was that most of us didn't know all our lines yet.

Soon the Easter holidays came rolling in and we all worked hard to not only learn our lines, but most importantly to act them, reading them as our character would say them.

On our return to school, we started running through the play from beginning to end with our dances, songs, costumes and all the props and sets. It was very enjoyable although very intense, but we can all say that it was a very, very fun experience.

I must admit that I was very nervous on the opening night and I could tell many others were too, after all it was our first performance and the hall was completely full. However, it went wonderfully well and I’m extremely proud of everyone who performed.

I want to thank all the staff for their hard work and patience and for making us all look so good on stage. Thank you so much for this opportunity, I am tremendously grateful!

Teresa Garcia-Ribeiro, Inters
On the 6th June the Remove, Inters and LTs set off to go to Hampton Court Palace, London. As soon as we arrived, we marvelled at the historic stretch of Tudor architecture and beautiful gardens. After a short break to admire Henry VIII’s armour and sitting on the grass surrounded by roses, we split into two groups and whilst one group explored the palace kitchens and royal apartments, the other group explored the religious roller-coaster of Tudor religion. We learnt about how England’s religion “flip-flopped”, as described by our guide, Dan, between Catholicism and Protestantism and then uncovered the truth behind the Elizabethan crisis and discussed arguments for and against who should have become monarch after Elizabeth’s expected death as she fell dangerously ill from small pox. During the tour, we got a good understanding of just how much food Henry ate. In the kitchens, we stood by a roaring fire and watched Alisha re-enact history by turning the spit. Next, we enjoyed a performance of Henry VIII telling the story of his wives, their lives and their secrets. Before leaving, we explored the beautiful fountain gardens. Overall it was a fantastic trip and a great day out.

Azahara Fitzgerald, LTs
UTs Taster Day For Study
General Studies week is an opportunity for the girls in Study I to take a break from their timetable after summer examinations in order to learn new skills and develop their relationships with one another.

On the Monday, we all headed out to London for the day where we spent the morning looking around the Tate Modern at an exhibition by Jenny Holzer who portrayed eye opening topics and ideas in controversial and unique ways.

Our day then consisted of viewing the Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy. One particular artwork which intrigued us was the tiger created out of Marks and Spencer’s teacake wrappers. Our day finished with shopping and eating at Covent Garden and viewing an amazing theatrical performance of the musical ‘Come from Away’ which we all thoroughly enjoyed.
Day two started with an energetic and fascinating self-defence class by an organisation called 'Street Wise'. This taught us necessary life skills allowing us to feel both confident and more cautious of our surroundings. In the afternoon, we jumped straight into First Aid and we were taught the recovery position and resuscitation.

After a day of exertion, on Wednesday, we went off to Daylesford for a very relaxed day starting with a fabulous cooking course. We began by going out into the gardens and picking the necessary vegetables needed to prepare our meal. The course started with us watching James, the chef, cooking us a delicious soup before we proceeded to split off into pairs to attempt to create the main course - hake en papillote, which to our surprise we managed to complete and which ended up tasting amazing. In the afternoon we were taken to Chipping Camden for a walk and stop at the café for a cup of tea.

Day four was all about careers and thinking about our future which consisted of a variety of interesting talks from Barclays and a careers advisor helping us put together CVs, personal statements and thinking about our next stage. We ended the day by having a barbecue on the lawn which gave us time to reflect on all the options open to us.

On Friday we spent an active day at Hill End. Here we carried out tasks in the woods, which would be useful if we ever had to survive in the wilderness! Fortunately, the weather was on our side and it was a beautiful sunny day so surviving was not that challenging! The day started with us splitting into groups to create a group shelter, both groups had to think innovatively on ways to make it waterproof and stable. After lunch, we sat around a bonfire and created our own dough and cooked it over the fire. To our delight, we were extremely grateful as Ms Sherlock bought us Nutella! Everyone enjoyed the team building challenges and will definitely remember it.

