



Dear Parents,

My theme in assembly this week was perseverance. For once I really struggled for inspiration in finding a topic, but then my old friend serendipity played a part by bringing together several different ideas. My initial inspiration came from the Junior School, where Miss Hamalis gave an assembly on Monday with Perseverance Squirrel, one of our Channing Characters, as her theme. Miss Hamalis talked about the challenges particular individuals had to overcome, such as Lionel Messi, who was diagnosed with a growth hormone deficiency as a child. Messi overcame financial and physical challenges to become one of the greatest footballers in history. His dedication, resilience and unwavering commitment to his craft exemplify the power of perseverance. Likewise Emily Blunt, who struggled as a child with a debilitating stammer that made speaking difficult. Through perseverance and practice, she overcame this challenge and went on to become an award-winning actress, demonstrating that obstacles can be overcome with resilience and effort. As I said in assembly, Year 11 and Year 13 know all about that as they worked their way through their mocks before half term - congratulations to all of them.

The second piece of inspiration came from an Instagram post from a former colleague of mine. 10 years ago he gave up his job as a teacher to see if he could make his side hustle as a sports commentator into his career, and has done so in style. On Monday he posted a video from the 2025 Invictus Games in Vancouver and Whistler which have just finished. The Invictus Foundation supports the recovery and rehabilitation of international wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans through sport. I found the video incredibly moving, and an extraordinary example of perseverance. Do watch it here: [📺 I AM Invictus | #ShareYourIAM](#).

The eagle-eyed among you will have spotted Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex, in the video. He is Patron of the Invictus Games Foundation and founder of the Invictus Games. In 2008, following deployment to Afghanistan, he returned home on a flight with three severely injured individuals. Witnessing firsthand the profound impact of both visible and invisible injuries, it became evident to him that there was a need for awareness of trauma and support in veterans' transition back to civilian life. The Invictus Games Foundation he set up runs the Invictus Games and an online community, as well as providing year-round sport recovery and adventurous challenge opportunities for wounded veterans across 23 nations. This supports long term improvements in physical and mental health and helps wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans reconnect with their families and communities.

The name he chose for the foundation comes from this poem, *Invictus*, by William Ernest Henley.

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.

That last line really caught my attention. You might remember last term that I shared with you the 150th anniversary film made by the Girls' Schools Association in which one of the participants talked about girls being the captains of their own ships. It also reminds us that no matter how tough life gets, we have control over the outcomes.

So those two pieces - the Junior School assembly on perseverance and the video about the Invictus Games - came together as an idea for an assembly in which I could talk to the school about perseverance. I knew I was on the right track when I heard Tuesday morning's Prayer for the Day on Radio 4 with Sofia Rehman. I listen to it at 5.43am every day before I get up, and Tuesday's was so apt I read it out verbatim at assembly.

*Did you know it's Ramadan? Some people know it as the holy month of fasting for Muslims, and if you're astute, you might remember being taught at school that Muslims fast the month to empathise with the poor. And whilst there may be some truth to that, there's really so much more.*

*The Prophet Muhammad said, 'Fasting is a shield, so when one of you fasts, they may not be obscene. If someone insults you or fights you then simply say I am fasting. I swear that the breath coming from the mouth of a fasting person is more pleasant to God than the scent of musk.'*

*The tradition teaches us that fasting is about more than abstaining from food and water; we have to watch our manners and actions, we have to turn away from the ignorant and rude, and I'm always struck by the part of the tradition that tells us that the breath of a fasting person is more fragrant to God than perfume - because objectively speaking, it can get quite bad! But it's a reminder that to get what we want, we often have to suffer less enjoyable moments. Ramadan reminds us of what we really want to achieve and knowing that the path to it will often be testing, but the fruits will be well worth it.*

This, then, was the third thing: after the Junior School assembly about Perseverance Squirrel and the extraordinary resolve of the competitors at the Invictus Games, who are living the words of the poem as the captains of their souls, the example set by fasting during Ramadan gives us all a moment for reflection. I used the prayer Sofia shared: *I pray for the optimism and confidence to set myself worthy goals, and the wisdom to know nothing worth achieving comes easy.* As I said to the school in Assembly, I hope you will feel able to pray, reflect or ask for the same.

So Ramadan Mubarak to all our families observing this sacred month, wishing you a celebration filled with blessings and joy alongside your loved ones. For our Hindu families who celebrated Maha Shivratri on Wednesday, may the blessings of Lord Shiva bring you good health and endless joy. And to everyone marking St David's Day on Saturday, Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Hapus (Happy St David's Day)!

