

Abingdon News



Gold at the Palace

A number of Upper Sixth and OAs celebrated receiving their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award at Buckingham Palace this year. 2026 is particularly poignant as it marks both the 70th anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh Award and the retirement of Katy Lee, our wonderful DofE verifier.



Message from the Head

The end of the summer term is always freighted with emotion and excitement, and this was particularly the case this year.

As ever, we said farewell to our Leavers with a sense of sadness mingled with excitement about what the future will hold for them. The Class of 2026 have made a wonderful contribution to the life of the School, showing great commitment to their studies while also embracing everything the Other Half has to offer, achieving some spectacular successes.

At the same time, induction days for our new First Year (Year 7) and Lower Sixth students allowed us to welcome our first mixed year groups into school to meet one another as well as their teachers. We had announced that we would be welcoming girls to Abingdon two years previously and have been busily preparing for this change ever since, so it was thrilling to see girls and boys enjoying their induction events together, looking forward to their arrival in September.

They will all benefit from the traditions of scholarship and ambition that underpin life at Abingdon, as well as our commitment to the personal development of every student in its broadest sense.

They'll also enjoy the new facilities that will help every pupil to develop existing skills and passions, while discovering new ones.



When in Rome...

The First Year visited Corinium Museum, in the modern town of Cirencester in June. The pupils enjoyed testing their Latin translation skills on various tombstones, including those of a six year old, a 75 year old, a Swiss soldier, and a Celtic woman called Bodicacia! Pupils also retold to each other key myths which were displayed on the excellent mosaics in the museum. Finally, in the workshop, pupils explored the lives of six different people who lived and died in Roman Corinium, getting to dress up as them.

Showing we care

This term, our community service volunteers have enjoyed visiting Abingdon residents at Fountain Court and Old Station House on Tuesdays. They have taken part in a variety of engaging activities including learning new games such as Sequence, Uno or dominoes, and have enjoyed taking part in intense pub quizzes. They have also exchanged stories, helping them form friendships with the residents. All the students found the visits to be incredibly rewarding and have expressed a strong desire to continue these meaningful visits in the future.





Battlefields trip

On 14 April, 38 pupils and four teachers departed for the battlefields of the First World War. They visited various sites around Ypres, the Somme and Arras. The students took the opportunity to pay their respects - three laid a wreath at the Menin Gate at the Last Post ceremony; and everyone paid their respects at Pozieres Memorial to three OAs who lost their lives on the Somme battlefields.



Adventure trip

Fifty three First Year students travelled to Rock UK's Summit Centre in Wales over the Easter break for an adventure trip. As well as aerial adventure, archery, bushcraft, climbing, canoeing and crate stacking, they spent a day in the surrounding countryside following the path of a river from its source up in the mountains, down through a cave system, to a spectacular waterfall. It was a great way to hone their team building and communication skills and make new friends.

Fourth Year French trip to Lyon

Over the Easter holidays, 34 Fourth Year pupils from both Abingdon and St Helen and St Katharine embarked on a week of cultural and linguistic immersion in Lyon.

Pupils attended French lessons in the morning at a local language school before taking on a number of sights in the city in the afternoons. These included the Groupama football stadium, the Traboules and the Institut Lumière, where they learned about the birth of cinema in Lyon.

Pupils enjoyed the challenge of communicating with host families in French, ordering food in the local eateries, and navigating the Metro.



Canoe do it?

Five Lower Sixth students completed their Duke of Edinburgh Gold canoeing training and practice expedition over the Easter holidays. They focused on essential paddling, capsize and rescue training before navigating the waterways in two canoes and a touring kayak along the Kennet and Avon Canal. This included passing over the picturesque Dundas Aqueduct and learning how to efficiently portage locks. They finished on day four with a paddle on the Oxford Canal. The team showed excellent camaraderie, teamwork, and determination throughout.



Taking stock

In May, the Abingdon School Investment Trading Club (AITC) hosted the annual stock pitch competition. Over 30 students from the Third Year to Sixth Form pitched their 'Best Stock to Buy or Short' to a panel of experts including Dom Spalding, Expert Wealth Management; Stuart Bartholomew, Craven Street Wealth; and Ben Armitage, Evenlode. The winners were told their presentation was 'on par with final year university students'. AITC sessions provide students with valuable skills and knowledge for pursuing a related degree or career in the City.



Going to the zoo

Did you know that giant Galapagos tortoise 'Lonesome George' - was, until his death in 2012, the last surviving member of the *Chelonoidis niger abingdonii* sub-species?! This was just one fun fact learned by students on an enjoyable Sunday outing to Crocodiles of the World - the UK's only crocodile zoo. As well as crocs, the crew spied slithering snakes, lithe lizards and merry meerkats as well as those tremendous tortoises.



Making the most of the weather

The recent sunny weather has allowed the Lower School Assistants to organise a wide range of outdoor activities for Lower School pupils during their Tuesday lunch breaks including croquet, table tennis and round net. A good time was had by all.



Getting quizzical

Lower School families gathered in The Pavilion at the end of the first week of term for a curry and quiz night. After enjoying a delicious meal provided by the catering department, the teams tackled rounds including science and nature, Abingdon anagrams, movie sound tracks and guess the chocolate bar. Congratulations go to *Minions Assemble* for winning the coveted trophy.



Pizza, pizza

Crescent House boarders put their culinary skills to the test in the April sunshine, making pizza in the wood-fired oven.



