



AROUND THE PALACE

Dear all,



As we approach the end of this academic year, we find ourselves at a poignant crossroads for the school. This summer marks the closing of our much-loved Prep School, and next summer will see the closure of the Senior School. This has undoubtedly cast a shadow of sadness over our community. However, amidst these challenging times, the spirit of our students, from Pre School to Year 13, has stood out.

At Seniors, the recent activities include the wonderful Sports Day with much fun had on the inflatables in the afternoon, the brilliant Dance and Performing Arts Showcases and the Year 13 leavers' party have showcased the resilience and positivity of our students.

All the Old Palace students have continued to embrace every opportunity with enthusiasm and positivity, embodying the core values of our school. Similar spirit

was evident this weekend at the Old Palace Association alumnae lunch where we welcomed back over 250 former students of the school. Although there was sadness about the school closure, this was in part mitigated by the very enthusiastic singing of the school song at the end of the event. We anticipate it will be the same at the end of the prizegiving assembly on Monday.

We still have events happening next week and these will be reported on in the bulletin at the end of the summer break.

To all those students and families leaving us this year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your hard work, contribution and support of the school and we

wish you every success in your future endeavours. For those who are returning in September for the important year ahead, we hope you enjoy a restful and rejuvenating summer break.

As I write this final message as Head, I am filled with pride and gratitude for having had the privilege to lead such a remarkable community through the challenges that we have faced.

Thank you all for your unwavering support, and I wish you all the very best for the future.

Best wishes

Jane Burton, Head

Year 13 Leavers' Party



Year 13 Leavers' Party

Year 13 held their Leavers' party on a warm summer's evening at Prep. They invited special guests Mr & Mrs Talleux along with current members of staff to dine with them at beautifully decorated tables in the field. Afterwards, everyone joined in with some group dances which were a lovely way to end the evening.



Year 13 Leavers' Party *continued*





Unity Dance Show

Unity, the final Dance Showcase at Old Palace School, took place in the Banqueting Hall on Wednesday the 26th of June to a sold out audience. Staff and students had been busy rehearsing for many months before the show to perform a diverse range of genres and styles and really stepped up to the mark with full energy and commitment. With 23 different dance pieces and more than 40 student and staff performers involved, it was busy back stage with many dancers having multiple pieces to perform. Bittersweet as it was, being the last whole school dance production, it was great to see some students perform to an audience for the first time with such confidence and connection to the work and their fellow performers.

Many reasons why I truly enjoy working at this school were evident in the show. The first being a sense of community, students from Year 7 to 13

worked together to not only perform in the finale together but created the opening number as a way of welcoming the audience to the show.

Then there is the celebration of diversity, for example Scico Country was a true highlight for the audience, with four Line Dancing Old Palace Science teachers toe-tapping across the stage, this made me, the students and hopefully you, smile! Miss Kimuli choreographed a hip hop inspired piece allowing the Year 8's to express themselves through dance.

Thirdly, the students' ambition and creativity, due to the amount of audition pieces performed celebrating cultures, popular styles in the form of solos to quartets, alongside GCSE, Arts Award and Dance Leaders pieces, with clear choreographic intent.

Finally, the trust and belief students have created between one another,

staff and themselves to create a fantastic show during unsettling times. Students mastered challenging lifts, connected with their inner thoughts and feelings and rose above and beyond what was thrown in their direction demonstrating their perseverance and strength. I am grateful to work with such talented and compassionate students. A dance performance I will never forget!

