



The Gosford Times

The Termly Newsletter of Gosford Hill School

Term 5 – May 2025

www.gosfordhillschool.org

In this issue...

Alderman Wise Awards Evening	1
'Into the Deep' Robotics Competition	2
Student Leadership Team 2025-26	3
Year 8 Sports Tour to Paris, France	4
Django Goes For Gold!	5
Making Emojis	6

Alderman Wise Awards Evening

On Wednesday 7th May, the Hall was filled with parents, colleagues and students as we gathered to celebrate the triumphs and accomplishments of our Sixth Form students at the 55th Alderman Wise Awards Ceremony.

We were pleased to have Councillor Lesley McLean (Chair of Kidlington Parish Council) join us to present the Frank Wise Memorial Award. This special award was set up in 1968 to honour Alderman Frank Wise, a well-known county, district and parish councillor who dedicated much of his life serving the local community. Mr Wise became one of Gosford Hill School's very first Governors upon its opening in 1932, and remained committed to supporting our school until his death in 1966.

This year the award, which recognises students who have demonstrated outstanding public service, was presented to Django L-P for his valued contributions to sport. In addition to being a dedicated athlete, Django devotes a lot of his time supporting his local athletics club, volunteering as a Young Leader and helping to deliver training sessions to young athletes across a variety of disciplines. Django is passionate about the importance of volunteers in grassroots athletics and is currently undertaking an Assistant Coaching Course to be able to lead sessions independently. Huge congratulations to Django and to everybody who deserved received an award.



Django receives the Frank Wise Memorial Award



'Into the Deep' Robotics Competition

On Tuesday, 29th April, we took part in our first ever **First Tech Challenge**, which was called "**Into the Deep**" robotics competition at Oxford High School.

When we arrived, we were greeted by the event volunteers. Soon after, five of us stepped up to meet the judges, and presented our robot and shared our story about how we had built, coded and practised driving the robot, along with the help from our Design and Technology department to build a wooden practice frame. We also faced some questions from the judges, including what were the biggest challenges we had to overcome.

After our presentation, it was time for the robot inspection. We quickly discovered that our robot's arms to hold the sample were too long to fit the competition's safety area, so a quick rebuild was needed! After some teamwork and fast adjustments, we successfully shortened the arms and started practising our robot's pull-up manoeuvre.

Competition Progress

By lunchtime, we were thrilled to find ourselves in **5th place**, with a:

- **RS (Ranking Score)** of 1.00
- **AUTO (Autonomous Score)** of 0.75
- **ASCENT (Ascent Score)** of 9.75

After **Round 11**, our improvements pushed us up to **4th place**, and by **Round 14**, we had climbed even higher, sitting proudly in **3rd place** with:

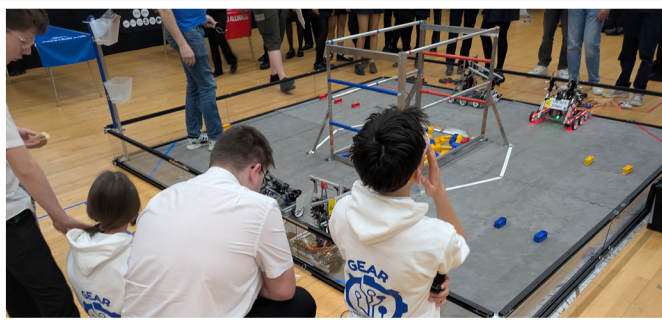
- **RS:** 1.33
- **AUTO:** 2.67
- **ASCENT:** 10.00

Our Round-by-Round summary for team GEAR, team number 2791,1 was for the game round we played:

- **Round 2:** Learning curve, unfortunately, we failed to score any points
- **Round 4:** Big improvement! Hung 2 samples and scored 28 points.
- **Round 6:** First win! Scored 53 points with the 2nd best ascent.
- **By Lunch:** Sitting in 5th place, allowing us time for strategic planning!
- **Round 8:** Second win! 34 points despite a robot breakage (which we quickly repaired!)
- **Round 10:** Third win! 35 points.

- **Round 12:** A tense tie at 10 points, but we pulled through with a final score of 25 points – moving up to 2nd place.

Once all the other teams had completed their rounds and the end of the qualifiers, we were proud to finish 3rd overall. [You can click this link](#) to watch our robot in action!