Students explore China through opera and film

Mandarin learners recently explored Chinese culture through opera and film, bridging ancient traditions and modern society. Third Year students immersed themselves in a hands-on Peking opera workshop, experimenting with movement and vocal expressions to understand theatrical symbolism. Meanwhile, Fourth Year students analysed contemporary cinema at the British Film Institute, where they used Mandarin to debate complex themes like family evolution, social pressures, and directorial choices, successfully sharpening their expressive fluency.



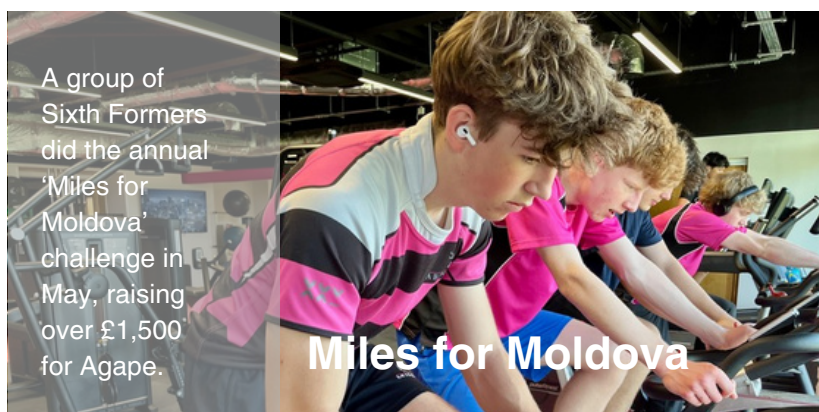
First Year visit Hengistbury Head

In May, our First Year pupils visited the Dorset nature reserve of Hengistbury Head to see coastal landforms. They saw the power of longshore drift and found evidence of coastal retreat.

Luckily, the weather was clear enough to allow them to see across The Solent to draw a field sketch of the Isle of Wight's famous Needles.



Lower School pupils enjoyed a dinner debate in May. After a spirited discussion over whether continuous assessment or end of year exams are the best system for schools to adopt and a pizza and cookie meal, there was a balloon debate which saw Greta Thunberg voted the most inspirational female figure, narrowly beating Malala.



Ready for co-ed: The journey to a new chapter at Abingdon

This September, Abingdon School embarks on a landmark chapter as it welcomes its very first co-educational cohorts into the First Year and the Sixth Form. But this historic shift is no sudden leap. It is the culmination of two years of forensic, ground-up preparation designed not just to introduce girls, but to elevate the school experience for every single pupil.

When Abingdon School first announced its transition to co-education, the leadership team drew a firm line in the sand. This would not be a superficial rebrand or a passive exercise in shifting admissions. Instead, the two year lead-in was treated as an invaluable opportunity - a mandate to review, challenge, and refine every single aspect of school life. The philosophy guiding the entire process has been clear from day one: it has never been about making things better just for co-education; it is about making things better for everyone.

The journey began with a remarkably democratic strategy. Rather than dictating policy from the top down, Abingdon established a series of cross-functional committees. Crucially, these were made up of staff from any department who wanted to contribute, drawing directly upon a massive well of prior experience working in mixed environments. These working groups did a deep-dive into eight fundamental pillars of the Abingdon experience: academic, curriculum, pastoral, Other Half, culture, facilities, external relations and boarding. This internal scrutiny gave the school the perfect excuse to question long-standing norms and ask whether specific areas of school life could be made even better.

To ensure they were completely on the front foot, Abingdon did not just look inward; they looked outward as well. Staff conducted extensive research visits, gathering detailed insight from at least 40 other educational settings that have successfully navigated mixed environments. No detail was too minor for scrutiny - everything from environmental dynamics i.e. what it genuinely feels like to learn and socialise in a modern mixed environment, to pastoral setups, uniform, and facilities, were meticulously scrutinised. This to ensure that from day one, every student feels secure, seen, heard and a profound sense of belonging.

True readiness also required listening to the people who matter most: the students. Leadership held open, honest

forums with existing pupils to unpack their excitement, answer practical questions, and directly address their fears. This collaborative approach extended into the broader community through the OX14 Learning Partnership. To ensure the PSHCE curriculum was genuinely sharp and relevant, Abingdon consulted directly with girls from partner schools tackling real-world, practical topics, such as managing menstruation, to ensure pastoral staff handle such conversations with utmost confidence, dignity, and normality.

Sport has seen some of the most dynamic changes, spearheaded by a newly appointed Director of Sport and an Associate Director of Sport. Both came from co-ed settings and have been in post for well over a year, working proactively to build a modern athletic roadmap before the first co-ed cohort even arrives. Rather than waiting for September 2026, the foundations are already laid, with netball teams already up and running alongside a brand-new multi-use sports surface explicitly designed to expand options for all pupils.

Academically, the school has looked in depth at classroom dynamics, including through a co-educational lens, receiving specific training on how to spot tendencies like perfectionism or over-working, which high-achieving girls can occasionally experience, to help balance workloads and model healthy academic habits.

For prospective girls looking at the school, a common question emerged during open days regarding leadership roles. Abingdon recognised early on the absolute necessity of strong male and female role models, structuring student leadership pathways so that incoming younger year groups immediately have diverse older pupils to look up to.

Ultimately, the journey to co-ed has reinforced Abingdon's foundational values and the message is clear: at Abingdon, you can rock up, be exactly who you want to be, and thrive.



