



UPTON VOICES

Spring issue 2025



ENGAGE @UPTON

Drama
Farm Club
Badminton
Youth Club

- Climbing
- Theatre
- Careers
- Sports
- DofE
- WEX

FOCUS ON LEARNER LEADERSHIP

ALL THE FUN FROM SIXTH FORM CHARITY WEEK

RAISING MONEY FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS TRUST STROKE ASSOCIATION & BACK UP

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG REVIEW

Watch out for the Child Catcher!

MADE BY LEARNERS, FOR LEARNERS.



CONTENTS

03

Engage

As ever, the Engage @ Upton programme has offered a range of activities for learners to participate in. From Farm Club to Drama Club, there's something for everyone.

Trips & Visits 10

This term, our learners have gone on a range of trips including to Cambridge University and to Birmingham Repertory Theatre to watch a performance of 'Death of a Salesman' as well as both Bronze and Gold Duke of Edinburgh training taking place this term!

22

School Production

This term, many of our learners performed in our school production of 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.' The play was brought to life on stage in February and it received amazing praise and feedback from all audiences.

Careers 26

Learners had the opportunity to attend a careers talk from Unilever, where they discussed how their company works, as well as their supply chain strategy, and Year 12 had a fantastic week at work experience, learning lots of new skills for the future.

34

Community

This term, our community has been busy as ever, especially with our recent Charity Week, which raised an extensive amount of money for Cystic Fibrosis Trust, Stroke Association and Back Up. Thank you to everyone who donated and for all the Sixth Form Learners who helped it to run so smoothly.

Sports 54

More amazing sporting achievements from our learners this term. Well done to the PE department for delivering such an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities. Congratulations to all of the teams on their success this term!



Editor's Note

Welcome to our 2025 Spring term edition of the Upton Voice. We have welcomed some new Year 10 and Year 12 learners to our editorial team and they have been busy visiting Engage activities as well as documenting all of the fun from Charity Week in February.

This term we have celebrated learner success at the Debate Society competitions, the Climbing Hut and with the spectacular school production.

In this edition we have given a spotlight to Learner Leadership opportunities at Upton and hope that this encourages you to get involved next term and develop some new skills.

We also have a new 'think piece' section on page 50. This term the article is written by Grace in L6 and is about our changing relationship with AI.

If you would like to get involved with creating the Upton Voice or have any ideas about what we should include please contact us and let us know.

Enjoy a lovely Easter break everyone!

*Miss Seery
& The Editorial Team*



FARM CLUB

Friday
until
4:10pm

VEM
Farm

*"I love feeding and taking care of
the animals like the guinea pigs"*

Harrison



Farm Club is an amazing club dedicated to
taking care of animals and learning about
how to look after them and their diets
Visit Miss Emberson in Lab
10 to join.

Year 8, year 9, year 10, year 11 welcome.



Monday
until 4:10pm

LKI
Drama
Studio

Drama



'Drama club has boosted my confidence and has allowed me to make new friends!' - Emily

Drama Club have recently been holding workshops where learners have begun to develop their performance skills, to prepare them for the upcoming auditions for our next school play.



Youthclub

Youth club takes place at lunch, in A15B, it is where learners can enjoy board-games, eat lunch and talk to each other. Every Tuesday a group of students gather and partake in fun activities. It is hosted by Mrs Benson and visitors. It allows students to interact with each other and to have fun.



"It is great to have fun with friends"

Tuesday
Plan A
and B

RBE
A15B



Badminton



Badminton club is a club for everyone to make new friends and have a good time it takes place every Wednesday in the sports hall week 1 year 7 and 8 , week 2 9,10,11 and Sixth Form with Mrs Lynch and Mr Nathan.



"I really enjoy Badminton with my friends"

"Badminton club is a exhilarating club and a great way to make friends"

Josh C Year 10

Tuesday
Week 2

JLY
Sports
Hall



Writers' Workshop



This term learners from KS3 have been working on original pieces based on the title 'The Leaders of Tomorrow'. We even have some beautiful art work from Evelyn in Year 9.

Of All The Things a Child Could Lose

Of all the things a child could lose,
From wellies,
And plushies,
Pyjamas,
And shoes,
From their books,
And their bikes,
Art,
And pirate hooks,

Of all the things a child could lose,
In the park,
On the train,
After dark,
In the rain,
On a trip,
In the mud,
After camping,
In the blood,

Of all the things a child could lose,
From the car you thought you could beat across the road,
To the car you crashed crushing their tiny bones,
To the fire from the stove,
To the unsafe home,
To the gun you left out in the open, like a fool,
To the gun a child snuck into school,

Of all the things a parent could lose,
They don't expect to lose their child.

Deer of Tomorrow

Falling. Gone. No leader of tomorrow.
The old buck fell after a long life during which he was very beloved, and like with any creature his time had come to be replaced.
The whole event led to great commotion, as for one brutal day there was no definite leader of tomorrow. The masses of the herd were forced to compete, clash and crack.
Usually, the largest buck would win, the one supposedly most fit for survival. But that day, two candidates stood up under the light of a blood moon, their antlers acting as politician ad campaigns. They charged, their power being a speech for what they felt was right, and one easily overpowered the other with his promises of a land that will be great again.
And yet this ruler was a tyrant, one that took advantage of his title.
Who will you pick for your leader of tomorrow?

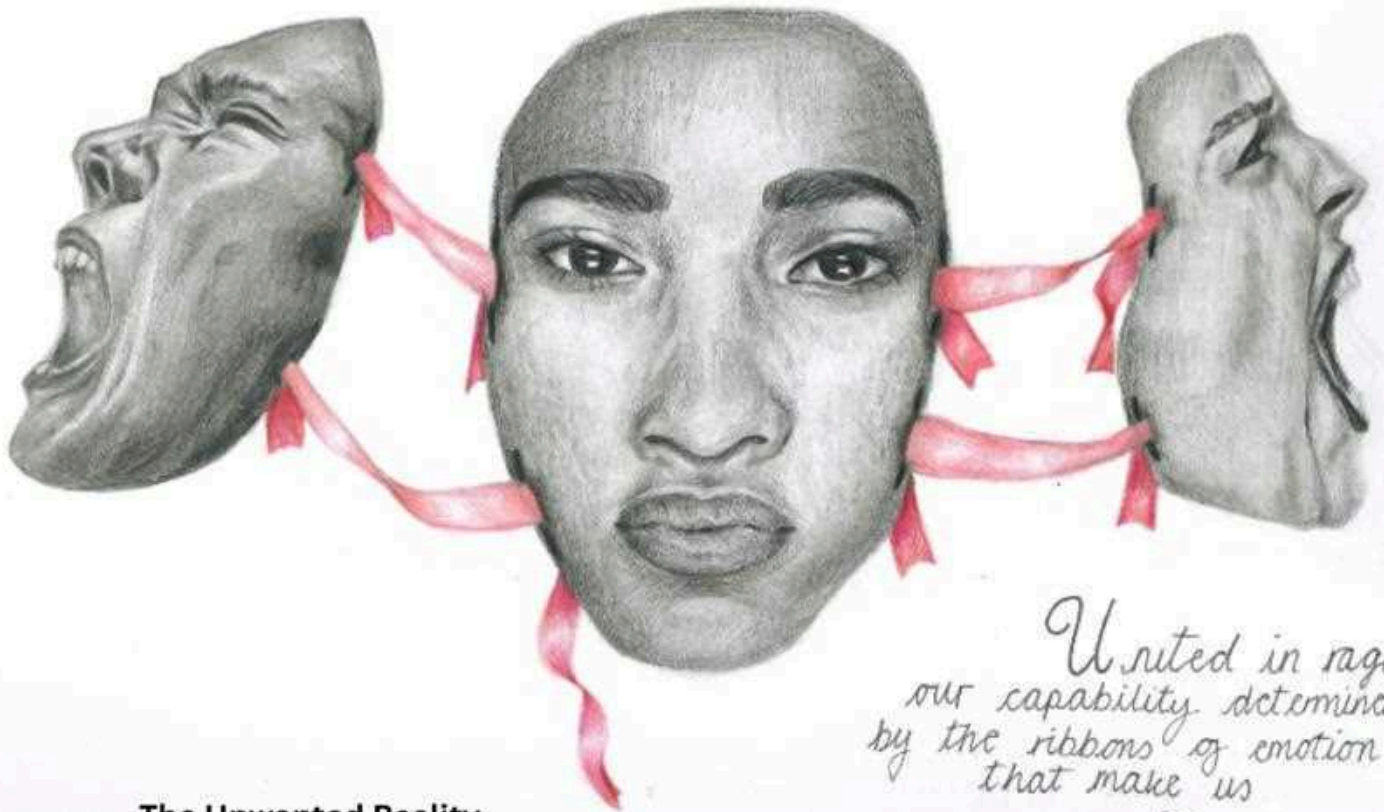
Aleksander

We have been thrilled to welcome lots of new members this term from all three KS3 yeargroups. I have been so impressed with the enthusiasm and artistry bursting out of M7 each session and I am extremely proud of the young writers for their exceptionally thoughtful pieces they have created.