Tara Minoli-Taylor, India Ramsden and Poppy West, Study I
Sports Day
Sports Dinner 2019
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

The Extended Project Qualification is taken by a keen minority of girls at Wychwood. It is in our view the very best preparation one can do for moving on to Higher Education. You need to choose a subject (any subject that does not clash directly with your A level syllabus) to research and then you write a 5000 word essay on the subject. Alternatively you can create what is called an ‘artefact’ which is something you make or do, having done the necessary research beforehand. This can be a performance, a piece of artwork or a scientific study. Study II this year saw two completed EPQs and I will tell you a little about both in order to show what a very diverse range of topics are covered by our pupils here at Wychwood.

Firstly, Matilda Gardener, who, during Study I, had formulated the idea of undertaking some research on the subject of opportunities for women and how they had changed in recent decades. However nothing definite was decided when the summer vacation arrived and Matilda went, along with fellow Study II pupil, Marsela Škenderaj, to Ghana to help schoolchildren there. On her return, Matilda, was enthused by her experience in Ghana and she developed her ideas for her EPQ about women’s lives to focus on the need to reduce the birth rate there. So Matilda wrote her EPQ on the question ‘Should Ghanaian women be limited to three children?’ This subject linked her interests in women and in Ghana with two of her A level subjects, economics and geography. She also thought about the context of China’s ‘one child’ policy. In the end, Matilda drew the conclusion that rather than limit the number of children by law, as China did, the best way forward for Ghana was to increase understanding about, and accessibility to, family limitation advice and methods, and as a result of her convincing presentation, she carried her audience along with her to the same conclusion.

Secondly, Eva Kischka took up a suggestion from school that she think about doing an EPQ. This idea came up only in January and the project needed to be completed by early May, but undaunted, Eva rose to the challenge. Eva combined her interest in film and TV with her very genuine concern for those who suffer from mental illness. Eva developed her own project researching the portrayal of a variety of mental disorders across over thirty films and TV programmes from Big Bang to classic horror films. She developed her own methodology, and following advice from a clinical psychologist, she determined a way of rating the material she viewed as ‘unhelpful/helpful’ and ‘accurate/inaccurate’. Eva initially set out do a research paper, but in the end she achieved the more difficult aim of producing an original scientific study that could be presented as an artefact with accompanying research report – and in just a few months!

In Study I several girls are quite well advanced on their EPQs for next year, and they had the benefit of listening to Matilda and Eva talk about how they found the experience. They came away convinced of the usefulness of the EPQ and the necessity to plan your time very carefully!

Dr M Donald
Cross Curricular Project
The Georgians

The Wychwood Cross Curricular project happens at the beginning of July each year when the normal timetable is suspended for four days and the whole school is then involved in exploration of the same theme or topic, which culminates in a presentation of everybody’s ideas.

This year’s topic was The Georgians. Each class studied various aspects of this topic in lessons. They learned about monarchs and slavery, Jane Austen, balls, architecture, foundlings, prisons and much more. The three classes also learned songs in their music lessons, which were relevant to the period and the theme and even learned a traditional dance.

At the end of their week of study exploration and debate each girl wrote monologues in response to what they had learned. Over the weekend the script fairy came and weaved all of the monologues into a script for the girls to perform. On Monday the play was cast and stage-managers were appointed and the girls began learning their lines, finding props and costumes, painting sets trying out make up, practising songs and dances and started to bring the original ideas to life.

Mrs M Constance
The Whole School Picnic
Sudley Castle 2019
Study Ball 2019
Study Leavers

Millicent Rowland
Milli, you are the conscientious, diligent academic pupil that even Cambridge University wanted to take forward in your studies! Your commitment to learning is exemplary and the fact that the younger girls are able so generously to benefit from your Literature essays (when this was a subject that you had studied through pleasantly and impeccably mannered – gritted teeth) is testament to what you can achieve because you put your mind to it. Unerring in your determination to understand, you question your teachers relentlessly and they love it! To teach a pupil with such tenacity for learning and passion for subject knowledge is wonderful. Collectively your teachers refer to your tenacious quality of seeking absolute understanding in all areas of learning and your insatiable, intellectual curiosity. Furthermore, your academic interests have been evident beyond your own learning and your role in many of the outreach activities, enthusing younger scientists has been very typical of your generous spirit. You manage your time and balance your incredibly high level sport with the same attention to detail. You were the only young woman under 18 to compete in L'Étape, (a 186km race in London in the summer of 2017). This was just one example of what you can achieve. Having you at Wychwood has been a great pleasure and we wish you every happiness in all your achievements of the future.