A wheelie good time

Lower School pupils attended hour-long workshops with former BMX halfpipe World Champion Mike Mullen in June. Over the course of the session, they gradually built up the difficulty and complexity of the tricks they attempted under Mike's expert guidance.



Bees knees

Very many thanks to SUS for donating a new hive and equipment. After splitting the original colony, students found evidence of a new queen bee!



Lower School quizzers

In June the 2M quiz team champions took on Hampton in a friendly match. Tackling questions from Roman commanders to English football, it was a closely fought contest, with victory secured by Hampton in the closing stages. Congratulations to Harry, Seb Rory and Charlie for representing the school on the quizzing stage for the first time.



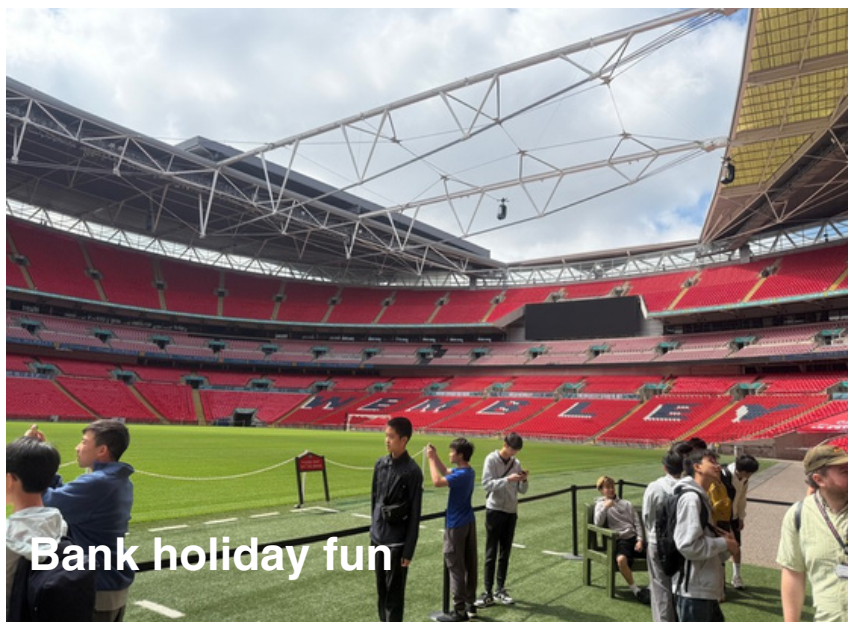
French film and pizza night

On a hot and sunny evening, a group of Lower School students enjoyed some delicious pizzas before watching *Une Vie de Chat*, a French award winning animation, in the welcomingly air conditioned theatre. They all rated the film very highly and enjoyed the combination of humour and poignancy.



The Martlet shines again

The school newspaper *The Martlet* has once again won Best Newspaper category in The Shine School Media Awards. Run by The Stationers' Foundation, the awards are designed to reward students who create outstanding newspapers, magazines, podcasts, and digital projects, and help young people develop crucial literacy, publishing, and business skills. A huge congratulations to the entire Martlet team for their hard work, under the guidance of editor Nathan, who leaves behind a remarkable legacy for next year's editor, Dylan.



Bank holiday fun

Twenty five of our boarders swapped the boarding house for an action-packed day out in London over the Bank Holiday weekend. The excursion kicked off beneath the famous arch of Wembley Stadium with an exclusive, behind-the-scenes tour. Boarders were treated to the ultimate VIP experience with unrestricted access to the official England team areas. From sitting in the hallowed dressing rooms where the Three Lions prepare for glory, to walking down the legendary players' tunnel and taking a seat in the manager's dugout, the group loved experiencing the magic of English football up close. After soaking in the stadium's history, the squad traded the pitch for the shops, heading to Westfield for an afternoon of well-earned free time. Boarders enjoyed the independence to explore the massive shopping centre with their friends, hunting down the latest trends and refuelling at the sprawling food courts. It was the perfect, relaxed end to a brilliant day out. It's safe to say the weekend trip scored a massive win with everyone.

Mathematical Olympiad

Many congratulations to Arnold who has achieved the best score in the 2026 UKMT Hamilton Mathematical Olympiad (South East Region). This is a staggering achievement and we are excited to see what the future will hold for this extremely adept mathematician.



Ringling the changes

In June, the bellringing club travelled to Sunningwell to mark their 60th anniversary. The band included Mr Jenkins and Mr Lomax, Upper Sixth Nathan (who rang his first quarter peal), Abingdon Prep pupil Reuben, and Brian and Susan from St Helen's Church, whose essential support helps keep the school club running.



Biology challenge

Sixteen Fourth Year students took part in this year's Biology Challenge - a national competition that encourages students to apply their knowledge of Biology beyond the classroom. The challenge tests curriculum content, as well as a wider awareness of the natural world and current biological issues. Our students rose to the challenge, with over 80% achieving either a Gold or Silver award. What a fantastic achievement - well done all who took part.



House challenge

Many congratulations to Donnelly's House for winning the annual House Challenge quiz tournament held before half-term. The team of Callum, Rafiq and William successfully outwitted the Franklin's House team in the final.



Bronze Duke of Edinburgh canoeing assessment



Over 8 and 9 June, a determined group of Fourth Year students took to the River Medway in Kent for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh canoeing assessment. Paddling the route from Tonbridge to Maidstone, with an overnight camp at Yalding. Blustery winds and unpredictable June showers tested their stamina and boat control, demanding high levels of teamwork to navigate the river and set up camp. Morale remained high, with even a capsized unable to dampen their spirits. Through resilient paddling and excellent campcraft, the group passed their assessment with flying colours.



