



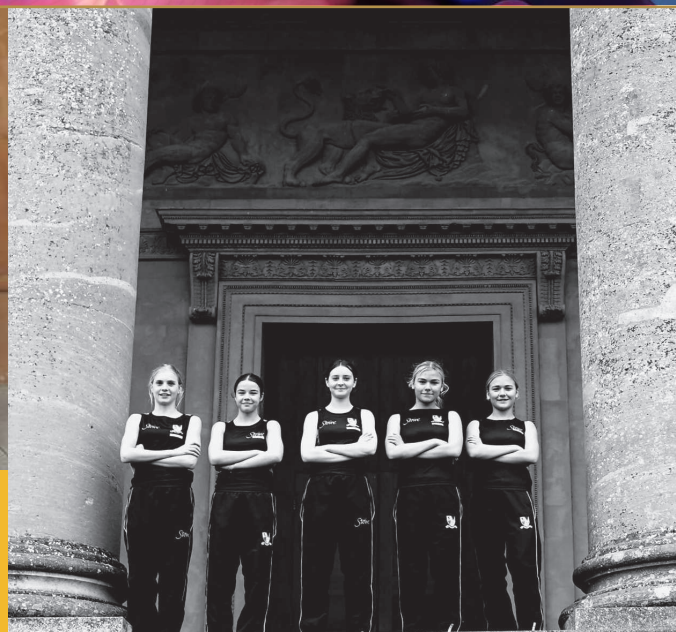
Eighth Best School for Sport in Britain!

School Sport magazine is a publication which ranks all state and independent schools for their sporting achievements. The national rankings are published in January and we are thrilled to see Stowe being ranked as the Eighth Best School for Sport in Britain!

The evidence comes from points gained by performances in competitions across 20 different sports. Stowe especially stood out in netball, cross-country, rugby, athletics, cricket and hockey, and it is these successes which contributed to our outstanding total in the last academic year. It is clear that the huge range of different sports that we offer at Stowe, and the success we have across a number of sports, is what has helped us to climb up the table.

We are so proud of all of the Stoics who have invested so much time and effort into helping our School achieve such heights in so many sports (all of which are valued equally). We also acknowledge the care, guidance and skill of the coaches, the support of the wider School community and the help of parents. This is a noteworthy achievement, and we are going to celebrate it!

Craig Sutton, Director of Sport



Sports Participation

As well as the results of matches, another key metric that the Sports Department look at is our participation levels in sports. We are delighted to see that the majority of Stoics have already represented Stowe in a sports team this year, with the following participation:

Third Form = 98%; Fourth Form = 85%; Fifth Form = 82%;
Lower Sixth Form = 78%; Upper Sixth Form = 61%

The figures for girls participation are particularly impressive, with 100% of Third Formers having represented Stowe; 95% of the Fourth Form and 86% of the Fifth Form. Well done girls!

We have also looked at the individual Stoics who have represented the School in the most sports matches, congratulations go to:

Third Form Girls

1. Veronica Owings (Stanhope)
2. Asta Eaton (Queen's)
3. Taryn Cox (Cheshire)

Third Form Boys

1. Freddy Morgan (Chatham)
2. Spencer O'Boyle (Temple)
3. Gabriel Foster (Winton)

Fourth Form Girls

1. Lila Rigg (Stanhope)
2. Mollie Davis (Cheshire)
3. Emily Hampson (Cheshire)

Fourth Form Boys

1. Oscar Chiang (Walpole)
2. Graham Bekwele (Walpole)
3. David Richards (Winton)

Fifth Form Girls

1. Penny-Belle White (Nugent)
2. Izzy Forster (Stanhope)
3. Mae White (Stanhope)

Fifth Form Boys

1. Ben Shortridge (Croft)
2. Callum McIntosh (Croft)
3. Toby Sutliff (Croft)

Lower Sixth Girls

1. Hannah Cambell (Nugent)
2. Holly Bateman (West)
3. Théa Gross (Cheshire)

Lower Sixth Boys

1. Oliver Dickmann-Peña (Winton)
2. Harvey Hughes (Grafton)
3. Oscar Dunipace (Chatham)

Upper Sixth Girls

1. Anna-Maria Collinge (Nugent)
2. Georgia Brophy (West)
3. Arianna Hay (Lyttelton)

Upper Sixth Boys

1. Krishnan Nair (Winton)
2. Gilbert Xu (Chandos)
3. James Bristow (Grafton)



Holocaust Memorial Day



On Monday 27 January the Stowe community marked Holocaust Memorial Day with an event in the Ugland Auditorium.

The speaker for the event was John Levy from The Academic Study Group on Israel and the Middle East. John provided a very moving and thought-provoking reflection on the Holocaust entitled 'Remembering for the Future'. This was bookended by moving piano pieces played by pupils from the Music Department.

Stoics from the Modern Foreign Languages Department gave a moving rendition of the poem 'Todesfuge' by German poet and Holocaust survivor Paul Celan.

While this event is always significant, this year was even more poignant, as the day marked eighty years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

**Francesca Holloway,
Head of Philosophy & Religion**



Head Chorister Recital

On Wednesday 5 February an audience gathered in the State Music Room to enjoy an eclectic recital from Head Chorister, Claudia Kilonback (Upper Sixth, Cheshire).

Claudia gave us three sets of classical, musical theatre and pop music, and performed with style and a gift for acting through song. Highlights included the beautiful 'Laurie's Song' from Copeland's 'The Tender Land', 'Still Hurting' from 'The Last Five Years' and Amy Winehouse's rendition of 'Valerie' to finish off the evening. Audience members were quick to congratulate Claudia on her vocal agility and the way she led us through a history of the voice.

Well done Claudia on working so hard around all your commitments to produce an evening of outstanding musical performance!

Beth Hodgson, Vocal Teacher



A Night to Remember Valentine's Ball for Endometriosis Awareness

The Valentine's Ball was more than just a night of fun, it was an event with a purpose. Organised to raise awareness and funds for Endometriosis UK, the evening combined entertainment, dancing and delicious treats with an important message about women's health. The idea for the event was brought forward by Ally Ter Haar (Upper Sixth, Lyttelton), a dedicated pupil who highlighted the need to support those affected by this condition. Thanks to Ally's vision and our School's enthusiasm, we hosted an unforgettable night filled with laughter, music, and generosity.

The Marble Hall was transformed, with twinkling fairy lights and heart-shaped decorations. As pupils arrived dressed in black tie, the atmosphere was lively and all attendees were excited for the activities planned for the night.

One of the main attractions was the dance floor, which was busy all evening with Stoics showing off their best dance moves. For those wanting to capture the memories, the photo booth was a must. Equipped with fun props and backdrops, it was the perfect place to snap pictures with friends. Laughter filled the air as pupils posed for both silly and sentimental photos.

A unique feature for the evening was the reaction machine, which tested players' reflexes in a fast-paced, competitive game. Groups gathered around to challenge each other, adding a fun and interactive element to the evening.

Of course, no event is complete without delicious food, and the pancake station was a huge hit! With toppings ranging from sugar and cinnamon to berries and maple syrup, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

While the night was full of fun, the true purpose of the event was to raise awareness of Endometriosis UK. Thanks to Ally's dedication, pupils had the chance to learn about the condition and the impact it has on millions of women worldwide.

The event successfully raised funds to support research and those affected, showing the power of our School community coming together for a cause.

The Valentine's Ball was both exciting and meaningful, a perfect mix of entertainment and awareness. It was a night filled with joy, unity, and purpose and we are delighted to be able to make a difference for Endometriosis UK.

Jack Dawson (Lower Sixth, Grafton), Amber Gaskell-Brown (Lower Sixth, Lyttelton) and Lleyton Moss (Upper Sixth, Grafton)

Service@Stowe, Fundraising Group





Rugby Colts Last 16 Cup Win

The U16A team played a thrilling last 16 National Cup match against Ysgol Dyffryn Aman, who travelled from Carmarthenshire on Wednesday 29 January.

Our Welsh opposition had a formidable front row, which disrupted the Stowe scrum but scrum half Finn Cloete (Fifth Form, Chatham) did well to get the ball away under pressure and release the back line. The Stoics found themselves 12-7 down at the break in what was proving to be a very even contest before centre Charlie King (Fifth Form, Croft) scored from his own half for his second try of the afternoon to give the Stoics a slender lead.

Winger Josh Williams (Fifth Form, Grenville) finished off a fine 1st phase backs move and Captain Seb Dare (Fifth Form, Grafton) added to the score sheet to set up a frantic last few minutes. With the Stoics facing enormous pressure in the final few moments, they held their discipline to record a memorable 33-31 victory to progress to the Quarter Finals in Ivybridge, Devon, on Thursday 13 February.

At the time of going to print, we are delighted to report the boys had a tremendous game against Ivybridge, winning 54-7, meaning they are through to the National Cup Semi Final. A full match report will be in the next edition of Stowemail.

Grant Seely, Director of Rugby



Badminton

On Thursday 6 February the boys' 1st & 2nd teams travelled to Radley. Both teams produced very strong performances with the 1st team winning 8-1 and the 2nd team 7-2. The boys' teams unfortunately suffered rare defeats at the hands of Bromsgrove on Saturday 8 February. The girls reversed the two defeats against Bromsgrove earlier in the season with magnificent wins. The 1st team won 5-4 and the 2nd team won 5-1.

Isaac Michael, Head of Badminton



RYA Powerboat Level 2 Course

The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) PB2 course covers the safe use of powerboats and low speed manoeuvres (such as mooring and docking). Several Stoics have successfully completed the course over the last few years, and we hope to follow this trend once again.

There are two courses available this year: Sunday 16 & 23 March, or Sunday 11 & 18 May.

Places are limited to a maximum of six pupils for each course. Pupils must attend both days of the course plus a classroom session on the Saturday before the course starts.

The cost of the course will be £250.

Please express interest to participate by **emailing me** with Stoics name, Year Group and any preference on course dates.

Duncan Syme, Head of Sailing





Fragile Earth

'Shifting Focus - Lessons from A Fragile Earth', an exhibition by Luke Letchford (Lower Sixth, Temple) was a resounding success with many visitors attending on the afternoon of Saturday 8 February.

The steady flow of Stowe community guests commented on the exhibition as "emotive", "thought-provoking" and that they were, "overwhelmed" by the quality of the photography and drone footage.

