



Autumn 2023

THE CASTLE



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EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES BAKE-OFF

Celebrating diversity and raising
money for Macmillan

PAGE 14

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

Odd socks, Support Squad and
model making competition

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NATIVITY SEASON

Pre-Prep shine in 'The Sleepy
Shepherd' and 'The Twinkly
Nativity'



ENJOYING TODAY
EDUCATING FOR TOMORROW



Note from the Head

Autumn 2023



Generosity is a valuable trait to possess and I am delighted to say that it seems to be in abundance within the MHS community. So many people have given freely of their time and gone above and beyond this term – it will be impossible to mention everybody, but they are all deserving of our gratitude. A school thrives when there is a willingness to contribute beyond the basic provision that is expected, and after all isn't a Prep School about more than the basics.

I love the enthusiasm and thoughtfulness of the children who wanted to run a cake stall to raise money for charity or deliver presents to The Salvation Army in Hastings. I love Year 8's leadership of the pupil body, their Support Squad activity on Tuesday mornings and the way they rise to any occasion. I love the speed with which the staff volunteer to do an extra duty or cover for a colleague who is absent, and I love their ability to understand and work for each child as an individual. And I particularly love the fantastic Friends of Marlborough House who have put in such an incredible stint through November and December, providing a Fireworks Extravaganza, a Christmas Fair, a Children's Shopping Event and more, while also decorating the School and taking me out for lunch! Marlborough House is a triangular relationship between the children, the parents and the staff, and I for one feel that it is going very smoothly and positively. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped to contribute to the warmth and positivity that encases us at present – long may it continue!

Congratulations to those who have achieved exam success and gained entry into senior school this term; for some the job is done and the pressure is over, while others must wait a while longer. I applaud the success of our musicians, our horse riders and our sports teams, while it has been a pleasure admiring the fruits of the drama, art and DT departments. We finished with a bonanza of Christmas entertainment – nativity plays, Victorian performances and a wonderful Carol Service, not to mention Christmas lunches, trips and pantomimes. Finding that balance between being purposeful and having fun is always an exciting challenge, one which I'm proud to say that I feel we are meeting.

I am writing this article five days after the end of term, having spent much of the last three days in bed with illness (typical teacher!) this article always allows me space to reflect on what has happened this term and the characteristics that have helped the School to flourish and be that place where children love to spend their time. I have really enjoyed the sense of togetherness and common purpose that strikes me as I walk around the place. Yes, there are challenges to overcome (I am not going to think about Labour or VAT for a few days!), but we will meet them from a place of strength.

Eddy Newton, Head





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Awards News

We were delighted to start the School year with two further awards:

Independent Schools of the Year 2023 Awards - FINALIST



We were one of only six schools in the country to reach the Finalist stage in the Independent Pre-Prep School of the Year category. Huge congratulations to our wonderfully nurturing and inspiring Pre-Prep team, whose success was recognised by the judges. It is the fifth year in a row that Marlborough House has been recognised by these competitive awards which receive hundreds of entries.

2023 Talk Education Awards for Innovation in Education - FINALIST



The category was 'Environmental Achievement', in recognition of the success of our child-led approach to environmental education over the past year and reinforcing the positive impact of our work with Eco-Schools. Again, we were one of six schools to reach this stage of the competition in this category.

Follow us on social media:

- @marlboroughhouse.school
- /marlboroughhouseschool

Private accounts for parents:

- Boarding: @marlboroughhouse.boarding
- Reception: @marlboroughhouse.reception
- Nursery: @marlboroughhouse.nursery



Year 4's Charity Cake Sale

Year 4 led the way in reacting to the earthquake in Morocco with a cake sale to raise funds for the Red Cross Appeal. Held outside the Harrison Building, there was keen interest from Prep School pupils and staff with over £250 raised.

Huge congratulations to Year 4 (and all those who supported from home) - what great ambassadors for 'Valuing Self and Others' at MHS.

Watch the video



SCAN ME



Individualised Learning for Seniors – Art and Drama

Extra art and drama classes for Years 7 and 8 launched this term, as part of our individualised learning opportunities for Seniors. These weekly, optional arts sessions take place within the School day, enabling our budding artists and actors to do more of what makes them tick; further developing their creative passions and interests.

In art, pupils have been learning about Gerhard Richter, successfully adopting his technique for creating abstract art. Whilst the drama group have been having a lot of fun with improvisation - encouraging pupils to think on their feet and collaborate as the scenes they are creating unfold in real-time.

Year 8 Geography Trip to Juniper Hall

Our Year 8 pupils set off early on a September Monday morning for an exciting trip to Juniper Hall, the Field Studies Council site near Box Hill, to collect data for their geography fieldwork and to develop their IT skills.

They eagerly jumped on the bus with their bags and bundles of energy, armed with waterproofs for the imposing weather forecast. Having sung their way to Surrey, they arrived full of anticipation.

Once at the first study site, close to the source of the River Tillingbourne, they were taught how to take measurements for the width, depth, velocity and sediment size and they jumped in the river to try it for themselves. It didn't take long for the weather forecast to come true and the downpours began. However, they showed great resilience and it didn't dampen their enthusiasm (excuse the pun!). They then repeated the experiments at three further sites, including next to the church used for filming 'The Holiday' and 'Four Weddings and a Funeral'. Fortunately, the thunderstorms didn't materialise and blue skies were spotted later in the afternoon. During the day, they even found a poor unsuspecting cray fish, much to the excitement of children and staff.

