



Dear Parents

I suspect that many of you have read with horror some of the recent statistics about childrens' mental health. If you did not see the articles, here is one from the [Guardian](#) and one from the [Times Educational Supplement](#). It is clear that we are at a crisis point in this country and whilst it is important that we understand why we have got to this stage, it is even more pressing to find solutions for those children who are struggling right now.

We know that friendships play an enormous role in young peoples' lives. Understanding friendships and what happens when these become challenging is therefore important in equipping young people with the tools they need. This week, Mr Gittins and other members of the Pastoral Team at Channing Senior School delivered the last in a series of PSHE lessons to roll out a new initiative called Girls on Board. The sessions introduced students to the idea that sometimes insecurities in friendship groups can lead to disputes, and that these insecurities often relate to a number of known factors. We went on to look at a range of these factors, and asked students to consider different types of behaviour that might exist within friendship groups.

With this in mind, we explored potential insecurities relating to group size, and encouraged students to recognise that, whilst all group sizes can be successful, they can also be prone to pitfalls. For example, a group of two will have the advantage of closeness, but what happens on days when one of the pair is not in school or one person moves away? Groups of three can be really successful, but two might be perceived as closer in the group, and odd numbers can lead to difficulties. Every time a group of three get on a coach there is the potential for someone to feel left out, and how often are people asked to discuss things in pairs in class? Groups of four might be the optimum number, but also risk dividing into two pairs if arrangements are not managed carefully.

We also considered what might be meant by 'queen bee' behaviour and discussed the concept that, whilst leadership is a good thing, sometimes people with power in a group might test loyalties. Other examples of behaviour include 'messengers', who are those who go from group to group spreading what they have heard, and sometimes adding embellishments. This provides them with a brief sense of power, but can lead to feelings of isolation when, inevitably, they are found out. We emphasised the importance of not using these behaviours as labels, but indicated that they can be useful in deciphering the actions of others.

The sessions have also helped girls to recognise that, within each friendship group, some people might be leaders and others followers, and that this can also cause insecurities. Indeed, all through the school day, circumstances will arise in which girls might worry about what others are doing - or saying about them. Considering how friendships are formed, and the bonds that can grow through shared interests and experiences, has also featured in the sessions, as well as

acknowledging that some students find the initial stages of friendship difficult, and that they can feel isolated because of this.

The sessions ended with an agreement that, should pupils ask for help with friendship turbulence in future, a Head of Year will ask them to reflect on what might be causing insecurities in the group, rather than calling people in to be questioned about specific events. Consequently, we are hoping that students will feel more able to come forward to discuss their concerns, without worrying that teachers will get over involved in their disputes and make things more difficult or awkward. We also hope that parents will feel more able to let us know if they have any concerns about friendships, knowing that we will respond discreetly and impartially.

It is also important to note that the Girls On Board approach is designed to help students deal with friendship issues, and does not relate to bullying. For this we have a robust anti-bullying policy which remains in place to respond to bullying behaviour.

Finally, the Girls On Board approach recognises that every girl needs someone to call a friend in their year group, and that promoting the values of inclusion and empathy are also vitally important. To support this, we are making 'Belonging' the theme of Wellbeing Week this year, with Mr Gittins working alongside Ms Mackie, our new Inclusion Coordinator, to devise a number of assemblies and events. There will also be a parent webinar in the evening of the 19th of March. We will send more information after the break but please mark the date.

Whilst I believe that the Girls on Board approach will be transformative, I also understand that parents might want to look for ways to support their children at home. TooledUp has produced a range of resources that I feel might be really helpful. For children to feel secure, they need to know who they can go to for support. This [activity](#) could allow you to explore this with them, creating a safety net together. However, we also all know that connecting with teenagers can be a challenge and this [webinar](#) might be helpful as well. Starting the conversation the right way is usually the biggest barrier to having the close connection we all crave and these [conversation starters](#) might support you in achieving this. From experience, dinner time tends to be the ideal time to talk about things that really matter. It is possibly the only time in a busy day that the whole family is able to gather. Kathy Weston from TooledUp explores in this [video](#) how you could use this time to 'debrief' the day and thus build resilience. Lastly, you might enjoy this [Q&A session](#) with Consultant Psychiatrist Dr Anna Conway Morris.