Jasmine

Miss Blumenthal

"Leaders of Tomorrow"



*United in rage,
our capability determined
by the ribbons of emotion
that make us
Human.*

The Unwanted Reality

I woke up and I heard a voice.
"It has been 20 years."

As I cleared my eyes, blinded by the white light I said "Huh?"
Again it repeated "It has been 20 years."

The voice sounded off. As I slowly sat up I found a robot, sitting next to me, holding my hand.

Did I die or is this reality? It's reality so what the flip did I miss?

The strange figure next to me said: "We were so worried all these years!"

It was said with human words but not human emotions.

As my vision focused, I looked around. No human, no being in sight.

I ripped the IV drip out my arm, and stumbled outside.

I looked around, a ghost town. No one, no one at all.

Global warming advanced it was hot and the once blue sky was now orange, with factory clouds now filling it. As I in this foreign planet, I saw the truth of what happened.

I guess the robots learned a bit too much, AI is too advanced. We started declining.

We started to get less and less until only a few remained.

Our legacy of corrupt economy, corrupt politics and the once-alive world remained.

My head started to ache and I felt dizzy and I collapsed.

Next thing I knew I was leaning against a wall, surrounded by more robots.

Are these the leaders of today? I started hyperventilating, my heavy breaths filling the silence and my heart racing faster and faster, my eyes bewildered. I ran past the bodies of cold metal.

Finally, I saw someone sitting on a bench. I raced towards them.

I shook them hard, tears flowing furiously. "Who are you? What is this? What's happening?"

Nothing but silence. Their eyes were wide, expression blank yet I could see the fear.

The reality finally fully set in. I staggered backwards, my hand over my mouth. I can't do this, I can't. Maybe it would've been better to not wake up.

Evelyn

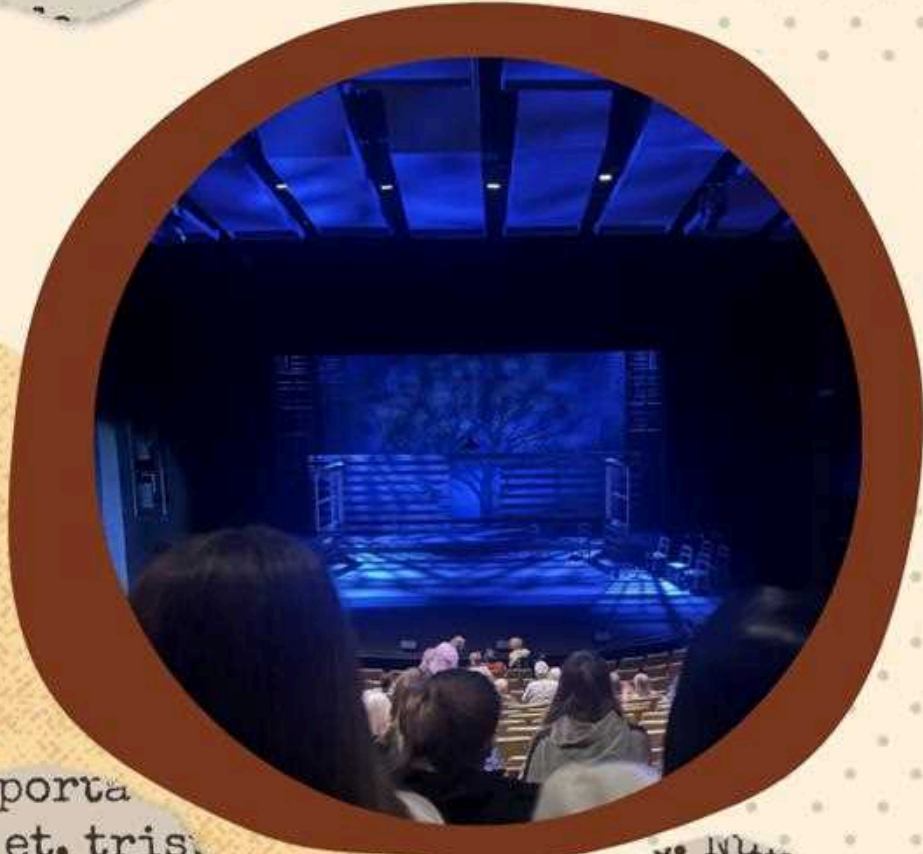
Shareen

DEATH OF

A SALESMAN

On Thursday 13th March, the Year 12 and 13 English Literature learners travelled to Birmingham Repertory Theatre to watch a production of Arthur Miller's 'Death of a Salesman'. It was an extremely enjoyable day for everybody.

'Death of a Salesman' is a 1948 domestic tragedy written by Arthur Miller centered around the tragic protagonist Willy Loman, a destructively insecure anti-hero who is struggling to succeed as a salesman, father and husband.



“

It was amazing to see the play we've been studying so closely in class come to life on stage!

Phoebe B Y12

”



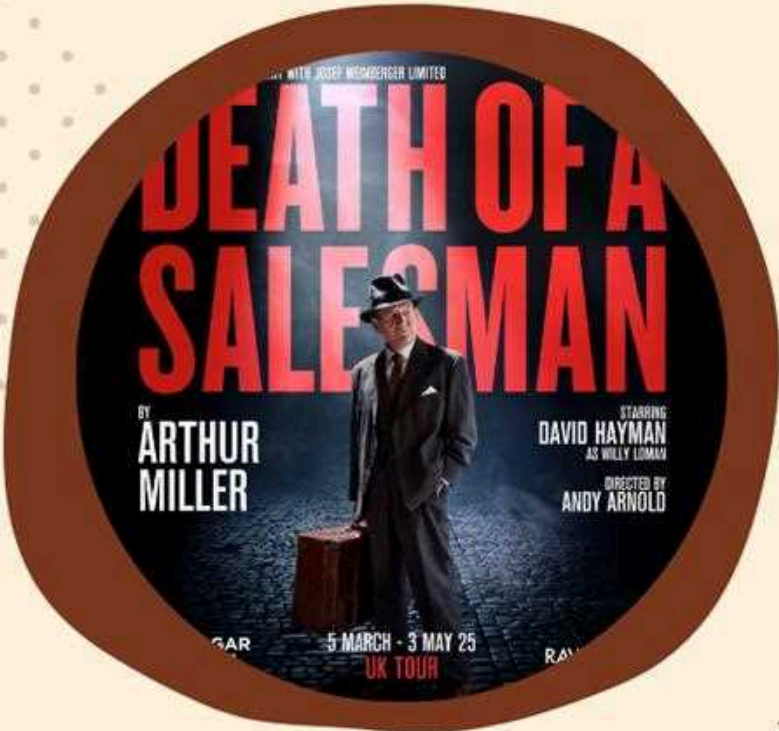
The show had a fairly small cast and the actors doubled as musicians. It was an interesting interpretation of the play.

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 primis in faucibus. Don
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 ie, eu tempus nunc moles
 s molestie tellus, w
 Duis facilis
 s vitae eros
 is. e

“ *It was great being able to see the clear difference between the present and remembered time.* ”

Chloe B Y12

After the show, the learners returned back to the coach for the 2 and a half hour coach ride back to school, arriving around 8pm. It was a great day for both learners and teachers and everyone thought this particular depiction of the play was amazing.



Lower Sixth visit

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

On Thursday 13th February, Miss Main, Miss Carter and nine lower sixth learners, Amelie H, Sofia L, Phoebe B, Ksenia M, Daniel W, Max G, Marco G, Elise H and Leo G had the privilege of visiting the University of Cambridge. This opportunity was given to the learners by the Chester Schools Together programme, a joint partnership between Upton and five other local schools, including the King's School. Learners had in depth talks on super-curricular and extra-curricular activities. They talked extensively about the application process and how to progress knowledge and understanding in potential subject areas (which makes a stand out application and a very strong personal statement.) The workshops took learners through the many courses and colleges offered by Cambridge university, with fun and interactive quizzes in between. The aim was to provide more information about the university and its 31 colleges, to make an informed decision about where to go post 18 (this builds on previous work on potential early applicants). A huge thank you to Miss Main for organising this trip.

Timetable for the day:

Arrive at King's School entrance: 05:45 am

Get on coach and leave: 06:00 am

Arrive at Fitzwilliam college: 11:00 am

Various talks about Cambridge: 11:00 am

Tour around Fitzwilliam campus: 11:30 am

Lunchtime / meeting with former Upton learners, Anna and Sophie: 12:00 am

More talks and workshops: 12:30 am

Group discussions on allocated topic: 14:30

Present and discuss ideas on theme: 14:45

Get on coach back to Chester: 15:00

Arrive back at King's School: 19:35



Outside Fitzwilliam College

11:51 am

From 11:30-12:00, the learners were given a tour around the Fitzwilliam campus. A second year Geography undergraduate guided the learners to the best locations at the college. This ranges from the library, with a large spiral staircase, to the old lecture hall, now being repurposed as a venue for film viewings. The tour provided an insightful glimpse into Cambridge University life, highlighting accommodation and socio-cultural aspects. At lunch, former learners, Anna C (currently studying Theology) and Sophie M (currently studying History and Politics), conversed with current year 12, to talk about their experience on their course and the application process. They provided lots of advice which was very useful and talked about how to do well in the interview process. They were both very welcoming and provided lots knowledge and guidance.