Jemimah Calfo
Jem, you have come so far since you first came to Wychwood and the young woman who will leave school this summer is a far more robust and happy version of the tentative young girl who looked around just two year ago. You are so generous in your praise of Wychwood as a school that has enabled this transformation, but it is not all down to Wychwood. The first full week you were here you had a Hub Challenge Day at the end of which the leader asked for someone to volunteer. You had the courage to step up, and then onto, a single piece of rope held by a circle of girls you barely knew, and you trusted that they would support you, whilst you made your way around that circle on your own. Who would have thought that you were playing out a metaphor of what your experience here would be. Suspicious that this place could not be what it appeared at first, you have enjoyed your studies, you have come to trust the teachers and the teaching methods; you have embraced every opportunity afforded you, not least three overseas trips (good work in anyone’s book!), and you are now looking at a future perhaps brighter than you had ever imagined, with friends for life. You have learnt to trust people and experiences again – and that is down to your courage. How strong this will make you into your future. Well done, Jem, and good luck in all that you do.

Ella Carter
We have had a bonus year with you, Ella, and in many ways it has served only to reinforce what we were able to say a year ago but with more poignancy. Having settled into Wychwood with such ease and warmth, you have adapted to two more year groups with that same generosity of spirit and, yet again, the whole community has responded. Knowing Marsela of old,
and with new friendships, some of which are a direct result of your natural capacity to be a peacemaker and to encourage resolution wherever possible, you have shown a both great sense of fun and a capacity for thoughtful reflection. You have absolutely lived the rich and complex spirit of the school through the strong relationships that you have built in your time with us. Your actual strength paradoxically is even more evident in times of weakness, auguring well for your future. Your generosity of spirit, and the benevolent plans that you have for your professional future, show not just aspiration but a depth of empathy and understanding beyond your years. We have been privileged to meet you at this time in your life, and those who meet the future you will be very lucky people.

**Neamh Pollard**

Neamh, you have been fiercely independent in your time with us, taking responsibility for yourself far more than we can ever know, and managing challenging logistics that haven’t always meant we have had the time that would have enabled better acquaintance. You slipped in half way through a year and it is likely that you will look to slip out. However, what appears to all of us is that with your natural qualities and your academic ability you could have much more self-belief. Sociable and clearly with an infectious sense of fun, you are sensitive and caring, and thoughtful among your peers. Never be scared to ask for support – it is not a sign of weakness. When you do leave Wychwood be aware that you are member of this community, somehow it will be under your skin – you just might not know that yet either. Good luck and please come back to see us. Your story has barely begun and we look forward to the forthcoming chapters. Good luck, Neamh.

**Isabel Jackson**

Izzie has been a core member of this form for some six years. Our fond memories of you as a young girl mostly involve horses of course and this is a passion that stays with you to this day. As a boarder you have really valued the warmth of both the boarding and the Wychwood community and you have had some important friends amongst your peer group. Happy memories abound of you giggling exclusively about something or other with Teana or Becky, (often under desk lids that were immediately snapped shut) and of course you have taken your friendship with Milli into shared A Level subject choices. For me, I will always remember the ambition with which you approached poetry recitals, and when you explained as a little one that you were going to recite Wilfred Owen’s ‘Strange Meeting’ we wondered if you had fully comprehended the task. You had. It was impressive. Yet, last November as part of the Wychwood Remembers commemoration, the maturity with which you had developed your understanding and the intensity with which you delivered those words was extraordinary. Thank you, Izzie.