All of these are excellent resources and please note that they are all accessible to you via your TooledUp login. I can also highly recommend the weekly newsletter; in fact the links above were all taken from this publication.

Lastly, despite the frankly depressing premise at the start of this week's Word from the (Deputy) Head, I hope that you will enjoy the half term week and your children will have a chance to rest before returning to school ready to learn. Our Years 11 and 13 will of course continue their mock exams and I would like to commend their efforts thus far. We all know that exam season can be stressful but they are focused and keen to do their best, which bodes well for the public exams in the summer.

If you celebrate Shrove Tuesday, enjoy your pancakes!  
Happy Chinese New Year to those of you celebrating over the break!

Xīnnián hǎo 新年好

Gong hei fat choy 恭喜发财

With best wishes for a restful weekend,

Mr Freddie Meier  
Deputy Head

# Notices

## Revised Extra-Curricular Timetable

While Year 11 and Year 13 mocks take place in the Sports Hall for the week before and after half term we have put in place a revised extra-curricular timetable for PE and Sport. Please see the details here: [Revised Extra-Curricular TT Spring 2024 \(5th & 19th Feb\).docx.pdf](#).

## Upcoming TooledUp Events

Expert online conference: Reaching Girls Early: Proactive Approaches for Mental Health, Appearance Anxiety and Body Dissatisfaction: 26 April 2024, 9.30am

Guest speakers include Dr Sophie Nesbitt, Dr Lucia Giombini, Dr Amita Jassi, Dr Helen Ringrow and Dr Karri Gillespie-Smith.

## Channing Association News

### Channing Year 7 Disco, Saturday 24 February

The Year 7 disco will be back for another year on Saturday 24 February 7:30-9:30pm in the Senior School Sports Hall. Tickets go on sale for **Channing only presale** on Monday 22 January at 9am. General sale from 26 January 9am. All details on Classlist.

### Comedy Night - North London Laughs, Wednesday 20 March

For one night only, Avalon presents a star-studded line-up including GREG DAVIES; ROB DELANEY; ROB DEERING; SARA PASCOE; LOU SANDERS; EMMANUEL SONUBI and JOSH WELLER for a hilarious evening to raise vital funds for Great Ormond Street Hospital. Tickets for North London Laughs charity comedy night are now available to buy here: <https://www.alexandrapalace.com/whats-on/north-london-laughs-2/> - maximum 4 tickets per family.

Doors at 6:30pm for Channing families to have a drink at the bar, before the show starts at 7:30pm, ends at 10pm.

### Channing Association Choir

Following the wonderful singing in the Winter Celebration in St Michael's last term, the Channing Association – supported by the Music Department – is very excited to be launching a parent and teacher choir this year, and we need YOU!

The choir is for parents and carers, and will open to all genres of music. Rehearsals will be fortnightly in a local venue TBC on Monday or Tuesday evenings 7-9pm.

If you would like to join the choir or take on the role of accompanist on the piano, please email [jschanningassociation@gmail.com](mailto:jschanningassociation@gmail.com) to register your interest. Venue and dates to be communicated in due course.

## Chatting with Channing

### From Channing to the Crown: Alumna Katie Nicholl's Remarkable Journey

Join us as Katie takes us on a nostalgic journey through her school days at Channing, where her passion for storytelling began. From conquering daunting staircases to forming lifelong friendships, Katie paints a vivid picture of her formative years and the lessons she learned.

Discover the behind-the-scenes tales of Katie's journey from aspiring journalist to acclaimed royal correspondent. From chance encounters with Prince Harry to covering milestone events like the royal wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton, Katie's career has been nothing short of extraordinary.



Explore the challenges of royal reporting, including navigating palace intrigue and earning the trust of sources, as Katie reflects on the evolving media landscape in the digital age. Listen on [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#) or the [Channing Website](#).

