



TORQUAY GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER: MS S FORSTER | FOUNDED 1915 | ACADEMY TRUST

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Dear Parents/Guardians

We are now approaching our last half term of the academic year 2021/2022 and with this in mind I have taken the opportunity to reflect upon the many successes and achievements of our students, your children. They have been amazing and accomplished so many things. I would like to share with you a few of our most recent highlights:

TEN TORS

The Ten Tors Challenge is attempted by 2,400 teenagers in 400 teams of six. The teams navigate routes of 35, 45 or 55 miles (depending on age) over the Northern half of Dartmoor, visiting ten nominated tors / check points in under two days.

Teams must be self-sufficient, carrying all that they need to complete their route and stay out overnight safely. Training for Ten Tors took place at weekends on Dartmoor over the winter months. Our teams were well prepared for the event, remaining positive and determined despite the rigours of the challenge. Altogether, a memorable occasion for everyone involved, and for many of the participants, a life-changing experience - the value of these activities cannot be underestimated.

Our students were fantastic - first Girl Team and third overall in the 35-mile section.



SUPER PUBLIC SPEAKERS

In March three Year 11 students from the public speaking team went to Colston's School, Bristol for the regional finals of the English Speaking Union. It was the culmination of months of preparation for these students and they were competing against the best six schools of the whole of the South West Region. Emily Litster presented a powerful and evocative speech on why 'Trade not aid' was needed for developing countries. Holly Bagnall was the questioner who had to think on her feet and explore the topic of the opposing school's claim that 'The British Empire must apologise for its past' which she managed with ease. Bethany Hine was the chairperson whose natural warmth and charisma set her apart achieving special recognition from the judges. Overall the girls were awarded second place, just missing out the South Wilshire Grammar school who were truly deserving winners. It was a very long day, filled with tension and nerves, but our students were absolutely outstanding.

A CELEBRATION OF GYMNASTICS AND DANCE

On Thursday 10th March, 50 hardworking gymnasts and dancers got to reap the rewards of a term and a half of hard work by absolutely shining on stage. This was an opportunity for all students to experience performing in front of an audience in a relaxed and encouraging environment. As we have missed out for two years, this made the performance extra special.

Act 1 started with gymnasts who rolled, flipped, and somersaulted their way through the first 30 minutes. There was individual, pair and group pieces as well as gravity defying acrobatics. After a short break, it was the turn of the dancers. Act 2 opened with the Year 7 dancers performing to

Mission Impossible. For the remaining 30 minutes, the audience were treated to many genres of dance such as ballet, contemporary and ending on a lyrical piece. The show was completed with an upbeat finale where all performers took their well-deserved bow.

IMOGEN'S UKRAINE APPEAL

Imogen Rios (Form 9B) has made a massive £500 crocheting sunflowers every spare moment she has. It is fantastic to see so many students and staff have supported Imogen by wearing her yellow and blue crocheted flowers.

STEM ENGINEERING COMPETITION

During Challenge Day Year 8 entered the **Sustainable Futures Innovation Challenge** by the Royal Academy of Engineering. This involved our students' becoming engineers' sharing their ideas for innovations that work towards a sustainable future for our planet and our goal of reaching net zero as a country.

Students chose from one of four themes: travel and transport, food systems, homes and habitats and consumerism - designing an innovative system or product that could help address that challenge. The designs blew the science staff away ranging from solar panelled planes to zero food waste apps. The students showed high quality designs and creativity with brilliant presentations.

Two teams were shortlisted by the Royal Academy as a joint entry: Hydro-mart, a renewable energy and sustainable supermarket and Eco-Beauty, which made beauty products that didn't impact negatively on the environment.

This new team of eleven students merged their ideas and took part in the semi-finals. This included a Q &A session with four STEM engineers about their profession, a coding task where they took over the controls of a virtual mars rover and solved the problem of a missing fuel cell. Finally an online presentation showcased their innovation to a panel of judges.