After a full day out in the field, the pupils re-fuelled with supper, but worked late into the evening to start their write-ups. With a good night's sleep, to rest and invigorate their weary minds, they set to work, maximising their time to focus on their fieldwork reports. They worked extremely hard and deserve praise for their attitude, resilience and application. After two days of hard work, they returned to School having made excellent progress, learnt about geography projects, developed their IT skills and ready to add the finishing touches to their fieldwork.

Mr Kimber, Head of Geography





Years 3 and 4 introduce PSB Award

Years 3 and 4 have a new weekly celebration, shining a light on our all-important core skills and preparing pupils for the Pre-Senior Baccalaureate (PSB).

These PSB skills are:

- Leadership
- Collaboration
- Independence
- Thinking & Learning
- Review & Improvement
- Communication



At Marlborough House, pupils build a strong foundation of skills for life, starting with a focus on character strengths in Pre-Prep and ending with the PSB; our skills-based approach to learning and assessment in Seniors (Years 7 and 8). The PSB Awards for Year 3 and 4 mark the start of the Prep School part of our pupils' skills learning journey, preparing them for Seniors and beyond.

SING! and Sports Masterclass at Eastbourne College

Thank you to Eastbourne College for not one but two great days out for some of our Year 6 pupils.

First up was the Sports Masterclass and Mindfulness Day, with pupils choosing two sports from netball, hockey, indoor cricket, swimming and rugby (with the rugby players able to play on the School's wonderful College Field pitch).

Following this was their annual Sing! event. The children learnt five songs during the day, singing in a four part choir made up of over 100 children - with one of the songs accompanied by a live band of musicians from Eastbourne College. They also took part in fun music, sport, science and drama sessions.



Year 4 Evacuee Trip

On a sunny September morning, we sent our Year 4's far away from the dangers of WWII. The children travelled to Tenterden to catch the evacuee train to... well, they weren't really sure when they boarded where they were going.

On their steam-powered journey, they met 'Viv the spiv' who tried to sell them black market chocolate. They learnt how to make chocolate spread from the unlikely ingredients of cocoa, sugar and... mashed potato! Fortunately, they arrived safely in a Welsh village where they met some very friendly host families. Then, it was back to good old 2023.

Well done to all the children who really enjoyed being immersed in 1940s culture, but definitely felt grateful that they didn't have to live through a real evacuation.

Mr Priddin, Year 4 Teacher

Scan to watch the video



SCAN ME





Reception's French Friends



Our Reception children were delighted to have two new French friends join them in the Autumn term and they have been going home with a different child each week. 'Roquefort' and 'Saucisson' are a toy mouse and cat, and they are spending one week at a time with every child in the year group. They each go home with a book and the children (with a little help of course!) will share their time with them with a drawing or writing. I am looking forward to seeing what the toys experience with the children.

Madam De Haan, Head of MFL

European Day of Languages

Once again, MHS was taken over by all things European for the day for our celebration of the European Day of Languages.

Pupils were 'tagged' by teachers who greeted them with the word "hello" in various languages from around the world. That gave such a great buzz around the School and made for a simple but effective celebration of languages.

We were very grateful to the many parents who visited and talked to their child's class about their culture and language: Czech, Polish, Spanish, Swedish, Dutch, French and Ukrainian. What a culturally rich School we are with 18% of families having a parent who speak a foreign language as their mother tongue.

We were treated to delicious snacks and a tasty Mediterranean Lunch and of course, our European Day of Languages was tied in with the Macmillan Coffee Morning and Cake Sale, which was hugely successful once again. Thank you to all for taking part!

Mme De Haan, Head of Modern Foreign Languages



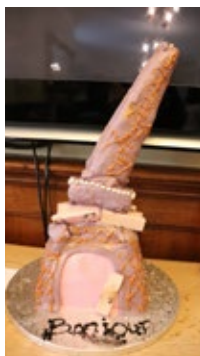
MHS Bake Off

Well done to everyone who created some wonderful bakes for the European Day of Languages Bake Off. This year's theme was 'Treasure' and all the cakes were sold at the Macmillan Coffee Morning.

There were some fantastic entries based on the theme. The winners were: Esme T (N), William S (R), Genevieve M (Y1), Lulu P (Y2), Isabel B (Y3), Elizabeth B (Y4), Eleanor T (Y5), Emilia C (Y6), Anna P (Y7) and Ruby C (Y8).

A very special prize was awarded to Poppy R (Y3) for her fantastic cake on the theme of Treasure and to Harriet M (Y6) for her Eiffel Tower cake.

Mme De Haan, Head of Modern Foreign Languages



Macmillan Coffee Morning

A sunny September morning saw the Gallery full of wonderful offerings for the Macmillan Coffee Morning and cake sale which once again was run in conjunction with the European Day of Languages Bake Off.

The Hopkins Hall was set up in a café style, it looked very inviting and welcomed a number of families for coffee and cake after drop off. At 3.30pm our lovely volunteers moved the cake stall onto the Terrace and the children had a fantastic time choosing some cakes and bakes to take home. Thanks to the generosity of all who supported the event, we managed to make the wonderful total of £663.53.

Mrs MacDonald, Chair FoMHS





Harvest in the School Orchard



The Great Outdoors Club made a beeline for the School Orchard to harvest cooking apples in September.

Our School Orchard, which is located beyond the Firsts Pitch, had 10 new fruit trees planted this year so apple, pear and plum picking can continue to be enjoyed by future generations of MHS pupils.



