



## UK Space Design Competition

A team of 11 Year 11 Scientists and Mr Pawar made their way to Hitchin station at the early hour of 7am on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> of November. Fuelled by coffee we were raring to go, some more than others, for our trip to Imperial College. When we arrived, we were introduced to our CEO for the weekend - Keith.

Our task was to design in as much detail as possible a base to be situated in lava tubes under the surface of Mercury. The base would house 200 people and should work as a mini city in that everyone had a certain job in making sure the base would survive. The time period was 2083 and we were allowed to presume that robots were very much a part of everyday life so we of course took advantage of this. However, it wasn't all fun and games since we had to take an awful lot into consideration. We had to allocate spaces for certain things to take place, i.e. accommodation, recreation, mining spaces and storage. We had to factor in that it takes 70 days to get to Mercury from earth so we had to design a ship big enough to carry all of our essentials as well, luckily we agreed that 3D printers would be very much advanced and we would use them for most things.



Fortunately we had the best brains from The Priory on our team who thought of whacky and intelligent ideas that definitely impressed the judges. We came up with ideas such as having glowing algae for mood lighting at night as well as it being a source of oxygen. Other ideas included having defence against things such as space pirates in case we came

under attack (the judges especially liked this).

The maths and science behind it weren't my responsibility however I was in charge of human engineering which meant I had to make sure that the settlement was as comfortable and fun as possible for the 200 people living there. We had to take in to consideration that without comfortable surroundings the inhabitants could become uncomfortable and suffer from space madness. To help reduce this risk we thought of engineering seasons and night and day to ensure it feels as much like earth as possible. We decided to have a mini government with many rules to ensure their stay would be as safe as possible. This took all us until 9pm. It was a long day and we couldn't wait to get home, but we'd completely forgotten momentarily that we were to return again the next day at the same time to present our ideas to a panel of professionals.

We presented our ideas on a PowerPoint and then answered any questions that were thrown at us, admittedly we struggled under the pressure but always answered with something. We could tell Mr Pawar was immensely proud of the work we'd done. Unfortunately we came second to a year 13 team who had already won the 3 years previously so we weren't too disappointed considering. The stress of the weekend mentally and physically drained all of us but we will never forget it since it was such an eventful and exciting 2 days. We'd like to thank Mr Pawar for the fantastic opportunity he provided us with and hopefully we can take part again next year.

By Madelaine Gee



## Dates for diary 2014

**Monday 6th January**  
INSET DAY  
Mock Yr12 & 13 Exams  
start at HGS & HBS

**RETURN TO SCHOOL**  
Tuesday 7th January  
Mock Yr12 & 13 Exams  
start at TPS

**Friday 10th January**  
Yr 11 Exam Results

**Monday 13th January**  
Yr 9 Options Taster Week

**Monday 20th January**  
Yr 9 Options Evening  
Post 16 Options Interviews  
Yr 11 Non 6th Form Applications Start

**Tuesday 21st January**  
Inclusion Week  
Yr 10 Charity Week

**Thursday 23rd January**  
Yr 7 Disco

**Tuesday 28th January**  
PROGRESS REVIEW DAY  
NO LESSONS FOR STUDENTS

**Thursday 30th January**  
Shakespeare Festival

**Friday 31st January**  
Post 16 Application Deadline

**Wednesday 5th February**  
Yr 9 Drugs Talk  
Drugs Talk to Parents in Evening

**Thursday 6th February**  
Intermediate Maths Challenge

**Friday 7th February**  
Yr 7 Careers Morning  
Headteacher Rewards Lunch

**Tuesday 11th February**  
Y12 History Trip  
Y5 Puzzle Day

**Wednesday 12th February**  
Gym & Dance Display 7pm

**Saturday 15th-18th February**  
A level RE Trip to Rome

**HALF TERM**  
Monday 17th Feb-Friday 21st Feb

**Monday 24th February**  
Yr 8 Charity Week

**Tuesday 25th February**  
Yr 7 Natural History Trip



Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and to thank you for supporting the school during my first term. Teachers and students have worked incredibly hard since the start of the term and deserve a well-earned rest. Over the last 15 weeks the school has run a huge array of extra-curricular events which have provided our students with a wider understanding of the society we live. With the last week of term upon us the pace of school life seems to have gone up an extra gear. The Christmas Concert, Panto, and the Presentation Evening are a true reflection of a school community coming together in celebrating achievement.

Geraint Edwards—Headteacher



## Headteacher's Commendations

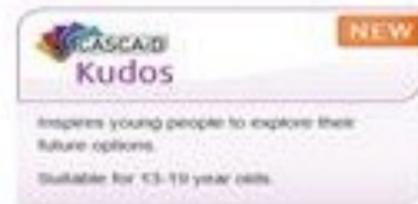


On the 16th December, the music department held it's annual Christmas Concert as a celebration of the achievements of our students over the past term. It was a very successful evening showcasing the talents of students from Years 7 to 13, with solo performances, woodwind and string ensembles (including our consortium flute quartet), the school choirs and or course, the orchestra. Members of staff even got involved, performing 'It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas' in the staff choir, which added to the festive atmosphere. Buy by far the most memorable event of the night was Jack Lawther, Liam Brennan and Alex Shilling performing a hilarious versions of George Michael's 'Careless Whisper' in full costume, which I'm sure is something those who saw it wont forget in a hurry. Overall, it was a magical night—the first concert for many, and the last for some of our Year 13s—which showed off the fantastic range of musical talent that we have within the school.