Lindsey Hughes  
Headmistress

## Notices

### Head Lice Reminder

Head lice are not serious, but can be very annoying. Research has shown that infections of head lice occur just as often in school holidays as during term time. Despite young children being the most affected, it is a community problem rather than a school problem. As a school, we need to follow the advice as outlined by Public Health England:

- School nurses should not send out letters informing parents about any incidents of head lice.
- There is no need for a child who has head lice to stay away from school.
- Routine screenings/ head inspections should not be carried out at school.
- Parents should be encouraged to check their children's hair regularly using a nit comb on wet hair.
- Parents should be advised to only treat if live lice are found.

Click the link for [further information](#) from the NHS.

Following this guidance, we do not share information regarding specific cases as this could result in bullying and unkindness towards individuals and/or groups or children and/or parents. We do, however, include this reminder for you to check your daughter's hair regularly please. If you are at all worried about head lice, or feel you need more advice, then you could consult your health visitor, pharmacist or family doctor. Some parents also choose to work with professional nit and lice removal services, who will support you to remove head lice in a clinic or at home.

### Careers help needed for Year 12 Springboard Day!

On Thursday 27 March 2025 we hold our Springboard Day, an event primarily aimed at Year 12 students who are planning for life after Channing. We would like to have employers from a range of sectors to join the university and gap year exhibitors at the Springboard Fair and are therefore looking for volunteers and contacts who might help.

Please let us know if you, or someone you know, would be willing to represent their employer and field of work from 3.15pm until 6.30pm in the Sports Hall at Channing on 27 March. Substantial refreshments for exhibitors will be provided during a break. Please note that this event will replace the employer fair that has previously taken place at the end of the Channing Careers Convention in June, so if you have been involved in that in the past we would love to see you at this event instead.

If you are not able to attend, please consider putting us in direct contact with a named person in your organisation who manages early careers and graduate recruitment, so we can invite them to join us. Our Year 12s will be joined by Year 12 St Aloysius students for the whole day, Channing Years 10 - 13 after school, and students from other partnership schools and Channing parents in the early evening, so there will be a significant number of visitors from a range of schools. Please email the Careers team at [careers@channing.co.uk](mailto:careers@channing.co.uk) to let us know how you can support us - we greatly appreciate your input.

### Ally Wylie Tower Foundation - Book Donations Needed

Do you have pre-loved books at home that you could donate to the Ally Wylie Tower Foundation? We are looking for donations of books for children and teenagers (fiction or nonfiction) that can be donated at food banks in the local area. You can bring your donations to

the Library until **Friday 28 March**. Books need to be in good condition and for children and teenagers - we can't take adult books for the moment. Thank you very much!  
Art & Art Students (& any Year 11s considering taking these subjects next year!)

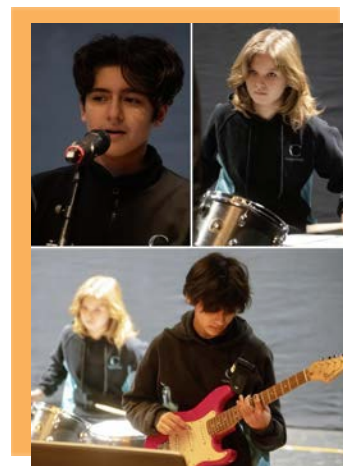


# Girls Enjoying Success

## Music News

### Music at Lunchtime

On Friday 14 February we held our lunchtime concert which happened to coincide with Valentine's Day, and a love for all genres of music was certainly in the air. The 'Wock Band', a very talented group of Year 8s played us Seven Nation Army; Anoushka Chadha shredded the lead guitar that was doubling as bass and Edie Cleasby smashed it on the drums. They were led by Ava Kamvari, the lead singer with a fabulously strong voice - well suited for Seven Nation Army!



After that, Ettie B-R in 7CWi played a wonderful piano piece called 'Song of Erin' by Dunhill. Simple yet beautiful, it provided a perfect contrast to Seven Nation Army. Well done Ettie - elegantly played! Next, Natalie L in 9GHA played 'Billie's Song' by Valerie Capers- a gorgeous, jazzy piece reminiscent of Ella Fitzgerald. Another great contrast, played flawlessly by Natalie. Then, Juliet K in 9GHA played 'Forlana' from 5 pieces for clarinet by Finzi. She demonstrated a superb amount of breath

control and technique, and soared gracefully up to the no doubt challenging high notes. Congratulations Juliet- what a moving performance.