**Marsela Skenderaj**

Marsela came in Study I already knowing Ella, yet she leaves at the end of her two years with us with great friendships across the form. It is difficult to imagine you have had so little time here. Your family is very special to you, Marsela, and you are appreciative of what they do for you. Furthermore, you are true to yourself, with your own distinctive style and your own independent way of managing your life so that in many ways you might have missed the full extent of support that could have been accessed at Wychwood – though perhaps your independence meant you did not need it. One message to take
away for the future is that there are always people in the world who will support you if you can find them – choose your friends wisely, as I’m sure you will. For you are a loyal and a protective friend and you know what it is to be the one supporting. Marsela you clearly have a great sense of fun and we hope that you have enjoyed your time with us. Your options are open now and you are more than ready to leave school! We wish you good luck in all that you do in the future, Marsela.

**Matilda Gardener**

Matilda is a very organised and efficient young woman who has been on a revision schedule for most of this year in order that she can maintain the balance and composure that she knows is healthy in life whilst also being fully prepared for her A Levels. In this, as in many other things, she is a great role model. To arrive at a school in September and to be made the head girl by February – following a preference vote within a school full of young girls who have known you for so little time – is truly impressive, and as you rightly acknowledge one of your proudest moments ever. You leave here best friends for life with Jem and find yourselves the new form reps for this cohort within the Wychwood Association – again testament to your maturity and personal acknowledgement of what you have found here at Wychwood. This really is a community that values you and with that we wish you every happiness for the future. Good luck, Matilda.

**Regina Stolyarova**

Regina you have grown into the stylish, composed and independent young woman that we see today by always managing your life in a mature way and facing the challenges that came your way with great strength of character and determination. You are a long way from home and have been a boarder for all of your time here so Mrs Henk has been a very important member of staff for you. Never short of an app or a new regime you have taken your diet, your health and your fitness levels very seriously, recognising the need for a balanced life and becoming the person that you want to be. You have a great sense of fun and your manipulation of facial expressions – as was evident in the leavers’ PowerPoint – has been extraordinary throughout your time here. You can tell a tale in three parts, with a flicker of an eyebrow and the slightest twitch of your top lip – and we love you for it! You have great self-confidence, you have great courage, and more than anyone in the form you know your own mind in an uncompromising way, attributes that will take you far in life. Whilst you have always chosen not to be considered for roles of responsibility we thank you for your contribution to the community as a whole. Remember us, come back and visit us and share your life lessons with other young boarders who hone their life skills here at Wychwood. We wish you every success into what we are sure will be a very stylish and successful future.

**Heather Fitzgerald**

Heather, it seems hardly possible that we first met you at an Open Evening when you were in year 6 with a teeny-tiny sister (now as big as you – and a very important part of your life) and here you are on the verge of leaving school in Study II nearly 8 years later with a head full of exciting plans from Swedish to Danish folk schools and music courses to a degree in History of Art at University. The range of those ideas reflects the speed at which your mind can quite simply swing from one thing to another – you are nothing if not engaged in the life around you in a full and exciting way. Warm, fun, excitable and enthusiastic we have treasured your Wychfactor appearances, your Performing Art performances, your carol service readings and your insatiable enthusiasm for life. No one in this school has been on as many overseas trips as you have (I gave up counting them), and the way in which you embrace the extension programme on offer here is outstanding. You know an opportunity when you see one and it truly does enrich your life and extend your interest in the world around you. You have never been shy of the student voice here at Wychwood, asking for the cross curricular project on the war in Inters and now rather fittingly choosing the Wyss Campaign for Nature as the charity that will benefit from the £20 Challenge in celebration of twenty years of the Friends of Wychwood this June. No wonder you were in the Articulation National Finals at Cambridge earlier last term. Your inclusivity is such that you will be missed across the school. You will never be short of friends, Heather, and we wish you every success in all that you do in the future. Please stay in touch.