Visitors continued to wander into the Watson Art School with intrigue and curiosity, as word spread amongst the Boarding Houses, with more guests arriving throughout the week. Luke curated, promoted and helped hang the work for the exhibition, ensuring that it could not go under the radar here at Stowe.

On entering the gallery visitors are struck by the beautiful vivid and bold colours, horizons and area footage. The largescale prints of Luke's various ecological adventures drew in spectators to marvel at his intriguing photography. The poignantly written captions bring our minds and thoughts to the fragility of our world. These captions inform and bring a sad reality, offering statistics that hit hard as well as offering hope on the climate crisis. The viewer is left to question their actions on our future world. 'Shifting Focus' is an emotional journey, it delivers a feast for the eyes and thoughts for the future as well as inspiring our next steps as we navigate the planet with our own carbon footprints.

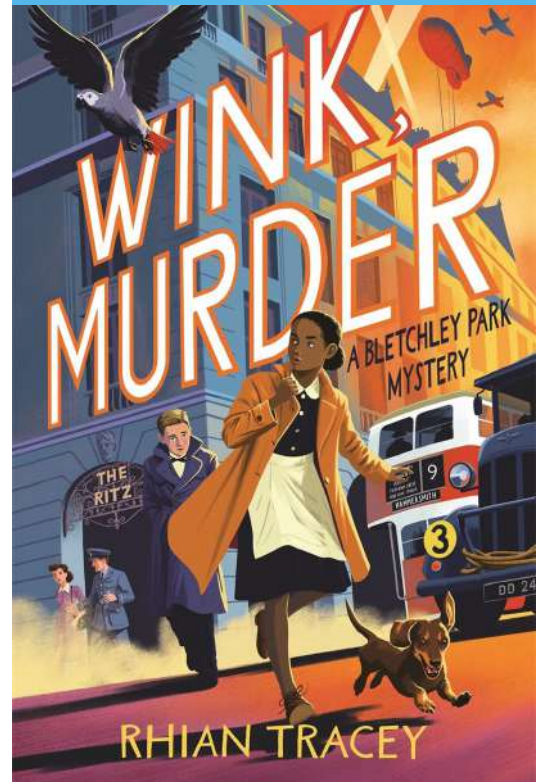
Congratulations to Luke for the marvellous display of his work, his commitment to putting on such a large-scale exhibition alongside other School commitments. A thank you to his support network, namely Mr and Mrs Letchford, who helped with the logistics and support and a special mention and thanks to Mel Greenwood, Senior Art Technician for her help in hanging the work.

Katherine Loudoun, Head of Art



WORLD
BOOK
DAY

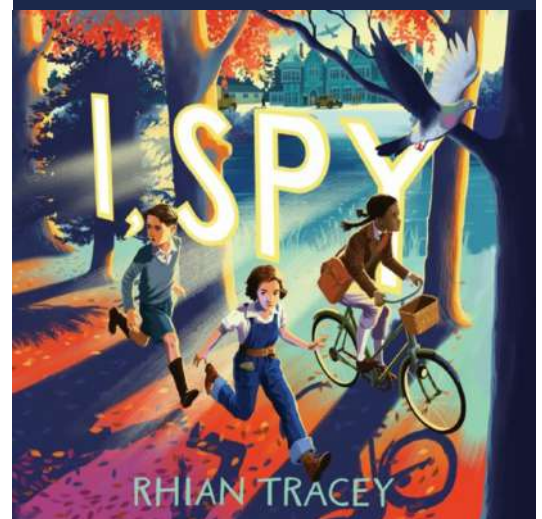
Changing lives through a love of books and reading
www.worldbookday.com



Bletchley Park Mystery Series

Stowe Teacher of Skills Development, Rhian Tracey, has already received fantastic reviews from her two previous novels in the 'Bletchley Park Mystery' series with 'I, Spy' and 'Hide and Seek'. The third book in the series, 'Wink, Murder' was released on Thursday 13 February. Rhian will be signing copies at the Imperial War Museum on Tuesday 18 February.

World Book Day is fast approaching, on Thursday 6 March. 'I, Spy' has been selected by World Book Day as one of their audiobook choices for 2025.





Boys' Ski Races in Wengen

Back in September, the Ski Club began training every Wednesday afternoon. It gave an opportunity for those looking to enhance their ski racing skills and take advantage of one of the many sports available at Stowe. For those interested in challenging themselves on difficult slopes in a competitive environment, the boys were offered an incredible opportunity to participate in the British Schoolboys' International Races, organised by the DHO (Downhill Only Ski Club) in Switzerland.

For those who decided to go, whether it was their first time or they had been before, the trip proved to be truly spectacular. We arrived on the afternoon of Friday 24 January and quickly settled into the Falken Hotel, where we would stay for the week. The training primarily consisted of racing courses and opportunities for self-improvement. Our days were filled with intense training, and we made the most of our short but helpful lunchtime breaks to rest and recharge before diving back into the work of improving ourselves and supporting one another. A significant amount of responsibility was placed on each of us to make the most of our training and be punctual, which provided valuable lessons in self-management. This also extended to managing our schoolwork while getting adequate rest back at the hotel.

On Saturday, we trained in slalom and took the opportunity to familiarise (or refamiliarise) ourselves with the stunning surroundings of the Swiss Alps. We ended the day by skiing down the Lauberhorn, the longest run in the Downhill World Cup, which we would later use for the Giant Slalom Race. On Sunday, we focused on giant slalom training, despite challenging track conditions. We made the best of it and continued to improve. On Tuesday, we practiced parallel slalom in preparation for the fun slalom race that afternoon.

On the fourth day, we were scheduled for our slalom race, but upon arrival, the snow and visibility were too poor for a safe race. Instead, we enjoyed a fun powder day, with plenty of snow to ski on, which provided a refreshing break from the intense training. On Wednesday, our final day, we trained on the Lauberhorn in preparation for the Giant Slalom race. This included a few practice runs, a course inspection, and plenty of anticipation. After completing our first run, we had lunch, followed by a second course inspection before completing our second run. We then skied back to the hotel, where we joined our coach, parents, and Mr Bonomi and Mr Jones for a cheese fondue celebration! During the prize-giving ceremony, Brooks Stevens (Lower Sixth, Walpole) secured Second place in the U18 overall Giant Slalom - what a great achievement!

Overall, the trip was an incredible experience and a testament to the efforts of Mr Bonomi and Mr Jones, who supported us in making the most of this opportunity. They helped us not only improve our skiing but also manage our time and pinpoint areas for personal growth. Thanks also must go to the Head for allowing us to embark on this wonderful journey. We are very much looking forward to 2026 already!

Lewis Wilson (Third Form, Chandos)



British Schoolgirls' Ski Races

The Stowe girls' ski team put in a fantastic effort at the British Schoolgirls' Races in Flaine, France, competing against top schools from across the UK. In the parallel slalom, our A-Team secured an exciting first-round victory against Wimbledon High School before facing a tough challenge against Epsom College in Round Two.

There were also some impressive individual performances:

Anastasia Sidorova (Fifth Form, Lyttelton) placed 22nd overall in the U16 Slalom in a highly competitive field of over 50 racers - an incredible achievement for her first international ski competition!

Martha Bond (Upper Sixth, West) finished 22nd in the U18 Giant Slalom, showcasing her skill and consistency.

Clover Longsdon (Fourth Form, Queen's) delivered a strong performance, finishing 17th in the U16 Giant Slalom out of over 60 competitors.

A huge well done to all our skiers for representing Stowe with determination and sportsmanship on the slopes!

Max Vendrig, Head of Girls' Skiing





Anguish at the Regional Schools' Netball Finals

The anticipation surrounding the Regional Schools' Netball Finals was palpable as the 1st VII, U16, and U14 teams travelled to The Wavell School in Farnborough on Friday 31 January. With the Regional Finals scheduled for Saturday 1 February, the teams were filled with optimism following a team supper at Stowe, complemented by a crucial stop at the services for much-needed snacks. Such camaraderie and preparation were instrumental as they geared up for the fiercely competitive day ahead.

Upon arrival on Saturday, the weather presented challenges with grey, overcast skies and light drizzle making the playing conditions somewhat tricky and the court surface notably slippery. These conditions, however, did not suppress the enthusiasm of the players. The event brought together the top teams from across the Netball South Region, and the level of netball displayed was nothing short of impressive.

The 1st VII initiated the day's proceedings with a stellar performance against BHASVIC (Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College), securing an impressive win that set a positive tone for the remainder of the event. Their victory created something of a ripple effect, showcasing the high aspirations the teams held for the day. Meanwhile, the U14 team found themselves facing the daunting prospect of competing at this higher level for the very first time. Despite being shaken by a loss in their opening match, their teamwork and unrelenting passion for the sport shone through, marking their presence throughout the day.

The U16 team encountered a tough draw, battling against netball powerhouses Hurstpierpoint and St Helen & St Katharine's. Although they faced formidable opposition, the U16 players exhibited significant improvement compared to their performance in the tournament from the previous year. Despite their best efforts, the U14 and U16 teams, regrettably, did not qualify from their respective group stages on this occasion.

As the day unfolded, the 1st VII continued their dominant run in the group stages, achieving an impressive record of four wins out of five matches, thereby securing a coveted place in the Semi-Finals. A triumph in this match would have guaranteed their advancement to the prestigious National School Finals scheduled for March. Their Semi-Final opponents were none other than Hurstpierpoint, a formidable team that had already faced Stowe twice in the season, with Stowe emerging victorious on both occasions.

After a slight delay, the whistle blew, marking the commencement of what would be a fiercely contested match. Unfortunately, Hurstpierpoint quickly turned over the first centre pass, putting Stowe on the back foot. From that point on, the match became an uphill struggle, as Hurst sought to avenge their previous defeats. After a tense 14 minutes of play, the final score was 9-15, bringing an abrupt halt to the team's aspirations for the National Finals.

Despite the disappointment, the girls took to the court for the final time, culminating in a commendable Fourth place in the Netball South Region. The coaching team expressed immense pride in the girls' preparation and performance; their dedication, teamwork, and resilience were evident throughout the day, and the coaching Staff remain optimistic about their continued development in the regular season matches that lie ahead.

Reflecting on the overall experience, it is evident that the weekend served not only as a platform for competition but also as a valuable opportunity for personal growth, fostering a sense of unity and perseverance that will undoubtedly contribute to all team's success in future. The hard work and dedication demonstrated by all Stoics is commendable, and we eagerly anticipate the evolution of these talented players as they progress through the rest of the season and beyond.