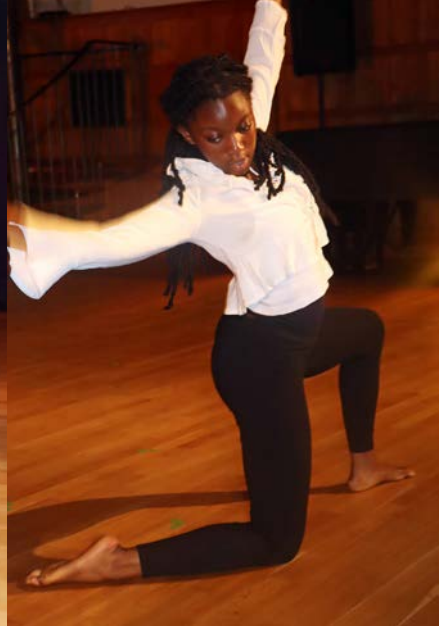
The result of everyone's hard work backstage meant that the show was well organised, ran smoothly and there was a joyous atmosphere. A huge well done to all the dancers, crew and staff. You all worked together to create a memorable performance for the audience, conveying your respect for Dance and one other, Thank you.

Mrs Barber
Head of Dance (Acting)





Unity Dance Show *continued*



Unity Dance Show *continued*



Women in Sport Week/Olympic Week

As a department we are always keen to recognise the importance of being active and we hope students find an activity that they will pursue beyond their school life. With the Olympics fast approaching, we had a week of celebrating sport – but with the focus on Women in Sport.

During breaktimes there were opportunities to relive primary school days with Big Skipping and mini challenges.

The week kicked off with a Cricket Bowl Out – and appropriately coincided with the Crochet Club Yarn Bomb of the Olympic Rings and the Paris 2024 Logo!

The bowl out was won by Mr Simpson and Jessica (Year 8) despite admirable efforts from everyone else who took part. The opportunities for girls to take part and progress in cricket have never been better – so if you are keen to be involved in cricket beyond school please contact your local cricket club or check out the ECB/Play Cricket website.

Tuesday saw staff and students playing tennis and trying some mini tennis challenges.



Women in Sport Week/Olympic Week *continued*

Wimbledon Tennis Championships are just around the corner in both location and time so what better time to try out tennis! Did you know that since Emma Raducanu rose to fame (2022) there has been a 10% increase in the number of 16 – 35 year olds playing tennis? Tennis is a great sport for fitness and for meeting new people.

Well done to those who joined in – and maybe visit your local club or local park to play over the summer.

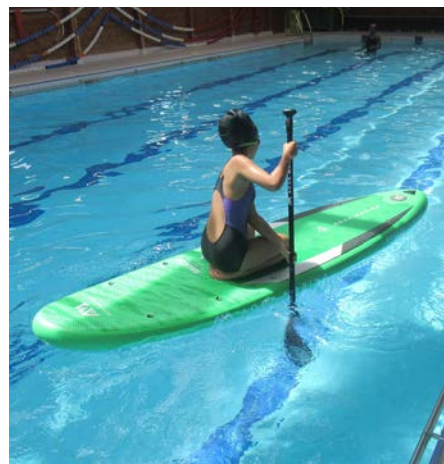
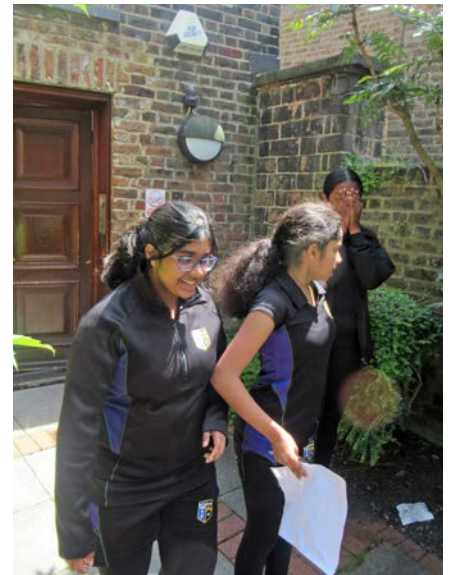
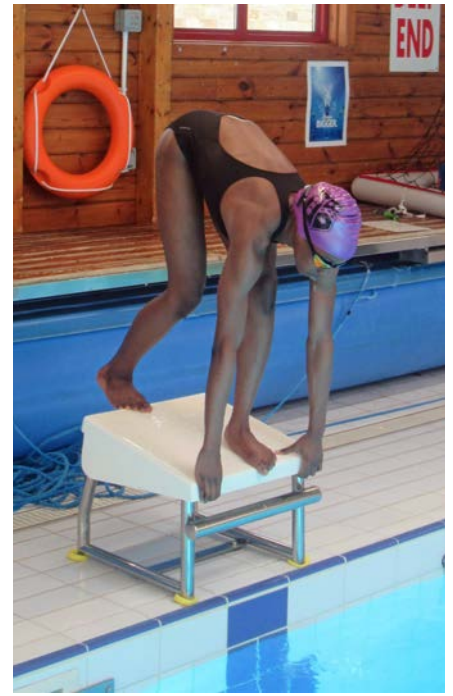
Wednesday was water based activities at lunchtime. Paddle Boarding and Big Float Challenges! Trying to get the paddle boards to go in the required direction was a challenge although Liana has totally grasped this! Lots of fun and fallings off....