Ms B Sherlock
Having been asked to write an article for the magazine about our experience of MUN this year, we chose to write a rap. It may seem like an odd approach but at MUN conferences, rap battles occur frequently and we thought it would be fun to write our own. The song we have written to is a celebration of how much you can develop in a short amount of time, which reflects our own changed lyrics, speaking about our fast development over the past two years (thank you Mr Siantonas!) and our plans for our upcoming and first ever Wychwood conference. Fitting a lot of content into a two-minute speech is difficult when standing at the front of a packed committee room so we wanted to prove that it is possible before the chairs tell us to ‘please come to our closing remarks’. We are hugely looking forward to our conference next year, WychMUN2020, and urge as many lower school delegates to attend as possible.

MUN – a rap to the tune of Guns and Ships
by Lin-Manuel Miranda

How does a group of Wychwood girls, an army, taking our own power,
Somehow defeat a global superpower?
How do we emerge victorious from the GA?
Survive the big debate leaving our delegation’s flag raised?

Hm. Turns out we have some secret weapons,
Some Wychwood girls, you know and support, confident to step in.
We’re constantly debating, defending our delegation.
Everyone give it up for Wychwood and our given nation!
MUN
We’re taking this place by a storm,
Leaving delegates’ opinions officially torn.
MUN
And we’re never gonna stop writing some operative
And some pre-ambulatory clauses
MUN
Watch us creating ‘em, debating ‘em, updating ‘em, wow!
MUN
We debate to have fun.
MUN
We come back with more puns
And jokes
And facts to keep us stoked.
You know, a lot of people use them
For humour and in conclusion,
We can end this club at other schools, limiting our brains, but

We decided, there was something more we craved.
Let’s do this!

Wychwood MUN
Yep, we’re putting on a conference,
For the British, German, Dutch, Greek and the French
Wychwood MUN
Er, you’re going to have to speak up eventually.
What are you going to do on the bench waiting?
Wychwood MUN
No one has more resilience
Than beginner delegates finding their brilliance.
Secretary Generals
Delegates are waiting to yield to you
If you join us right now, together we can turn the tide.
Oh, Remove, Inters, LTs
Don’t keep your lips sealed, spread the word.
If we manage to get this right,
They’ll come back for another fight.
We hope to fulfil all our aims -
Model United Nations.

Jasmine Crawford and Rebecca Smith, LTs
We would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the school year whilst also being mindful of the future.

Since September, it has become apparent that there are budding poets, scientists, artists, activists, fashion designers, mathematicians, actresses, entrepreneurs, athletes, speechwriters and speech givers and many more among us as a school community. We have tested and experimented with our own abilities and potential, pushing the good, and the occasionally not so good, boundaries. We have shown that we have the potential to be change-makers. Game-changers. Trendsetters. Advocates.

We have at times recognised our personal differences and striving to bridge those divides. We have recognised the common ground that holds us up and the less sturdy ground which threatens the stability we are used to. We are learning to recognise the need to look after ourselves whilst supporting those less fortunate. Our support of charities at Wychwood is testament to that. We have as a community raised an impressive £3,724.14 in aid of Jeans for Genes, Maggie’s, the Oxford Gatehouse, Alexandra House of Joy, Shelter Box and to help the victims of Cyclone Idai.

Having looked at what we have achieved, we thought it would be a good idea to take a glimpse into the future. During our summer holidays it can be difficult to know what to do to fill our time in a productive and fulfilling way, so we have created our own bucket list which we have categorised into five distinct areas. 1. Social Media 2. Passion 3. Random Acts of Kindness 4. To be active 5. Self-awareness

Number One on our bucket list is ‘Social Media’. We recognise that asking a teenager in the twenty first century to log out of social media for an extended period is a pretty futile request. Therefore, we encourage you to acknowledge that you have the ability to determine what you wake up to every morning. It could be this – incessant reminders of what you do not have. Or it could be this – last week woke up to Instagram posts from Greta Thunberg, UNICEF, Girl Up, UN Women, BBC News, Nadia’s Initiative and the Sudan Crisis. Despite controversy, social media also has the potential to be a platform for action, raising awareness and educating.