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Large Group discussions:

In the last hour, nine groups of learners from different schools were matched based on their subjects of interest. Similar to the 'Big Questions' workshop, learners were tasked with addressing a prevalent issue or statement that required discussion. Each group was assigned a specific question in regards to their potential university course. Table eight, where people were enthusiastic about geography, were asked, "Who is responsible for tackling the climate crisis?". Table 3, where people are considering studying maths were asked, "How many mugs of tea does it take to fill a swimming pool?" Everyone was given fifteen minutes to come up with their assumptions and arguments, both for and against their theme. During this time, they engaged in very intellectual conversations and offered their perspectives on the topic(s). Once the time was up, the groups were randomly allocated a number indicating the order in which they would speak, with table six going first and table three going last. This exercise was a fantastic opportunity for the learners to practice their speaking skills, enhance their communication, and challenge themselves to work as a team."

What was talked about?

Personal statement workshop:

Katie talked in length about the importance of super curricular activities in the application process. This includes wider reading and research on a particular area of study. For example, areas may include, watching documentaries, reading books or articles, summer school. Anything which demonstrates a genuine interest, and engagement with chosen area. Alongside this, extra curricular activities were highlighted, to develop extra skills and teamwork.

'Big Questions' workshop:

Sophie tasked groups over important issues and topics that are perhaps controversial. Once asked, she split the room into 'yes' (right) or 'no' (left). One of the questions entailed, 'is being healthy a choice?'. Many ideas, nuanced perspectives were shared and lots of interesting responses were given. Sophie did this to demonstrate the critical thinking skills needed with such a topic and how important the consideration of opposing ideas are into formulating opinion. Essential for Cambridge students.

"I had an amazing time looking around the university and Fitzwilliam College. The workshops were particularly helpful and highlighted specific areas to make a strong and successful application. I also had lots of fun discussing 'big questions' and I loved hearing everyone's opinions."

-Amelie H (L6)

"I am very grateful to have been given such an amazing opportunity and I loved the in-depth talks that were provided. My favourite part was the workshops. I now have a much clearer understanding of the path I want to take and my plans for what I want to do in the future."

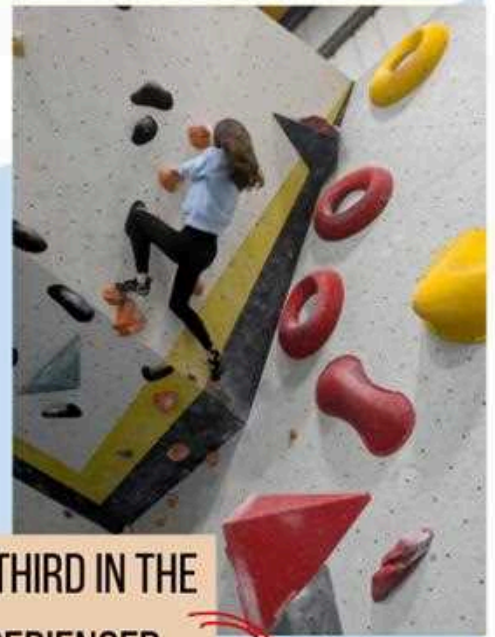
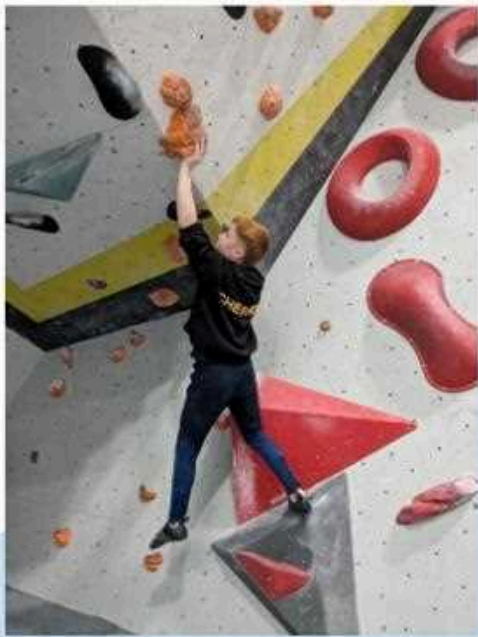
-Phoebe B (L6)

CLIMBING COMPETITION

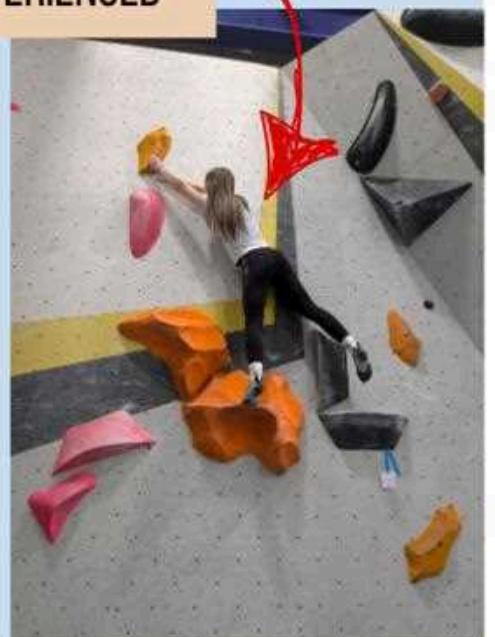


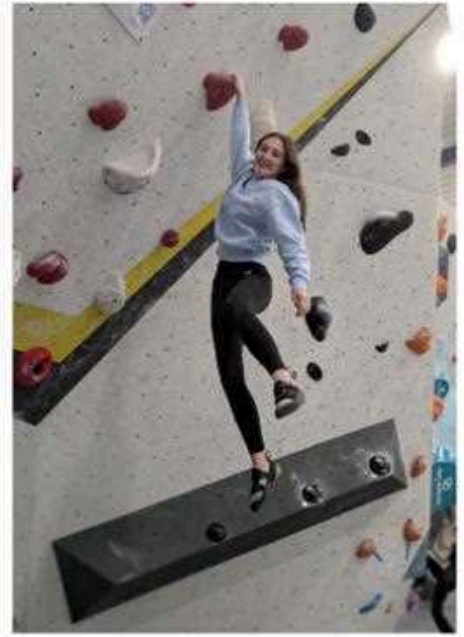
Some of our learners attended an open school climbing competition at the Climbing Hut in Ellesmere Port on 11th December. Our school did an outstanding job: Team A (consisting of 6 experienced male climbers from Year 8-11) came first in the overall Experienced Team competition. Sam came first in the Male Experienced category for his individual score, Milla came third in the Female Experienced and Rowan came third in the Male Experienced. It was a great day and all the climbers showed tremendous effort and perseverance throughout the competition.

This is the second time we have entered this competition and it was a huge success. It is so lovely to see how supportive and encouraging the climbers are towards each other. Well done team! Miss Seery

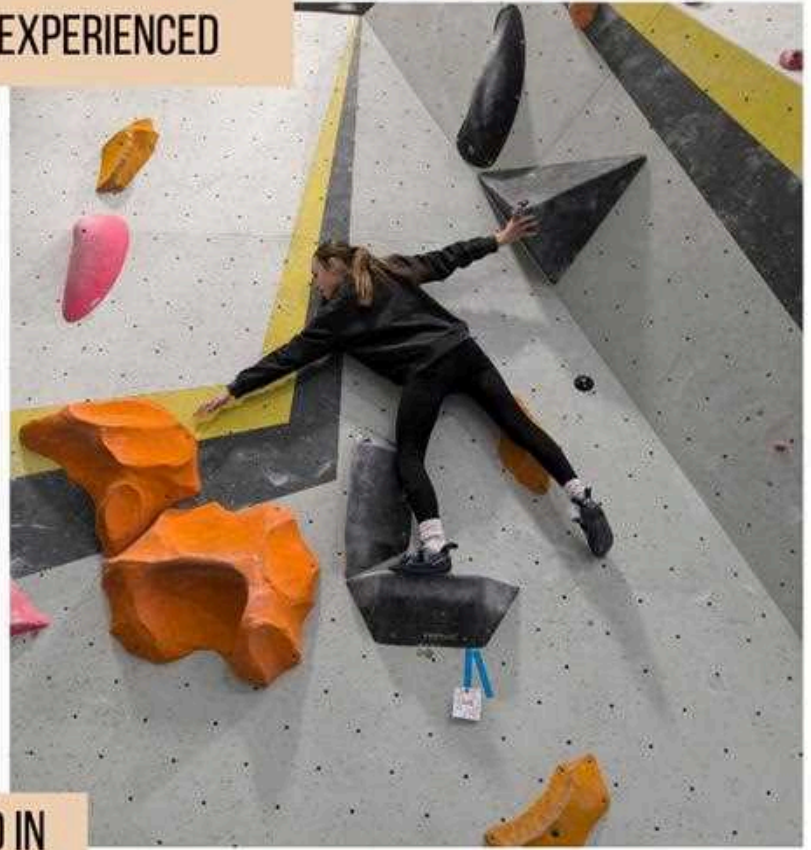


MILLA CAME THIRD IN THE
FEMALE EXPERIENCED





SAM CAME FIRST IN THE MALE EXPERIENCED



ROWAN CAME THIRD IN THE MALE EXPERIENCED



CLIMBING HUT
ELLESMERE PORT

MATHS MEM CHALLENGE

Over February half-term years 7-10 participated in the MEM challenge and senior challenge.