Charlotte Calland, Head of Netball

Hockey

The U14 boys had a win over RGS High Wycombe on Thursday 31 January and in the Inter-House competition, held on Saturday 1 February, the Champions in both the Intermediate and Junior competitions were Croft.

Well done to the boy's 1st team who beat Bromsgrove, away 4-2 on Saturday 8 February, to set them up for a busy week of Cup matches ahead. The 2nds had a comfortable 5-0 win, and the U16As and Bs also won. In the Junior sides, the best result was an encouraging 3-3 draw for the Yearlings A.

Lacrosse

We are regularly fielding six lacrosse sides this season. The Junior sides had successful matches against Godstowe on Friday 31 January and the Seniors enjoyed tough competition in the Cheltenham tournament the following day.

Sophie Darling Screenprinting Workshop



On Monday 27 January Art Scholars were invited to a workshop on screen printing with artist, Sophie Darling, where they had a go at printing one of her UV exposed screens, along with creating their own t-shirt designs from hand cut paper stencils. The pupils came up with elaborate two stencil designs and cured their inks on their wearable art with an iron.

Later that evening Sophie discussed her brand in 'slow fashion' and how she wanted to focus on what really matters: high-quality materials, thoughtful design and sustainability. Combining hand printing methods with digital practices, Sophie hand stitches her work, from reversible jackets, to using the off cuts to run patchworking classes for the local community. The Stoics enjoyed hearing how a degree in Fine Art can lead into branding, being self-employed and managing all the areas of a business.

Sophie's studios and shop are based in Brighton where the works are hand crafted and printed to order via her [website](https://www.sophiedarling.com).

Katherine Loudoun, Head of Art



FASHION DESIGN MARKETING AND BUSINESS:
Monday 27th January
5:30-6:30 pm
At Sainsbury Gallery-
Watson Art School

Sophie Darling was founded to create meaningful fashion that celebrates craftsmanship, sustainability, and individuality. Using screen printing, each piece is carefully handmade, ensuring no two are alike. With a made-to-order approach, the brand reduces waste and produces garments that are unique, durable, and timeless, reflecting a commitment to quality and environmental consciousness.
www.sophiedarling.com

Compulsory to Art scholars and A-level artists. Optional for GCSE and other students.

 [sophie_darling_](https://www.instagram.com/sophie_darling_)

Pupil Perspectives

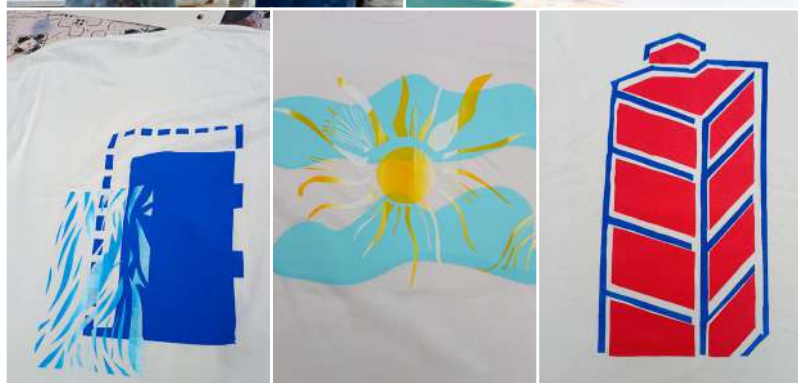
We were lucky enough to have a workshop run by Sophie Darling, a fashion and textile designer based in Brighton. Sophie's workshop and talk gave us a valuable insight into the design world and how to navigate it. Sophie's talk also showed us how to turn ideas or concepts into real life designs and how to express our artistic elements in real world situations, expressing the limits of creativity and innovation. This workshop and talk gave us an unfiltered look into the design world and will prove valuable to us in our careers beyond Stowe.

Toby Tyler (Upper Sixth, Walpole)
A Level Art Scholar

Artist Sophie Darling came to Stowe and explained how her career changed to get her to where she is today. She explained how her business has evolved over the years and how she creates intricate designs before screen printing them onto fabric and making clothes, as well as posters, cards and wallpaper. When opening her shop, she explained how she was very mindful to only import supply locally. During the day, we had the opportunity to make our own designs and screen printing onto t-shirts, which was brilliant and a great experience having Sophie to guide us.

Poppy Pragnell (Fourth Form, Queen's)
GCSE Art Scholar

Poster design by Annie Jones, Teacher of Art





On Thursday 6 February, Stowe's A and B polo teams played Harrow. The Stowe A team was led by Captain Luca Natella (Upper Sixth, Cobham), followed by Bea Leyland (Lower Sixth, Queen's) and Edward Berry (Fourth Form, Cobham). The As played an attack heavy match with Luca scoring an overwhelming number of goals in the 18-12 win. Bea and Ed had their fair share of action, scoring a couple of nice goals themselves. This was quite remarkable play, given that it was the first time this trio had played together. We expect much more to come from this team as the season progresses.

The Stowe B team played a tough match, going goal for goal with Harrow. Captained by Jasper Hagger (Fourth Form, Walpole), with Fiamma Natella (Third Form, Queen's) and Stirling Woolner (Third Form, Grafton) they certainly did not let Harrow just walk away with the win. They battled it out to the very last second with Stirling very nearly scoring an equalising goal in the last minute. Overall, it was an impressive and exciting outing for both teams. With such depth and potential on display the future of Stowe polo is looking incredibly bright.

Fiona Corthine, Head of Polo



Basketball

The Junior Inter-House basketball was held on Sunday 2 February. Nugent beat Queen's in the Girls' Final to be crowned 2025 Champions and the Boys' 2025 Champions were Grenville who triumphed over Walpole in the Final.

On Tuesday 21 January the 1st team took on an unbeaten Marlborough side. Stowe edged this scintillating match 52-51 to claim a memorable victory. Harry Langford and Gilbert Xu (both Upper Sixth, Chandos) top scored with 17 points a-piece. Inspired by the 1st team, the U16 team also had great success against Marlborough, winning their close encounter 27-24. Ziggy Shannon (Fifth Form, Walpole) top scored with 16 points.

On Saturday 1 February both the 1st and U16 teams hosted Winchester College. The 1st team won 66-31 and the U16 team won a thriller 35-34. Harry Langford top scored in the 1st team match with 24 points and William Harrison (Fifth Form, Chandos) top scored in the U16 match with seven points.

On Saturday 8 February the 1st team travelled to Rugby School and produced a great team performance with every team member getting on the score sheet in the 84-31 victory. Although Harry Langford (18 points) top-scored again it was great to see the next highest scorers Alexander Humphreys-von Bittschwan (Lower Sixth, Grenville) and Archie MacGowan (Lower Sixth, Cobham) chipping in with 12 points each.

Isaac Michael, Head of Basketball





CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS



After several weeks of planning, on Friday 31 January we hosted a dinner to welcome the Year of the Snake. The evening began with a demonstration led by Mrs Zhang on how to make a spring roll. We all thoroughly enjoyed this experience and were delighted that our hand-made spring rolls would be served as part of the dinner.

The dinner officially began with an award ceremony, where we awarded pupils based on their behaviours and achievements in the past year. Prizes ranged from 'The Gamer' to 'The Academic Weapon', and everyone really enjoyed seeing their friends being called up to claim the awards.

One of our award holders - Jingyuan Zheng (Upper Sixth, Chandos) started the next round of challenges by attempting a difficult Chinese tongue twister, bringing laughter all round the dining room. A special mention to Dr Wallersteiner, who took on the challenge and performed one of the tongue twisters with what he claimed to be "A very authentic North Eastern Chinese accent." Despite no one knowing the accent, his confidence told us that he probably knew what he was saying!

The audience excitement was not quelled by what followed, an array of entertainment that continued throughout the evening. From 击鼓传花 (Passing the bomb) to making a 'Chinese Knot', everyone

participated with all the activities, and some went back with prizes.

We were especially grateful to Holroyd Howe Caterers for their efforts in making a very authentic meal, featuring 红烧肉 (Braised Pork Belly), 香菇青菜 (Bok Choy & Shiitake Mushrooms), 土豆烧牛肉 (Beef Stew With Potato), dumplings, spring rolls and egg fried rice - all of which were made to a great standard.

After the meal, we were very fortunate to enjoy performances from Jasmine Zhang (Lower Sixth, Lyttelton), Ethel Zhu (Upper Sixth, West) and Katherine Liu (Lower Sixth, Queen's) who performed 一笑倾城 (A Smile on City), and a piece on the saxophone from Anson Xue (Fourth Form, Walpole), who expressed their excitement for this festival through the piece - 我爱你中国 (I Love You, China).

The evening ended with a brilliant sing along, where everybody sang two Chinese songs - 新年好 (Happy New Year) and 好运来 (Goodluck Strikes).

We would like to further extend our thanks to Mrs Roddy, who helped organise and put together this amazing evening to help everyone recognise and celebrate Chinese culture.

Sunny He (Upper Sixth, Chatham), Grace Huang (Upper Sixth, Lyttelton), Gilbert Xu (Upper Sixth, Chandos) and Gaia Mesonero-Perez (Lower Sixth, Lyttelton)





Bucks School County Cross Country Championships

Stowe hosted the Bucks Schools County Cross Country Championships 2025 on Wednesday 5 February. Well done to the 27 Stoics who stepped forward for the challenge of the demanding course. With a mixture of nervous energy and enthusiasm at the start, Stoics ran with determination and resilience - especially considering the cold weather.

Congratulations to the Stoics who, as a result of their performance on the day, are in contention for being selected to represent Buckinghamshire at the National Finals in March:

Mollie Davis (Fourth Form, Cheshire) who took Second place; Katie Webb (Fifth Form, Cheshire) who took Third place; Ben Cousins (Fifth Form, Cobham) in Fifth place, and Lauren Webb (Fifth Form, Cheshire), Thomas Humphrey (Third Form, Croft) and Dominique Dunn (Lower Sixth, West), who were all inside the top 12 for their age group.