There are also other platforms available which encourage thoughtful, directed action. A while ago we came across ‘Voices of Youth’, an organisation created by UNICEF with the aim to inspire young people like us to share our own thoughts about issues, such as, gender equality, human rights, climate change and education with others around the world who are of a similar age online. For example, you can submit a blog, advocate and shift your perspective dramatically just by understanding the argument of an individual who has experienced firsthand gender discrimination or a human rights violation in an emerging country.

Perhaps social media could come to mean something different to you, your peers and your parents.

Number Two on our bucket list is ‘Passion’. Our differing and unique passions influence, shape and define us as individuals. It could be dancing, writing or the history of the atom, etc. The holidays provide the perfect opportunity to discover a new passion and to build upon an existing one.

Number Three on our bucket list is Random Acts of Kindness. This could be anything from volunteering at your local charity shop to watering your neighbours’ plants whilst they are on holiday. You could even learn a couple of phrases in a friend’s mother-tongue language. Random Acts of Kindness are about being constantly aware of those around you and your surroundings.

Number Four on our bucket list is to be active both physically and mentally. You could take your dog for a walk, try a new sport or even climb a hill. On the other hand, you could pick up a book, learn a random fact every day or write a blog, maybe even create an account for ‘Voices of Youth’. Or you could be socially active by volunteering or litter picking.

Number Five is self-awareness – something that is in constant development and relatively tricky to come to terms with. Self-awareness is learning to be aware of your strengths, your weaknesses, your aspirations and your fundamental beliefs. It is knowing when to push yourself and more importantly to acknowledge your limits. We think that marginal gains are crucial in gaining a better self-awareness and it is something that does not happen overnight!

So, 1. Social Media 2. Passion 3. Random Acts of Kindness 4. Be active 5. Self-awareness. Our message for you really is to be active and to embrace the holidays as an opportunity to discover or confirm your drive, ambition and aspirations. Aim high and be prepared to fall, and then get up and go on.

Anaïs Arroyo, Betty Sek and Scarlet Lopez, Study I
Madame Collcutt
What will the stable block be like without Mme Collcutt’s voice ringing out? As you open that door, you KNOW what is going on up those stairs. It is French being taught with feeling and fervour, knowledge and understanding and an absolute requirement that anyone who steps through the door of the French room should commit to the subject in as complete a manner as does Mme Collcutt herself. Catherine has worked at Wychwood for 26 years – just think about dedication and the commitment to the school that she has given: think about the cohorts of girls she has seen through and the staff and headmistresses she has seen come and go. Throughout her time here she has been held in great affection by girls and colleagues as we all know that, when the chips are down, we can rely on Catherine to get us through. Catherine is a Wychwood legend and deservedly so. Her high expectations and standards are legendary and are respected by girls and staff alike. Girls appreciate her confidence in them and strive to rise to the level that she makes clear is where they should be aiming. Many girls start out a little nervous of Catherine: they then become downright scared, but they end up with a deep affection and respect for someone who is truly a great teacher. Staff consider her meticulous professionalism and her eye for detail and aim to emulate her.

Catherine has a real desire and the ability to impart the beauty of the language she teaches, coupled with an understanding of Francophone culture and influences and she has brought so many to a love of her native land and its culture. An indefatigable runner of school trips, despite the time and effort they take before, during and afterwards, Catherine has helped adolescents appreciate France and the French to a much deeper level than would otherwise be possible. More than that, she has made the effort to allow the girls to do that in the way they most enjoy – with their friends.

Catherine has been an essential and deeply caring member of the pastoral team during her time at Wychwood. She knows her girls, she is observant and will not let go of something that needs to be sorted. She can have fun with the girls, but they all know when to stop. Wychwood is going to be far less cultured place without Catherine and every one of us will miss her breadth of knowledge, her wit and her dry sense of humour. This has made working with her a pleasure with her wry, apt and accurate comments often producing a delighted giggle from the assembled company. Her assemblies have brought enlightenment and understanding to all the girls who have seen them and we have also benefited from the wonderful range of Oxford academics that she knows, not least her fascinating husband Simon.