In addition TIANNA (Year 8) attempted and succeeded in breaking the schools Year 8 25m Butterfly record! Well done to Tianna!

Thursday – well that was Sports Day – see all the photos! What a great day that was!

Mr Simpson's infamous Scavenger Hunt saw teams of students running round the school looking for clues (and in some cases moving them to make it difficult for other teams....) It was supposed to be nice and calm and relaxing after the busyness of Sports Day – but it wasn't! Well done to those teams who found all the clues and successfully rearranged the letters to make the School Motto.

Well done to everyone who took part! It was a fun week!



Crochet Club Yarn Bombs the Tennis Court for Women in Sport Week

The Old Palace Crochet Club has been steadily crafting for International Yarn Bomb Day that takes place at the beginning of every June. It is this event, once a year when crafty yarn-lovers display their woolly creations outside for others to see.

Last year, the club made a big 'tree-hugging' hands and arms to wrap around our Old Palace chestnut tree.

The Old Palace Crochet Club has spent since April preparing for, and steadily crafting every Monday lunch time since April in preparation for this year's yarn bomb. Using techniques such as finger knitting, lots of blue, black, red, yellow and green strands of what look like rope were made and wrapped around mini hula hoops. Then came the task of making LOADS of gold strands for weaving into a large crocheted mandala 'dream-catcher' supported by a huge

hula hoop. This acts like a frame for working the gold finger knitted yarn into.

This year, we wanted to create a sports-themed display at Old Palace during our Women in Sports week.

Thanks to Mrs Smith and the PE department, we hung our display, the Paris 2024 Olympic logo, complete with Olympic rings up in the tennis court for all to see.

Thanks to Liana, Parvati, Dayna, Sadhana, Anoushka, Sansita, Isla and Mrs Peplow for all their hard work in helping to make this years Old Palace yarn bomb possible.



Year 7: PSHE - First Aid

In our last Year 7 PSHE lesson, we learnt about what we should do if we found someone lying unconscious on the ground.

Firstly, we learnt about the Dr's ABC which stands for:

Danger = Check for

Response = see if you get a response

Shout = for help

Airways = check for blockage

Breathing = see if patient is breathing

Circulation = make sure no major injuries

After this, we learnt about how to put someone in the

recovery position, which we tried out on each other.

Finally, we learnt about CPR. CPR actually stands for:

Cardio

Pulmonary

Resuscitation

We used a fake defibrillator to learn about how to use it and we learnt how to apply compressions to somebody's chest in an emergency.

Overall, we feel a lot more knowledgeable and prepared for an emergency now.

Isla N, Year 7



Year 12: Economic Students Visit Lingfield College

On Thursday, 13th June, our Year 12 Economics class went to the Institute of Economic Affairs conference, held at Lingfield College.

We attended three lectures on the gender pay gap, the monetarist perspective of inflation, and the free market approach to climate change. The lectures were very interesting, and we learnt lots about economic situations which impact us in our everyday lives, as well as the history behind them.