MEM
(the Mathematical Education for Merseyside) is a charity based in the university of Liverpool that has been running these competitions since the 1970s!

I have enjoyed the Maths challenge because whilst it was quite challenging I liked being able to do it. I was able to show off my skill and add a bit of creativity. It was great!

Jermome Yr7

Initial length = 500cm
 Final length = 108cm = 21.6%
 $500\text{cm} - 108\text{cm} = 392\text{cm} = 78.4\%$

$500\text{cm} \times x\% \times x\% \times x\% = 108\text{cm}$
 $500\text{cm} \times x\%^3 = 108\text{cm}$
 $100\% \times 78.4\% = 21.6\%$
 $x\%^3 = 78.4\% = 392\text{cm}$

21.6% of the value is left over meaning 100 is 21.6%. To find out what each person mully their length by that was passed on we need find the cubed root of 21.6%

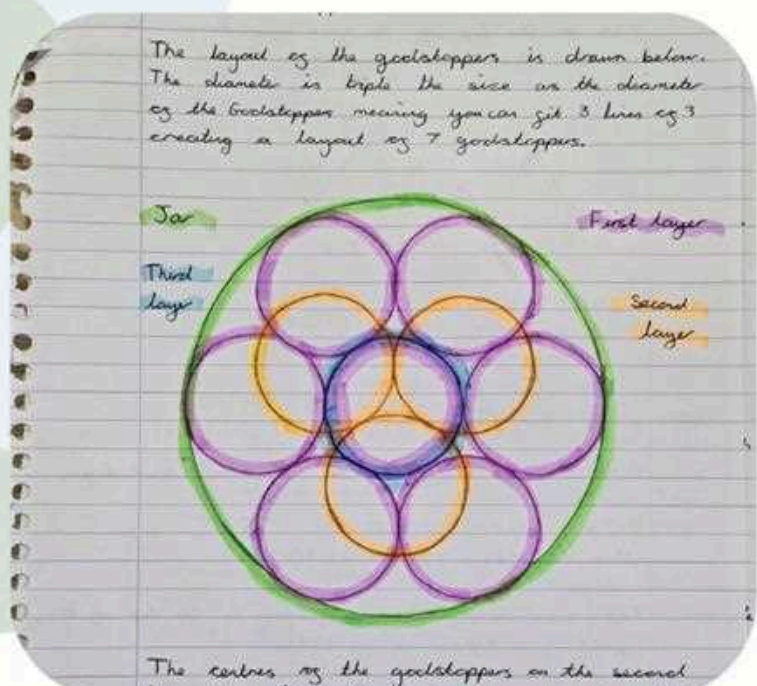
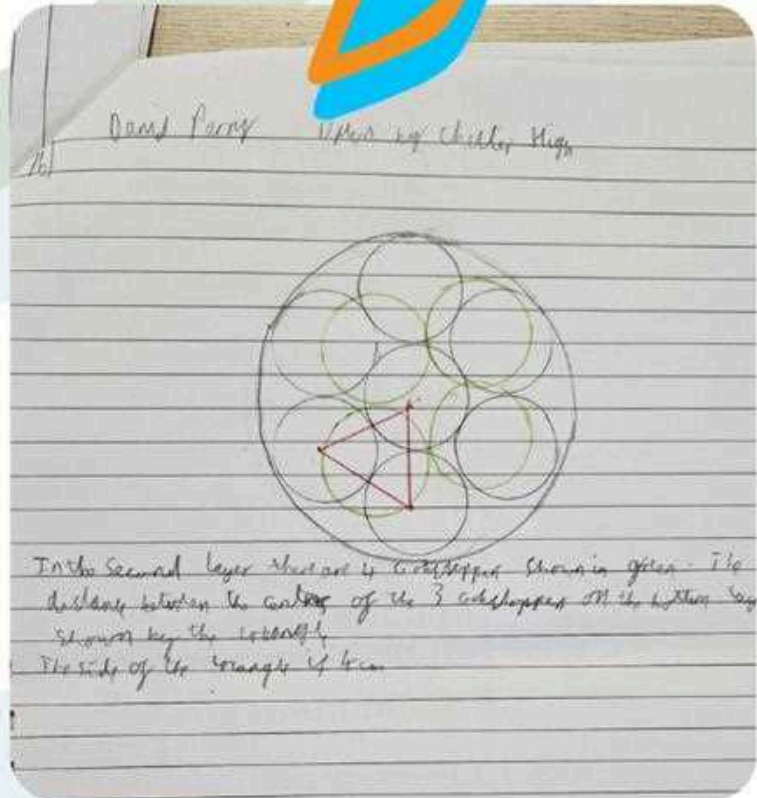
$\sqrt[3]{0.216} = 0.6 = 60\%$

This means 60% of the value they got was passed on and they kept 40%.

$x\% = 40\%$

Abby - $500\text{cm} \times 40\% = 200\text{cm}$
 $500\text{cm} \times 100 - 40\% = 300\text{cm}$ left

Brenda - $300\text{cm} \times 40\% = 120\text{cm}$
 $300\text{cm} \times 100 - 40\% = 180\text{cm}$ left



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER COURSE

"It was a very useful course, and I really enjoyed it. I am very grateful to MHFA for giving us the opportunity to take part for free, as it is usually quite expensive."

- Carina

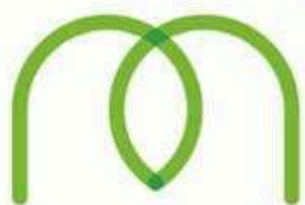


This term, 14 Year 12 learners successfully completed their Mental Health First Aid training course, run by MHFA England. During the course, they learned about various mental health conditions and how to support individuals experiencing them.

Now that they have completed the training, the learners are applying their newly acquired skills by supporting younger learners within the school community

"I'm really proud to have completed this course! It's given me valuable skills to help others, and I feel much more confident in supporting people with their mental health."

- Amelie



MHFA England



UKBC

BRITISH BIOLOGY



OLYMPIAD

Kate won silver!



This year, a group of Year 12 and 13 learners completed the notoriously hard British Biology Olympiad this term. Many learners were awarded Commended and Highly Commended awards, with one Year 13 student receiving a bronze, and Kate in Year 12 receiving a silver award. The biology department is very pleased with the results.

Bronze DofE Training Day



This year 90 Year 10 learners took part in their DofE training day where they participated in 5 different sessions, gaining new skills to utilise in their upcoming expedition. The sessions included a race to pitch tents, bag packing and a talk on good, nutritional food choices. They discussed risk assessments and used stoves to boil water for hot chocolate... (and possibly a pot noodle or two!).



By Edith, Niamh and Grace Yr10



"I really loved learning how to stay safe during my DofE trip and how to pack my bag"

Jamie

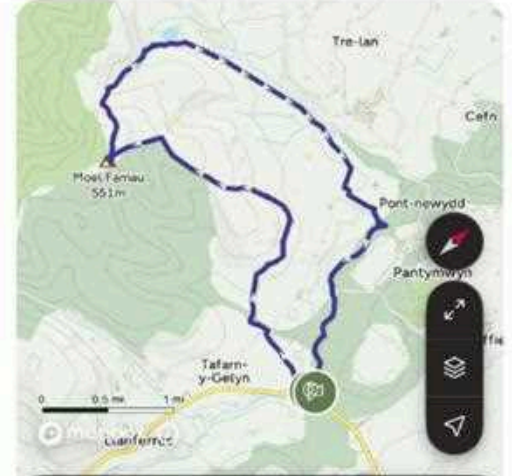


"My favourite part was getting to make hot chocolate on the stoves!"

Eira W

Gold DofE Training Day & Walk

This year we have 20 L6 learners who are working towards their Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The first stage of training for their expedition includes a day in school practising bag packing, navigation, and camp craft. This is followed by a day's hike from Loggerheads to Moel Famau where they can put their skills and team work to the test. All of the participants did really well on the day and we were blessed with beautiful sunshine. We hope that this is a good sign for the rest of our expeditions this year!



Distance	Total time	Moving time
9.19 mi	5h 41m	5h 11m
Avg. speed	Total ascent	Total descent
1.7 mph	1675 ft	1706 ft

Elevation





Chicky Chicky



10-13 FEBRUARY
6PM
SCHOOL HALL

From 10th-13th February, some of our KS3, 4 and 5 learners delivered their performance of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. All four productions received outstanding feedback from everyone who went to see them!



This production has been an honour to be a part of. The talent on display is sensational!

Charlie S (Y12)

"It was a fantastic new experience where I got to collaborate with all the talent within school."

Eden G (Y12)



Bang Bang



"Chitty Chitty Bang Bang was a spectacular production to be a part of and I adored playing the child catcher so much."