Craig Sutton, Director of Sport



Football

It has been a very busy time for the footballers, with every year group having matches during the week commencing Monday 27 January. The 1st team beat Oundle 3-0 on Saturday 1 February, with Rasan Bamoki (Lower Sixth, Temple) scoring twice and Will Otter (Upper Sixth, Winton) also getting on the score sheet. Captain Dan Goje (Upper Sixth, Chatham) and Archie Trotman (Upper Sixth, Cobham) had great games, but the Player of the Match was Charlie King (Fifth Form, Croft). The 2nd team had two draws in their league games and the U16s had an emphatic 6-0 win over Stamford, with Gustav Franzén (Fifth Form, Cobham) scoring a hat-trick and Toby Sutliff (Fifth Form, Croft) judged as Player of the Match.

Our 1st and 2nd team travelled to The Leys in Cambridge for their Mercian League matches. The 1st team narrowly lost for the first time this season, but our 2nd team remain undefeated after a 3-0 win and currently lie Second in the League.

Josh Wood, Head of Football



VYPR Independent Schools Netball League: A Showcase of Talent and Team Spirit

On Wednesday 22 January, the 1st VII team took to the court at The University of Wolverhampton, participating in the final round of the VYPR Independent Schools Netball League (ISL). This much-anticipated event was notable not only for the high calibre of netball on display, but also for its fan engagement; the matches were live-streamed by NXTGEN, allowing supporters to cheer for their teams from afar via the platform's YouTube channel.

The event marked a significant moment for the team as it welcomed back Captain Anna-Maria Collinge (Upper Sixth, Nugent) and defender Claudia Kilonback (Upper Sixth, Cheshire). Their return was instrumental in strengthening the squad following their initial outing in December, when the team had faced formidable competitors. The seasoned players brought a wealth of experience and leadership, which proved vital as the team prepared for the day's challenging schedule.

Throughout the course of the day, the 1st VII team contested nine closely fought matches, each demonstrating not only their tenacity and skill but also the sportsmanship and camaraderie that characterises school netball. The level of play exhibited by all participating teams was exceptional, underscoring the impressive nature of school netball across the country. Each game provided a platform for students to display their skills and tactical understanding of the game, reinforcing the importance of competition and nurturing athletic talent.

Particularly noteworthy was the performance of Zara Kalu (Fourth Form, Cheshire), who was making her third appearance for the 1st VII. Playing two age groups up, she continued to impress with her agility and defensive acumen, which did not go unnoticed; she gained recognition from ex-England player Jade Clarke. Her outstanding gameplay culminated in her being crowned the 'Defender of the Competition', an accolade that highlighted her significant contributions throughout the day's matches. In addition to this honour, she received a goodie bag of prizes from the league's sponsors, VYPR, acknowledging her remarkable achievement. N'dea Lambert (Vice-Captain) (Upper Sixth, West) was awarded the 'Teams Player of the Tournament', after showcasing her excellent defensive play across both events.

Overall, the final round of the ISL proved to be a resounding success, showcasing the dedication, talent and competitive spirit of young netball players. As anticipation builds for future events, this league not only serves to highlight the athletic prowess of school netballers but also fosters a sense of community and shared purpose amongst the sport.

Charlotte Calland, Head of Netball



Budding Leaders Bridge the Gap with ILM Level 3

Twenty of our Lower Sixth pupils are enjoying the journey to formalise their leadership development through the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Level 3 course. This nationally recognised qualification provides a solid foundation in leadership principles and practices, a truly valuable addition to any university application, especially when crafting a compelling personal statement for UCAS. It demonstrates a proactive approach to personal development and a commitment to honing skills that are highly sought after by universities and future employers.

A recent ILM lesson provided a fascinating practical demonstration of the importance of clear communication and direction in leadership. Stoics were divided into four groups, each tasked with building a bridge using the same materials. The catch? Each group received a different level of instruction. The first group was simply given the 'vision' for the bridge - the end goal. The second received the 'vision and the mission' - the purpose of the bridge. The third group was given the 'vision, mission, and a strategy' - a plan of how to



achieve the goal. Finally, the fourth group received all the above, plus a 'common sense of purpose' - an understanding of why the bridge was important and who it would benefit.

The results were striking - the groups with more comprehensive instructions constructed significantly more robust and effective bridges. The teams who were only given the vision struggled with anxiety and uncertainty, lacking the clarity needed to effectively collaborate and build. This exercise powerfully illustrated how crucial clear vision, a defined mission, a well-thought-out strategy, and a shared sense of purpose are to successful leadership and project completion. It brought the theoretical aspects of leadership to life, showing Stoics the real-world impact of effective communication and planning.

This ILM Level 3 course is an excellent opportunity which is available only to Lower Sixth CCF pupils. It equips pupils with essential skills in communication, problem-solving, and team management, providing a recognised qualification that enhances their university applications and prepares them for future leadership roles.

If you are currently in Fifth Form and are interested in developing your leadership skills and gaining a valuable qualification, please speak to me for more information about the ILM course within the CCF.

Major Andrew Arnold, CCF Contingent Commander



CCF RAF Section - Leading Cadet Badges

Fifth Formers Nicolas Bacho (Grenville), Ginn Jindavaranon (Walpole), William Rendell (Croft) and James Stratford (Walpole) have qualified as Leading Cadets. All achieved the required standards of airmanship, principles of flight and navigation, and Sqn Ldr Bridgeman of Thames Valley Wing extends his congratulations.

Very well done!

Dr Charles Adkins, Pilot Officer CCF RAF



The Stowe rowing team has made a promising start to 2025. At the Northampton Head of the Nene event on Saturday 18 January, Stowe was represented by boys' and girls' VIIIs, and seven sculling crews. The J18 quad was our fastest girls crew, whilst our J16 boys' quad was the fastest Junior boat at the event. Our boys' VIII was the fastest eight of the day, beating adult crews from Northampton, Derby, Oundle and Milton Keynes. The two boys crews of Joshua Hall (Fourth Form, Winton), Patrick Kingsman (Fourth Form, Winton), Cameron Gray (Lower Sixth, Temple), Caspar Westley Smith (Third Form, Chatham) and Fifth Formers Ben Cousins (Cobham), Ned Curry (Croft), Oscar Beumer (Chatham), Hecco Harrison (Temple), Max Frohnsdorff (Temple) were awarded their medals in Assembly.

The eagerly anticipated event at Hampton on Saturday 1 February, which attracts large numbers of school rowers (about 2,000) and is convenient and popular with Stowe parents, was unfortunately cancelled due to the weather. The backup event at Peterborough, that Hampton themselves had entered, was also cancelled. To give our rowers the chance to compete, Julie Potter kindly allowed the team to attend Newnham College's event at Cambridge University, the following weekend, Saturday 8 February.

Newnham claim to run the friendliest event on the Cam. Whilst we did not win the prize for 'Smiliest Crew of the Day', our Sixth Form girls' quad of Alice Watson, India Gordon (both Upper Sixth, Nugent), Isabelle Hunponu-Wusu (Upper Sixth, Stanhope) and Coco Bartoszewski (Lower Sixth, Nugent) won prizes for the J18 event. With a huge amount of hard work - early morning ergo sessions, evening running, many training sessions-a-week - they have transformed themselves from cautious novices to competitive endurance athletes. It is an achievement that, rightly, they are proud of.

Five of our other boats were Class Winners. They were unopposed, so there are different ways of looking at this. They had plenty of opposition at Hampton, but when that event cancelled, our crews were the only ones that kept going and made it to a start line. It is an achievement for them.

Our boys' VIII beat 14 men's crews. Our girls' VIII beat five women's crews. Our boys' J16 quad was again our fastest boat. The Third Form boys' quad were also very promising.

We certainly have some successes to celebrate, but we need to keep a perspective. Of the 4,000+ secondary schools in the UK, only 100 have boat clubs, so running a boat club automatically puts us in the top 2.5% of schools. Amongst our seven peer Midland League schools, only Stowe and Oundle have boat clubs, putting both in the top third. However, the 40 schools (Top 1%), who aspire to Henley and university scholarships are at a different level. In our 2023 intake, we have a viable group, training to a high level, who can compete with the best, however for the last two years this has not been repeated. We have only one Third and one Fourth Form girl rowing, and only two Fourth Form boys. Even among Third Form boys, we have only the minimum for a quad. This means that teams for them are difficult, and we will be relying on our Fifth Formers. The training they are doing and the standard they are achieving is impressive.

Kit Request

After Half Term, please can all rowers return to School with wellington boots. At the big lake at Great Moor, launching is from a stony shore, the water is cold, and most Stoics do not have suitable footwear. They also need waterproof jackets, for waiting at the start at competitions, and layers of insulated clothing, to keep warm off the water.

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 1 March - Friendly at Oundle.

Sunday 16 March - Eastern Region Junior-16 trials.

Tuesday 25 March - The Schools' Head at Putney; an international event. We plan to enter our Sixth Formers in boys' and girls' quads and the Fifth Formers in a mixed eight.

Saturday 29 March - six Stoics are heading to Sabaudia, near Rome, for a training week with Olympian, Gillian Lindsay, at her favourite rowing destination.

Summer Term

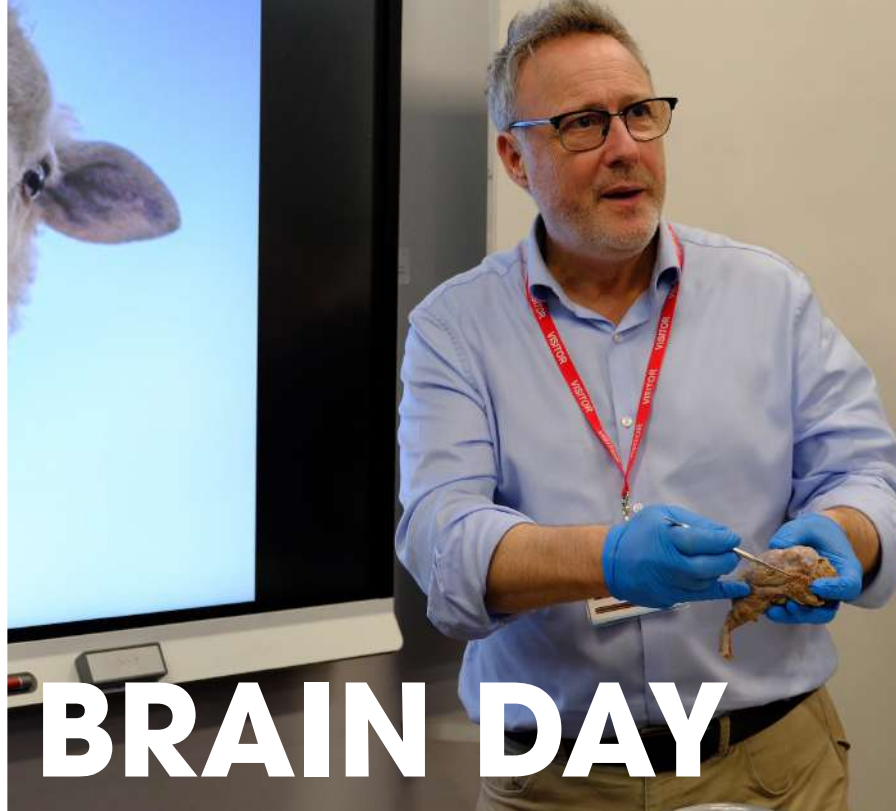
Friday 27 June - Henley Royal Regatta Qualifiers.