Out in the field

Lower Sixth Geography students recently completed the annual fieldwork trip, gathering the primary data needed for their independent A Level investigations. Human Geography students carried out research in Birmingham and Wrexham, while Physical Geography students explored a range of environments including the scree slopes at Llangollen, the coastline at Criccieth, and the sand dunes at Harlech. The trip also included a walk through the stunning Nant Ffrancon Valley. We were lucky to avoid the only poor weather of the week and managed to see the dramatic landscape of Cwm Idwal. The fieldwork gave students valuable experience in data collection techniques and helped prepare them for the next stage of their coursework projects.



Learning about one's roots



The First Years spent a June afternoon learning about the early history of the school. After a fascinating talk from Mrs Wearne, the school archivist, they walked into Abingdon to visit Abingdon Museum, St Helen's Church, St Nicolas' Church and the Roysse Room (the school site after its re-endowment in 1563).

Abingdon 2026 Leavers



On 8 May, we bid a fond farewell to our Upper Sixth students and welcomed them into the Old Abingdonian (OA) Club. To mark the milestone, yearbooks were handed out and a special graduation ceremony was held in the Amey Theatre, followed by a final photo of the entire year group. The morning was rounded off with a service of reflection, a delicious lunch and lots of ice-cream!



Abingdon Results



A Levels

Grade	A Level passes
A* and A	32%
A* to B	92.5%
A* to C	97.9%
EPQ	
A* to B	97%

GCSEs

Grade	GCSE passes
9	47.6%
9 and 8	73.9%
9 to 7	88.4%
9 to 4	99.7%

A spectacular night under the stars

Clear skies and a comfortably cool breeze set the perfect stage for the Griffen Ball on the evening of Saturday 27 June as 375 students, parents, and guests gathered for an unforgettable celebration.

Attendees were treated to a delicious three course supper, while a pair of roaming magicians kept the crowds entertained throughout. There was live music from Ear Candy Oxford with energetic sets from DJ Joffins that kept the dance floor packed. Guests also tried their luck at a dedicated suite of casino tables and took a spin in the infamous dodgems.

By the time the festivities wrapped up, guests headed home having experienced a truly brilliant celebration.



A celebration of the arts

One of the most anticipated events in the school calendar is the Celebration of the Arts, which this year took place on Wednesday 24 June. Parents and students from across Abingdon School, Abingdon Prep School and The Manor Prep were invited to bring a picnic and soak up the atmosphere. Featuring two art exhibitions, as well as the much loved Anything but Classical concert, and the House Drama Final, there was plenty to see, do and enjoy. The Lower School 'Be our Guest' exhibition was especially impressive - with recreations of favourite foods (below)gemini.





Chinatown and The British Museum

Third and Fourth Year Mandarin students visited Chinatown and the British Museum this term, to deepen their understanding of Chinese language and culture. The day began at Charing Cross Library, the largest Chinese library in the UK, where students learned about its history and took part in a word hunt using Chinese book titles. They then explored Chinatown through a scavenger hunt, identifying Chinese characters on signs, visiting shops, and practising real-life Mandarin through simple shopping interactions. Students also learned about the history of the area. After lunch, they visited the British Museum's Chinese collection where they saw Ming Dynasty Glazed Ceramic Dragon Tiles, Tang sancai ceramics, Northern Song dynasty monochromes, and Jade and bronze collections.



Consider yourself at home

The Amey Theatre was transformed into Victorian London in May as Abingdon's Lower School delivered a spectacular production of *Oliver! Jr*. The young cast captivated audiences of friends and family, proving they could master a high-energy, all-singing, and all-dancing spectacle. Production lead Mrs Badger expressed immense pride, noting that the students' infectious joy on stage made weeks of hard work completely worthwhile. The triumphant show has set a brilliant new benchmark for future Lower School musicals. Huge thanks go to the dedicated staff and supportive parents who went above and beyond to make this theatrical success possible.

Abingdon News



Moldova

Six Lower Sixth formers and two members of staff visited Moldova to organise summer day camps for over 100 Moldovan children in two schools at the beginning of the summer. Activities included English lessons, art and craft, and team challenges such as film making and Taskmaster-style competition. We are very grateful to Agape, our partner charity, for making the trip possible.



CCF best overall

Abingdon's CCF cadets represented the School admirably at the end of term at Central Camp. They delivered outstanding performances across every activity, securing 51 individual and team medals and were honoured with the Best Overall Contingent trophy. Considering they were up against 650 participants from 17 other schools, this is a remarkable accomplishment.

Abingdon School in Partnership

Partnership ambassador

Jacob looks back on a transformative year

Serving as the first student ambassador for Abingdon School in Partnership (ASiP) has been a privilege. My role was to raise awareness, collect testimonies, and represent our community - a journey that witnessed growth not just in others, but also in myself.