Our penultimate performance was Millie W in 9EHI, singing 'The Sky Above the Roof' by Vaughn Williams. A delicate and challenging piece, Millie showed amazing musicianship and sensitivity to the music. Finally, Maya H-B in 12KW, A.K.A The Queen of Music at Lunchtime, gave us the iconic Brooklyn Baby by Lana Del Rey- what a performance! Her stage presence is indescribable, and she smiles as she sings - really endearing to watch. What a diverse programme; a special treat for a very special day! Do listen [HERE](#).

*Reviewed by Eve C*

### Music Theatre Evening

Eight of our Music Theatre examination candidates gave performances on the Thursday before half term in the Arundel Centre. The evening started with a hit from Mamma Mia, 'Honey 'Honey' sung

and acted superbly by Hattie H in Y10 and then followed by Evie D from Y7 singing 'Castle on a Cloud' from 'Les Miserables' - a very delicate and moving performance. Hettie F from Y8 then followed with a delightful and well characterised rendition of 'Quiet' from Matilda. There was then great athletic action from Manon D also in Y8 with her powerful performance of 'Red Ryder Carbine Action BB Gun' from 'A Christmas Story'.

We then moved onto our Sixth form candidates, all of whom are either taking Grade VIII or a Diploma in Music Theatre. Scarlett D gave a very poignant performance of 'There are worse things I could do' from 'Grease' - sung with much pathos and good characterization. Saskia C really captured the essence of that beautiful song from 'Jekyll and Hyde' - 'In his eyes', displaying great breath control and some powerful moments. Georgie G performed 'A part of that' from 'The last five years' followed by 'Adelaide's Lament' from 'Guys and Dolls'. Both performances were very polished indeed, and acted superbly. Finally Evie M sang two songs, 'Stars and the Moon' from 'Songs for a New World' and the iconic show



stopper, 'Don't Rain on my Parade' from 'Funny Girl'. Evie was able to show off both her dramatic and vocal capabilities in two stunning performances.

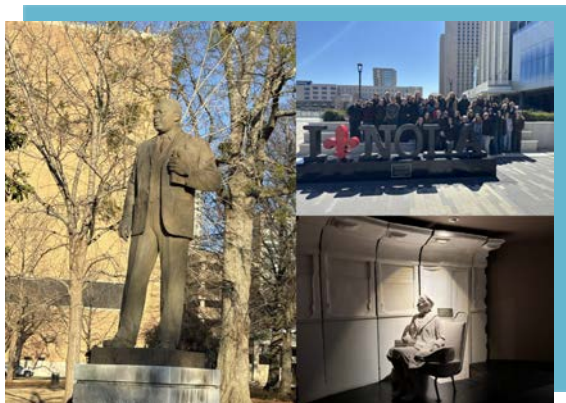


We wish all our Music Theatre candidates, many of whom are in Year 11 and Year 13 and were unable to perform that night due to their mock examinations, all good wishes for their examinations that take place on 6 and 7 March. Do watch the video [HERE](#).

## History & Politics News

### Atlanta, Alabama and New Orleans: Civil Rights Trip

This half-term, Year 12 and 13 History and Politics students embarked on an unforgettable journey through the heart of the American Civil Rights movement. The trip, spanning several states, took them from Atlanta, Georgia, to Montgomery and Birmingham in Alabama, and finally to New Orleans, Louisiana. It was a powerful and eye-opening experience, blending deep historical insight with the joy of exploring vibrant American culture.



The journey began in Atlanta, Georgia, where the students visited the Atlanta Civil Rights Museum, which offered a sobering yet inspiring look at the struggles and triumphs of the Civil Rights movement. The group moved on to visit Martin Luther King Jr.'s childhood home and church, followed by the Ebenezer Baptist Church, where King's journey as a leader of the Civil Rights movement began. These sites were a poignant reminder of the indelible mark King left on the world. Next, the students made their way to King's final resting place in the King Center, paying their respects at



his tomb. As they stood before the memorial, it was a moment of reflection on how far the fight for equality has come and how far it still has to go.

The trip wasn't all sombre history; students also visited Coca-Cola World, where they enjoyed creating their own unique flavour combos. The interactive experience had everyone in high spirits, tasting their creations and marveling at the innovations of this iconic brand. Their journey continued in the Inman Park neighborhood, a historic district full of charming Victorian homes, and Krog Street Market, where the group indulged in local delicacies and enjoyed the atmosphere of this bustling part of Atlanta.