Final Stages of Competition:

Next came the exciting task of **forming alliances**, where ranking teams could choose to work with another school to work together and by winning the best out of three, the two alliance teams would make it through to the UK national final to be held in London; we chose to team up with **Matthew Arnold School** for the finals.

- **In our first finals match**, we lost by 30 points.
- **Second match:** We fought back and won by a slight lead with just 3 points!
- **Final match:** Despite a strong performance, we lost to **Oxford High School**.

The final qualifier's outcome for the day:

We proudly received the **Runner-Up Alliance Award!**

We would like to thank our outreach sponsor, **Versantus**, for their generous support. Their contribution has enabled our team to purchase materials to build a practice frame in preparation for the qualifiers. It has also helped us create a strong sense of team pride and identity by allowing us to provide team hoodies for each member. We are very grateful for their support.

Although we didn't qualify for this year's Nationals, the experience from the start to the final stages this year was unforgettable. We learned so many valuable lessons, built amazing teamwork skills, and left more motivated than ever to succeed next year.

Watch this space! We're just getting started!

Written by Alica M (Year 8) and Mr Lee.

Student Leadership Team 2025-26

It's a pleasure to introduce our Sixth Form Student Leadership Team for the academic year 2025-26. Alyssa, Ben, Nicole, Jack, Imogen and Daniel will represent the student body of the school, meeting with the Headteacher and reporting to the School Governors.

They will also speak for Gosford Hill School at various public events throughout the school year and implement new ideas for school improvement. Our sincerest thanks go to our outgoing team – Josh, Katie, Islay, Hamza, Ellie and Evie – who have demonstrated a great commitment to their roles over the past year. We wish them all the very best for their future.



Recent Visiting Workshops



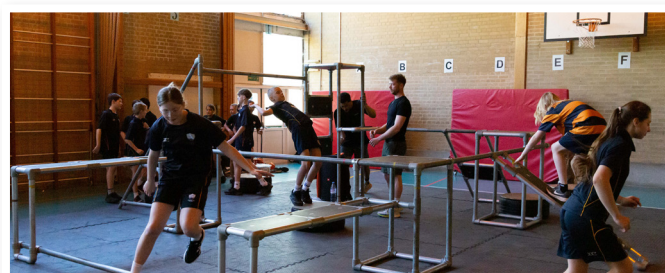
The JJ Effect

Huge thanks to Byron from the JJ Effect for visiting us in April to give an exceptionally captivating and powerful presentation to students in Years 7-10 about the dangers of knife crime amongst young people. Byron established the JJ Effect following the tragic loss of his brother Jon-Jo to knife crime in 2014. He now works with many organisations across the UK to educate young people and steer them away from knife crime, county lines, grooming and criminal exploitation. We're committed to working together with the police and superb organisations such as the JJ Effect in order to protect young people and our community.

Justice in Motion

We were very pleased to welcome back Justice in Motion, an Oxfordshire-based physical theatre company, to Gosford Hill School at the end of last term. Justice in Motion tours various locations throughout the UK to deliver an engaging education programme, exploring and highlighting the critical issues of county lines, knife crime and child criminal exploitation.

Their presentation includes musical rap elements from their 'CODE' show, which you may have seen performed in Bicester or Broad Street, Oxford last year. After an interactive assembly, students were able to participate in a series of creative skills-based workshops that linked to the show, including having a go at parkour in the gym!



Year 8 Sports Tour to Paris, France

Everyone who joined Mr Smith, Miss Ryan, Mr Goldring, and Mr Gough on the Year 8 Sports Tour during the Easter holidays had an unforgettable experience! This year's tour took students to Paris, France, for an action-packed four-day adventure filled with a variety of exciting activities. Organised annually by the PE Department, the Sports Tour offers students a fantastic opportunity to represent their school in matches against local French teams.

Highlights of the trip included a behind-the-scenes tour of the iconic Stade de France, attending a live professional football match, and taking part in a coaching session led by professional football coaches from Paris Saint-Germain (PSG). To top it all off, students also enjoyed a magical visit to Disneyland Paris. Massive thanks to Mr Smith and the PE Team for making it all possible!



Year 10 Football Team become County Champions

Huge congratulations to Mr Gough and the Year 10 Boys Football Team for their incredible 3-1 victory over The Warriner School in the North Oxfordshire League Cup Final during the last week of term. A well-deserved win and a fantastic team effort – champions of North Oxfordshire!