Above all we will miss her deep humanity: this is the woman who notices when something is amiss with any member of staff or girl and does something about it. This is the woman who shaved her head in public to raise money for Cancer Research because, while she knew cancer had touched her family, she also knew how deeply it has touched other members of the Wychwood community. This is the woman who quietly touches base with the support staff to make sure all is well with their world. This is the woman who brings issues of exploitation or abuse across the world to our attention and prompts our consciences. We wish her so much fulfilment in her retirement and hope that she has all the happiness in the world with her family and much loved grandchild.

Au revoir, Madame
I came to Wychwood as a ‘stop-gap’ one cold January day, in order to complete the academic year before the arrival of the permanent teacher the following September. I was struck by the students’ willingness to learn and the kindness of the staff. So much so that, when Mrs Duffill, the then headmistress, asked me to come back in November, I did not hesitate and the rest, as they say, is history.

I can truthfully state that my Wychwood years have been the most fulfilling and happiest working years of my life. Wychwood has enabled me to grow as a person and develop skills in many different ways. Unlike the lucky Wychwood girls, I was not given the opportunity to learn public speaking at school. Therefore I have been terrified whenever I have done an assembly, although the last one was much easier (wonder why?).

I have felt appreciated by this caring community of staff and students who have supported me on a daily basis. I will miss you all but might, on occasion, become a bad penny!  

Mrs C
Clara Weisner

At Wychwood we have a cup affectionately known as the Good Egg cup – given by Ms Crawford to a girl who really is a ‘good egg’. Occupying that difficult half-way house between staff and girls as a gap assistant, Clara exemplifies the Good Egg job description - she has been an outstanding Gap Assistant this year and we are really going to miss her. Being a Gap Assistant is never easy because you are at the very bottom of every pile. It is certainly an intense learning experience because you learn about teamwork, about giving something new a go and about handling boring and mundane tasks to the very end. However, you also learn about instilling your interests and passions into younger people and watching their eyes light up when they understand, about making real friends with people of different ages, cultures and background and about tolerance. Clara has done all of these with courtesy, bravery and thoughtfulness and she has got on with both the most mundane and the more interesting tasks that being a Gap Assistant at Wychwood has to offer and whatever she has turned his hand to, she has done well. Nothing is too much trouble and she really cares about the quality of the work she does because she knows that it reflects on her and builds the picture that we have of her. We thank her for everything she has given and to wish her every success in the future as she goes on to read physics where she will shine.

Sheridan Mack

Miss Mack arrived at Wychwood as Assistant Housemistress of The House in September 2017. She very quickly integrated in to our small but diverse community. During the day, Miss Mack moonlighted teaching at Cherwell so the girls were delighted when they discovered that, not only was she able to be of great help with their biology, but on all their other subjects as well. Firm but fair, Miss Mack entered in to many lively discussions with the girls and gave sound advice when needed. Tuesday evenings during the Michaelmas term found everyone in the Porch Room watching The Bake Off, with Miss Mack providing delicious munchies to nibble on.

Miss Mack has decided that the time has come to move to the metropolis and we wish her lots of success and happiness. She will be sorely missed by the girls and Mrs Henk.

Mrs L Henk

Friends of Wychwood

Noel Rainbird has chaired FoW for the last two years and has whipped us back into shape! Thoughtful, kind, determined and a real but understated and diplomatic leader, Noel has had a clear vision for what the FoW should be doing to support the school and she has ensured that it came to fruition. She has worked tirelessly to ensure that the events she has masterminded worked well and we have all benefited from the great Quiz and Curry night to the fantastic Fashion Show to her endless support for us at the piano, whether that be helping Mrs Walster to rehearse or playing carols at Green Gates so that the choir can give such pleasure to the residents. Organised and willing to work, she epitomises the ethos of Wychwood and we thank her wholeheartedly for all she has done – what will she find to fill her time now?