From Georgia, the group took a beautiful train ride to Birmingham, Alabama, where they visited the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. One of the most powerful stops was at Kelly Ingram Park, the site of the infamous 1963 attack on children participating in a Civil Rights protest. Here, police dogs and fire hoses were used against young activists, making it a poignant reminder of the violence that was once used to suppress change.

In Montgomery, the students delved deeper into the roots of the movement by visiting the site where Rosa Parks sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott. This pivotal act of defiance launched a wider movement for Civil Rights, and the students learned about the bravery and persistence of the people who fought for justice. They also toured the home of Dr. King, where he led and organized the Civil Rights movement, with a personal guide who had known him, offering rare insight into his character and leadership. As a surprise treat, the staff bought the students a selection of Crumbl cookies, much to their delight.

The next stop was New Orleans, Louisiana, with a brief detour through Mississippi. In New Orleans, students visited the Louisiana Civil Rights Museum, where they learned about the state's role in the struggle for equality. One of the most vibrant aspects of New Orleans was its Mardi Gras celebrations, where the students found themselves swept up in the parades. With beads, toys, and gifts tossed from the floats, they were part of the joyous, colorful festivities that are a hallmark of the city's culture. Students tried local cuisine such as gumbo, jambalaya, Po' boys and beignets and ate at legendary spots such as Acme oyster house, Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville, Raising Canes and spent one evening enjoying the myriad of games at Dave and Busters.

The group also visited The Presbytère Museum, where they learned about the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina and its causes, both natural and manmade. The museum's exhibits were a sobering reminder of the struggles faced by the residents of New Orleans. But the city also showed its resilience, as students explored the French Quarter and traveled by streetcar to the Garden District, home to celebrities like Nicholas Cage and Sandra Bullock. Among the historic sites, they visited the final home of Jefferson Davis, the Confederate president, and learned about the city's complex history. A highlight of the trip was a Bayou boat tour, where the students encountered alligators, turtles, eagles, and even friendly raccoons. The natural beauty of Louisiana left a lasting impression on everyone.

The trip was an educational journey like no other, combining the weight of history with the joy of exploration. From dancing along to marching bands to experiencing the diverse cultures and rich history of the American South, the students came away with memories they will cherish forever. It



was a journey that not only educated but also inspired, leaving the group with a deeper understanding of the ongoing struggle for equality and justice. Huge thanks go to Mr Raine for his huge efforts putting this trip together and leading it and to Miss Feeney and Mrs Devine for all their hard work too.

Mr Martini-Phillips

## Maths News

### Intermediate Maths Challenge Results!

Just before half term the UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge results arrived. Well done to students in years 9-11 who completed this 25 question 1 hour challenge. Well done especially to those Year 11s who did it, just before their mock exams! Try out one of the questions yourself (and you are not allowed to use a calculator!).

15. What is the value of  $\frac{3^6 - 3^4}{2^9 - 2^3}$ ?

A  $\frac{9}{32}$

B  $\frac{9}{16}$

C  $\frac{9}{12}$

D  $\frac{9}{7}$

E  $\frac{9}{5}$

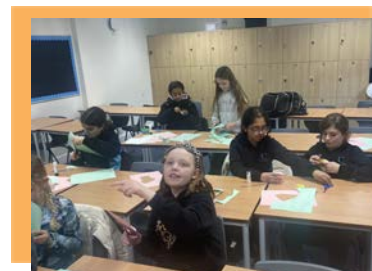
The students achieved 91 certificates in total: 49 Bronze Certificates, 38 Silver Certificates and 4 Gold ones. Congratulations to all of these students and we always like hearing everybody talk about the problems immediately after the challenge! Well done to all students for showing so much perseverance.

A special mention to the following students:

Year 9: Annika S: Gold Certificate and Best in Year 9

Year 10: Imogen B: Gold Certificate and Best in Year 10

Year 11: Diya B: Gold Certificate and..... Kira S: Gold Certificate, Best in Year 11 AND Best in the whole school!



### Problem Solving Club

This week we had the first session of the half term, run by Saskia and Yael, our Year 12 students. The 9 primary students from Highgate School Primary and Channing Junior School did a race to make a cube from 3 pyramids and then another from 6 square based pyramids from nets. Here they are deep in thought!