Millie W (Y12)

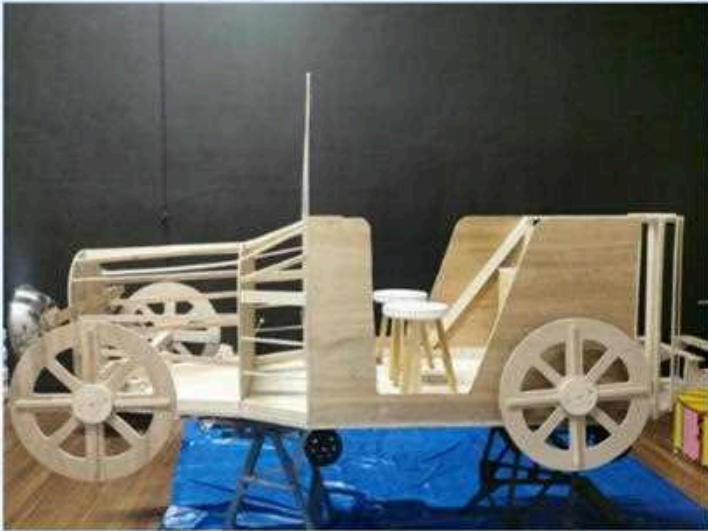


At Upton-by-Chester High School, we place immense value on the creative aspects of our curriculum, believing that artistic expression nurtures imagination, critical thinking, and collaboration. This performance is a shining example of how creativity enriches our learners' learning experiences, empowering them to bring classic stories to life in innovative and inspiring ways. - Mr Cummins

CAST LIST

Caractus Potts - Charles C
Truly Scrumptious - Olivia A
Jeremy Potts - Logan G and Barnaby N
Jemima Potts - Nell H and Isabella W
Grandpa Potts - Olivier H
Baroness - Eden G
Baron - Charlie S
Child Catcher - Millie W

Behind the scenes



Awards



Harrison
Best Technical



Olivia
*Best Vocal
Performance*



Charlie
Best Performance



Nell
Most Potential



Lily
*Best Technical
Newcomer*

Careers Talks

From Stellantis, the NHS, the Army, Adapt and Change and Edge Hill University.



A group of our Year 10 learners had an incredible opportunity today to collaborate with Stellantis, the multi-national automotive manufacturing company, as they introduced the benefits of apprenticeships! As part of this hands-on experience, learners were challenged to design and build a bridge that measured at least 50cm long and 10cm high. It was amazing to see their creativity and teamwork in action! The winning team are pictured below. Thank you, Stellantis, for inspiring our future engineers and showing them the potential of apprenticeship pathways.





"She talked about her struggles getting into the field, and how learners in public schools should be given more opportunities. It was very inspirational."

Ukasha



Welcome to Tattenhall Dental

Tattenhall Dental stands out as a contemporary dental practice, fully equipped with cutting-edge technology, ensuring that our patients receive the most advanced dental care available. Our leading dentists, Dr. David and Dr. Khan, are experienced professionals who have spent many years working in hospital. Their collective knowledge and experience, the cornerstone of their practice, allowing them to ensure the best possible outcomes for their patients' needs.

At the heart of Tattenhall Dental is our dedication to patient comfort. Dr. Khan and Dr. Khan understand that visiting the dentist can be daunting for many, so they go the extra mile to ensure a welcoming and reassuring atmosphere. Their friendly staff is fully experienced, ensuring that each patient has a comfortable and pain-free experience. They take the time to listen, understand, and provide a tailored service that aligns with individual health requirements and preferences.

Our commitment extends beyond just dental treatments. We strive to foster a relationship of trust with our patients, ensuring they feel confident in the care they receive. This commitment is reflected in our transparent and honest communication. We believe in providing our patients with the information they need to make informed decisions about their dental health.



"I really enjoyed the talk. I thought she was very passionate about dentistry and gave a really good insight into what her job looks like day to day."

Yara

We were honoured to have Dr. Alana Davies from Tattenhall Private Dental Practice join us over a working lunch today, to share her wealth of knowledge and experience with aspiring Year 12 Dentists. She provided invaluable advice on the application process, interview tips, and much more. Her passion for dentistry and dedication to helping future professionals was truly inspiring. As a former learner of Upton she was eager to assist and support our current learners, so thank you very much!



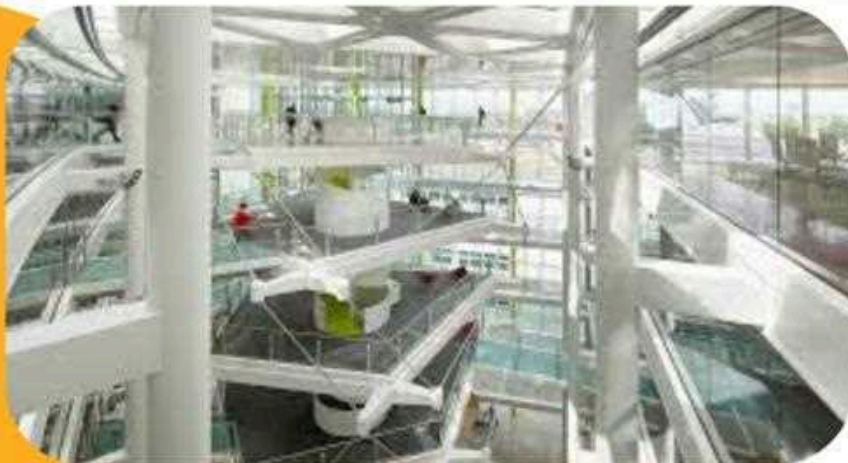
Careers Breakfast Talk

with Ekaterina Mangan

Topic: Supply Chain at Unilever



During this breakfast talk we found out how Ekaterina Mangan, a supply chain executive at Unilever, helps big companies get products to customers quickly and efficiently. She also loves using new technology to make sure everything runs smoothly and to keep improving how things work. Ekaterina emphasized the importance of synchronization across all sectors, highlighting how teamwork and technology drive success in this dynamic field. A big thank you to Ekaterina for inspiring our future leaders!



This is inside Unilever's headquarters!

Unilever's Supply Chain Strategy

Unilever's supply chain strategy is focused on creating a more efficient and agile supply chain that is sustainable and resilient. This includes leveraging digital technologies to reduce costs, improve transparency and traceability, and enhance customer experience.

Fin O'Dell

Fin, alongside the rest of his team won England's under 18s talent academy cup, whilst having the highest percentage of state school learners in the entire tournament. Fin plans on continuing to play at a University level and compete in the BUCS (British University and College Sports) where hockey is the second largest team sport!



After discovering hockey in year 2 PE Fin joined the Chester hockey club where he worked his way up to team goalkeeper. Fin now plays for Chester Hockey Club for men's performance squad and the Timperley talent pathway (which is part of England's hockey pathway).



Year 12 Work Experience



In the week 10th-14th of February our year 12 learners completed their work experience. This served to assist learners throughout the sixth form in gaining useful experience and valuable future contacts. This article will explore some of the places in which year 12 learners spent their week on work experience.

"Our time spent in the Chester Archive was really interesting."
-Phoebe



A group of learners spent the week in the Chester archives where they saw many historical documents including a religious artefact written by a 14th century monk.



"I really liked the variety of the week working with many learners of the different years doing many different jobs."
Hannah



The learner Sade completed her Year 12 work experience at Axis in Dublin, Ireland.



Carina, Saima and Yalinya did work experience at The Countess of Chester Hospital. Carina and Yalinya observed the medical professionals in the anaesthetics department, both students said they really enjoyed the experience. The learner Saima was also on work experience in the Countess shadowing nurses as they cared for cancer patients in ward 43.

'Shadowing the consultants in Chester hospital was a valuable experience that I enjoyed so much.'

Carina



Bella completed her work experience at Merlin Dog Training.



Charlie spent his work experience week on the set of Emmerdale.



Chloe completed her work experience at All Saints Church in Hoole.

EPQ



Congratulations to the Year 13 Learners who recently received their excellent EPQ results. This is an optional qualification where learners produce an Extended Project that shows a deep level of research and excellent presentation and literacy skills on a topic of their own choice. Learners also conduct their own primary research and this year this included workplace-observations, interviews with experts and surveys. Some students also produce their own artefacts as part of their project and this year we saw a poetry anthology and a graphic novel as submissions. Other topics included research into eating-disorders and Autism, the effect of Covid on the NHS, Post Natal Depression, the growth of China's economy and the Good Friday Peace Agreement.

Learners are pictured with Ms H. McCarthy (EPQ Lead) and Mr D. Ryan (School Librarian) who deliver the course as part of the Sixth Form taught curriculum and as an extra-curricular, 'fast-track' option for those taking four A-Levels.

Should the potential adverse health side effects of nanoparticles prevent their use in cosmetics?

After detailed research Rose concluded that the nanoparticles posed very minimal health issues through cosmetics.

Is society a bigger influence on one's identity or is it genetically predetermined.

Daisy concluded that this was a mix of both. She learnt how to research and present an argument in a professional manner and found the process really beneficial.