During the semi-finals the team won prizes for themselves and a 3D printer and robotics for the school. After a nervous wait we have just heard that they have been selected as finalists with only nine other schools! Later in June they will be travelling to London to the Royal Academy of Engineering, all expenses paid, for a prize giving celebration event. Here they will have the opportunity to present their projects to a panel of judges as well as engineers and others working in STEM. As a reward for being selected as a finalist they have already won £1000 enhance STEM at TGGs! Well done year 8. We cannot wait to hear all about the final celebration.

SKI RACING

The South West Ski Association competition took place on Sunday the 15th May at Gloucester Ski Slope. The TGGs ski team were entering the competition with the hope of retaining the title and trophy from the previous year 2019 when it was won by TGGs. After a course inspection in the morning the team set about their timed slalom race of a challenging course. Having put down a solid first time, there was a break for lunch and rain before resuming in the afternoon. Times were improved and the last run saw the fastest from all three girls. After a long wait the prize giving

started building up to the winner of the secondary school class, finally first place was announced and to huge cheers and applause TGGs were announced the winners. It was a fantastic day's racing and a huge well done to all three racers. Fleur Lambert-Bord, Alisa Keating and Rosie Arnold.

QUANTUM THEATRE BRINGS SHAKESPEARE TO TGGs

After a three-year absence, TGGs English staff and Year 11 students were very excited to welcome back the Quantum Theatre company who rocked up one rainy April morning ready to perform their own distinctive version of Shakespeare's Macbeth.

From its accompanying soundtrack of haunting bagpipes to the shadow projection of some of its gorier moments, this was a mesmerising production of Shakespeare's Scottish play with an energetic cast of five taking on all the roles with skill and conviction. Year 11 proved to be an appreciative and enthusiastic audience, evident in their resounding cheers as the players took their bows at the play's conclusion. The consensus was that this great way to revise the play and the performance really helped to bring the text alive for the students.



LINX CHRISTIAN YOUTH TRUST

In RPE (religion, philosophy & ethics), as part of the unit on Jesus, we were delighted to welcome some visitors into the Year 7 classroom. Charlie and Matt from [LINX](#) Christian Youth Trust delivered exciting, memorable, and chocolate-themed sessions, to all our Year 7 classes, on the importance of Easter to Christians. Year 7 students were asked to reflect upon the concept of 'sacrifice' to gain a deeper understanding of the Biblical story of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. They really enjoyed participating in this engaging session!

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION TRUST

Recently, a group of Sixth Formers from TGGs had the opportunity to take part in Lessons from the Auschwitz scheme, an educational programme to commemorate and spread information about the Holocaust. One aspect of the programme is tasking those involved with spreading information about the legacy of the Holocaust in their local communities, and Olivia Boote and Matilda Roddy have written a very informative article as part of the project which you can read [HERE](#).



YEAR 7

The Royal Navy has also visited year 7 students to teach them invaluable team skills and they were actively involved in making wheelbarrows, navigating contaminated lakes using tyres, rescuing friends and guiding friends through an obstacle course whilst blindfolded.

Finally, several students from Year 7 through to Year 10 have also participated in the [The Diana Award](#) which is a scheme supporting young people to make a positive change to the world including training antibullying ambassadors. The students will be putting their campaigns together over the next half term, ready to launch in September.

ALAN CARR

In May we were visited by comedian and presenter Alan Carr, and a film crew, as part of an upcoming television series for Channel 4. Alan surprised a group of English students who were working on Crime Fiction writing with Mrs Preston. Hilarity ensued as ideas for murder mysteries were brainstormed and shared, followed by rather a lot of selfies! As always, our students were amazing and rose to the occasion with brilliant ideas. We'll bring you more information about the programme and broadcast dates as soon as we can...



YEAR 13 LEAVERS CELEBRATION AT DARTINGTON HALL

A very special evening at Dartington Hall where we said a formal goodbye to our Year 13. We are so pleased to be able to once again celebrate our students together with their families. Well done and thank you to all our fabulous performers and speakers. A retiring collection raised £306 towards [Operation Imprezza](#).