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Meerkat Mayhem for Year 2 at Drusillas Zoo

Year 2 started off their trip by watching the meerkats; showing a great interest in their daily activities. In the zoo's classroom, the children had an educational talk, learning more facts about meerkats and had a chance to meet a milk snake and an armadillo.



Pre-Prep's Farming Talk

With farming being such an important part of all our lives and with it being our Harvest Festival week, our Pre-Prep children were very lucky to be visited by Mr Budd, a local arable and fruit farmer.

Mr Budd is passionate about showing children where their food comes from and the processes that are involved. He kindly showed them some of the jobs he does throughout the year and to finish, he handed out fresh apples for the children to enjoy. You really don't get food produced and to the consumer quicker than that!

Mrs Boyd, Reception Teacher

Next up was a fascinating tour around the zoo, where the children used their animal spotter guides to find the different animals. A wonderful day for all!



Year 6 Discovery Day

The Year 6 Discovery Day took place in early October, with opportunities for our own pupils, and those from visiting local schools, to take part in a carousel of exciting activities linking to art, DT, science and sport; all centred around a theme of 'Energy'.

The art sessions produced some beautiful, autumnal clay pieces, which were carefully modelled on seed heads. Once their creations were finished, the children chose their preferred glaze and were delighted to receive their finished pieces once they had been first in the School kiln.

Cell identification and microscope work to discover how energy is stored and moved around the body was the focus in science. The children were also able to observe and touch (with gloves) a lamb's heart which had been dissected.

In DT, they learnt about thrust, designing and building rockets from recycled bottles. After the build phase was complete, it was off to the Colts' Pitch where they

pumped up the rockets, creating sufficient pressure to send them high into the air to the delight of all.

Down on the Astro, the children had a rugby skills session, experimenting with different catching techniques to improve their ball skills. They then took part in a series of fun games to give them an opportunity to try out and embed their new skills.

Thank you to all the teachers who came together to organise such a memorable day packed with new and interesting experiences for Year 6 and the visiting pupils.



Scan to watch our rocket video



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Years 7 and 8 visit Earth Photo Exhibition

Making the most of a beautiful Autumn day, Year 7 and 8 visited Bedgebury Pinetum to take a look at the Earth Photo Exhibition.

Earth Photo is an international competition, organised by Forestry England and the Royal Geographical Society, in which photographers document the beauty and fragility of the natural world.

Having taken inspiration from these stunning shots, the pupils worked in small teams to take their own photos. They used the beautiful autumn colours of Bedgebury to great effect; they should be very proud of the effort that they put in and of the images that they produced (as you can see from the accompanying images).

As the visit coincided with World Mental Health Day, everyone took the opportunity to use the calm of the forest to perform some mindfulness exercises.

Mr Priddin, Enrichment and Creativity Lead



Year 8 Support Squad

Introducing the Year 8 Support Squad; a dedicated session delivering peer support to benefit pupils in the Prep School.

What is Peer Support?

Peer Support uses the knowledge, skills and experience of children and young people in a structured way to help them develop their understanding, confidence and self-awareness. Students who feel part of the School community and who can develop positive relationships with their peers, generally feel happier and more able to cope with stress factors in their lives, such as exam pressure, anxiety, or friendship difficulties.

How do we deliver Peer Support?

Our new weekly Year 8 Support Squad sessions enable pupils at MHS to build connections, help each other understand how they have come to know what they know, redefine help as co-learning and develop the strength, confidence and resilience to move towards what they want, rather than away from the things they don't want. The younger children within our community will benefit from this by recognising that they are not alone; they can express their feelings, learn helpful information, gain hope and help others.

Example Support Squad activities:

Origami - Circle Time Games - Rangoli Patterns
Litter Pickers - Sing Song - Seasonal Crafts

Mrs Walker, Head of Pastoral Care



Year 5 Richborough Roman Fort Trip

Year 5 students were treated to an immersive History trip to Richborough Roman Fort led by myself and Head of Classics, Mrs Budd.

Richborough Roman Fort is one of the most beautifully preserved and restored remains of a Roman Fort. Richborough is thought to be the site of the first Claudian landing and was home to the largest monumental arch outside of Rome. Students spent the day in teams, exploring the site, which included a newly built Claudian gate and the remains of shops and even a Roman hotel. Each team were working together to produce an architectural plan for their own fort, inspired by their findings at the site. Onsite, a visit to the museum and interactive displays really helped the students imagine they were back in Roman Britain.

Having studied Roman Britain in the first half of term and with an inspiring trip to Richborough under their belt, pupils will start building scale models of their fort designs. This will involve understanding scale, experimenting with ancient building methods and modern model-making techniques.

A fantastic day was had by all; a hugely valuable and enriching experience.

Mr Everest, Head of DT



Year 3 Trip to Herstmonceux Science Centre

The Year 3's trip to Herstmonceux Science Observatory in early October was a great experience.

The world-famous telescopes at the observatory left our young scientists in awe. They were so enthusiastic, asking and answering questions about the wonders of the universe.

The interactive science experiments had them fully engaged, with hands-on activities that sparked their curiosity and ignited their imaginations. They couldn't get enough of it!

Overall, it was an incredible experience that not only deepened their understanding of science but also fostered a love for exploration and discovery.

The children's enthusiasm and eagerness to learn made it a truly memorable day for all.