I found the lecture on the gender pay gap the most interesting as the speaker discussed the history of this ongoing issue and how it has been approached in different ways over the last decade. The conference was overall a very engaging experience, and a great introduction to university style lectures.

Year 12, Emily



Performing Arts Showcase

On 27th June, the Performing Arts Department welcomed audience members to a dynamic and impressive evening of Dance, Drama and Music. The evening was an outstanding opportunity for students to showcase their multiple talents and for the three departments to work collaboratively. Students performed in a wide range of performance styles such as Musical Theatre, Ballet, Soul Music and Naturalistic Theatre. The number of pieces students contributed to was impressive and they demonstrated amazing abilities to adapt to these varied styles. The performance was inclusive with work from open clubs, exam classes and auditioned ensembles. Over the course of the evening, the audience was treated to a series of powerful and moving performances that highlighted the extraordinary skills of our young performers.

The evening commenced with the Chamber Choir's powerful rendition of *'Shackles (Praise You)'*. Their harmonious voices filled the hall with energy and emotion, setting a high standard for the performances that followed. Hannah (Year 10), Yea and Chloe (Year 8) then graced the stage with their skilled playing of the romantic piece, *'Valse Russe'* by Frank Bridge. Their musical prowess and synchronicity left the audience in awe, proving their dedication and talent.

A stunning ballet piece titled *'Reflection'* was performed by Natalie (Year 11), Mia (Year 12) and Rosie (Year 10). Their graceful movements and expressive choreography conveyed deep emotion, captivating everyone present.

Parvati (Year 9) mesmerized the audience with a solo performance from *'Nee Himamazahayaji'*, accompanied

by the elegant dancing of Mounisha, Hanitha, Rinii, and Navinaa (Years 12 and 13) in Classical Indian Dance style. Their intricate movements and expressive choreography were a highlight of the evening.

The Drama pieces in the first half of the Showcase were also a triumph. Dayna (Year 10), Ariana (Year 9), and Nissi (Year 13) performed a surreal extract from *'Alice in Wonderland'*; while Isla, Ayesha, Gracie-Mae, Lola, Ruby, and Ishika (Years 7 and 8) entertained with a hilarious excerpt from *'A Servant of Two Masters'*. Anoushka, Isla and Sansita (year 7), performed a charming scene from *'Toad of Toad Hall'*. Ellie (Year 11) delivered an accomplished performance of a monologue from Sophocles' *'Electra'*. Her powerful delivery and deep understanding of the character left a lasting impression, showcasing her dramatic talent.



Performing Arts Showcase *continued*

The Super Choir then delivered a breath-taking performance of Tahlyah's (Year 10) original choral piece, inspired by *'Pie Jesu'*. The composition's beauty and the choir's harmonious execution were deeply moving. Amy (alumna) also stunningly played her sister Hannah's (Year 10) original cello composition. The first half also saw an accomplished performance of the *'Flower Duet'* by Zaynah (Year 13) and Flora (Year 12) and *'Last Midnight'* by Nissi (Year 13).

The second half of the Showcase featured gripping drama pieces. The Year 10 students delivered standout performances in *'Hospital Food'* (Sapphy, Anna, Theresa-Mae, and Amber) and *'Ash Girl'* (Adaeze, Ella, Alice, and Elizabeth), showcasing their outstanding acting skills and range. Ellie (Year 11) and Lola (Year 8) also performed the iconic *'Deception, deception'* scene from *'The Glass*

Menagerie' by Tennessee Williams. Their sensitive portrayal of emotions and naturalistic acting style impressed the audience. The Musical Theatre Club also treated audiences to their comical rendition of *'Twisted'*, a revisionist parody of the 1992 film *'Aladdin'*. Finally, Sapphy (year 10) delighted with her amusing performance of heartsick teen, Gillian, in a monologue from the play *'DAGS'*.