Tuesday 1 July - on the first day of Henley Regatta week, we are planning to host a lunch party for Stoics, Old Stoics and parents. If you would like to join us, and would like guest tickets for The Stewards' Enclosure, then please contact me or other Stewards' members, and we can order these for you.

I do hope that you can join us to celebrate your children's year in the boat club.

Andrew Rudkin, Head of Rowing





The human brain is one of the most complex and fascinating organs in existence, controlling everything from our thoughts and emotions to movement and memory. Dr Guy Sutton, Director of Medical Biology Interactive (MBI), led an eye-opening 'Brain Day' session at Stowe on Thursday 16 January, diving deep into neuroscience.

Much like fingerprints, every brain is unique. This is because nature nutrients constantly intersect to shape our neural circuits. The outer layer of the brain, called the cerebral cortex, is divided into four lobes each responsible for different tasks. Meanwhile, the cerebellum ensures balance and coordination, and the brainstem controls and regulates unconscious functions like breathing and heart rate. Together, these structures make up the command centre of the human body.

Neurones are the messengers of the brain, transmitting electrical signals and releasing neurotransmitters to communicate with one another. With an estimated 270 trillion synapses, the brain is constantly forming and refining neural connections. Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to rewire itself, meaning the more we practice, the stronger and more interconnected our neurones become. This explains why 'practice makes perfect' is not just a saying, but a scientific reality. The adaptability is also what helps stroke victims and brain injury patients to recover. In extreme cases, doctors have even performed hemispherectomies, which is removing an entire brain hemisphere, with the patient learning to function using just the remaining half.

A thought-provoking idea presented during the session was the notion that reality is constructed by our brains. As Morpheus famously says in 'The Matrix' "What is real? How do you define real?". Dr Sutton explained that reality is simply our brain's interpretation of sensory information. Your sensory neurones actively construct your experience of the world, which is why optical illusions and hallucinations can feel real. The discussion also touched on the effects of drugs on the brain. Cannabis, for example, has been found to reduce dendrites (the branching structures of neurones) and even reduce the size of the cerebral cortex. Studies show that teenagers who use cannabis are at a higher risk of developing schizophrenia. Similarly, psychedelic drugs like LSD affect serotonin receptors, leading to altered perceptions and hallucinations. Understanding the science behind these effects highlights the importance of making informed decisions about substance use.

The brain has specialised neurones that fire during specific mathematical operations. For example, some neurones respond only to addition, while others fire during subtraction. Dyscalculia, a condition similar to dyslexia, but for numbers, occurs when these neural pathways do not function

properly. Music also activates unique parts of the brain. Scientists have found that the auditory cortex responds specifically to singing, but not to speech or instrumental music. Maybe this explains why songs get stuck in our heads!

Recent research has revealed that pregnancy does not just change the body, it physically reshapes the brain too. Studies show alternations in grey and white matter, which is linked to maternal instincts and emotional sensitivity. These neurological shifts may help mothers bond with their babies, reinforcing Bowlby's 'attachment theory' and Ainsworth's work on 'secure attachment'. Even more strikingly, studies show that stress or verbal abuse during pregnancy can affect a baby's brain development, increasing the risk of speech and cognitive processing difficulties later in life. These brain changes may be a biological mechanism to strengthen caregiving instincts, ensuring healthy emotional and social development for the child. This research highlights just how crucial early bonding and a nurturing environment are for a child's long-term well-being.

One of the most jaw-dropping topics we discussed was the development of cerebral organoid - tiny lab-grown brains made from human stem cells. Scientists have come up with the idea of taking skin cells, reprogramming them into stem cells, and then growing them into neural tissue, creating miniature versions of the human brain. Notably, when left unattended, these cells can form structures resembling the cerebral cortex, which is responsible for consciousness. These 'mini brains' could revolutionise research into neurodevelopmental disorders, neurodegenerative disorders (Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, etc.), brain cancer and mental illness.

Diet plays a crucial role in brain function. A diet high in sugar and fat during adolescence can lead to long-term memory deficits. Studies on rats found that those raised on junk food had impaired cognitive functions, even in adulthood. Some foods, however, have positive effects. For instance, bananas and avocados can naturally boost dopamine production, improving motivation and mood. So next time you are choosing between fast food and something nutritious, remember you are feeding your brain too!

Stowe's 'Brain Day' left us in awe of the sheer complexity of the human brain. The brain is not just an organ, it is the foundation of everything we are. As Dr Sutton reminded us, the more we learn about the brain, the more we realise how much we do not know.

Stephy Ho (Lower Sixth, West)

and...ACTION 3!

The Atomic Age Film & Media Conference for Sixth Formers and Teachers

Between 10am and 3pm on Thursday 20 March, Stowe is hosting the third 'and... ACTION!' Media Conference aimed at Sixth Formers studying Film and Media (and their teachers) in The Roxburgh Theatre.

This year's theme is 'The Atomic Age' and during the day there will be the chance to watch the brilliant and extremely moving animated film adaptation of Raymond Briggs' illustrated book 'When the Wind Blows' (which features music by Roger Waters and David Bowie) and Peter Watkins' powerful TV docudrama 'The War Game', arguably one of the BBC's greatest achievements. There will also be presentations on 'The Bomb in Song' from myself, and Japanese culture post Hiroshima.

This promises to be a fascinating and thought-provoking day which will stretch and challenge pupils. A Level Film pupils must study documentary theorists including the ideas of Peter Watkins who directed 'The War Game' and a large number of media pupils are interested in animation and popular music.

Tickets can be booked [here](#).

The following week, on Thursday 27 March, there is a screening of Steve Coogan's 'Dr Strangelove' which ties in nicely with the event and is not to be missed.

To book tickets for Dr Strangelove (cinema screening) (15) at The Roxburgh Theatre please click [here](#).

Dr Andrew Webber, Acting Head of Film & Media

WHEN THE WIND BLOWS



MUSIC

Junior Award Holders' Concert

On Wednesday 22 January, a selection of our Junior Award Holders' presented solo items in an evening recital held in the Ugland Auditorium. The concert programme displayed not only the wealth of talent these young musicians possess, but also the diverse range of instruments and genres which they cover. With performances of music ranging from Chopin to George Formby, the Award Holders captivated the audience with their technique and musical maturity.

Congratulations to all who were involved in the concert, we look forward to following your development and that of all the Music Award Holders over the coming months.

Emma Bryden, Director of Music





Change 100 visit to Westside Young Leaders' Academy (WYLA)

WYLA's aim is to create leaders of character and purpose for tomorrow's world, drawn from those most in need in disadvantaged communities. Central to our Change 100 mission is a belief we share with WYLA: that education is a launchpad and a gateway to belonging to an influential peer group who will individually and collectively exert positive influence in society. The event was designed to offer some insight to WYLA children interested in the boarding school experience.

Jennie Beebee, Development Manager Change 100

On Saturday 1 February six Change 100 ambassadors visited Westside Young Leaders' Academy (WYLA) in the London Borough of Brent and Lewisham, one of our key Change 100 partners. After an introduction to what the academy does by the founder of WYLA, we met the young leaders and watched them in one of their morning activities - 'drill'. This initially seemed similar to CCF here at Stowe, but once we all got involved in the exercise, we had a very quick reality check of just how difficult and complex it was. During this time the young leaders said their affirmations and the things they are grateful for. One of the youngest children warmed all our hearts as he said he was grateful to have us there to speak about boarding school. We then made our way to one of the classrooms, where Olivia Barratt (Fifth Form, Nugent), Julia Likierman (Fifth Form, Stanhope) and Chidera Nomeh (Fifth Form, Nugent)

presented their speeches to the Junior Young Leaders, who were full of enthusiasm and asked the Stoics lots of questions on what life is like at our School. Following this, we had a short break where all the young leaders ran to the 'tuck shop' for some snacks. Once break had ended, Romulus Flanagan (Lower Sixth, Cobham), Georgina Longsdon (Lower Sixth, Queen's) and I spoke to the Senior Young Leaders, whose ages ranged from 12-16. They seemed quiet, shy and more reserved, however, by the end of our speeches, they plied us with lots of questions and once we had left the classroom, we were told they all wanted to come to Stowe!

We had such an eye-opening time at WYLA, it was wonderful to meet such a large number of highly motivated peers. One of our biggest takeaways was the fact that Brent is the third poorest Borough in the UK and there are 27 active gangs that are potentially influencing these children's lives. WYLA does a wonderful job acting as a buffer to protect their young people. Even though we could only briefly explain the extraordinary resources and opportunities Stowe has to offer, we hope we left the children with something for them to consider and perhaps aspire to, and the understanding that they have a chance of an education that we are so grateful to have.

Millie Colebrook (Lower Sixth, Queen's)



French Cultural Workshop

On Tuesday 28 January, 88 French linguists went to Milton Keynes to take part in the British Film Institution (BFI) cross-curricular workshop on WW2 and the fate of Jewish Children in France during that time. Pupils gained historical insight on the impact of war and implications for the French Jewish population. The workshop was built around the film 'Le Voyage de Fanny (2016)', based on the true story of survivor Fanny Ben-Ami. Pupils worked on film extracts in French in the morning and watched the film in the afternoon. Pupils enjoyed learning about the topic in French and were left very moved by this story of resilience and hope.



A Level French linguists night out to Oxford

On Friday 7 February, 23 French A Level pupils went to Oxford to enjoy a French meal at Pierre Victoire Bistrot. The journey to Oxford was enjoyed by all thanks to a French playlist put together by the pupils, ranging from Charles Aznavour to Angèle. Stoics enjoyed a three-course meal (special mention to the steak-frites and marquise au chocolat!) and had the opportunity to take part in a musical quiz and fast-paced word game 'le petit bac', testing out their knowledge of vocabulary while enjoying French specialties. Well done to the Upper Sixth team who narrowly beat the Lower Sixth!