Mr Smith

Subject Leader of Physical Education



Django Goes For Gold!

Congratulations to Django L-P (Year 13) for taking home a tremendous tally of three gold medals from the Oxfordshire Track and Field County Championships, held at Horspath Athletic and Sports Ground earlier in May. Django has been a member of Bicester Athletic Club for over 10 years and came first in the Under 20 100m, 200m and long jump respectively. Well done, Django!



Welcome to our new Governors!

Thank you for participating in the recent parent/carer elections. We were fortunate to have 4 high quality and talented candidates come forward this year and from those, two have secured their positions on the Local Governing Body starting from September 1st 2025. Their term of office will be for four years or for as long as their child is a student at the school.

We welcome Joanna Powell and John Pyrah to the Local Governing Body. If you missed the vote over the last two weeks, their summaries are below for you to review.

Mrs Joanna Powell:

Joanna has lived in Kidlington for over 9 years, and all of her 4 children have been at Gosford Hill School. She currently works in the finance department of a charity, but has previously worked as a bursar of a local independent school. She has experience of managing tight budgets, and loves to make improvements. After university, she worked at Barclaycard and Barclays designing and implementing statistical models for credit cards and loans. She has experience of being a primary school governor for 10 years in Bicester; being Chair of Governors for 4 years. She enjoyed supporting and challenging the school to be the best it could be for all pupils and staff and looks forward to being able to do that for Gosford.

Mr John Pyrah:

I have lived in Kidlington for the past 18 years and have a small family, with my children currently attending schools in the village—one of whom is a student at Gosford Hill. Although I didn't grow up in the area, the school community has been instrumental in helping me build strong connections with families who share the same passion for providing the best education and support for their children.

If elected as a Parent Governor, I would be committed to strengthening the relationship between the school, parents, and the wider community. I believe that genuine partnership and open communication are key to creating the best outcomes for our children.

Professionally, I work in the field of governance, risk, and compliance. While this may sound technical, at its core it's about helping institutions operate effectively, ethically, and with long-term stability. I hope to bring this experience to the governing body and contribute to the ongoing success of Gosford Hill School.

Next Steps:

Look out for information about the Governors and their work on the school website. This link details the governors on the local board, their work and focus each year. <https://gosford-hill.oxon.sch.uk/about-us/governing-body/>. It will be updated in the Autumn for the new academic year and will align with the school priorities for 25/26.

Other ways to engage with school as a parent/carer:

If you would like to engage with the school, but do not want the formality of the governor role, please do consider joining 'Friends of Gosford Hill School' - a group set up to support events and fundraise for the school. If you are interested in this position please contact the Deputy Head, Mr Bateman via the school office.

Thank you for participating in the election (we had a great response!) and choosing the governors. We look forward to updating you on the work of the board over the year.

Mrs Johnson

Clerk to Governors

Farewell, Year 13!

On Monday 12th May we said goodbye and good luck to our Year 13 students, who started their study leave on Tuesday 13th in preparation for their A Level examinations. A celebratory lunch together in the Sixth Form Centre was followed by rounders on the field, until a thunderstorm blew in and made for a rather dramatic end to their last day!

It has been a pleasure to have seen Year 13 grow into responsible, respectful and resilient young adults over the past 7 years. We look forward to celebrating with them at their Summer Ball in July and sharing their successes on A Level Results Day in August.



Making Emojis

Take a look at these superb Emoji products made by some of our Year 8 students during their Design and Technology textiles lessons. The students have enjoyed the challenge of designing and creating these faces within a four-lesson time span, learning to use the fabric knives properly and stitch correctly. We think you'll agree that they're fabulous!