### Channing at St Joseph's Concert

Parents are warmly invited to the Senior School's Channing at St Joseph's event, which will be held in the splendid setting of St Joseph's Church on **Thursday 14th March at 7.30pm**.

This year's programme of choral and orchestral music includes Bob Chilcott's 'A Little Jazz Mass', Christina Perri's 'Jar of Hearts', sung by the joint choruses of Cantemus Chorus and Conabor Choir. The Chamber Choir sing Sarah Quartal's 'Songbird' and Cecilia Mc Dowell's 'Would like to meet' with all choirs being accompanied by orchestra. Our Senior String Ensemble will be playing Finzi's 'Romance' and a flute concerto by J S Bach featuring Emily B on Flute. The Symphony Orchestra will frame the concert with the 1st Movement from Sibelius' 2nd Symphony and a lively Danzas Cubanas as a finale!

**Would you please note that if your child is a member of any of the ensembles mentioned above they will be required for the FINAL REHEARSALS and the concert.**

### FINAL REHEARSALS

Wednesday 13th March - 4pm-6.30pm Founders' Hall  
Thursday 14th March 1.40pm-4.30pm St Joseph's Church

Following the rehearsal on the afternoon of the concert students will not be able to return to school.

All performers will be required to return to St Joseph's Church by 7.10pm on the evening of the concert, which should finish by 9pm. Students will be expected to wear Concert Dress unless they are in Year 7, who should wear smart school uniform.

Tickets are priced at **£8 for adults** (children under the age of 18 are FREE) and are available now by clicking on the link below (or pasting the link into your browser).

<https://www.channing.co.uk/senior-school/senior-school-productions-and-concerts/>

### Sixth Form Higher Education Preparation Presentation

This is a reminder that Year 12 parents and students are invited to the Sixth Form Higher Education Preparation Presentation on Tuesday 20 February 2024 from 6.30 - 8.00pm in the Arundel Centre. Light refreshments will be available in the AC Foyer from 6.15pm. This information evening will cover UK universities and admissions including Oxbridge, the stages in the UCAS process and how Channing School supports students with their university and other applications.



# Girls Enjoying Success

## Pupil Success

Congratulations to Olivia W in Year 8 who competed on Saturday at the UI4 CEP Marathon Foil Fencing competition in Paris representing England. Olivia finished 32nd overall, missing a place in the Last 16 by just two points, and was the second highest ranked English fencer. Well done Olivia on a wonderful achievement!



## Geography News

This term the students in Senior Geography Society have produced the inaugural Channing Geography journal which is a special edition on Climate Change. Thank you to the Prisoners of Geography Society for their special edition article.

Thank you to Bella C, Lotte C, Sophie M, Amel O and Maddie P in Y12 for their excellent articles and their amazing effort and commitment in putting the journal together. We hope you enjoy it over half term.

■ [Climate Change Journal.pdf](#)



## Drama News

### Year 10 GCSE Drama

Year 10 GCSE Drama students performed their original devised pieces on Thursday evening, to an audience of friends and family. Subject content ranged from online dangers, sexism in the workplace and body image and the misuse of the drug Ozempic. The students adopted The Paper Birds Theatre Company's methods of devising, which included collecting verbatim text from individuals affected by the issues explored and combining abstract movement with dialogue, making for some impactful theatrical performances. Well done to all the students involved for creative interpretations of the verbatim material and their sensitive and mature understanding of the issues raised.



### Chicago

This week, the cast and crew gathered to watch a screening of 'Chicago' in the Arundel Centre. The afternoon was complete with popcorn and plenty of singing along as students and staff alike re-lived the magical experience all over again. We are so proud of what we managed to achieve and we know this was a very special production for the Channing community at large. I am still receiving glowing feedback about the show from parents now, three months on! For those that were not lucky enough to get tickets to the sell out run, Mr Gray has painstakingly edited the audio and film from 4 nights into this recording. You can view it by logging in with a student account and clicking the link [here](#).



## Art News

This term in photography club Year 7 students have been learning about compositional devices, trying different portrait lighting setups, and getting to grips with some basic editing to create a double exposure composition.