Fanny Leluan, Head of French



Nature Conservation Projects

Who are we and what do we do?

The Conservation Club is a group of pupils who have a particular interest in nature and a desire to protect it. The group meets every Monday and we complete a variety of tasks on site, as well as learning about the environment, wildlife and the consequences of climate change.

On Monday 3 February, we walked to Lamport Woods (near the Gothic Temple), where we were greeted by the ever-smiling face of Iona, a ranger from the National Trust. Iona has worked with us many times before on other projects around Stowe.

Lamport Woods has a flourish of snowdrops and Winter aconites every year. With the guidance of Iona we helped to clear the woodland ground of tree saplings, using Loppers to cut the saplings down as low as possible, which allows Winter aconites and snowdrops to grow freely and to spread across the ground. Our group spent an hour chopping and collecting the leftover debris to ensure a clear section of land for these flowers to thrive.

Along the way we learnt that the Winter aconites and snowdrops are the first flowers to appear in the New Year, with their growth time varying due to the type of Winter. This year snowdrops have appeared slightly earlier than normal as we have had a milder Winter.

I really enjoyed the walk around the area, the flowers, the woodland and the setting afternoon sun were beautiful and serene representations of nature. The activity gets us outdoors and into the fresh air which is a much-needed thing for us Stoics, who are often hard at work indoors for much of the day.

Blake Packshaw (Lower Sixth, Cobham)



Burns Supper

The Burns Supper 2025, on Thursday 23 January in the Mansion, was a vibrant celebration of the life and poetry of Robert Burns, held with enthusiasm by the 88 Stoics in attendance. The evening kicked off with Jonty Gordon's (Upper Sixth, Croft) iconic address to the haggis, which was met with applause and laughter. Guests were treated to heartfelt readings of Burns' poems, showcasing the timeless beauty of his work. The formal toasts were also a highlight, with a charming 'Toast to the Lassies', followed by a witty and spirited 'Reply to the Laddies', sparking both reflection and good-natured banter among the attendees.

After a delightful dinner, the Stoics embraced the spirit of the evening and danced the night away in the surroundings of the Dining Room, immersing themselves in traditional Scottish reels. The lively dancing included popular favourites such as the 'Hamilton House', 'Reel of the 51st', 'Eightsome Reel', and 'Strip the Willow', creating a festive atmosphere that embodied the celebratory nature of the event. The Burns Supper was a night of joy, camaraderie, and cultural celebration, honouring the legacy of Robert Burns in true Scottish fashion.

Georgina Black, Assistant Houseparent West & Teacher of Biology



OLD STOICS



Old Stoics 20-Year Anniversary Drinks Event

On Thursday 30 January, The Alfred Tennyson pub in Belgravia was abuzz with excitement and nostalgia as it hosted a special Old Stoic 20-year anniversary event. The occasion brought together Old Stoics who left Stowe in 2004, reuniting after two decades apart.

As the former classmates arrived, many of whom had not seen each other since their School days, stories were eagerly exchanged as the group caught up on each other's lives. The air was filled with the sounds of hearty laughter and animated conversations, as old bonds were rekindled, and new memories were made.

One of the highlights of the night was a heartfelt speech by OS Henry Kimbell (Chandos 04) who expressed gratitude for the enduring friendships and the opportunity to reconnect after so many years. The speech was met with enthusiastic applause and laughs - thank you Henry!

As the evening ended, contact numbers were swapped and promises made to stay in touch, vowing not to let another 20 years pass before their next reunion. The 20-year anniversary drinks event at The Alfred Tennyson was a resounding success, leaving everyone with cherished memories and a renewed appreciation for the enduring power of being part of the Old Stoic Society.

Charlie Evans, Events Manager Old Stoic Society

OS Calendar of Events

We are thrilled to announce a busy and vibrant calendar of Old Stoic events planned for the first half of 2025. From engaging networking events to fun-filled social gatherings, there's something for everyone. These events are just one of the many benefits of being part of the Old Stoic Society. Whether you are looking to expand your knowledge, network with like-minded individuals, or simply catch up with fellow OS, our events offer something for everyone of all ages.

For further information, please visit our [website](#) or [email us](#). Follow us on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#).

OLD STOIC EVENTS

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| 27 February | Law Networking Drinks, Inner Temple Hall - London |
| 23 March | OS Sports Festival - Stowe |
| 3 April | Live Bands Night, Half Moon Putney - London |
| 30 April | SOS Lunch, Oriental Club - London |
| 14 May | Property Networking Drinks, Baker Street - London |
| 23 May | Eve of Speech Day Concert - Stowe |
| 24 May | Speech Day & Classic Car Display - Stowe |
| 13 June | Clay Shooting, Holland & Holland - London |



Join the Old Stoic Society Book Club

Are you a book lover looking to connect with fellow readers? The Old Stoic Society is excited to announce the launch of our new Book Club, starting this Summer Term! Whether you are an avid reader or just looking to explore new genres, our Book Club will offer a welcoming space for all.

The primary goal of the Club is to bring together members of the Stowe Community, including Old Stoics, Parents and friends of Stowe who share a love for reading. You can look forward to guest speakers, author Q&As, and themed reading events that promise to be both engaging and enjoyable. To register your interest please [email](#) the Old Stoic Society and we will be in touch with more details soon.



OLD STOIC RACING CLUB

CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL PREVIEW

All Old Stoics, Parents and Friends of Stowe with a keen interest in horse racing are warmly invited to attend our sixth Cheltenham Festival Preview on Thursday 6 March at Stowe. This is the place to come and hear about the top performers, and some under the radar selections, for the leading week of jump racing in the sport's calendar.

The evening will be chaired by former Sky Sports Racing Presenter, Robert Cooper (Cobham 68). On the panel will be: Alex Hales (Chandos 92) - Trainer for our Stowe Racing syndicates, Nigel Hawke - Trainer and former Grand National winning jockey and Tabitha Worsley - Jockey.

It is always a superb evening so please do join us. Tickets are free and include light refreshments. To book your place [click here](#).



History of Art Lecture - Staging the Antique in British Interiors and Gardens

On Tuesday 28 January, Stowe had the privilege to receive Dr Adriano Aymonino, Art Historian and Senior Lecturer at the University of Buckingham, to deliver a lecture called 'Genius Loci: Staging the Antique in British Interiors and Gardens'; a talk revolving around the reception of classical ideals and aesthetics within Britain during the 18th Century.

In a pre-lecture interview, Cameron Gray (Lower Sixth, Temple) and I were able to ask a series of questions which he not only answered with patience, but with interest and enthusiasm.

Adriano, a native of Rome, retold his teenage school escapades where he would explore the various churches and palaces that inhabit the historic city. It gave him, in his words, his "first rudimentary education in the history of art".

From my side, I wanted to know more about the way classicism was utilised by the new post-1688 elite in Britain, whether it was misused, and to what extent did politics permeate such places as Stowe, former British bastion of Whiggery. Adriano explained that in the case of France, both republican revolutionaries and die-hard royalists claimed classicism for themselves, drawing inspiration from either Republican or Imperial Rome. The Founding Fathers, Napoleon Bonaparte, Russian Tsars all scrambled to use classicism and legitimise their ideas by associating themselves with the ideals of classical antiquity.

Adriano boldly stated that classicism has continuously been misused throughout history, and that unfortunately it was delegitimised by its perversion and application during the 20th Century by the dictators Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin. Classicism previously had a monopoly on taste, but the last century saw its demise from its privileged position, ushering an era Adriano named "a patchwork of taste". With Romanticism came the shift from objectivity to subjectivity, and as of now beauty is no longer in the object but in the eye of the beholder.

Wanting to know what he saw as the future, and whether classicism will ever return to its previous position, Adriano dismissed the idea, stating that the trend towards the multiplicity of taste was irreversible, and that he only saw the potential reapplication of classicism on a grand scale in contemporary authoritarian figures wishing to establish some sort of self-centred grandeur.

As for advice, Adriano, a decidedly inspiring figure, told us that the single best thing we could do is read books, not be dissuaded by disillusioned and dismissive academics, as was his case with an eminent professor in archaeology, and that with a city like London, we should explore all it has to offer for an aspiring art historian. The more museums and galleries, the better.

The **lecture** Adriano went on to give was both compelling and insightful, especially in his original perspectives on the Marble Hall, which will undoubtedly give experts much to consider.

Paul Ostroverhy (Lower Sixth, Chandos)

FUTURES



Artificial Intelligence (AI) & the Future of Work: Insights from Marcus Cronin

On Thursday 6 February, Concord and Victory's Alfie Corthine (Lower Sixth, Croft) met with Marcus Cronin (Grenville 92), a global expert in advertising, brand management and AI implementation. With 28 years of experience working with brands including Skittles, Adidas, and Guitar Foundation, Marcus shared his fascinating journey - from his time at Stowe to leading AI-driven innovation today.

Marcus spoke about how AI is reshaping industries, the importance of human-AI collaboration and why creativity and adaptability are key to thriving in the evolving job market. He highlighted his work in early AI adoption, testing alpha versions of tools like ChatGPT-2 and developing AI assistants that enhance business operations rather than replace human roles.

One of the most compelling takeaways was that AI is not just for tech experts, it is a tool for everyone. Marcus explained that AI should be viewed as an assistant, much like C-3PO is to Luke Skywalker. It can increase efficiency, enhance decision-making and boost creativity across industries, from advertising to healthcare.

Some key questions covered in the interview:

- What inspired your transition from advertising to AI?
- How can non-technical professionals break into AI?
- How is AI transforming industries that don't traditionally rely on technology?
- What are the biggest misconceptions about AI in the workplace?
- What advice do you have for students pursuing careers in AI and tech?

Another powerful insight from Marcus was that AI will not replace jobs. People who do not know how to use AI will be replaced by those who do. He emphasised that understanding how to leverage AI is now as essential as learning Excel or PowerPoint.

A huge thank you to Marcus for an inspiring and thought-provoking discussion.

To watch the interview please click [here](#).