A major highlight was co-leading OX14 Learning Partnership student voice meetings alongside my peer, Isa. Collaborating with local schools, we worked to enhance cross-school communication, social media engagement, and event signposting. Across the year, I documented a dynamic range of initiatives including a podcast, academic coaching, primary science club and our ChallengED event. While my job was to report on how these events helped others, the process helped me as well, transforming my own confidence. Entering a room of strangers used to feel like a "social endurance event" but through this role and Peer Support Lead training, I learned that confidence is a skill and I developed the ability to navigate social barriers and found how much it can help with building rapport. Managing articles sharpened my organisation skills and taught me that preparation and clear communications are the foundation of any successful project; while watching others reinforced that effective leadership isn't just about what you know, but how you share that knowledge and how well you listen to those around you.

Reflecting on nearly 4,000 hours of student partnership experiences, I feel immense pride. By documenting the success of others, I ultimately found my own voice.



Ahead of hosting their own Model United Nations (MUN) Conference towards the end of term, Abingdon students dominated at the Marlborough College MUN in June. Competing against 35 other schools of roughly 450 delegates, the team secured a staggering nine individual awards including the highly coveted 'Best Delegation' for their representation of China. A brilliant result.



The Greenpower race season began this term and our teams delivered an impressive performance on 24 May at Goodwood and on the 31 May at Castle Combe, along with our partnership school, Fitzharrys.

Across fiercely contested races in the morning and afternoon, in very hot conditions, the teams remained competitive and showed consistent strength throughout the day. Both teams coped admirably with the challenging weather, demonstrating real resilience and teamwork.

Congratulations to all involved for their dedication and hard work.



Over 80 Sixth Formers across the OX14 Learning Partnership (including 17 from Abingdon) have been appointed as Peer Support Leads (PSLs) for the next academic year. To help prepare them for their mentoring roles, they need to undertake some training, the first session of which they completed this term. The training focussed on safeguarding, active listening, and creative listening to ensure they can safely support their younger peers whilst developing leadership skills.

Abingdon Youth Summit

In this feature, Abingdon student Dylan talks about attending the recently held Abingdon Youth Forum and highlights the important work of local charity The Abingdon Bridge.



"Do you ever feel isolated, that there is no one to lean on, and that centralised, state support for young people has dwindled in recent years?

"Certainly, this is the daily reality for thousands of 13 to 25 year olds, both in and outside of Abingdon, but, thanks to the work of charitable organisations like The Abingdon Bridge (TAB), there is hope that this will change.

"The Abingdon Bridge recently hosted the Abingdon Youth Forum, held at the Cybersecurity firm Sophos' offices in Abingdon. The event saw more than 100 attendees meet to raise awareness, and take action on, these issues.

"At the forum, decision makers and young people were brought together - connecting those in power with young people in need. Those present included the Mayor of Abingdon, the Abingdon MP, Oxfordshire county councillors, company CEOs, police officials and four of Abingdon School's own Peer Support Leads (PSLs), a part of Abingdon's OX14 Learning Partnership.

"The event featured a collaborative workshop where

attendees were divided into teams of roughly ten, with a Peer Support Leader assigned to each group. During the session, teams tackled a 'budget' challenge, tasked with designing and funding concrete initiatives to provide social spaces, quality education, and accessible career opportunities for today's young people.

"The four attending PSLs represented Abingdon School exceptionally, contributing freely and honestly to group discussion and openly connecting with leaders and others. Often, as the only representative young person within their group, their voices mattered the most.

"Sports Day in the afternoon brought the event to an end for Abingdon's PSLs - but the Youth Forum was a major success. Everyone involved learned the importance of providing for the younger generations, taking care of what we have, and (ultimately) fostering our future leaders.

"We look forward to further collaboration between Abingdon School, the OX14 Learning Partnership and The Abingdon Bridge; together we can provide the opportunity for valuable dialogue about the future direction of the town for young people."

Abingdon Music

Music in the Netherlands

At the beginning of the summer, 61 pupils and 7 staff embarked on an eight day music tour to the Netherlands. The Chapel Choir, Big Band, and String Ensemble delivered 10 contrasting performances throughout the week.

The tour opened in Wijk bij Duurstede with a Big Band concert in the Market Square, followed by a sacred concert at the Grotekerk featuring Fauré's *Requiem*. In Delft, the Big Band entertained market crowds before the group explored Amsterdam, visited Anne Frank's House, and attended Evensong at St Nicholas Basilica.

In Haarlem, pupils toured a working windmill, prior to a two hour Big Band jazz concert and a choir performance at the iconic *Bavokerk*, accompanied by Mr Morrin on the historic organ.

A rest day at the Efteling theme park preceded a group dinner and final performances in Utrecht. Highlights included a concert at the Domkerk - featuring a spellbinding performance of Bach's *Chaconne in D Minor* by Ryan, a canal cruise, and an energetic Big Band theatre show. The tour concluded in Leiden with a final performance of Fauré's *Requiem* at the Hartbrugkerk.

A memorable 10 concert journey for one and all.



Piano extravaganza

It was a joyful evening in June which brought together pupils and staff who took to the stage to share their passion for music-making. Their collective performances highlighted a wonderful sense of togetherness and community, and was hugely appreciated by the audience who were captivated.



Lower School on song

The six Lower School tutor groups took to the stage of the Amey Theatre just before half-term for the annual inter-tutor group music competition. Each group had been working on a song in their music lessons for several weeks and had put together their own band to provide accompaniment. A great deal of musicianship was on display and Mr Windsor had lots of positive feedback to give in his adjudication. The winners of the trophy this year were 2M for their excellent performance of *Counting Stars* by One Republic.