On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December Year 10 were visited by Sharon Wright, an entrepreneur who appeared on Dragons Den. She talked to the students about setting up her own business, the balance between her work life and private life, the battles she faced in the business world and her own personal struggles with stress and an eating disorder. The students asked mature and thoughtful questions and Sharon was all too happy to answer these honestly. Sharon was thoroughly inspirational and I hope that the students have gained some insight into what hard work and dedication can achieve. Also, Jordan Lau 10DJ was lucky enough to receive a signed copy of her book!

**Charity Fundraising to date is a massive £3,918.84**  
Well done to everyone. Thank you to the PSA who raised £1,500 at the Christmas Craft Fair



## Yr 8 Careers Activity

As part of their Careers activities, all of Year 8 took part in a one hour session where they used the Kudos application. Kudos is a part of Youth Connexions Careerscape programmes which are designed to help young people through answering a series of questions about their likes and dislikes what could be a good match for a possible career. The aim of these sessions was for the students to explore the many career possibilities open to them and to then research whether the career they had chosen could be found in the local area. It was fantastic to see how many different types of careers the students found and to see them working out what they would need to achieve in their exams to allow them to follow their chosen career path.

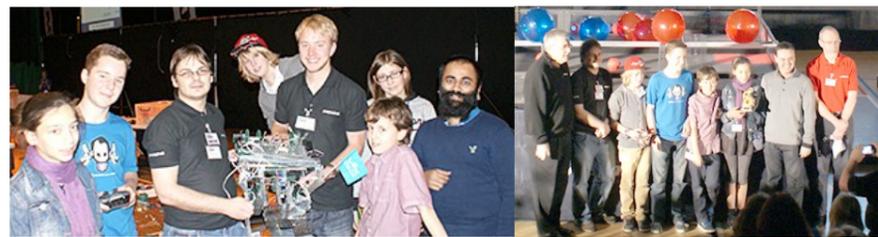
The community ambassadors have been busy once again with another visit to Westbourne Care home. The community ambassadors ranging from year 8 to year 12, gave up their time after school to visit the care home. The students chatted to the residents over tea and biscuits and some students helped write Christmas cards! We are hoping to return to Westbourne care home in the new year and maybe even invite some of the residence into school for an afternoon!



Over the past several months we were working on building a robot. It had to fit various specifications and requirements including moving balls and moving over a bump.

In October there was a practise date. We took our robot to MBDA and fixed the claw onto the chassee. Immediately we began to pick up some problems; the balance was totally out; the amount of torque needed was totally underestimated and the proportions were slightly out. With the help of our MBDA representative, Luke, we began to modify and rebuild the structure and rethink our plans to meet the challenges of the competition. We attended the Robot Rumble competition on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December in Stevenage. The day was very intense and we had to do last minute modifications. The robotics competition was an enjoyable experience and we learnt a lot from doing the project. We have learnt team working skills, problem solving skills, meeting deadlines, engineering skills and communication skills. Our hard work paid off and we won a trophy for the best log book.

By Esta Norton



## The Enigma Project

On Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 79 Year 6 pupils from Whitehill, Wilshere Dacre and Offley Primary schools took part in a two hour maths activity, The Enigma Project. For the first hour James, from the Millennium Maths Project, Cambridge University, explained all about how codes work and how they might be broken and demonstrated how messages were sent and decrypted using a working Enigma machine. Then in pairs, the pupils all worked on breaking many different codes. The pupils really enjoyed taking part in this activity and were really engaged in trying to break the codes.



## 6th Form

**The 6th Form Christmas Meal and quiz**  
It was very nice to spend some time with friends and teachers, having fun taking part in a team quiz, even if some teams did not get very many points! The food was tasty, after all who can turn down fish and chips! It was a fun evening for both students and teachers and a great fundraiser towards the 6th Form Prom. Thank you to everyone who came along.



## Consortium Challenge

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of December teams of six year 13 students from TPS, HBS and HGS took part in a University Challenge style quiz as part of the Cole Swinburn Cup. Cole Swinburn is a series of sports, arts and academic events that Year 13 teams from the three Hitchin schools take part in—a bit like a Hitchin Triwizard Tournament. Our team was made up of, Alex Hawkins, Calum Thomson, Isaac Waby, Susannah Copson, Megan Rataj and Ellen Radcliffe (for one round) and Tom Coombes for the remainder. The questions were submitted by the Head Boys and Girls from the three schools, and it could be said that they were definitely... challenging. At the end of the evening HBS came out top, with 200 points, TPS came second with 130, and HGS finished last with only 10 points. It was a great evening all round and HBS' win leaves the standing at HBS 9 points, TPS 5 and HGS 3.  
Pearl Pearce-Smith



On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December a number of Sixth Form students and members of staff performed the first ever production of a Priory School panto. Written and directed by Miss Follano, this entertaining show was a highlight in what has been a very active term for the Sixth Form. We had some 'interesting' performances from the boys – Tom Ferns, Leon Anderson, Bailey Burton and James Chapman were far too at home dressed as women! I have never seen such an ugly bunch of sisters! And also some comedic moments from the girls – Tegan Watson (Buttons), Steph Brokensha (Cinderella) and Evie Downie (Prince) showed some fabulous comedy timing. And as for the staff, I'm not sure what Mrs Hall was doing hiding in that Christmas tree and Dr Blackford's short but sweet appearance brought the house down! Traditional panto villains were aplenty; Mr Duncombe was a particularly vile step mother, and also some less traditional villains in the form of Michael Gove, who was portrayed brilliantly by Mrs Mathews. He certainly got a big boo from the staff! All in all it was a fantastically fun evening, the audience loved it, and we raised a whopping £658 for the Sixth Form Charity. The British Heart Foundation. Thanks to everyone involved for their hard work!