Mrs Mathers, Year 3 Teacher



Harvest Festival for Years 1-8

We were delighted to welcome parents to our Harvest Festival. Donations were gratefully received, prayers were read and children from Years 1 - 8 performed; a really energetic and uplifting experience for all involved.

Years 1 and 2 kicked-off proceedings with an old classic, Big Red Combine Harvester, before Years 3 and 4 demonstrated their movement skills with a choreographed version of "Thank Your Little Stars". We were delighted that Isabella B (drums) and Jesse C (electric guitar) led the Year 6 band, who accompanied all of Years 5 and 6 children singing "Let's Harvest". Years 7 and 8 chose to rap and sing to bring our wonderful celebration to a close.

Our thanks to Dawn from Nourish, who kindly joined us for the celebration and shared an important message about caring for those in our local community, resonating with our focus on 'Valuing Self and Others'.

Harvest Festival for Nursery and Reception

The last morning of half term saw a roomful of Dingle Dangle Scarecrows celebrating harvest festival in fine form. Nursery and Reception came together to sing, dance and share their knowledge about why we are so grateful to our farmers, and why we give thanks for the harvest coming in.

The children arrived carrying their donations, sang songs that Mrs Townsend had taught them, tested their vegetable and fruit knowledge with Mrs Edmondson and heard all about farming life from Mrs Boyd. Then Mrs Coombs led us in prayer and thanks before we got a chance to dance the Harvest Samba! A joyous celebration indeed.

Mrs Edmondson, Head of Nursery





Informal Concerts

We were treated to two fabulous informal music concerts in November.



At the Prep School event, we had appearances from children on the violin, drums, piano, singing, saxophone, flute and clarinet – a huge variety! With 26 solo performances from musicians in Years 3 – 8 and a wonderful opening number from String Group, it really did prove to be an enjoyable evening for all involved.

The Pre-Prep concert began with singing club singing “When it’s a sunny day, I’ll sing a song to keep me happy!”, followed by ten polished solo performances with several of children bravely performing to an audience for the first time.

Huge congratulations to all our School musicians.

Mrs McEwan, Head of Music and Mrs Townsend, Pre-Prep Music Teacher



Armistice Day

The whole School assembled for our Act of Remembrance on Armistice Day and a wreath was laid on our memorial plaque in the Chapel Garden by the four Heads of Houses. At the ceremony in Hawkhurst, four Year 8s including our Head Girl, Zoe C, represented the School and laid a wreath at the War Memorial on behalf of Marlborough House. In the Pre-Prep, they enjoyed making and decorating poppy-shaped biscuits and created some beautiful Armistice Day artwork displays which went on show in the Pre-Prep building.



Watch the video



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Scenes from Oliver!

Our musical theatre club performed a wonderful selection of scenes from Oliver! in a School Assembly after just 8 hours of rehearsals in their Activity Afternoons.

All the children worked so hard in their Thursday afternoon activity sessions, learning lines, acting, dancing and singing. We even had some time for make-up design too! Huge congratulations to all involved.

Mrs McEwan, Head of Music



Anti-Bullying Week

Odd Sock Day marked the start of Anti-Bullying Week, linking to our current PHSE topic: 'Celebrating Difference'.

The fun didn't stop there, with pupils trying out the Random Acts of Kindness Wheel, collaborating on their Form's Anti-Bullying Charter and taking time to think about what they are thankful for. PHSE lessons focused on these themes, with Years 5 and 6 also joining the BBC and Anti-Bullying Alliance's live lesson and a Prep School Chapel on the story of The Good Samaritan. Well done to Year 8 who performed the Anti-Bullying Alliance song 'Make A Noise' – we enjoyed making some noise again when we came together as a School for our Children in Need Walk at the end of the week.

Thank you to everyone who entered our model making competition, exploring the theme of 'Build your friendship on firm foundations'. We had a fantastic selection of entries which the judges (Head of Art Mrs McNamara, Head of DT Mr Everest and members of the Pupil Council) were very impressed with.

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Bonfire Night

Mr Townsend and his team ensured the bonfire was quite the spectacle and the Year 8 girls did a fantastic job of making 'Guy' the Guy. The Catering Team ensured everyone was well fed with the addition of macaroni cheese to the menu going down very well. The drinks were flowing - boozy hot chocolates for the parents were a surprise hit and there was a never-ending stream of candy floss (yes, we are looking into how to alleviate wait times for next year!). The children had great fun with their glow items and the sound of laughter and fun was the background to the evening.

An enormous amount of thanks is due to the School teams; however, it was down to the generosity of the wonderful parents who volunteered their time to help out that ensured the evening really was a success, with a wonderful atmosphere and great sense of MHS community spirit! We really hope that you all had a great time.

Mrs MacDonald, Chair FoMHS



Children In Need

We had a great day celebrating Children In Need, raising £250 for the charity appeal in the process.

Everyone looked fantastic in their 'hint of spots', and, at the end of the day, Reception to Year 8 (cheered on by Nursery at the start!) enjoyed a 'friendship walk' around the grounds to also tie in with Anti-Bullying Week. With different year groups paired up, it was an opportunity for the older children to ask the younger children questions about themselves, find the inevitable common ground and importantly to learn their names so they can greet each other around the School in future.

It's a lovely event with a family feel and this year was no exception. As a cherry on the cake, we were delighted to see our Children In Need friendship walk featured on BBC South East News!

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THE POLAR EXPRESS
Train Ride

All Aboard the Polar Express!



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Year 2 had an exciting morning when they immersed themselves in a MHS Polar Express Experience.