Evensong at Dorchester

On 27 April, the Chapel Choir sang a service of Evensong jointly with the choir of Elstree School in the beautiful setting of Dorchester Abbey. The two choirs made a fittingly majestic sound in Stanford's *Evening Service in C*, one of the grandest settings in the repertoire, and also sang music by Mozart and Ayleward, along with S. S. Wesley's great Eastertide anthem *Blessed be the God and Father*.



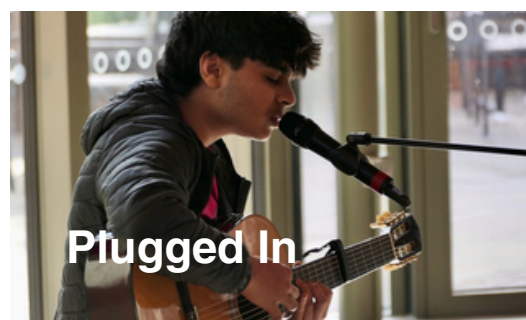
Evensong at Westminster

On 1 May, the Chapel Choir sang evensong at Westminster Abbey. Following an historic tour and a warm-up performance at St Margaret's Church, the choir rehearsed in the Abbey with the organist. During the service, they performed with superb diction and blend, delivering a resounding rendition of Stanford's *Evening Service in C* and S.S. Wesley's *Blessed be the God and Father*. Singing at such an iconic venue is a wonderful accolade and a special mention must go to Teodor for his poised treble solo.



Showcasing musical talent

In May, both the solo platform no. 5 and musicians' concert held at St Michael's Church highlighted the confidence, maturity and enjoyment of our musical students. Brava!



Plugged In

Our Plugged In concert in May featured solos from guitarists, bassists and drummers and showcased an exciting range of music. A good warm up to the Anything but Classical concert held in June.



Lower School Gala Concert

On 12 June, Lower School presented an evening concert. One highlight was the Orchestra which has grown over the year as those who have benefitted from the taster scheme have joined up. Another, was a scene from their production of *Oliver* earlier in the term. They closed the concert with *Reach For The Stars*, their entry for House Singing Competition this year. Well done to all those involved.

Young musician

On 29 April, eminent musician, George Caird came into school to adjudicate the advanced final of the Young Musician of the Year competition. Featuring 10 performances from nine pupils, it was a concert of incredible musicianship and interpretation. Congratulations to all our student performers and especially to Ryan with this year's winning performance of Ravel's *Tzigane*.

Abingdon Sport

Record breaking success at the National Schools Regatta



Abingdon's rowers put on a spectacular display at Dorney Lake over a scorching, record-breaking May weekend. Fielding 98 rowers across 11 events, Abingdon achieved its best collective set of results in nearly a decade, culminating in seven crews ranking in the nation's top six. Highlights included a brilliant, podium-equalling Bronze medal for the J15 A crew, dominant finals wins for all three J14 octos, and both J16 crews making the A final. The weekend concluded with a masterfully executed, tactical victory for the Championship Eight, who flew from 14th in the time trials to secure 9th place nationally. A massive well done to our rowers and huge thanks to parents and coaches for their support.



County cup for U15s

It has been an action-packed and highly successful term for the U15A Cricket side, culminating in county cup glory. First up was the semi-final away at St Edward's. Due to the weather, the match was reduced to a thrilling 5-over shootout. Will spearheaded the bowling attack, completely shifting momentum by taking an incredible three wickets for just three runs in his single over. Thanks to this tight bowling, Abingdon comfortably chased down the target of 46 with seven wickets to spare. This victory set up a Friday evening clash away against MCS in the County Cup Final. After losing the toss and being asked to field, Patrick led the bowling performance with an impressive spell of three for 17 off his four overs, restricting MCS to 113/eight from their 20 overs. Abingdon's chase got off to a shaky start with a few early wickets, but a brilliant, steadying partnership between George (50) and Patrick (32) saw the team home with two overs to spare. With the county title secured, Abingdon proudly progresses to the national stages of the T20 Competition.



Feeling sporty

Lower School pupils enjoyed a very successful inter-tutor group athletics competition at Tilsley Park in June. Cheered on by their parents, every pupil competed in a track and a field event and there was a really good competitive and supportive atmosphere all afternoon. Congratulations to 1G and 2C who came 1st in their respective year groups.

Swimming sensations

Many congratulations to Fourth Years, Kaan and Satoshi; and Fifth Year, Luca all of whom finished the swimming season ranked within the top 20 swimmers in Great Britain and who qualified to compete at the Acquatics GB Summer Championships and the Swim England National Championships which took place in Sheffield in July.



Staking their claim

The end of term saw the final croquet fixture of the season, against Merchant Taylors' Northwood on home soil. With most of the croquet first team away on a geography field trip, several players with much less croquet experience stepped up at the last minute to represent the school - including a couple of pupils who had never played croquet before, and one of our Heads of School, Isa. The progress made by all was impressive, and there were some very close games.



U12 8-a-side festival

The U12A cricket team enjoyed a fun day of competition at the St Hugh's eight-a-side Festival in May. In the opener, Abingdon set a solid target of 76, but Winchester House chased it down in the final over. The team bounced back in game two, restricting Abingdon Prep with excellent bowling and fielding before chasing down the target with an over to spare. The final match against the hosts saw St Hugh's set a target of 91; which despite aggressive running and powerful lower-order hitting, saw Abingdon finish just 10 runs short.