Dates For Your Diary

Date	Event
Monday 2nd – Wednesday 4th June	Year 10 and 12 DofE Practice Expedition
Tuesday 3rd June	Year 12 Drama Practical Exam
Thursday 5th June (9:30am - 2:00pm)	Year 10 Geography Field Trip
Friday 6th June	Year 10 and 12 Silver DofE Route Planning Day
Friday 6th June	Year 10 Drama Practical Exam
Monday 9th – Friday 13th June	Year 10 Work Experience Week
Thursday 12th June (4:00pm - 5:00pm)	Bring a Grown Up! English Workshop
Wednesday 18th June (4:00pm - 5:00pm)	Year 5 Welcome Event
Friday 20th June	Year 11 Celebration Assembly
Monday 23rd June	Sixth Form Taster Day
Wednesday 25th June	Year 6 Transfer Day and Evening
Thursday 26th June	Year 11 Prom

Whilst they gain an understanding of the science behind flight, the students are also improving their employability skills, such as team working, problem solving and effective communication. The students are enjoying the friendly competitive atmosphere, making good use of their creativity and knowledge whilst developing their engineering skills, to gain extra points for their teams.

Getting ready for Work Experience – Year 10

Work experience for our Year 10 students is not long off now. Thank you for all the efforts you have made to secure your student a placement. To get the most out of this experience, it is important that students are prepared (know what's expected of them, where to go and how to behave, etc) and also make notes of their placement journey during the week, so they can reflect on this afterwards. Year 10 will be having an assembly and Student Development Time devoted to this, but please help reinforce this message by going through this with your child.

Students will likely be feeling a bit nervous about the experience, but all learn from their time on placement and most will find it an overwhelmingly positive experience. However, if you have any concerns, please do get in touch.

Mock Interviews for Year 10

In our drive to raise students' readiness for the world of work, we will be holding our first mock interview event for all Year 10 students on the morning of 7th July, only possible with the amazing support of the local Kidlington business community. We still have spaces, so please do get in touch if you can help support this event. These interviews will be a maximum of 15 minutes each and provide a valuable opportunity for students to hone these skills before they'll need to use them in Year 11 and beyond. No pre-preparation by volunteers is needed.

Careers News

Airbus STEM programme



We launched our second year of collaborating with Airbus, this term, to deliver their prestigious STEM in-school programme. Seventeen successful Year 9 students have already completed two of their 10-week STEM project. The students are being taught about the different aspects of aeronautics, which is then reinforced through practical fun tasks to embed their learning. The programme will culminate in a tour and an awards presentation at Airbus Helicopters in Kidlington.

Post-School Plans

As Year 11 and 13 have now started their exams, any parent or carer having concerns about their child's plan about what happens next, please do get in contact, as I'm here to help. Please ring the school to ask for Mrs Zajac or email me via: szajac@gosfordfordhillschool.org.

Mrs Zajac

Careers Lead and Qualified Careers Advisor

Dates of Terms: 2024 - 2025

Autumn Term	Wednesday 4th September 2024 – Friday 20th December 2024
Half Term	Monday 28th October – Friday 1st November 2024
Christmas Holiday	Saturday 21st December 2024 – Monday 6th January 2025
Spring Term	Tuesday 7th January 2025 – Friday 4th April 2025
Half Term	Monday 17th February – Friday 21st February 2025
Easter Holiday	Saturday 5th April 2025 – Monday 21st April 2025
Summer Term	Tuesday 22nd April – Tuesday 22nd July 2025
Half Term	Monday 26th May – Friday 30th May 2025

INSET Days

Monday 2nd September 2024, Tuesday 3rd September 2024, Thursday 26th September 2024, Monday 6th January 2025, **Wednesday 30th April 2025**, Friday 27th June 2025.

Dates of Terms: 2025 - 2026

Autumn Term	Wednesday 3rd September 2025 – Friday 19th December 2025
Half Term	Monday 27th October 2025 – Friday 31st October 2025
Christmas Holiday	Saturday 20th December 2025 – Sunday 4th January 2026
Spring Term	Monday 5th January 2026 – Friday 27th March 2026
Half Term	Monday 16th February 2026 – Friday 20th February 2026
Easter Holiday	Saturday 28th March 2026 – Sunday 12th April 2026
Summer Term	Monday 13th April 2026 – Friday 17th July 2026
Half Term	Monday 25th May 2026 – Friday 29th May 2026

INSET Days

Monday 1st September 2025, Tuesday 2nd September 2025, Thursday 25th September 2025, Friday 1st May 2026, Monday 20th July 2026.

Contacting Your School

School Reception:

Telephone: **01865 374971**

School Email:

office@gosfordhillschool.org

School Website:

www.gosfordhillschool.org

Absence Line:

Telephone: **01865 855378** (Please use this number to report absences)

Email: **attendance@gosfordhillschool.org**