They got dressed into their pyjamas and pretended to go on a journey to the North Pole. It was incredibly exciting as our classrooms were turned into trains and the journey to the North Pole was great fun; the children even got to have a hot chocolate on their trip! Finally, Year 2 wrote some fantastic fictional stories about their Polar Express experience.

Mrs Hancock, Year 2 Teacher

Poetry Celebration

This informal event provided an opportunity for the children to perform a poem of their choice to a supportive audience, some for the first time and others returning as seasoned performers. There were individual and small group performances from all year groups, as well as whole class performances from the Year 4 and 5 pupils. Those who have started LAMDA lessons this term also had the opportunity to share the pieces they have been working on. The children all performed brilliantly, and it was wonderful to see them reciting their poems with confidence and pride.

Mrs Henderson, Head of English





Conkering Hero

Congratulations to Louis P in Year 6 who has won our annual Conkering Hero competition.

The competition has run since half term so well done to Louis for five weeks of wins with a very special (if slightly worse for wear) conker!



Year 8 Trip to the French Institute

Our Year 8s have a new heroine called Adèle Blanc-Sec, a witty, clever, cynical yet caring novelist-detective in 1910's- 1920's Paris. She is the main character of a series of French comic books created by Jacques Tardi which we explored during a very constructive workshop at the Institut Français in London.

The girls participated fully in discovering the various characters, the different location sets and dialogues of the brilliant film we watched in the afternoon 'Les Aventures Extraordinaires d'Adèle Blanc-Sec'. A very successful day out enjoyed by all.

Mme De Haan, Head of Modern Foreign Languages



Christmas Fair



Thank you to all who managed to attend the FoMHS Christmas Fair. The sun shone and festive cheer was in abundance as the sound of laughter and fun echoed around the whole School.

Mrs McEwan and the School choirs started proceedings with some beautiful carol singing on the Terrace, which heralded the arrival of Father Christmas – eventually! The Old Gym was the venue for some fantastic year group stalls, Mr Newton's Office was transformed into a magnificent Christmas Grotto, whilst the Gallery was home to reindeer food making and more. As always, the inflatables in the Sports Hall were a huge hit! The raffle was certainly an epic occasion with over 30 prizes and more than 1,000 tickets sold!

As always, a huge amount of thanks is owed to all those who helped make this such a fantastic event.

Thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas events in one way or another; your generosity has meant that between the Christmas Fair, the Children's Shopping Event and My Child's Art purchases, we have been able to make £2,000 to donate to the chosen charity of Kent Young Carers, who are so deserving of the funds.

Mrs MacDonald, Chair of FoMHS





Year 3's Victorian Christmas Play

The Victorian Christmas performed by Year 3 was absolutely magical.

The way the children brought Ebenezer Scrooge's transformation to life through the Nativity story was truly captivating. Our young actors did an incredible job portraying the different characters and their emotions. The props and costumes perfectly captured the Victorian era, adding to the authenticity of the performance. Everyone sang beautifully and spoke in clear voices and impressed us all with the successful culmination of lots of hard work. It was a beautiful reminder of the true meaning of Christmas and the power of kindness. Overall, it was a delightful way to begin December.

Thank you to the Year 3 parents who generously donated over £200 to Barnardo's Children's Charity in the performance collection. We are so grateful to them.

Mrs Mathers, Year 3 Teacher





Year 3's Victorian Trip

Year 3 looked splendid in their Victorian outfits as we set off on a sparkling crisp morning for The Museum of Kent Life.

The children had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the Victorian era by visiting the different venues starting with a typical Victorian cottage. We met Elizabeth the chandler, who showed us how to make candles and Year 3 were rightly proud of the candles they made. Exploring the Victorian Christmas traditions was fascinating, giving us all a glimpse into how Victorians celebrated the season of goodwill.

We listened in silent awe about the hardships faced by children in the workhouse during that time and felt a great sense of gratitude about our own lives. Meeting Charles Dickens and being guided through a performance of A Christmas Carol was a truly memorable encounter. A big shout-out to the parents for their effort in providing splendid costumes for the children. Overall, it was a truly magical and educational experience that we will remember for years to come.

Mrs Mathers, Year 3 Teacher



MHS support The Salvation Army

Year 8 visited The Salvation Army in Hastings to deliver the huge number of children's gift bags that were generously donated by the Marlborough House community. Whilst with the charity, they were excited to be filmed by BBC South East sorting presents and making up additional gift bags.

We are incredibly proud of the Year 8s, who have demonstrated both dedication and service over the past month. They visited every classroom in the school to talk to pupils about the gift bag appeal, they then helped sort the donations with the support of Head of English Mrs Henderson and Deputy Head Mrs Archer and they put a lot of care and thought into their work at the charity.

Thank you to all those who donated a children's gift bag and helped us to be a part of The Salvation Army's special Christmas appeal.

Scan to watch
the BBC report



SCAN ME





The Twinkly Nativity

'Angels they were singing, they were singing to us' - indeed everyone was singing when Years 1 and 2 performed their nativity.

The Twinkly Nativity lived up to the characters - it was indeed flashy, glitzy and dazzling. Mary and Joseph hit the road to Bethlehem with a clippity clop! Whilst looking for a place to stay they met Innkeepers who couldn't help but luckily they found a stable where Jesus was born. Angels sang about the good news whilst the Wise Men followed the star. For the grand finale the children shone; a happy ending to a happy term.