Mrs A Johnson
Lower Transits

Upper Transits CC
Upper Transits LJ

Shell FC
Results 2019

We would like to congratulate Study II on their A Level results – one of our girls gained four A* grades in STEM subjects and turned down Cambridge in favour of Warwick and we congratulate Milli with great pleasure and thank her staff for excellent preparation and teaching. Some 67% of our girls went to their first-choice university which is roughly where I would hope we would place, as we want our girls to be ambitious in the university choices and so inevitably one or two will miss a place. This was a year group who worked with encouragement, time and effort from the staff and who are setting off to a variety of universities and further education placements where we wish them further success and are sure they will flourish. Study II achieved 22.2% A* grades which is 5% above last year’s national average of 17% for all independent schools, the A*-B percentage was 47%, which was thrilling, and the girls managed 100% A* in STEM subjects and 100% A*-B in geography, Spanish and art, demonstrating the breadth of the excellent teaching at Wychwood.

This year saw our first BTEC results which are excellent and the girls taking this qualification have done really well reaping the reward of their hard work.

At GCSE we were delighted with the Shell who have worked really hard and the majority have really outdone expectations and are rightfully delighted with themselves – we are certainly very, very proud of them. The staff deserve real congratulations for these results as we are now almost entirely working on the new specifications: they have worked intensively to get to grips with the requirements and have put those requirements into practice, to the girls’ benefit. In a year where the national percentage of grades 7-9 was 20.8%, Wychwood gained 56% grades 7-9 and 76% grades 6-9 and every single girl contributed to that statistic. Girls gained results that they never believed they could and are well placed for the next phase of their secondary education.
Academic Year 2018-2019

Remove
Lucia Balhetchet
Katya Bellers
Verity Gray
Cora Greig
Caitlin Logan
Caitlin Masey
Celestine McCauley
Diana Mukhametzyanova
Fei Ya Pu
Elizaveta Smirnova
Cornelia Taylor
Bianca Tozzi
Kira Webb-Johnson

Inters
Mariam Alvi
Zenobia Calhoun
Yunru Chen
Atossa Cont
Isobel Evans
Teresa Garcia-Ribeiro
Wanling Gu
Janice Hammond
Nina Moalic
Emilia Moss
Elizabeth Newman
Olivia Pasley
Gina Smith
Lynn Stolz
Marisa Thomas
Jaiyi Wang
Jiamin Wang
Margaux Welker
Qiuci Zhong

Lower Transits
Tia Boyden
Natalie Cooke
Jasmine Crawford
Isabelle Dalton-Parker
Jamilah Dogan Hurd
Azahara Fitzgerald

Upper Transits
Lily Forster
Layli Ghanea-Hercock
Alishba Irfan
Mabel Kinnings
Rosanna Knowles
Yichun Liu
Kiera Logan
Bingxuan Shi
Rebecca Smith
Yiyi Wang
Sophie Willis
Yuan Yang
Leony Ye

Shell
Ella Arroyo
Honor Bluff
Viktoria Boehner
Rosie Bullows
Martha Elliston
Ella Frost
Amelia Ghanea-Hercock
Sophia Guilfoyle
Madeleine Hilton
Clara Kelly
Rosie Moss
Rose O’Donovan
Lauren Smith
Mai Thomas
Xiyun Wang
Evie Wessel
Amelia White
Isabella White
Grace Wilkinson
Wanxin Xiao
Peony Ye

Study I
Anaïs Arroyo
Josephine Bradley
Veryan Bunker
Zyi Chen
Achsah Duncan
Fatemeh Hozhbari
Poppy Kay
Georgina Lagden
Sophie Lagden
Scarlet Lopez
Olivia Lowes
Tara Minoli-Taylor
Madeleine Monnerot-Demaine

Study II
Jemimah Calfo
Ella Cater
Heather Fitzgerald
Matilda Gardener
Isabel Jackson
Neamh Pollard
Millicent Rowland
Marsela Skenderaj
Regina Stolyarova

Tegan Perry
India Ramsden
Alicia Sandy
Betty Sek
Mengchen Shi
Alix Vallotton
Poppy West
Wanxin Xiao