The Junior Wind Ensemble delighted with an impressive performance of Handel's Water Music, displaying their musical finesse and coordination. Nissi (Year 13) and Flora (Year 12) also returned to sing *'Agony'* from *'Into the Woods'*. Chitleen's (Year 13) performance of *'Burn'* was also especially moving. As the audience neared the end of their journey, Zaynah and Chitleen (Year 13) performed a touching duet of *'For Good'* from *'Wicked'*, bringing a heartfelt moment

to the stage.

The Indian Dance club was back in the second half with *'Kuthu X Bharathanatiyam'*, a fusion between two predominant South Asian Dance styles. The GCSE Dance students' choreography in *'Deception'* was also a visual treat, with Theresa-Mae, Rhianna, Olivia, Amber, Sapphy, Tahlyah, Ella, Keona and Rosie demonstrating their remarkable talent and creativity.

The evening concluded with the Super Choir leading the remaining performers in a medley of Aretha Franklin hits. Nissi (Year 13) delivered the final solo with unmatched energy and passion, channelling the 'Queen of Soul' herself.

All the Showcase performances were fantastic and proved that Old Palace Performing Arts students are truly deserving of some 'R-E-S-P-E-C-T'!





Independence Day BBQ



Election Week at Old Palace!



Although the vast majority of Old Palace students were unable to vote in the general election, they got a good dose of democracy nonetheless!

On Tuesday, all of the Politics A Level students participated in a whole school assembly. Five of them acted brilliantly as representatives of each of the five major parties in England, answering questions on key policy areas: education and young people; the economy and cost of living crisis; and immigration. Even when they may not have been advocating

what they personally believed, they passionately and accurately articulated the positions of their party in order to give the audience a terrific sense of the democratic choice facing the country.

The students earned frequent and whole-hearted applause and many left the assembly wishing the country's real politicians could offer such concise and convincing answers!

Armed with information from the assembly, all students got to vote in the Old Palace mock election during form time on Wednesday. When all the votes

were tallied, the result was extremely clear. Calculated by First Past the Post, the Green Party won 5 of the 11 seats (forms), Liberal Democrats 3, the Conservatives 1 and a further 2 forms split equally between Green and Lib Dem. So we'd be looking at a Green minority government or Green and Lib Dem coalition! By percentage, Greens won 47.5% of the vote, Liberal Democrat 28.3%, Labour 11.1%, Conservatives 9.1% and Reform 4%.

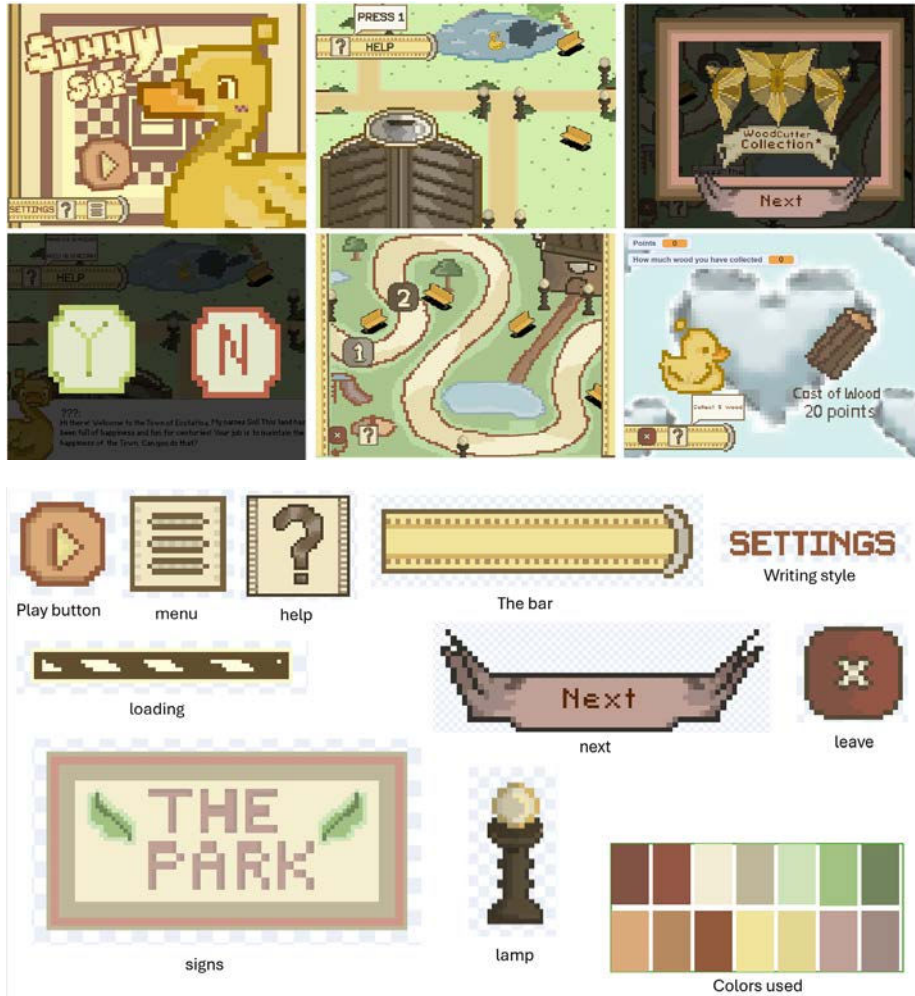
A triumph for democracy and maybe a glimpse into the future!