Mrs Pay, Year 2 Teacher

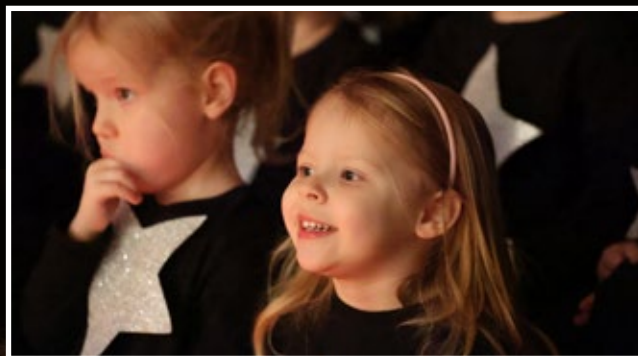


The Sleepy Shepherd Nativity

Reception and Nursery presented an enchanting performance of The Sleepy Shepherd.

The children were amazing and they truly lit up the stage, as the Old Gym was transformed into a Christmas theatre. We saw singing, dancing and acting, with audience participation too. The confidence, focus and sense of pride on show was a true reflection of what a wonderful bunch of children they are and the effort that went into the performance. A memory to treasure forever.

Mrs Coombs, Reception Teacher





Prep School Carol Service



Our candlelit Carol Service in St Laurence Church, Hawkhurst, was a magical way to end the School term from the beautiful 'Once in Royal David's City' solo sung by Alex P, through to the uplifting finale 'Feliz Navidad', sung by all the choirs.

The musical performances also included a piece of choral music written especially for the Prep School Carol Service. 'Venite!' was a collaboration between Year 4 Teacher, Mr Priddin, and Head of History and Latin, Mrs Budd. Thank you to them both for this very special Christmas present for MHS.



Children's Christmas Shopping Event



The Friends of MHS Christmas activities culminated in a wonderful day of festive shopping for all the children in the Hopkins Hall.

Each child was able to purchase two gifts for two special grown-ups in their lives, which were then wrapped and labelled before heading home to go underneath their Christmas trees. The sense of anticipation and excitement on all the children's faces was a delight to see, as was the care and thought that each child put into selecting (their idea of) the perfect gifts! Thank you to Maria Tanner for organising the event and to all of the volunteers who turned up in Christmas jumpers and helped make it such a fun and happy occasion.

Mrs MacDonald, Chair, FoMHS

Carols by Candlelight

In December, five of our violinists played for the first time at the Carols by Candlelight service at St Augustine's Church, Flimwell. Well done to the young musicians who formed the Sunday String Group: Alice B, Finley D, Grace V, Tilly R and Verity P - they performed beautifully both before the service and during the carol singing which they led. I was very proud of them all.

Mrs Townsend, Violin Teacher





Festive Fun!

We love our Christmas traditions and entertainment, making the end of the School term extra special for pupils.

The FoMHS set the scene with all the beautiful decorations which spread Christmas cheer throughout the School. In Pre-Prep the children decorated the Pre-Prep Christmas Tree themselves with hand-made decorations; one for every pupil in Pre-Prep. Another popular tradition in Pre-Prep is 'Stir Up Day' when many a wish was made as the children stirred the Christmas Pudding mixture with gusto.

Soon it was panto time and 'It's behind you!' echoed out of the Old Gym as Nursery through to Year 5 enjoyed

their trips to watch a fantastic visiting theatre company perform a very silly version of 'The Three Musketeers'.

The younger children weren't the only ones enjoying some festive trips - Year 6 headed off to the Kino to see a Christmas film, while Years 7 and 8 went bowling, and Year 8 also squeezed in a trip to watch a performance of 'Grease The Musical'.

The end of term Christmas lunches and parties were joyous with songs sung, crackers pulled and secret santas exchanged. In the Pre-Prep, the term was rounded off with a visit from a very special person complete with a large bag of presents - Father Christmas no less!





Sports Teams Round Up

Senior Girls' Hockey Season

The girls' hockey season has been another excellent one for MHS.

The senior 1st VII girls have set the tone; working hard in sessions and showing real determination to develop their skills and team work. They had some notable wins over Claremont, Vinehall, Dulwich, Bethany and Benenden, and they also battled hard to draw 1-1 against St Ronan's - a game they probably should have won, but they could not convert the many short corners they won. In addition to inter-school matches, they also competed at an IAPS competition in Canterbury. The side was Captained positively by Emilia M, who provided a good number of goals from superbly hit short corners which often took keepers by surprise due to their power and accuracy.

The 2nd VII had even better results, with only one loss in the whole season. As a result, they won 7, lost 1 and drew 1 - the draw being an exciting 2-2 game with St Ronan's. The U11s also had a strong season with the A and B team again winning most of their matches and the girls working hard across all the sides.



Junior Girls' Netball Season

The junior girls' netball season was a very positive one for the Year 3 and Year 4 girls. The notable team were the U9's B team, who were unbeaten having only one draw and 5 wins. The U8's made great progress in the understanding of the game and awareness of the application of skills, they now move with more fluency and now call and communicate more positively. Overall the season was very much a learning curve!

Junior and Senior Boys' Football Season

The boys' football season was similarly exciting. Sadly the U11 A side lost a strong attacking option with Harry A being injured for all but two matches, despite this the boys worked hard with good wins over Solefields and Vinehall, and draws against three other sides. The B team won more matches, but the tight nature of all the games made it very exciting to watch throughout the season.