### Maths Feast

On Thursday 13 February Mrs Wootton and Mr Bowman took 8 Year 10s to this entertaining morning at Elizabeth Garrett School in Islington with 16 other North London schools, where an exciting feast of quizzes and maths problem solving took place. We had 2 teams of 4 students who thoroughly enjoyed the morning. They completed 4 rounds of nail-biting puzzles. Our students aced the 'Would I lie to you?' round. They found the 3D 'Cubes and Ribbons' round, problem solving in 3D, very challenging. The 'Broken Calculator' round involved coding puzzles, which was a favourite for Imogen, Lily,

Georgie V and Serrana. The final relay round was the favourite for our other team: Emma F, Evangelina, Georgie M and Eleanor C - where they got



bonus points in 3 of the sections! They finished 6th and 9th and really enjoyed the experience (and the refreshments).

## Reading and Library News

### Phil Earle Talk

On Thursday, a group of enthusiastic Year 7 students from Channing's student-led 1:1 reading mentor programme had the incredible opportunity to attend an exclusive online talk with award-winning YA author Phil Earle!

Earle's journey to becoming a writer wasn't straightforward. As a young person, he struggled to connect with novels—until he discovered the magic of comics and graphic novels. That spark ignited a lifelong passion for storytelling, leading him to write numerous gripping books for young readers.



Graphic novels that are popular with Year 7 at the moment include *Smile* by Raina Telgemeier, *The Girl from the Sea* by Molly Knox Ostertag, *Roller Girl* by Victoria Jamieson and *Invisible Emmie* by Terri Libenson.

Students were captivated as Earle shared his experiences, offering a behind-the-scenes look at his career and the creative process behind his books. There were audible gasps when Earle talked about two of his novels that explore the fate of domestic animals in World War Two: *While the Storm Rages* and *When the Sky Falls*. Earle's story proves that anyone can fall in love with reading—it's just about finding the right book!

### Tanya Landman Visit

On Friday 14 February the author Tanya Landman spoke to Year 9 about her books and career. Tanya is the author of over forty books for children and young adults, including murder mysteries, historical fiction and retellings of Gothic literature. In her talk she spoke about her historical thrillers for young adults: *Apache*, *Buffalo Soldier* and *Hell or High Water*. The first two novels are about North American indigenous people in the late nineteenth century and centre young female protagonists - an Apache girl and, in *Buffalo Soldier*, a young African American girl who enlists in the U.S. army disguised as a boy after slavery is abolished and has to fight the Apache and other North American indigenous peoples. Tanya explained how she was motivated to write about these stories after reading *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown, which opened her eyes to the devastating impact of the American Frontier Wars on indigenous peoples in the American West in the late 19th century. Tanya also spoke about her journey to becoming a writer, which included jobs as a children's bookseller, an actress and PR manager for Bristol Zoo.



In her creative writing workshop for Year 8, Tanya shared techniques for writing a scary story. She talked about her retellings of Gothic literature - short versions of classics like *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights* and *Frankenstein* - and some of the elements from these stories that could be used to inspire terror or horror in the reader. She challenged pupils to create suspense by incorporating uncanny details into an otherwise mundane scene. As an example of this, she cited one of her favourite childhood stories - 'Tom's Midnight Garden' - where the protagonist lies awake at night unable to sleep and hears the clock strike 13.



## Joyce Efia Harmer Talk and Creative Writing Workshop

On Wednesday 26 February the author Joyce Efia Harmer talked to Years 10 and 11 in their assembly about her debut novel *How Far We've Come*. Erika in IIDK has written about the talk here:



*On Wednesday, Year 10 and 11 were lucky enough to hear from debut author Joyce Efia Harmer about her book 'How Far We've Come'. The book was about the concept of time travel where a sixteen year old Obah who is enslaved on a plantation in Barbados travels to the 21st century. In this journey, she goes on a path of self discovery and newfound hope because she sees the change that has taken place. I particularly enjoyed when Joyce Harmer talked about herself and her long lasting passion for reading novels. She set all of us a challenge at the end to read a book and tell somebody what it was about. The talk was inspiring because she wanted to highlight the importance of reading a book because reading is something from which we can grow as a person.*

In her creative writing workshop with Year 9, Joyce Efia Harmer helped pupils to create an intense scene using techniques such as *in medias res*, cliffhangers and showing not telling.

## Channing Archives

A newspaper cutting found in the Channing Archive from 1925 describes Miss Haigh, Headmistress from 1921- 1952, as 'a Head Mistress of insight and determination, adequate to bringing the School into line with modern educational ideas and requirements.'...We think that she would be mighty proud of our vision for Channing in 2035 - Conabor, indeed!