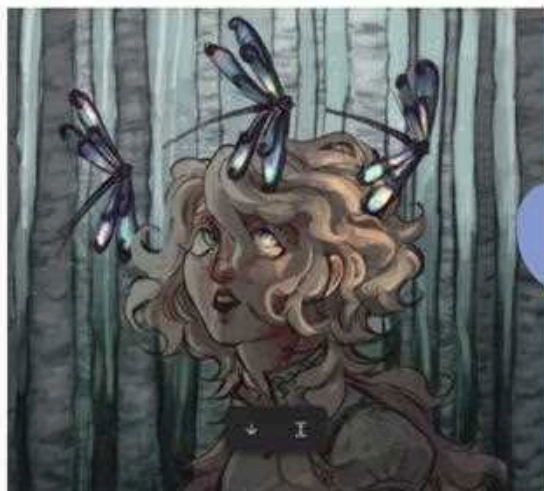


To create concept and illustrative artworks for an original story.

Orione created an original story inspired by a mix of Irish Celtic as well as Spanish and Arabian iconography.

Orione loved doing this piece of work and is looking forward to studying Concept Art at University.

Completing this project taught me lots about turning some big ideas into achievable pieces of work.



TEIGUE LLEUWEN
ELDEST CHILD OF THE KING AND QUEEN
SYMBOL OF MISFORTUNE AND ANCIENT
PURPOSE OF BEING TRADED FOR SAFETY



versiferous stars



part hair brown (light) descended into white-grey multiple moon-crescent shaped scars



Upton's Commitment to Shaping a Brighter Future

What is leadership?

At Upton-by-Chester High School, we proudly embrace our motto, "Learning to Shape the Future" as a guiding principle in all that we do. Our commitment to excellence extends beyond the classroom, inspiring us to serve not only our school but also our wider community and society at large. These Leaders demonstrate what it is to be a learner at Upton-by-Chester High School.

The achievements and unwavering enthusiasm of our learners remind us that the future is indeed in capable hands.

Year 12 and Year 9: Debate Team victors

Upton's Debate Team brought home accolades from this year's Rotary Debate Competition. Year 9's Sam, Queenie, and Jasmine secured gold for their impressive performances on crucial topics like the future of AI and its environmental impacts. Meanwhile, Year 12 students Eden, Ed, George, Noah, Ben, and Tom claimed silver, captivating judges and the opposition alike with their well-reasoned arguments. Notably, Eden's no-notes delivery was a standout moment. These budding debaters are sure to continue shaping meaningful discussions on societal issues.

KS3 Learners: Engaged in Literary Excellence

KS3 learners proudly represented Upton at The King's School Chester for the Carnegie Medal shortlist announcement event. The Carnegie Medal, the UK's most prestigious award for young people's literature, it sparked lively discussions among students and staff from King's and Blacon High School. Upton students earned high praise for their thoughtful contributions and even had the chance to meet Ros Harding, Chair of this year's judging panel – a truly enriching experience

Elise: Science and Sustainability

In celebration of British Scientific Week, Elise H, a driven Year 12 student, took the initiative to organize a Scientific Panel on the theme "Adapt and Change." The event featured engaging discussions from panellists in the Science and Design Technology Departments, KS4 STEM Club learners, and an attentive audience. Elise, a dedicated STEM Club member, demonstrates her passion for science every week, helping others deepen their knowledge and fostering insightful conversations.

Beyond her scientific pursuits, Elise is a proud member of the Eco Schools Action Group, working tirelessly on strategies for a more sustainable future. Her commitment to both science and the environment highlights her dedication to making a difference, a passion she hopes to carry forward into higher education.

Youth Mental Health First Aiders

The Lower Sixth were fortunate to have the chance to complete a course focused on supporting young people with their mental health. They went through lots of challenging topics (including depression, anxiety, schizophrenia), learning how mental health plays a role in everyday life. Now equipped with this invaluable knowledge, they will now take on the important role of mentoring and offering guidance to younger learners who may be facing challenges or seeking support. Approaching topics with empathy and understanding. This experience will not only benefit their peers but will also have a lasting impact, as everyone will carry these skills forward into their futures and careers. The learners' dedication to supporting others underscores Upton's ethos of care and compassion.

From Elise's leadership and environmental advocacy to the intellectual pursuits of our debaters and literary enthusiasts, with the empathy demonstrated by our mental health advocates, Upton's students exemplify what it means to make a positive impact.



Debate team: Sam, Queenie, Jasmine, Eden, Tom, Noah, Ed and George



KS3 learners outside of The King's School Chester



Elise's panel, 'Adapt and Change' for British Science Week



Lower Sixth learners, Carina and Amelie on Youth Mental Health First Aiders course

“
At Upton we provide opportunities for learners to lead. across the breadth of our curriculum and beyond. This allows the learners to develop a vision and master the skills to deliver it
”

- Mr Iqbal



eco action group

Activities and work undertaken:

This photo was taken in March 2024, this is just a few of the enthusiastic Eco School members! Image includes Luis G, Joe B, Joanne P, Aleksander S, Dylan F, Isobel D, Nyah J-W, Ruby Er, Ava N, Emily M and Ava H. The Eco Schools group identify three targets which they work towards throughout the academic year. This year they are focusing on: Global Citizenship, Marine and School Grounds. The group have established strong links with Chester Zoo to promote the use of the app "Palm Oil Scan" to raise awareness of using sustainable palm oil rather than boycotting the oil altogether. They visited the zoo to learn more about this to share with the school community.



“ Being in Eco Schools Action Group has taught me a lot and helped me make a difference. I’ve connected with amazing people who share the same passion as me! ”



Impact on other:s

This year our Eco Schools Action group has grown in numbers; this has been purely through the members sharing their enthusiasm for improving our environment within school. Our work on recycling batteries for Duracell's Big Battery Hunt even featured on their website as part of their pioneering stories! In July 2023, we presented our work at Chester Zoo's School Takeover Day, where we got to talk to visitors of the zoo about what we have done to make our school more environmentally sustainable. This made the regional news!

Impact on themselves:

Eco Schools Action Group members have had the opportunity to develop their professional speaking, networking, and campaigning skills. They have been able to learn more about how as individuals they can make a difference to their local and global environment. This has allowed them to share their passion and enthusiasm for the environment!

Recent events:

Members of the Eco Schools Action Group, had the opportunity to showcase the impactful work they have been undertaking in collaboration with The Chester Schools Sustainability Network. Elise, Emily and Henry in year 12 discussed the benefits of working with other schools and large organisations like Chester Zoo to achieve sustainability targets and what we are doing as the Eco School Action Group.

They showed representatives attending the European Conservation Education Conference, with people from countries such as Estonia, Slovakia, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands. The Eco Schools Action group shared their work and loved Lower Sixth's passion and extraordinary efforts to promote biodiversity, encourage healthy living, and advance sustainable energy practices. The invaluable contributions and inspiring projects of the Eco Schools Action Group were not only a testament to their dedication but also a source of inspiration for fostering international dialogue and collaboration on sustainability.

“It was a really good opportunity to learn more about sustainability and how we can grow a better environmental conscience.”

- Grace (L6)



“It makes me inspired to do more for my community, the environment and beyond.”

- Hayden (Year 10)



Recent Events:

In the lower school, members of the Eco Schools Action Group have been making significant strides toward achieving their biodiversity goals. As part of their efforts, they focused on the Cheshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which served as a guiding framework for their initiatives.

The group had the opportunity to attend an insightful talk delivered by fantastic speakers which provided valuable inspiration and direction. During the session, they were able to assess the steps already in place to support biodiversity on the school grounds and identify areas for improvement.

Green Expo:

Representatives from the Eco Schools group attended the Chester Green Expo where they got to meet local businesses who are striving to provide clean energy and energy saving homes!

Chester Schools Sustainability Network:

Every month representatives from our school meet with Chester Zoo and other local schools to discuss what they can do collaboratively to increase sustainable initiatives in schools and the wider community. During these meetings, we have also met with local organisations who are increasing green spaces and campaigning for change.

Eco schools has enabled me to share my enthusiasm and my love for the environment! Being a member has allowed me to meet up with people who are passionate too.



Why is Eco Schools Action Group important?

Eco Schools has allowed learners to be able to make a change in areas that they feel passionately about, whether this be declining biodiversity, climate change action or healthy living. This is both within the school and the wider community, this has provided organisations the opportunity to hear from future decision makers and youth voice.



Environmental Leadership Course:

10 members of the group are currently preparing to work towards their level 2 environmental leadership qualification.

Cheshire West and Chester Council Meeting:

The Eco School Action Group met with the climate change department of Cheshire West and Chester Council. The group had the opportunity to listen to how the local authority is responding to changes caused by a changing climate. They also had the opportunity to share their ideas on what more could be done with increasing biodiversity, promoting healthy living and energy.





Geographical Association

What happened on the day?

On 4th December, two teams, each with six learners from Upton-by-Chester High School, took part in the annual World Wise Quiz, hosted by Chester University. Both teams thoroughly enjoyed the Quiz, with various rounds on volcanoes, country outlines and fieldwork. Eight schools and sixteen teams participated from Chester, Wirral and North Wales. Year 9 learners: Adam B, Aleksander S, Harrison C, Queenie R, Nadia Z and Lena A, all had a fantastic time competing against other schools and being quizzed on various topics.



What does the Geographical Association do?

The Geographical Association promotes excellent geography education by fostering a network where geography teachers can connect, share ideas, and learn together. They support teachers professional growth :



What is the Geographical Association?