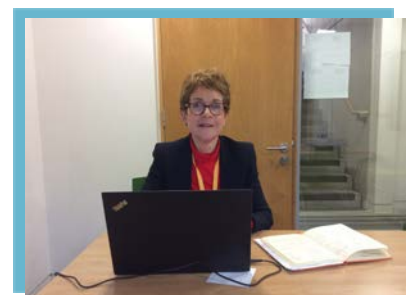


## English News

This week, 7.3 put their debating skills to the test. Students were put into small groups and were asked to write a speech arguing for or against their designated motion. It was an opportunity for students to showcase their independent research skills, their public speaking skills and their ability to persuade an audience. Motions included, 'this house believes that Friday should not be a weekday', 'this house believes that endangered animals should not be taken out of their habitats to be protected' and 'this house believes that you should never lie.' Students argued with energy and enthusiasm to deliver a series of engaging and heated debates.

## Careers News

Every student in Year 12 met with Mrs Janet Kilsby this week for a careers discussion. Mrs Kilsby (pictured) is our visiting qualified careers adviser. She has worked for many years with both the





Morrisby organisation, which is a leading psychometric and careers information organisation, and with Channing. During the meeting students discussed their possible university and career intentions with Mrs Kilsby, who used her extensive knowledge and experience to give up-to-date advice and guidance. Mrs Kilsby was very impressed with how informed and thoughtful our students already were, and they now have more possibilities to follow up via the Morrisby and Unifrog platforms.

## Partnership News

### Communita

This week, local residents braved the wind and rain to come and enjoy a delightful afternoon tea here at Channing Senior School. Our guests brought their digital devices to gain some much-needed expertise from our Year 10 pupils. They were also delighted to be entertained by Zoe Q who played a selection from Bach's Solo Cello Suite (Number 5) on her viola. Thank you to all the Channing pupils and staff who contributed to making this another highly enjoyable afternoon.



### Baking at La Sainte Union

This week a group of Year 9 students joined Year 9 students at La Sainte Union School to try their hand at baking apple crumble, supported by Channing catering staff. The session was enjoyed by all, students and staff alike, and the girls went home with the fruits of their labour, together with a good portion of custard provided by Diego. It was great to see girls from both schools working together to develop their cooking skills.



### Cooking at St Aloysius

This week, with Mrs Hibbert's support, the girls tried their hands at baking Red Velvet Cupcakes. Some very professional looking decorating skills are starting to show.

Although it looks as though some of the cupcakes didn't make it as far as the decorating stage, they were too hard to resist just as they were.





### Science club

For the final week of Science club before half term the pupils from both Brookfield and St Joseph's school were finishing off both painting and erupting their volcanoes! The pupils had worked hard in previous sessions researching, designing and then building their structures. This week was the grand finale. Great fun was had by all involved watching their creations erupt!

## Library News

### Lunar New Year

Angie R and Nancy S in Year 8 have produced a beautiful display for the library to celebrate Lunar New Year. The display includes hand-made paper lanterns with 'Happy New Year' written in Chinese characters and a [poster](#) explaining the traditions of Lunar New Year. This year is the year of the dragon so there are also paper dragons wishing you a happy and prosperous new year. Thank you, Angie and Nancy!



### World Book Day Photo Competition

Where do you like to read? In bed? In the bath? On the ski slopes? Could you take a photograph of yourself reading somewhere exciting or in your favourite reading spot this half term? It could be on holiday, or at a London landmark or even a local park, cafe or library. There will be a prize for the most artistic and imaginative photo. Please send your photo and the title and author of your book to [librarydepartment@channing.co.uk](mailto:librarydepartment@channing.co.uk) by 1 March. There will be a display of the photos on or around World Book Day in March.