500 WORDS SHORT STORY COMPETITION

This year's whole school 500 Words short story writing competition was on the theme of Freedom and attracted a huge number of entries. The standard was extremely high and the English ambassadors had an enormous challenge in trying to identify winners. However, after much deliberation it was decided that the KS4 winner should be Ciara Williams with her thought-provoking and mature exploration of the theme with the runner up being Rozenn James – both students from 11C. At KS3 the winner was Delphine Preston and the runner up Eliya Smith, both from 7B.

The overall house winners will be announced, and the house cup presented later in the term.

The Key Stage 3 winning entry can be found at the end of this newsletter – enjoy!

SUMMER CONCERT

On Tuesday 24th May we celebrated the return of live music with our annual Summer Concert. The students showcased a fantastic range of performances to our first live audience in over two 2 years and sounded absolutely amazing! Thank you and congratulations to all students who participated.



TRUSTEES

Our Trustees would like to welcome two new members to the board. They are Bernice Williams and Matt Thompson.

GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE

Earlier this term we received a visit from the Good Schools Guide assessing the school and updating their public information – [CLICK HERE TO READ](#) what they have to say about us.



I would finally like to wish you all a pleasant and relaxing half term break and I look forward to seeing all our students again on Monday 6th June 2022.

Yours faithfully

Ms Sarah Forster BSc (Hons), PGCE, MA, NPQH
Headteacher and Accounting Officer
Torquay Girls' Grammar School

Short story KS3 winner - by Dephine Preston (7B)

As soon as the unstable wire crossed her vision, she didn't hesitate. Like a wild cat to its prey, she darted towards the fence, ignoring the frantic shouts and sirens behind her, and threw herself onto the bog-like mud, squeezing, squirming and contorting herself to try and inch into her escape route. The metal fingers of the fencing clawed at her back, the menacing demons in her head chanting, screaming at her to stay. Adrenaline inside of her rose as a rough, firm hold grasped at her foot dragging her back to the living hell. Desperately kicking with her other leg, she eased her foot from the hold of her shoe, jolting the last of herself through the opening. With not a second to waste, her scarred arms shoved her up from the ground and she took off, racing across the barren landscape.

No matter her lack of direction. No matter the scraggly remains of thistle bushes puncturing her skin every few bounds. No matter the screeching sirens deafening her bleeding ears. No matter the daunting threat of her recapture looming over her life. She was no longer a prisoner. No longer a doll in their doll house. And that was what counted.

Daylight turned to moonlight, the merciless sun to the dusky haze of the night. Over time, splotches of emerald, lime and green bottle coloured shrubbery peeked out of the ground, moss-covered rocks the size of hedgehogs scattered themselves about, the viridescent fir trees of September clustered together in small thickets, handfuls of the starless sky hindered from vision. As her aching limbs wheezed with pain, a staggered walk phased into a bedraggled crawl, then she gave in. Collapsing underneath a longevous tree trunk, she lay her head drowsily back on a pillow of bronze pine needles, allowing the crescendo of crickets' symphonies and the skittish scamper of foxes in the distance trick her exhausted brain into a dreamless sleep.

A gentle, lukewarm breeze licked her face, awakening her eyelids from their deep slumber. Unwillingly, she sat up. The scene that greeted her was certainly not the one she had previously seen.

The plain bushes of the past night – or however many nights ago that was – had now been dappled with frivolous flowers, colours of seashell lilac, African sunset gold and autumn ocean blue. Boughs of thriving, verdant leaves filtered out beams of the midday sun, projecting a kaleidoscope of light to the undergrowth, which now had bunches of khaki grass like patchwork on a quilt. The merry chitter of wrens echoed from somewhere in the endless maze of greenery, and the refreshing aroma of dew droplets swept across the forest. Standing now, she set her pace to a steady plod, tasting the clean air of the woodland, brushing her fingertips lightly over the rough, chiseled texture of the trees' bark.

Slowing, she came to a halt on the edge of a clearing. A single raindrop landed on her forehead, trickling down her face, baptizing her into a new life.

Freedom.