The Association is a dynamic and inclusive community dedicated to advancing geography education. Supported by its committed members and volunteers, it strives for further geographical knowledge and understanding through education

Any year 8 learners who are keen to take part next year, please let your Geography teacher know.





Debate Team

Recently both our senior and intermediate teams competed in the regional finals. The seniors were very strong and competed wonderfully in a very tough final debate. Ben was charming and informative: an ideal chair. Eden had memorised a wonderful and persuasive speech, and Thomas demonstrated clarity and passion.

The intermediate team were hugely successful winning their final and the only disappointment is that no Nationals are being held this year, as they would have had a reasonable chance to claim the title. Queenie was engaging and informative in setting up the debate. Sam was electric within his speech and delivered a mesmeric performance. Jasmine was senatorial, elegant and precise.

Mr Fearon



Learners involved in the competition are Eden G, George C, Tom C, Ben N, Noah S-B, and Ed D



On the day of the competition the sixth form won the competition with flying colours against multiple schools, and competed in the finals in Wrexham along with the year 9 winners.

During debate club all members have a specific role in what they do in order to prepare for future competitions. The point of argument in the most recent competition with the lower-sixth learners, is whether AI is advancing too quickly. Should further developments be delayed, or should we forge ahead enthusiastically? Or perhaps our use of AI could be minimised?



Year 9 learners Sam, Jasmine, and Queenie are competition winners!

During debate club, learners practice various arguments for and against the specific subjects given to them, to hone their skills before any upcoming competitions.



Congratulations to both the intermediate team (Sam, Jasmine, and Queenie) and the advanced team (Eden, Tom, and Ben) for competing in the final round of this years Rotary Debate competition.



Finally, Intermediate won the gold award and Advanced won silver. The judges were full of praise for both teams! Well done years 9 and 12!



CHARITY WEEK

SIXTH-FORM CHARITY WEEK RAISED MONEY IN SUPPORT OF:

The Cystic Fibrosis Trust work towards building a brighter future for everyone with cystic fibrosis, they fund cutting-edge research, in hope of driving up the standards of care and supporting people with the condition, and their loved ones every step of the way.

**Cystic
Fibrosis Trust**

Fighting for a *Life Unlimited*

back up
transforming lives after spinal cord injury

Back Up Trust aims to inspire people affected by spinal cord injury to get the most out of life and aid their families in helping this vision. Through education, events and challenges like the 2025 London to Paris Cycle Ride they achieve this goal!

Stroke Association aims to support people rebuilding their lives after a stroke, they specialise in support, funding critical research and campaign to make sure people affected by stroke get the very best care.

Stroke
Association

Adams story:

His Stroke Victory

Adam had his first stroke when he was seven, and his second a year later. He was determined to regain his ability to walk. It took eight months with the use of splints. Three years after the strokes he joined a local disabled sports club, where his confidence greatly improved and Adam realised what he was capable of achieving. Adam became interested in air rifle shooting. He's since represented Great Britain and has become an international sporting champion winning both bronze and silver.



“There is light in the dark. Don't hide away thinking you can't do anything. Get out there and find something you can do, and enjoy it.”

Learning wheelchair skills for independence

Layth had a cycling accident which caused permanent paralysis at the T12 level. He now uses a wheelchair full-time. Back Up helped Layth develop his wheelchair skills on their Multi Activity Course. Participants can try fun outdoor activities such as hand cycling and abseiling, in a supportive environment.

“In the early days I struggled to see a future. How would I still live life with a spinal cord injury? But you've got to keep on living – and Back Up was phenomenal in helping me do this.”



“Charity week is a fun and meaningful way to bring everyone together, raise awareness, and make a difference. It's about teamwork, creativity, and showing how small efforts can create big change.”

**TOTAL RAISED:
£3917**

What happened throughout the week?

Monday: Just dance, a bake sale, bingo, table tennis, car washing and a raffle ticket sale.

Tuesday: Just dance, a bake sale, dodgeball, a disco, InterYear football, InterYear netball, a car wash and a raffle ticket sale

Wednesday: A bake sale, dodgeball vs staff, teacher karaoke, a table tennis tournament, car wash and a raffle ticket sale

Thursday: Just dance, a bake sale, dodgeball, a table tennis tournament, InterYear football, InterYear netball, car wash and a raffle ticket sale

Friday: Sponge the teacher, a bake sale, dodgeball, staff pantomime, car wash, lower school: non uniform day and sixth form: costume day

“Charity week was so much fun and really engaging for all years. I worked on the bake sale and everything sold out really quickly! I especially enjoyed sponging the teachers and seeing the look on their faces when a bucket of cold water was dropped over their heads!”

Sponge the Teacher



“
It was one of the worst 20 minutes of my life, I'm pretty sure my body went in to shock after the first ice cold bucket was poured over my head. I was off 'ill for two days the following week... I've signed up to do it again next year to raise more money for charity!
”
Mr Cresswell



“
Cold, Wet!
”
Mr Lydiate





“
*Wet, Wet
 Wet*
 Mr Casstles
 ”



Ratings from Mr Fearon:
 Mr Casstles.
 A magnet for water, the precipitation cycle in action 8/10.
 Mr Bell
 High pitched southern screaming at times. Sounded like an urban fox 4/10.
 Mr Cresswell
 Solid in defence. 7/10.
 Mr Mottram
 had his own suit for the occasion. Preparation is the key to success 10/10
 Mr Lydiate
 Seemed comfortable in adversity 9/10
 Mr Parry.
 Ponytail prevented him being drowned in his own hair 7/10
 Mr Fearon.
 From the north 10/10.



Teacher Karaoke

The staff were really brave to get up on stage and sing - I really enjoyed it!

Sade



All of the singers were really good!

Shannon

Staff Panto & Car Wash



The Car Wash raised loads of money for charity and it was bucketloads of fun!

Maisie



Costumes





HEY AI, WRITE ME AN ARTICLE

THE COGNITIVE CASUALTIES OF 'CONVENIENCE THINKING'

WRITTEN BY GRACE S

The silent subtext of AI's response reads: 'Hey Human! Surrender your Brain!'



THE DILEMMA, CAPTURED BY GRACE S

In this cultural moment, we are right to question the influence of Artificial Intelligence. It has become a spurious friend. 'Convenience thinking' comes at a cost; it contorts our intellect, diminishes our confidence and creativity, affecting our meta-cognition and memory centres. Author and futurist, Patrick Dixon details: 'about 80% of thirteen-to seventeen-year-old UK students are already using AI tools such as ChatGPT on a regular basis', this is inevitably going to shape the impressionable young minds of learners. Education is a sphere that needs to be dominant in

the conversation, AI is unapologetically useful, an asset if used cautiously and used to assist rather than dictate. So let's open up the conversation about the contentious placement of AI in education...

LESS FRIEND, MORE FOE

There has been a perceptible shift in the mechanics of intelligence, a reflection of our prevailing culture of convenience, everything is fast and everything is now. This onslaught of change is impacting the education system at an exceedingly alarming rate. Commodifying our intelligence is normative to Gen-Z, funding conglomerate businesses who 'scrape' and take from centuries of learning, these pillaged goods are then provided packaged and with premium speed delivery! Generationally, our approach to the acquisition of knowledge has seen a seismic shift, pre-1989 (world wide web creation), one would comb through physical resources, books and papers, forming a resilient analytical intelligence. Pan

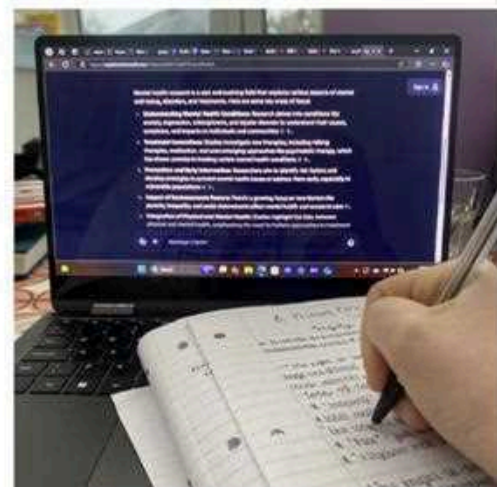
to today, where our epistemic experience has been upended. Essays are written and complex formulas solved on demand with no cognitive engagement (this is to be expected, we are products of our time, but this does not render it any less ethically sinister). As AI develops, access will continue to reconfigure this generation's intelligence to a place of possible disempowerment, analytical indecision, and creative mutism. These observations do not stem from a place of fear, but from science. The brain constantly adapts to its environment, AI's influence depends on how frequently and passively you consume from it. A continuous reliance reinforces neural pathways associated with inactive information obtainment, this minimises the cognitive load which lessens activation in regions of the brain responsible for mental dexterity (including reasoning, analysis and decision-making), all tools educators try to instil in their learners. The statistics speak for themselves. In 2024, an average of 37.5 million per-day answered Chat GPT's 'What can I help with?', the

sheer volume indicates society's overarching dependence. This is specifically prominent within the school environment: a quick fix for a forgotten homework or to minimise the pressures of time consuming research. When we unquestioningly accept AI generated answers, activation in the anterior cingulate cortex, a region part of mistake detection and control, is minimised, since neuroplasticity conforms to a 'use it or lose it' principle, passive consumption can leave you deskilled. I interviewed a teacher at this school about their observations of AI in the classroom, it was reported that: 'I asked a member of my class a question and their instinctive response was to consult AI' although this was likely to be a joke, it does unveil a concerning trend, this is a real narrative for many learners. Referring to AI has minimised our ability to formulate individual responses to questions. This is also reflected in the 2023 Cognitive Science Study, reliant AI users were less likely to question assumptions and as a result showed less originality and creativity in problem-solving. This reflects historian Yuval Noa Hararis beliefs that generative AI has 'hacked the operating system of our civilization'. AI has also clawed its way into our emotional intelligence, dangerous dependencies can form at birth and nurture the belief that your own work is not good enough. Over reliance cripples your academic confidence, I've had many a conversation with peers about this.