## STEM News

### Marine Biology Club

An exciting week at Marine Biology Club saw three big new developments:

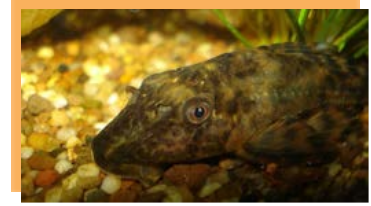
- 1) The students have created a new rota for checking in the fish, feeding them, and testing and changing the water when necessary. Thank you to Estelle B for her expert rota-drawing skills! Ruby C and Alexa L-B did a great job of changing most of the water this week, giving our fishy friends a nice clean tank ahead of the half-term break.
- 2) The students have begun designing the ornaments that they hope to make in the Ceramics Room after half-term. Mr Gittins will be casting a keen eye over the designs and



visiting Marine Biology Club the first week back to guide the students through the design process.

3) And finally, the biggest news of all...we have two new fish!!!  
Added to our growing fish community are:

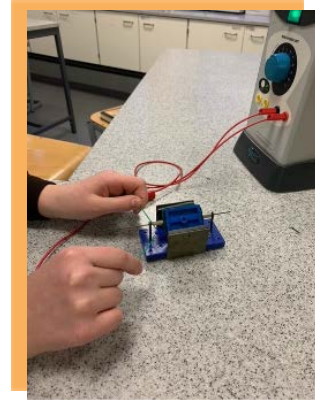
- a beautiful pink and purple Siamese fighter fish who has added some much needed colour and vibrancy
- and a not so beautiful but every bit as much loved and appreciated brown pleco sucker fish who will keep our tank clear of algae



### Year 7 & 8 Science Club

This week we built electric motors. Did you know that your family probably owns hundreds of modern electric motors of varying sizes? They might power your washing machine or the electric windows in your car or the turntable in your microwave oven; tiny ones might even lurk inside the laptop you are reading this on.

Motors might appear magical or complex but they are actually only made out of 2 fundamental parts: copper wire and magnets. We were able to get our 'home made' motors to work well and spin around at high speed.



### Anatomy Club

This week the students dissected a frog. First they examined the external anatomy, looking at the long tongue, which was attached to the front of the mouth, the eardrums, on the external surface of the head, and even feeling the small teeth inside the mouth.

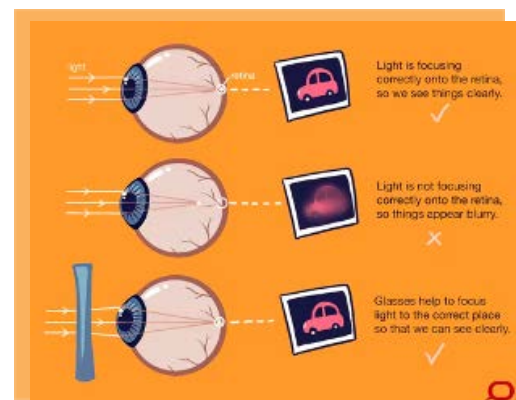
Next, the students removed the skin from one of the legs to inspect the large muscles. As with all animals, the muscles come in pairs; when the students squeezed one of the muscles (simulating the muscle contracting), the limb flexed. Finally, a large dissection was made down the inside of the animal and the liver, heart, stomach and intestines were investigated.

Next week, we will be dissecting a mouse, our first mammal.



### KS3 Science Question of the Week

This week's KS3 Science question of the week was 'How do glasses work? When and where were the first pair of glasses invented?'. We had some great answers sent in, giving thorough and detailed answers; however the winner this week who received a commendation was Scarlett C. Well done!







### Robotics Club

In the Robotics club the pupils started their activity by investigating the time taken for the different movements of their Marty Robots. Next they coded functions to make a series of movements. The pupils then analysed the rhythm and timings in their favourite songs. Their challenge was to sync the robot's movements with their song and code their Robot to do a seamless dance routine. The dances were asynchronous to begin with but by the end of the session, we witnessed some fantastic Robot dancing.

### CREST Awards

Ekta A and Caye B were ready to measure the volume of gas produced by their fizzy drinks with a gas syringe today. Following the recipe proved challenging at the start, but Ekta took control and made sure that they were making attempts to record their volumes and amounts of solid correctly. Georgina V, Isla M and Isobel B continued breaking things! Finding masses with the correct size to ensure a fair test hampered proceedings, but the team showed resilience and good team work to overcome these challenges.