The U9 boys showed real passion and quality, with an unbeaten season out on the fields. They also drew their final match against Holmewood House, which was a great final effort in the term. The U8 side is also very capable with lots of good wins. Their stronger players also helped out with the U9s, so the future is very bright indeed. Overall, the football season has been highly entertaining and the boys have had a season to be proud of, especially the very positive results of a fixture against a much bigger school!



Riding Team Round Up



Hickstead Championships

11 members of the MHS Equestrian Team represented the School at the NSEA National Grass Roots Championships at Hickstead in August, competing against up to 140 schools from across the nation.

The children, who ranged from Years 2-8, looked very smart in their new kit and did us proud with their perseverance, resilience and great team spirit. There were great results across the board with highlights including the 60cm Yellow Team and 70cm Blue teams who were placed 5th nationally, with a special mention to Zoe C who rode an incredible round missing the fastest time, out of over 120 competitors, by only .25 of a second.

Hickstead Qualifiers

In October, our younger riders were also out competing and sailed through the Grass Roots Qualifier to place Team 1st in the 60cm and 70cm classes, and Team 2nd in the 40cm class; qualifying for the championships at Hickstead next summer. Special congratulations go to Erin C who jumped a lovely clear and won her class.

Addington Championships

Huge congratulations to the four members of the MHS Equestrian Team who competed at the NSEA (National Schools Equestrian Association) National Championships at Addington in October and came an incredible Team 2nd nationally in the 75cm Arena



Eventing Class. This competition is the pinnacle of the NSEA calendar with over 1,000 competitors representing schools from up and down the country. Well done to the MHS team of Eliza B, Zoe C, Emma G and Annabel J and their ponies Dizzie, Wizz, Ash and Beech - to come away with a Team 2nd was an amazing result and a true testament to the team's hard work and determination.

Regional Finals

On a rainy day in December, Tara B, Erin C, Emma E and Jack G jumped their way into Team 4th regionally in the 60cm at the NSEA South East Grass Roots Show Jumping Regional Final. Congratulations to them all, including new rider Poppy E who achieved a well-deserved 8th place in the 40cm and Tara B who came 4th individually in the 70cm.

Congratulations also go to Carolina and Beatrice K who completed in their first NSEA competition for MHS with 2nd places for both in the 50cm and 75cm respectively. Beatrice also achieved 2nd in the 85cm Eventers' Challenge. Both qualified for Hickstead next year too.

It has been an exciting term for the team - a big thank you to the parents of the children involved for all their support and to our brilliant coach.

Mrs Jones, Equestrian Team Manager



Clubs Highlights

Karate Club

Congratulations to Mireille F-T, Henry H, Harry I, William R-M and Harvey S in Year 2 who took their first karate assessment in December. They all passed their grading and gained their Red Belts. We look forward to our next grading for pupils in the Prep School in February.

CMA Karate has been teaching pupils from Year 2 upwards at MHS for six years. It is lovely to see children coming to learn karate, initially saying it is too hard, but after only a few weeks and a little practice becoming very good in their work and achieving new belts, with added confidence and self-esteem that accompanies it. This is what makes my teaching so enjoyable. It's not all work work work - last year we had a visit from the 9x World Karate Champion, Sensei Wayne Otto OBE, who came to teach the children in sparring and is returning to run a seminar for CMA students later this term.

Sensei Paget, Karate Teacher



Dance Clubs



The ballet and acro watch week performances brought a little Christmas magic within each display!



In ballet, pupils performed a mixture of class work, examination preparation and "The Snowman" routines. Within acro, the groups have been learning their fundamental skills which they showcased in their dances.

Everyone performed brilliantly and enjoyed having the opportunity to dance in front of an audience, as well as receiving a little ornament for their Christmas trees as a lasting memory of their hard work.

Miss Caister, Dance Teacher

Music Clubs

To support music beyond the curriculum at MHS, there are lots of musical clubs available for pupils in the Prep School to join during the School day. Pupils will also have the opportunity to perform at School events such as our termly informal concerts and additional Prep School events. Our wonderful music clubs are as follows (please see the clubs list for full details):

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| - Orchestra | - Chamber Choir |
| - Guitar & Ukulele Group | - Senior Choir |
| - Music Theory | - Wind Group |
| - Junior Choir | - String Group |

In the Pre-Prep, pupils are able to join Mrs Townsend's weekly Singing Club.





Salvete

Gail Brundle, Head of Drama

I have had a love of the Performing Arts from a very small age but it was when I started teaching in Tunbridge Wells that I developed my passion for teaching Drama to children. It is so rewarding to see children develop confidence in communication and to watch them blossom as performers.



For the past 23 years, I have been Head of English and Drama in Prep Schools both in East Sussex and Hampshire. Over the years, I have directed myriad productions – on school stages, in local theatres, at the Edinburgh Fringe, at the RSC in Stratford-upon-Avon, and even in Disneyland Paris – and I am always in awe of the enthusiasm, commitment, teamwork and talent that children show.

In recent years, I have added LAMDA teaching to my bow and now run sessions at school for any child who would like to develop their skills in communication, public speaking, and dramatic performance.

In my spare time, I love going to the theatre and spend many of my holidays at the RSC helping backstage as a volunteer. I also enjoy choral singing and playing hockey – although not at the same time! I also love training and walking with my family's six Labrador gundogs and, when time allows, holidaying with my husband and my daughter.

Matt Everest, Head of DT

I have a passion for Design and Engineering which I discovered very early on in my school career. I graduated from the University of



Brighton with a BA Hons in Interior Architecture and began designing and building spaces around Brighton and Hove.