Dr Gordon West, Head of Futures



Belonging

Why Belonging Matters

Belonging is not just about feeling included; it affects how we behave, learn and treat others. When we feel part of a group that values us, we naturally want to contribute and do our best. On the other hand, when we feel isolated or left out, it can lead to negative behaviour, low motivation, or even missing school altogether.

How Belonging Affects Learning

When we feel like we belong, we are more engaged and willing to learn. Research shows that pupils who feel connected to their school are more motivated, perform better academically, and are less likely to give up when things get tough.

Belonging and Behaviour

Imagine a pupil who feels like they do not fit in. They might disrupt lessons, or withdraw completely. Why? Because sometimes, negative behaviour is a way to seek attention or control. When pupils feel included and valued, they are more likely to respect school rules, build positive friendships, and contribute to a peaceful environment. Belonging helps prevent conflict and encourages kindness.

The Role of Social-Emotional Skills

A sense of belonging also helps us develop important life skills, like empathy, communication and cooperation. When we feel accepted, we are more likely to work together, solve problems, and support each other. This creates a school environment where respect and kindness are the norm, not the exception."

Inclusion and Diversity

One of the most powerful things about belonging is that it creates an inclusive community. Our School is made up of people from different backgrounds and cultures, and that is something to be proud of. When we try to include, whether it is by inviting someone to join a conversation, standing up to bullying, or showing kindness, we make our School a better place for everyone.

What can we all do to make sure everyone feels a sense of belonging?

- 1. Include others** - Invite someone new to sit with you at lunch or join your group.
- 2. Show kindness** - A small act of kindness, like a smile or a friendly conversation, can make a huge difference.
- 3. Respect differences** - Celebrate what makes each of us unique and create a community where everyone feels valued.

Belonging is not just about fitting in; it is about making sure no one feels left out.

Mike Rickner, Deputy Head (Pastoral) & Designated Safeguarding Lead

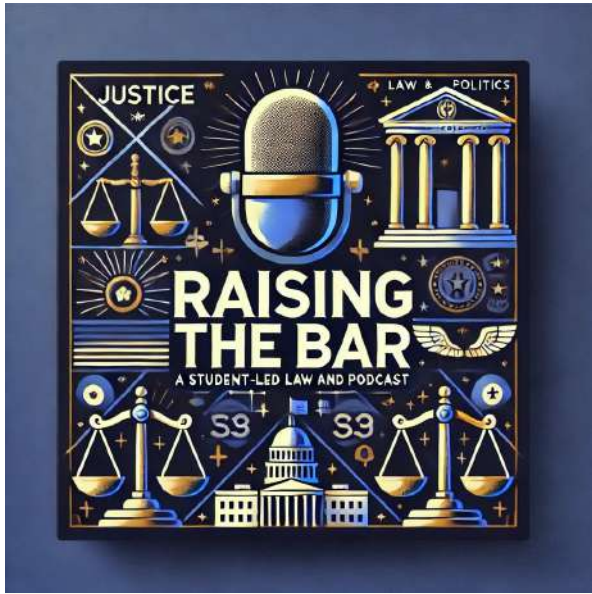


GEOGRAPHY

Hazardous Earth Workshop

On Tuesday 11 February we welcomed Staff and volunteers from the British Cartographic Society to deliver a 'Restless Earth' disaster response workshop with the Fifth Form Geographers. Working in small teams, pupils discovered the real-world challenges faced in the aftermath of natural hazards such as the 2011 Tohoku earthquake in Japan. The activities tested their creativity and geographical skills as they used a variety of different reference maps to plot the extent of the damage and plan appropriate responses including aid distribution and the establishment of temporary shelters for survivors. The workshop was a fantastic opportunity for Stoics to hone their use of map scales and keys, to deepen their understanding of hazard preparation and response, and explore some of Geography's many applications in future careers.

Becky Stanworth, Head of Geography



Raising the Bar

The Concord and Victory Law Podcast is making waves once again! 'Raising the Bar', a podcast created by pupils, for pupils has returned with another compelling episode, tackling the most pressing political developments shaping the world today.

In this latest instalment, Tia Sulap (Fifth Form, Lyttelton), Emilia Combastet (Fifth Form, Lyttelton) and Shaynna-Allyn Obaze (Lower Sixth, West) delve into the policies emerging from Donald Trump's second term as US President. With insightful analysis and thought-provoking discussion, they break down the implications of these changes for both the United States and the wider global community.

The episode explores a range of crucial topics, including:

- The legal challenges surrounding Trump's controversial immigration policies.
- How the reclassification of federal employees could lead to a politicised civil service.
- The future of the Affordable Care Act and the risks of dismantling it without a clear alternative.
- The impact of Trump's foreign policy shifts on US allies, particularly regarding Ukraine and China.

This discussion offers a fantastic opportunity for Stoics to engage with contemporary global affairs, hear diverse perspectives, and deepen their understanding of law and politics in action.

Listen now, whether you are studying law, interested in political debate, or simply curious about world events. Tia, Emilia and Shaynna dissect these major issues with clarity and insight.

Tune in to **Raising the Bar** now and be part of the conversation!

Dr Gordon West, Head of Futures



Criminal Law and the Man Problem

How does criminal law shape and reflect the society we live in? Who has historically designed it, practised it, and taught it? And how does that impact the justice system today?

On Wednesday 5 February, we were honoured to welcome Chris Lloyd - Senior Lecturer in Law at Oxford Brookes University, to an engaging discussion on the 'man problem' in criminal law, a theme explored in Ngaire Naffine's book, 'Criminal Law and the Man Problem: An Ethical Inheritance' (2019, Hart Publishing).

Chris has spent over 13 years teaching and researching criminal law, specialising in areas such as criminal justice, sexual offences, and feminist legal theory. His current work critically examines how criminal law has been historically shaped by men and how legal academics should ethically inherit this legacy.

The discussion was led by Shaynna-Allyn Obaze (Lower Sixth, West), Tia Sulap (Fifth Form, Lyttelton), and Emilia Combastet (Fifth Form, Lyttelton), who posed some fantastic questions:

How has the way criminal law is taught changed over the years, particularly regarding gender and social justice issues?

What do you think is the most misunderstood aspect of criminal law?

Given the historical biases in criminal law, do you think true gender neutrality is achievable?

What are the biggest challenges students face when studying criminal law?

What advice would you give to students aspiring to specialise in criminal law?

How do you think criminal law education will evolve in the next decade?

What role will AI play in the future of legal education and practice?

Chris also shared thought-provoking case studies, from the marital rape immunity era, to the controversial 1993 case of Brown, where the courts ruled on whether consensual BDSM acts among gay men should be criminalised. These cases underscore the ways in which law is not neutral - it is shaped by social attitudes and power structures.

As discussions like this highlight, the study of law is not just about statutes and precedents, it is about people, power, and justice.

A huge thank you to Chris Lloyd for such an insightful session and to Shaynna, Tia and Emilia for leading the discussion so brilliantly.

To watch the full interview, please click **here**.

Concord and Victory



Love and Limerence

The 'Love and Limerence' concert, by Dr Andrew C Webber and the (new) Hyacinth Girls took place in the Roxburgh Theatre in the evening of Wednesday 22 January and was attended by nearly 100 Stoics, Staff and guests.

Joined by singers Grace Reilly (Upper Sixth, West) and Emily Garwood (Upper Sixth, Cheshire) plus Sunny He (Upper Sixth, Chatham) on keyboards and Peter You (Upper Sixth, Walpole) on bass, the show consisted of 12 new songs, accompanied by famous English love poetry written by Shakespeare, Hardy, Keats and Duffy, and read by a stellar cast of teachers, including Dr Anthony Wallersteiner, Max Vendrig, Sophie Rickner and Emma Ackroyd.

The performance also included new illustrations by the highly talented Yeva Solop (Upper Sixth, Lyttelton), who brought the songs to life with 12 brilliant paintings which were projected onto the big screen. Yeva also designed the incredibly eye-catching poster for the event.

The new songs charted love's journey and were all written by me since my last concert appearance in The Ugland in March last year. They were mainly acoustic with folky influences including Leonard Cohen, John Martyn, Prefab Sprout and Bob Dylan. I had previewed one of the new songs 'The Politics of Romance' in an assembly early in January, and it proved a hit when performed again during the evening. Other songs included 'Forget-Me-Not', 'Lady M', with its catchy whistling chorus; the very moving 'Miranda' and the comic 'Joy of X', which raised a huge guffaw from Jim Sheppe!

Before the Summer, there will be a final chance to see the band in action on Friday 2 May in The Music Room, when we will be performing 'Every Third Thought: an evening of old and new songs'.

Dr Andrew Webber, Acting Head of Media & Film Studies



Bishop of Bradwell

It was a pleasure to welcome back to Stowe, The Right Reverend Adam Atkinson (Grenville 85), Bishop of Bradwell. Bishop Adam is one of two Old Stoic Bishops in the Church of England (the other being Bishop Ric Thorpe (Walpole 83)).

During the service, Bishop Adam expressed his gratitude for his opportunity to grapple with the claims of the Christian faith during his five years at Stowe, and identified the Lent Addresses in his Upper Sixth year as the 'moment the penny dropped' for him, becoming a Christian shortly after this. Adam spent many years serving as a vicar and church leader in London until being consecrated as Bishop of Bradwell in 2023.

The Evensong sermon was on the subject of friendship. We were reminded about the importance of friendship, and how friends are more valuable than anything we can acquire in this life. Bishop Adam concluded by pointing us to Jesus, who is 'the friend who sticks closer than a brother' (Prov 18:24).

It was lovely to have some of the wider Atkinson family joining us in the service, and we look forward to welcoming Bishop Adam back to Stowe again in the future.

Rev James Righetti, Chaplain

LANGUAGES SOCIETY

On Thursday 16 January, the Languages Society invited Mrs Sandra Wheeler, former teacher of German at Stowe, to come back to speak about life growing up in East Germany.

Mrs Wheeler's very informative talk covered many aspects of life in a provincial town prior to 1989, as well as the changes she and her family encountered after the reunification of Germany. It was fantastic to hear of her personal experience of growing up in a socialist state.

The Languages Society is always on the look-out for speakers to come and talk about other languages and cultures, please do get in touch if you would like to share your own experiences with our motivated group of Sixth Formers!

Valentine's Day with the Languages Society

On Thursday 6 February, the Languages Society celebrated Valentine's Day, with a pink and red themed evening of quizzes, games and cupcake decorating, all related to how love is celebrated in different languages and cultures. Society members can now confess their love in a whole range of languages, including Afrikaans, Turkish and Finnish. Minäkin rakastan sinua!