### Science Journal Club

As the Year 13s have mock examinations this week, it was a quieter journal club meeting than usual, but Zoe Q did bring delicious food along! We discussed an article on the use of CRISPR gene therapy which appears to have cured a dangerous inflammatory condition. We discovered that the use of CRISPR is not in itself new, but that the unusual feature of this treatment is that it was administered directly into people, a method sometimes called “in vivo” delivery. The scientists used lipid nanoparticles to hold the genetic material and no cells had to be removed from the patients, making this a much quicker and cheaper method of gene therapy than previous approaches. Currently, it seems to be limited to treating diseases that affect the liver, but may have other applications moving forward. The high success rate (albeit with a small sample size) made this seem like a very exciting treatment.

### Biology Olympiad for Years 12 and 13

This week and last, Year 12 and 13 were invited to participate in the British Biology Olympiad. The British Biology Olympiad challenges and stimulates students with an interest in biology to expand and extend their talents. The competition consists of two, 45-minute multiple choice papers to be taken online under staff supervised exam conditions. Students will be presented with topics and ideas which they are not familiar with, so will compete with their problem solving skills and understanding of core principles. In addition to encouraging and rewarding pupils in their studies, the competition is the first stage in selecting a team to represent the UK at the International

Biology Olympiad (IBO). The IBO seeks to challenge by both theory and practical tests some of the top pre-university biology students in the world, with over sixty countries taking part.

## Maths News

Well done to Year 10, Year 11 and some Year 9 students who took part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge last Wednesday. We look forward to seeing how you've all done in a few weeks time. To get a feel for the standard of difficulty have a go at the question below which was taken from this year's paper:

When I increase a certain number by 20%, I get twice as much as when I decrease 20 less than the number by 20%. What is that number?

A 40

B 60

C 80

D 100

E 120

## Sports News

### Football

#### U12 V City of London Girls

Last week Year 7 had a challenging match against a strong City of London School. We were fortunate to have the whole of the Junior school MUGA so our seven players were joined by two City players to make a 9-a-side match. City had a very strong, fast and skillful player who quickly scored two goals against us. However as the game progressed, Liliana Bracken started to get the measure of her and put in fantastic challenges to prevent the score being much higher. At the end two well worked goals from a City player and Matilde Legg made the score more respectable as we finished six goals to two. A huge learning experience and I'm very proud of the team with resilience they showed to stay in the game throughout the 60 minutes.

#### U12 V South Hampstead High School

The Year 7 team had another fixture this week against strong opposition. From the very start it was evident to see the progress this team is making. Playing a 2-4-2 formation in 9-a-side benefits the team going forward with increased numbers, although can leave you exposed at the back. Our overload in midfield meant that we dominated possession and created numerous chances. However the system does require the goalkeeper to cover in behind the defenders when the opposition play a long ball. This is something we are still working at and unfortunately conceded two goals against the run of play. A great goal by Siena R halved the deficit and despite creating numerous more chances we couldn't add to the scoresheet and in one of their few attacks South Hampstead scored a third to win 3-1.

#### U15 V Francis Holland

Firstly, I would like to say what an amazing turn out for the girls u15s match against Francis Holland. We had 13 girls attend the match. The game started off fast with Channing scoring 3 great goals back to back. Courtesy of 2 great solo goals from Neve C and Sienna A.

However, the game was one of two halves as the girls understandably took their foot off the gas and invited pressure from the opposition. This led to Francis Holland scoring 3 goals making the



score 3-3. With 5 minutes to go Channing scored a great team goal securing the points. Well done Neve C for the historic hat trick. Well done girls!

## Year 7 and Year 8 News

This week our Spring term big sibling - little sibling event took place. Year 7 and Year 8 gathered to make friendship bracelets and have a good catch up!



## Channing Archive

For this week's Flashback Friday we would like to share a picture of the Staff Hockey Team from 1949: perhaps it's time for staff teams to make a comeback?