MORE FRIEND, LESS FOE

It is not all bleak! AI can be a tool for the self-disciplined, those who use it for research, to then intensively and critically analyse AI's response have been seen to maintain high activity in the prefrontal cortex and parietal lobes highlighting sustaining cognitive engagement. Tim Bajarin (author of the Forbes article 'The Rise Of AI Tutors') interviewed one of his Oxford professors who commented on the position of AI in education: 'A better way to think about AI is to think about it as a tutor. Tutors have been part of all education systems for centuries. But, a tutor's role is to augment the learning experience, not replace it'. As a revision tool, a consolidation technique, and for some individuals, particularly for those who identify as neurodiverse, it might create opportunities for a different type of learning experience. A student from the North-West who left mainstream education and began studying via an AI tutor called Century Tech has excelled under the initiative, developed by a team of experienced teachers, neuroscientists and technologists, an education platform combining the latest research in learning science, artificial intelligence and neuroscience, with 93% of school leaders recommending it as a tutoring tool. This learner's experience can be understood through their quote 'I enjoy that the system is broken down into manageable chunks and it tracks your progress automatically to

tailor areas to focus'. Also they discussed disliking the added noise of a school environment and were self-motivated so the conditions were right for success. The benefits are not limited to the learner body, 36% of teachers this month admitted to experiencing 'burnout', with AI resources like Century Tech, planning and administration pressures can be dramatically reduced. The DfE report said that for some teachers, using AI "reduced their overtime, improved their work-life balance and increased job satisfaction,' allowing teaching staff to be more present in the classroom.



ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT, CAPTURED BY GS

How we relate to this sometimes useful, sometimes spurious friend is what really matters. We've seen the malevolence of 'convenience thinking' on the brain, but also its tender helping hand within the education system. AI is an unstoppable force, it will continue to develop, but it is how we engage with it that matters. The cognitive benefits of penning this article far outweigh the time, effort and stress that would be saved if I had just sat down and said 'Hey AI, Write Me An Article'.

MEET THE SIXTH-FORM LEADERSHIP TEAM



JESS G - YEAR 13

Hi, I'm Jess, the Head Learner! I am part of your Learner Leadership Team because I wanted to make sure that Sixth-Form voices were heard and people saw change as a result! Something I am really passionate about is ensuring that everyone's ideas are incorporated, for Charity Week 2025 we prepared a Google Form to allow our sixth-form community to provide charities they would like to raise money for. As a result we were able to support Back Up, Stroke Association and Cystic Fibrosis Trust. It was a really incredible experience!



EDEN G - YEAR 12

Hi, my name is Eden! I am part of your Learner Leadership Team. I wanted to be part of the leadership team so that I can represent and advocate for learner's voices as our school is changed and renewed with your perspective in the forefront. A moment that was particularly inspiring was in the last days of the 2025 Charity Week as all our hard work paid off and we got to enjoy costume day and be proud in the fact that we had raised £3700 for 3 amazing charities!



GRACE S - YEAR 12

'Hi, I am Grace! I wanted to be part of the Sixth-Form Leadership Team to advocate for the needs of my peers and to organise Charity Week, hosting events and raising money for deserving charities, both things that I am really passionate about. Something I have really enjoyed about this experience is being able to represent the sixth-form when meeting with Aspens to discuss food quality, allergen inclusion and packaging, as well as the aspirations of our sixth-form community for the direction of the canteen.'



SAIMA A - YEAR 12

'Hi. My name is Saima! I wanted to be part of the Learner Leadership Team because it gives me an opportunity to develop new skills and work in a strong team environment. I enjoy being able to discuss relevant topics and consider how we can help our sixth form be a better place! I am particularly enjoying discussing the logistics of up-and-coming events like Fairtrade Fortnight, being able to talk with local businesses in hope of gaining their support and seeing the city involve itself has been really motivating and inspiring!



HENRY S - YEAR 12

'Hi, I'm Henry! I wanted to become a Learner Leader because I wanted to get involved in helping out around the school, specifically in supporting the Sixth-Form and making sure their voices were being heard, and to get experience with organising events like Charity Week! I really enjoyed planning and participating in the Volleyball and Bake Sales throughout the week, getting to involve all ages in helping our community and supporting deserving causes felt very empowering!'



EMILY M - YEAR 12

'Hello, my name is Emily! I wanted to be a Learner Leader so I could make a difference to the school community and be more involved in running and organising activities! I particularly enjoyed being involved in the planning and preparation of the Sponge the Teacher Event during Charity Week. It was a real highlight of the week for the learners and being able to raise that money for such incredible charities felt very rewarding. It also taught me a lot about the logistics of running an event, skills I will continue to take forward with me!'



STE S - YEAR 13

'Hi. I am Ste! I wanted to be apart of the Learner Leadership Team to work with others to represent the needs of the Sixth-Form! It has been a very rewarding experience where I have been able to learn more about project and event development and also how to make sure that different perspectives are heard and acknowledged, which I believe betters the school community! Something I am particularly looking forward to is planning the Year 13's Prom!'



GEORGE S - YEAR 13

'Hi. My name is George! I wanted to be part of the Learner Leadership Team because it gives me an opportunity to work in a collaborative team to bring forwards the visions and goals of the sixth-form! I am honoured to be able to plan, prepare and hosts events like Charity Week and the Prom which reflect the wants of my fellow peers, and it's exciting to be able to discuss with the group different ways we can include and incorporate the ideas of the sixth-form learners to better represent the school!'

IF YOU HAVE ANY ENQUIRIES OR REQUEST YOU WISH TO BRING UP TO THE SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP TEAM, FEEL FREE TO EMAIL SIMPSONR@UPTONHIGH.CO.UK OR SPEAK TO ONE OF THE LEARNER LEADERS!

SPORTS

highlights



Heart break for Year 11 football going out of the Chester cup quarter final on penalties. We lead for most of the game but a late goal took it to the lottery that is penalties! Unlucky lads.



U19s reached the NW round of the National Schools Netball Champs. Unfortunately two early losses blew away their chances of reaching the National Finals again. 5th best school in the North West. Unlucky!



Under 14 netballers jumping for joy as they reach the final of the sister and sort at Loughborough university , well done girls and roll on the final.



Congratulations to Dean in Year 11 for this great achievement.





Well done Year 7 football for a convincing win in the Chester cup tonight. Lots of excellent goals from JoelC x3, LaytonH x3, BenA, AstonH, BenS, JoeS & FreddieS. ⚽



Under 12, 14, 16, 19 netballers enjoyed a drink and a bite to eat with Mr Cummins to say a massive congratulations for their and the schools recent netball success and achievements.



Well done year 9 footballers who moved into the Chester cup semis with a 5-1 win vs Blacon. Goals from OliB, JackM x2 & ElliotR x2. ⚽



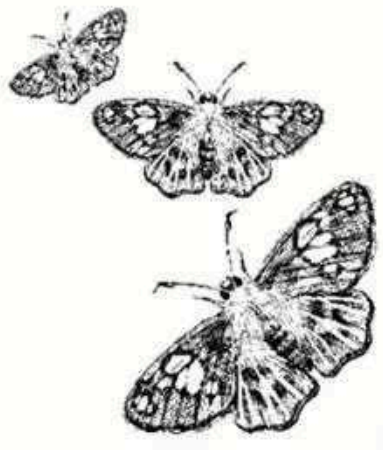
Congratulations to the U18's football side who overcome Kings school in a controlled 4-1 victory in the Chester cup. A controlled performance with goals from Marcus B and Alex J.



It wasn't to be for our Under 12 netballers in the COD tournament as we narrowly lost out late in the game to Kings, well done girls for a hardworking and resilient effort.



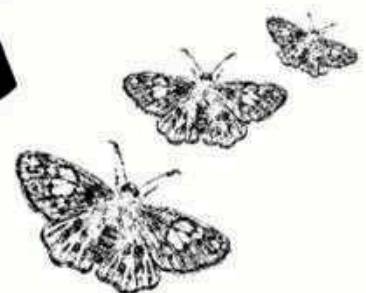
More penalty devastation for year 10 football after despite a resilient team performance drawing the game 1-1 penalties unfortunately didn't go their way, well done lads.



Alice

by Laura Wade

1st July - 3rd July 2025



Join us down the rabbit hole