In 2008 my teaching career began as a TA at Bede's and quickly fell in love with the classroom, spending most of my time supporting the Art and Design department. I completed my PGCE in Design Technology at Roehampton University and began teaching in a Secondary comprehensive school in Surrey in 2010.

From a newly qualified teacher to Head of DT, Head of Year, Head of Pastoral care, to Assistant Headteacher leading Curriculum and Careers, I have had a varied and exciting career in teaching. My passion has always been in a workshop surrounded by tools and timber. A DT classroom to me, is a unique platform to foster and develop a love in young people, for all things design.

Any free time, I can be found in the Gym, riding our horses, or being chased by my two daughters round the various parks in Tunbridge Wells.

Alice Hancock, Year 2 Teacher (Maternity Cover)



I joined Marlborough House after moving from London, where I taught in two different London Prep Schools. I knew from a young age that I wanted to be a teacher and love the fact that every day is different when working in a school. I am passionate about teaching and strive to inspire the children that I teach. I feel incredibly lucky that I can witness children grow, achieve and reach their full potential.

I qualified as a teacher in 2012 after completing my BA (Hons) degree in Primary Education at University of the West of England and I have taught in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 over my career.

Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with my family and love going for dog walks with my energetic spaniel Digby. I enjoy exploring the countryside as well as going to the gym or running when I have some free time.



Henry Martin, Junior Master

It's great to be back at Marlborough House for my Gap Year having been a pupil here from Nursery through to Year 8, before going on to Sutton Valence School. I am part of the boarding team and help with games and science, and in the Nursery. I will be at MHS until the end of the School year following which I am going to travel and work in Australia.



Tara Mitchell, Head of Science

I graduated as a Bachelor of Science with Honours from the University of the West of England in 2011, where I soon began supply teaching at various establishments through Kent, East Sussex and Surrey. Having a strong interest in anatomy and physiology along with a lifelong love for horses, I pursued my career as an Equine Dentist, which saw me working in the UK and the UAE. Following the birth of my daughter, I finally hung up my dental equipment and gained a PGCE from Canterbury Christchurch University and continued to share my passion for the sciences through teaching in both further and higher education.

During my free time, I can often be found providing support to my daughter at pony club and MHS equestrian team events.



Emma Vickers, Games Coach

I have had the privilege of being immersed in sport from a young age; playing and competing in tournaments and



competitions across the South East, primarily on the tennis and netball court.

I have been teaching Physical Education for fifteen years, following a BSc Honours in Sport Science and a PGCert in Physical Education from Brunel University. My teaching experience ranges from Nursery to A-Level, including leaderships roles within Sixth Form and Physical Education. I join Marlborough House School from a Sevenoaks Preparatory School where I was Head of Physical Education for eight years.

I am thoroughly looking forward to a new challenge at Marlborough House School and hope to spark and nurture a love of sport in pupils of all ages and abilities.

SELECTED OTHER NEW STARTERS

Nich Cunliffe, Gardener

Mr Cunliffe has joined the Grounds and Maintenance team where he works part time.



Sharon Jones, School Secretary

Mrs Jones has joined Mrs Christie part time in the School Office and is also the MHS Equestrian Team Manager.



Freya Porteous, HR and Compliance Officer

Mrs Porteous has joined the Bursary Team where she works part time.





Valete

Victoria Cornwall, School Secretary

You appreciate somebody that leaves more when you realise how much ground they covered – we are still filling in the gaps!

Tori was so important to the administrative side of MHS and I enjoyed working alongside her, trusting her implicitly. She was efficient, humorous and direct (a spade was definitely a spade!), and I valued her judgement and discretion. Her fierce loyalty and devotion to her children meant that her decision to work at Dulwich was no surprise to me; I was only sad it happened so swiftly. While she left with little fuss and ceremony, her work rate, capable manner and affection for MHS will certainly be remembered.

Mr Newton, Head



Kate Dipper, Marketing Assistant (MHS 1987 – 2023)

Mrs Kate Dipper has been at MHS for 36 years, starting way back in 1987 and fulfilling countless roles in the intervening years. She started as Assistant Bursar before moving to work in the Front Office as well as Acting Registrar, Marketing Assistant, Newsletter editor and manager of the MHS Equestrian Team, and I have no doubt many other roles besides these! Her loyalty and commitment to the school as an employee and a parent have been immense and it will be a strange day without Mrs Dipper at MHS. She will be leaving with our grateful thanks for all that she has done for the school and we wish her well as she looks forward to taking holidays during term time for the first time in decades!

Mr Newton, Head



In Kate's own words:

"It's a wrench to leave this wonderful school but I am looking forward to taking holidays during term time, something I haven't been able to do for a very long time - I've been told there's a life out there and I'm off to find it! It's actually 'au revoir and not goodbye' as I am going to continue to pop in and do the flower arrangements around the School; it's proving too hard to leave! Thank you MHS for so many very happy years".

Dan Trachonitis, Games Coach

Dan started at MHS in January 2022 having returned from teaching in Japan. He added a calm, relaxed and confident level of coaching

to the Games Department. The children benefited from his footballing skills and I know the senior girls enjoyed their first season of football with Dan helping lead the sessions. We will miss his knowledge and professionalism, and Sutton Valance will hopefully prove to be a great move for him working in closer unity with his wife. We wish Dan all the best.

Mr Mathers, Director of Sport