Smooth sailing

Many congratulations to Alex who has qualified to represent Great Britain (GBR) at the upcoming 29er World Championships in Kiel, Germany. The road to qualification was a gruelling one, consisting of three consecutive events over the winter where being placed within the top 15 of the fleet paved the way for qualification. Bravo Alex.



Sport Award holders' go to Bath

On 28 April, our Sports Award holders' visited the University of Bath to experience one of the world's best university sports facilities. Students participated in some specialised testing in the sport science lab including a VO2 max test, a Wingate Anaerobic Test, and a strength assessment. After a lunch, they attended a lecture by applied sports scientist, Jonathan Robinson; were given a tour of the facilities; and watched and met members of GBs swimming team.



On the up

On Thursday 7 May, Abingdon welcomed some Cothill students to the climbing wall to compete in a friendly fixture against six Lower School students. There were a set of 12 boulders of varying difficulty to try to complete in a 40 minute period, with individuals scoring points for each one they managed. Well done to Evan, Harry, Josh and William for tackling some epic climbs and particular congratulations to Second Year pupils James, who came joint 1st, and Alby, who placed 3rd.

Henry selected for Vitality Mixed Disability IT20 Series

Many congratulations to Henry who has been selected to represent England in the upcoming Vitality Mixed Disability IT20 Bi-Lateral Series against India. Following an extensive selection process, the England and Wales Cricket Board confirmed Henry's inclusion as part of a 16-man squad designated to compete in the seven-match series. Neil Bradshaw, England Disability Cricket Operations Manager, extended his congratulations in an official letter from Lord's Cricket Ground, wishing Henry the best of luck for the upcoming matches. As do we!





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high level of focus on communication and language
development.”**

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Abingdon Prep

Really good sports



Prep School pupils enjoyed a fantastic day of House competition and lots of fun in our annual Sports Day held at Tilsley Park. It began with the parade of the houses, followed by a full morning of field and track events, cheered on by parents, friends and staff.

A spooktacular play

Our Senior section finished off the term with a wonderfully weird and brilliantly spooky production of *The Addams Family* at The Amey Theatre. Across four intensive days, the children worked with focus and energy to bring this ghoulishly funny story to life. The final performance was a real triumph and the audience were thoroughly entertained. Huge congratulations to every pupil (and teacher) involved, both on stage and behind the scenes, for their hard work, teamwork and fantastic performances. A creepy, kooky success!



Breaking the code



Year 3 had a great day discovering what it was like to be a member of the Auxiliary Unit, training at Coleshill base in April. They explored an underground bunker, completed dead letter drops and experienced camouflage and stealth training, as well as trying some code breaking techniques.

Junior summer concert



Congratulations to the pupils in our Junior Section who showed a wide variety of musical talent, both collectively and performing solos, in their summer concert, held in June.

A 'wild' time



Reception and Year 1 had a really wild day out at the Cotswold Wildlife Park this term. The children were amazed to see so many incredible animals, including rhinos, giraffes, zebras, and lions.



Gardening Club

With the days getting longer and the weather warming up it was about time the gardening club got their hands in the soil again. At the end of April, the pupils cleared the old beds of the winter weeds and planted some sunflowers, pumpkins and cosmos. They were excited to see how tall they could grow their sunflowers this year, whilst nurturing the area to attract as much biodiversity as possible.

Year 8 experience cricket at Lord's



Year 8 pupils enjoyed a fantastic day at Lord's Cricket Ground, the home of Cricket, where they experienced an inspiring mix of history and practical coaching. The visit began with a guided tour of the iconic ground, giving pupils exclusive access to some of Lord's most famous areas, including the world-renowned Media Centre and the fascinating MCC Museum. The tour provided a unique insight into the rich history and traditions of the game. Students then took part in an exciting coaching session at the Indoor Cricket Centre, where MCC coaches delivered an engaging session designed to develop their cricket skills in a fun and supportive environment. Pupils were then lucky enough to see the England and South Africa women's teams training on the Nursery Ground. Seeing international players prepare at close quarters was an unforgettable experience and a source of inspiration for everyone involved.

Sun and celebration at summer garden party

The Head welcomed donors and volunteers to the beautiful garden of Lacies Court for the annual garden party. The evening is always a celebration and an opportunity to say thank you to everyone who supports the school whether through philanthropy, mentoring or volunteering. Your generosity enriches the educational experience of every student at Abingdon.



Development round up 2025/26

Abingdon's community of supporters grows with each year, and it would be impossible to summarise the number of initiatives and touch points that our donors interact with in their relationship with the school. Every member of the Abingdonian community who chooses to support the school is a stakeholder in its future, ensuring future generations continue to benefit from an Abingdon education.

Since launching our Seven Years to Change a Life bursary campaign in 2021, the Abingdon community has raised nearly £2.5m in donations and pledges. Thanks to the incredible support of OAs, parents, and friends, the 110 Club now has 44 members funding 10% to 100% of a student's entire journey. This collective generosity allowed Abingdon School to provide 74 bursary places this year, with 22 students receiving full fee remission. Together, we are closer to our ultimate goal of supporting 110 pupils.

A Champagne afternoon tea for members of the 1563 Society



We held our annual 1563 Society gathering on 3 June, bringing together those who have generously pledged a legacy to the school. This year, guests joined us for a traditional afternoon tea, which was made memorable by the musical talents of our students.