Rachel Holland, Teacher of French and German

STOWE HOUSE PRESERVATION TRUST



Putting the Mansion to Bed - Winter Conservation

Over the Winter months, country houses including Stowe were traditionally 'put to bed'. Families would leave their Summer palaces and return to London for the 'season' of soirées, balls and the bustling marriage market. These events, which flourished in the 18th Century, coincided with parliamentary sessions of the time. While we no longer throw covers over furniture or shutter the windows completely, we do adjust our opening times during the late Winter period to reflect the reduced number of visitors on cold, damp days. This quieter period allows us to focus on essential conservation work, including the meticulous cleaning and preservation of the collections housed in the museum.

Every Winter, we carefully open the museum display cases to carry out conservation cleaning on the objects. Where possible, items are removed and inspected for signs of deterioration. Using a soft pony-hair brush, we gently remove dust, which is immediately vacuumed away. Left unchecked, dust can 'cement' on to surfaces under certain environmental conditions, making its removal more abrasive and potentially damaging. Dust can also become a food source for mould and pests, further endangering these precious items.

Our conservation efforts extend beyond the museum to include The State Rooms. Here, the cleaning process follows a similar method but on a grander scale. We begin by inspecting walls and ceilings for damage. Scaffolding allows us to closely examine all areas, and we use a backpack vacuum (imagine Ghostbusters, minus the boiler suit!) equipped with a soft goat-hair attachment to gently remove dust and cobwebs from fragile gilded plasterwork. Chandeliers, sculptures, paintings and fireplaces are also thoroughly cleaned and inspected. This annual Winter clean ensures we can address superficial issues and identify potential leaks or structural repairs that may need attention in the future.

Another key part of our conservation strategy is protecting the collection from light damage caused by UV radiation. During the 25-year restoration of the Mansion, UV film was applied to the windows of south-facing rooms along the piano nobile. This film helps prevent UV light from breaking down delicate surfaces, however over time, the effectiveness of the film diminishes. Recent light readings in the Music Room, taken with an Elsec monitor, showed levels close to 100 lux. For reference, readings over 75 lux suggest the UV film is failing, and an unfiltered sunny room can reach as high as 2,000 lux.

Given the sensitive nature of Valdrè's wall paintings in the Music Room, we decided to replace the ageing UV film with a more advanced version. The new film still filters out 99.5% of UV light but is slightly tinted to reduce visible light, which, while less harmful than UV, still causes gradual damage. This film also reduces glare, blocks 42% of solar energy and helps stabilise the room's relative humidity, preventing issues like splitting wood or cracking plaster and paintwork. Incidentally, the same company also supplies Buckingham Palace with window film!

Removing the old film has been a slow, painstaking process. Baked onto the windows in places, it must be carefully scraped off using a glass scraper. Applying the new film is equally meticulous work, as it must be precisely cut in situ to avoid visible gaps. We plan to complete the remaining stages of removal and installation during School holidays, ensuring minimal disruption.

By making the most of these quieter Winter months, we are able to preserve Stowe's treasures for future generations while ensuring the mansion is ready to welcome visitors as the warmer seasons approach.

Mel Whitrow, Stowe House Preservation Trust Marketing Officer

Opening Hours

As we start to shrug away Winter's icy grip and embrace signs of Spring, our opening times will adjust. We will be open daily throughout the Half Term and welcome you to explore the museum, enjoy refreshments in our café and discover the House with your family or on one of our guided tours.

15-23 February Open Daily 10.30am-3.30pm

1-29 March - October Open Daily 10.30am-4.30pm

Help support the ongoing care of our House by picking up one of our 'Blind Dates with a Book!' Each book is wrapped with intriguing clues, making it the perfect gift for a friend, loved one, or even yourself. Plus, your donation helps us continue giving new life to pre-loved books. Join the fun and contribute to a great cause.

Events at Stowe House

Proceeds from the events hosted by Stowe House Preservation Trust go back into restoring and maintaining this Grade I Listed 18th Century masterpiece.



Stowe Tots

Mondays: 24 February, 31 March, 28 April, 19 May, 30 June. 10-10.45am

A fun-filled sensory play session for families with young babies and preschool toddlers. Once a month, session themes will vary. Held in our Visitor Centre, activities will be led by our friendly learning and community team. In February, block-book sessions until May and receive a complimentary session in June.

Booking is essential.

One Child & one Adult, £5.



Cupid's Trail: Valentine's Adventure

15-23 February, 10.30am-3.30pm

Step into a world of mythology, creativity and love with Cupid's Trail, a family-friendly Valentine's-themed adventure designed for children aged 4-14. This February Half Term, explore our awe-inspiring State Rooms to uncover fascinating stories of ancient gods, solve fun puzzles and riddles, and enjoy hands-on crafts in this historic country house.

Free activities are included with normal admission. Children go free with a paying adult.

Find out more.



Zodiac Explorers: Chinese New Year at Stowe

Wednesday 19 February, 10am-12pm and 2-4pm

Bring the magic of Chinese New Year to life with our exciting children's workshop. Perfect for ages 5-10, this two-hour interactive experience is packed with storytelling, crafts and adventure that will spark creativity and inspire young imaginations.

Book now. £4.50 per child, standard adult House admission applies.



Mother's Day Bath Bomb Workshop

Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 March 10.30-11.30am and 2-3pm

This Mother's Day, why not treat the special lady in your life with a truly personal gift? Join us for a fun and creative workshop where you and your little ones can make beautiful, handmade bath bombs - perfect for gifting.

Each child will create up to two bath bombs, write a secret message to hide inside, and package them in a charming hessian bag with a ribbon and tag.

They will also have the chance to craft a lovely handmade card to complete the gift. It is a wonderful way for parents, guardians, and loved ones to help their children create a thoughtful, unique present for someone special.

Booking is essential.

Free activity, normal admission applies.



Secrets of Stowe Tour

Tuesday 30 March 11am, Sunday 6 April 6pm and Monday 14 April 11am

With only a limited number of tickets remaining, be quick to book a space on our behind-the-scenes tours. A highlight for visitors will include seeing the latest addition to the Gothic Library, the Soane table - an original piece of Stowe furniture that has now returned thanks to a generous donation by the George Clarke Foundation. Book your **tickets here**.

Adult £12, Under 16s £6.



Rooftop Tour

Tuesday 1, Saturday 5 and Friday 18 April, 6pm

Enjoy the chance to climb the noble cantilevered stone staircase to admire the magnificent view from the roof and look over the world-famous Gardens; this truly is 'the finest view in England'.

Booking is essential. £15



Lino Print Workshop

Saturday 2 August, 10am-4pm

Lino print in a one-day artist-led workshop with expert printmaker Alexandra Buckle.

In this artist-led workshop, you will create a multi-layered lino print based on images or photographs that inspire you. Secure your space on the workshop. £80

Proceeds from the events hosted by Stowe House Preservation Trust go back into restoring and maintaining this Grade I listed 18th Century masterpiece. Book your **tickets here**.

January Change Maker of the Month (CMOM)

Stowe Teaching - Paul Prouse, Teacher of Physics received the award for stepping in to help a colleague in an entirely different part of the School in their hour of need.

Stowe Support Services Stowe - Nicola Webb, Grenville Matron received the most amount of nominations ever received in a single month of the CMOM programme! The nominations were all for her amazing work in supporting Grenville House with their moves back and forth over the past months.

Swanbourne House - Alan Neal, Grounds Assistant was awarded Change Maker of the Month, for making a huge impact on the overall School site and for being a proactive problem-solver especially when it comes to health and safety.

Winchester House - Tom Gray, Head of Boys Games, Activities Coordinator, Boys Houseparent and Acting Head of Boarding was recognised for his consistent and exceptional contribution to the lives of Housians in Boarding, games and their Pastoral Care.



Stowe Parents' Cricket - New Season, New Players Welcome!

The Stowe Parents' Cricket Team is gearing up for our second season during the Summer Term, with five fixtures already pencilled in. It is a great way to enjoy some friendly competition and connect with fellow parents.

New players of all levels are welcome - whether you are a seasoned cricketer or just keen to get involved. If you are interested in joining, please [email me](#).

John Saunders, Stowe Parents' Cricket Club

Stowe
Parents
CRICKET

Service@Stowe

**STREET
CHILD**

**6TH FORM CHARITY
LEADERSHIP FORUM**



STREET CHILD

On Friday 24 January, a group of Sixth Form pupils representing Stowe travelled to London for the Street Child Sixth Form Charity Leadership Forum.

We were able to collaborate and exchange ideas, all with the goal of planning future fundraising events. We discussed ideas about events both in School and also larger, joint efforts that could combine the different schools involved to have a fun event to raise money for the charity.

A highlight of the event was hearing from guest speakers who shared their experiences of the charity sector. Their stories and advice provided valuable guidance, enabling us to think creatively about our possible fundraising efforts.

It was incredible to be around students who were as enthusiastic as us and the energy in the room was amazing. A huge thank you to Alessia Capella and Sophie Cecil (both Upper Sixth, Stanhope) for leading this group and helping to bring everyone together for the charity. We look forward to working on our ideas for future fundraising events!

Harrison Newman (Lower Sixth, Croft)
Street Child Committee

Philosothon

During the Michaelmas Term, Stowe successfully hosted its inaugural prep and primary school Philosothon. A Philosothon is a friendly competition between small teams in which participants take part in a series of 'Communities of Inquiry' and are judged by the quality of their participation.

Almost sixty prep and primary school pupils in Years Five and Six joined us to take part in an afternoon of philosophical reflection and discussion. The day was won by Ashfold School, the latest addition to The Stowe Group. To succeed the pupils had to read and discuss a range of thought-provoking texts, which ranged from the 'Book of Genesis' to 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. We were all immensely impressed by the quality of the discussion and reflection and are looking forward to the 2025 event.

I would like to thank both my colleagues, who aided in the judging of the event, and our Prefects and Academic Scholars who successfully facilitated each discussion.

Francesca Holloway, Head of Philosophy & Religion



Stowe School
Stowe
Buckingham
MK18 5EH

t | +44 (0)1280 818000
e | stowemail@stowe.co.uk
w | www.stowe.co.uk

Editorial Team:

Mrs Cath Clarke
Mrs Eleanor Lyttle
Mrs Tori Roddy

Stowe