Bafta Young Game Designer Competition 2024 Finalists – Update!



Following on from the recent news that both Liana and Ayesha in Year 8 have got through to the final of the BAFTA Young Game Designers Competition 2024, competing against many thousands of students who enter this very rigorous and challenging competition. Their game is called *Sunny Side* about a helpful duck.

The information on the BAFTA website reads as follows:



Sunny Side

This place is called *Sunny Side*, A place where happiness is everything but there is one place in Sunnyside without happiness, Ecstataca. Players, guided by Sol, a helpful duck, embark on a journey and regain the happiness in the town again.

Completing tasks like helping a woodcutter earns 'happiness points,' which fill a happiness meter. Poorly done tasks decrease the meter, but players can retry. The player discovers what deep secrets caused the town to become like this as they progress.

Featuring simple pixel art with a yellow and brown palette, *SunnySide* is designed for ages 7-13, offering no violence for those curious to explore, focused on problem-solving with a calm and happy atmosphere.

The school wishes both students good luck in the final in July, held at BAFTA HQ in London.

The Computer Science Dept.

Year 10: Food and Nutrition - Fruit Caviar Practical

Last week in GCSE Food and Nutrition lessons our Year 10 students were working on presentation and plating techniques by practicing the skill of 'spherification'.

They made a selection of sweet caviar using agar agar powder, which is derived from seaweed, mixed into a reduction of pureed fruit a top of a plain scones with a sweet cream cheese. In the images are Anna's apple caviar, Laura's strawberry caviar and Ayesha's lemon caviar.



OPA Bids a Fond Farewell at Summer Reunion

The sun shone brightly on the last-ever OPA Summer Reunion to be held at Old Palace School. We were delighted that Miss Hilton, who was fondly remembered by many ex-pupils who attended the Reunion, sent flowers and her best wishes for the day.

250 alumnae arrived at 11.00am on Saturday morning and enjoyed tours of the Senior School followed by drinks and lunch in the Banqueting Hall and the Chestnut Courtyard.

Guests had travelled from far and wide to be there and it was lovely to see so many alumnae excitedly greeting old school friends; many of whom had not seen each other for years!

After lunch, everyone gathered in the Banqueting Hall to hear the Chair of the OPA Committee, Katherine Homatas, introduce the current Head of Old Palace, Jane Burton, who is retiring this summer. Jane summed up the mood of the reunion perfectly when she touched on the importance of the OPA in the school community, and her hope that it would continue beyond the school's closure.

After the presentations and thanks, Marian Holmes kindly played the famous school song and we all sang along – many with a tear in our eye! It was perfect ending to a truly memorable Summer Reunion.



OPA Bids a Fond Farewell at Summer Reunion *continued*