A term in the life of the OA Club Office

Abingdon's vibrant Old Abingdonian community is reflected in the daily work of the OA Club Office. From inviting Tom Digby (OA 2016), Olympic and World Champion rower, to speak to our Upper Sixth leavers, organising the receptions held in Shanghai and Hong Kong, arranging the Gerald Smithson Memorial Cricket match, to writing an article on an OA award-winning wildlife director and cinematographer based in Botswana's Okavango Delta – no two days are the same. Illustrated are some of last term's activities.



Evensong at Westminster Abbey, followed by OA drinks at The Feathers on Friday 1 May.



Leavers' Day on Friday 8 May. OA Club Chair, welcomed 184 Upper Sixth leavers to the OA Club.



OA 50s, 60s Lunch on Friday 15 May. 100 OAs and guests attended the annual lunch at the Leander Club.



OA Drinks, Hong Kong on Thursday 4 June at The Racing Club, Happy Valley Racecourse.



Year Group Reunions ('56 '61 '66 '71 '76 '81 '86 '91 '96 '01 '06 '11 '16 '21) on Saturday 13 June.



The Gerald Smithson Memorial Cricket Match on Friday 19 June. OAs vs School's 1st XI.



UCAS 360 Degrees on Friday 26 June. Fifty three OA volunteers signed up for the School's UCAS 360 Degrees event. Students network with alumni to gain first-hand insight into specific degree courses, and university life.



Henley Royal Regatta on Friday 3 July. Members of the Abingdonian community enjoyed strawberries and Pimm's during the afternoon tea break.

Abingdon Out of the Past

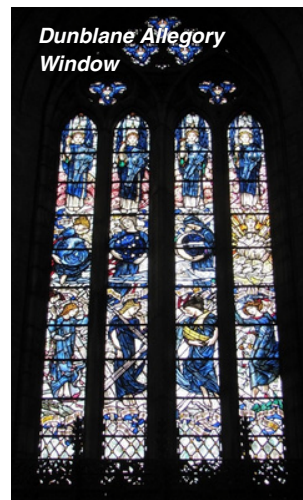
Abingdon's stained glass

Dunblane Cathedral

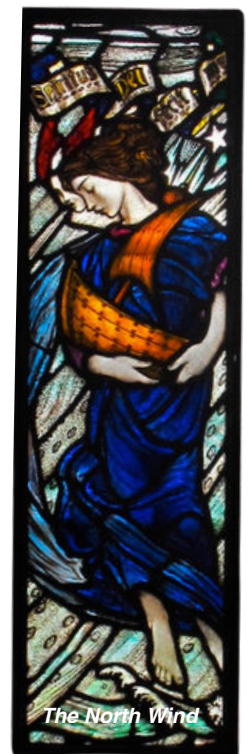
Louis Davis (1860 – 1941), educated at Abingdon in the 1870s, was a distinguished stained-glass artist of the Arts and Crafts movement whose masterpiece, the six Choir windows in Dunblane Cathedral, was commissioned by the Scottish architect Sir Robert Lorimer. After his death, Davis's widow donated an exhibition panel from one of these windows to the School. It is currently in the Staff Common Room. The Choir windows illustrate the Benedicite Opera Omnia, the Song of Creation, and the Abingdon panel represents the north wind from the Allegory window. In addition to the panel, the School archives hold a number of Davis's sketchbooks and drawings.



Louis Davis



Dunblane Allegory Window



The North Wind

Common Room



Also in the common room are four panels of glass that began life in the old schoolroom, now the Roysse Room part of the Abingdon Guildhall buildings. The work of the firm of C E Kempe and Co, the panels list the names of the headmasters who occupied the schoolroom between 1563 and 1870, some of the prominent men educated in that schoolroom and the names of their contemporaries who became heads of Oxford colleges. The panels were installed and the room refurbished in 1911 at the cost of two OAs keen to mark the fact that the room had been Abingdon's schoolroom for 307 years.

Four of the panels, the list of headmasters and the heads of Oxford Colleges, had to be removed when Abingdon's Abbey Hall was built in 1966. They were acquired by the School on permanent loan during the 1990s.

Roysse Room

Two panels remain in the Roysse Room, together with a series of stained-glass coats of arms belonging to benefactors of the School during its years in that schoolroom. They are the work of William Glasby (1863 – 1942).





Discover, experiment and explore at Family Science Club

Abingdon School Enterprises has worked closely with the Abingdon Science Partnership team to deliver Family Science Club since October 2025. Together, we have run six fantastic Family Science Club weekends each term throughout the academic year. From shocking electricity and kitchen chemistry sessions to pond life investigations and space exploration, there has been a wealth of hands-on activities for children of all ages to enjoy.

Welcoming our community to the Amey Theatre

This year, we have hosted 17 National Theatre Live and Royal Ballet and Opera screenings at the Amey Theatre, alongside 25 annual productions by performing arts schools and community groups. It has been a fantastic year for welcoming our community into the theatre. From our first comedy night in June to a diverse programme of talks, book signings and special events, we are delighted to have welcomed more than 19,500 patrons through our doors.



That's a wrap on Sports Day season at Tilsley Park

It has been another busy and rewarding sports day season at Tilsley Park, with more than 20 school sports days taking place, including a number of partnership events. Parents and guardians turned out in large numbers to support and encourage their children, creating a vibrant and memorable atmosphere.

Tilsley Park remains committed to providing local catchment schools with free access to its sports facilities. By welcoming young people to experience these exceptional facilities, we hope to inspire participation in sport, create new opportunities for local pupils, and strengthen our longstanding connections with the wider community.



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