

The Gosford Times

The Termly Newsletter of Gosford Hill School

Term 3 – March 2026

www.gosfordhillschool.org

In this issue...

New Build Update	1
Anna's International Judo Success	2
Year 8 Human Library	3
Southern Science & Technology Challenge Final	4
Riya's Recognition from Reading University	6
BBC Bitesize Careers Roadshow	6



The area behind the canteen where the tennis courts were located



'The Bungalow' under demolition

It's been a while since our last update, so there's plenty to catch you up on!

Spring term commenced on Monday 5th January, and by the afternoon of Tuesday 6th January, demolition of the former caretaker's bungalow was underway. After standing for many years, this building was reduced to a pile of rubble in only a few days. 'The Bungalow' was converted into a learning support hub in 2003 after a period of vacancy, and in more recent years was used as a base for the school nurse and school counsellor. Some of our former students and colleagues may remember this area of the school ground being home to a swimming pool and some adjacent tennis courts. For a long time, the old tennis courts were re-purposed as a staff car park. By mid-January, this area of the school site had been completely cleared and levelled,

ready for the installation of a large two-storey temporary classroom building (more on this to follow in our next update). Temporary site office buildings for B&K were also craned into place on the former Maths playground during the week commencing Monday 20th January.

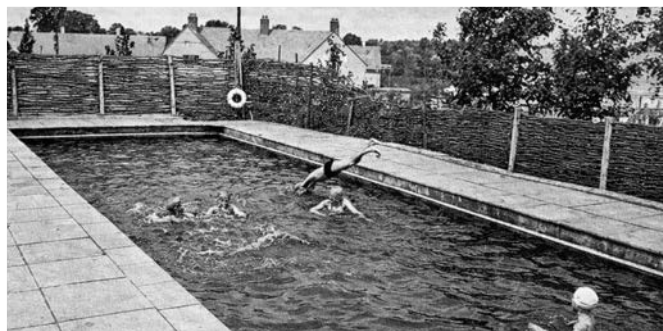
Following on from this clearance work, McDermotts, our groundworks team, began excavating the site in preparation for the concrete foundations of the temporary classrooms. Interestingly, while it was initially thought that no trace of the old swimming pool remained, part of the base – painted a light blue colour – was uncovered in late January. Among the rubble, a distinct corner shaped piece was found which is visible in the below photograph. It is fascinating to think that it was hidden for all of this time!

(Continued on next page)



The groundwork team expose remnants of the former swimming pool

For those interested in a bit of history, the swimming pool was built between 1955 and 1957 by Gosford Hill School students themselves, following ambitious plans by then-Headteacher Joe Ainley to provide a safe place for pupils to learn to swim. The County Education Committee supplied the building materials at a cost of £230 – equivalent to over £7,000 today! Surrounding the pool, students made screening from local willow trees, woven into fencing panels during carpentry lessons, while metalwork classes crafted a wrought iron gate. After a new, larger swimming pool opened at (what is now) Kidlington & Gosford Leisure Centre in 1975, the Gosford Hill School swimming pool fell into disuse and remained empty for several years before being filled in during the 1970s. We've used AI to upscale the images on the right which were originally featured in a local newspaper after the pool's opening.



Mr Birchall,

Marketing, Digital Media and Communications Assistant

Anna's International Judo Success



📷 Photograph: JudoScotland

In January, Sixth Form student Anna K (12GBS) achieved impressive success at the Scottish Open Judo Tournament, held at the sportscotland National Centre in Inverclyde. The international event welcomed more than 485 competitors representing 143 clubs from 14 countries, providing a highly competitive environment for athletes of all levels. Anna competed across two age categories, demonstrating determination and skill throughout the competition. She secured a bronze medal in the Juniors division and an outstanding silver medal in the Adults division – a remarkable achievement at such a high-level event. Reflecting on the experience, Anna said, "It was a valuable experience competing at a high international level, and I am grateful for the support I receive from the school in balancing my academic work and sport." Congratulations to Anna on her success and for representing the school with such dedication!

Year 9 Languages Day at The Queen's College, University of Oxford

Mrs Richards recently took a group of Year 9 students to the Year 9 Languages Day at The Queen's College, Oxford. The day began with a welcome, before students attended a workshop subtitling a short film in French, German or Spanish. After lunch, students heard a short introduction to linguistics and then took part in two workshops where they learned a new language from scratch in 40 minutes. During the afternoon break they spoke with student ambassadors about university life. The day concluded with a presentation on the benefits of studying languages and a Q&A with current undergraduates. The visit gave students

the opportunity to explore languages beyond the classroom and gain insight into studying languages at university.



Year 8 Human Library: From Hydrotherapy to Engineering!

Year 8 students recently experienced their very first careers experience! The event was set up to broaden their horizons by connecting them directly with industry experts. Students rotated around 10 different employer tables, quizzing guests about their roles and how they got there. We had a fantastic range of industries represented, from a dog hydrotherapist to an aircraft engineer, providing a real insight into these many different professions and the skills needed for the modern workplace.

Our Sixth Formers kicked off the morning by hosting a networking breakfast with our visitors, practicing their own professional skills before many volunteered to stay on to help run the event.

A huge shout-out to our business volunteers. Thank you for giving up your time to share your wisdom with our students; we simply couldn't do this without you! If this is something you could consider supporting in future, please do get in touch as we are always looking for more supporters from different professions:

szajac@gosfordhillschool.org

Mrs Zajac, Careers Lead



'The Doctor's Show' at the Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot

In February, Mr Gannon and Miss Hall organised a visit to the Cornerstone Arts Centre, where Year 11 History students attended a performance of 'The Doctor's Show' by School History Scene. This engaging and humorous production explores the development of health and medicine in Britain from the Middle Ages to the present day, supporting students' studies of the Britain, Health and the People unit as part of the GCSE History curriculum. Below, Milly T (11JCY) shares her reflections on the experience.



"On Thursday 5th February, many of the Year 11 history students went on a trip to the Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot, where we watched a show all about medicine through time, based on the GCSE content. The show was both interesting and informative. We were given lots of tips throughout the performance, on how to get the highest marks on exam questions by a man who has written many books, text guides and has been an examiner.

We were also all given our own activity booklets, being given time to fill these out, with all the information from the scene before the break. These questions not only challenged our memory, but helped us learn what we were not yet confident on, as after every question, the answers were explained and two of the actors then read out example answers. We were then asked to guess the number of marks that question would be awarded.

It was helpful to have the reasoning behind each mark awarded, explained to us. Not only did the show teach us the content in new ways, helping embed the information in our minds in a fun and interactive way, but they also gave us practical tips along the way, like how to tell the amount of time you should spend on a question, and how best to spend the time efficiently, answering the questions in ways that make it easiest for examiners to award you highly. Overall, it was a great trip that has really helped consolidate our knowledge on medicine through time."

New Build GHS: Plans, Phases and Progress



GOSFORD HILL
SCHOOL

An artist's impression of our brand new school



Date

Wednesday 11th
March 2026



Session Times

6:00pm to 7:00pm – Current parents and carers
7:00pm to 8:00pm – Prospective parents and carers
8:00pm to 9:00pm – Wider community

Parents, carers, prospective families and members of our local community are warmly invited to a special evening at Gosford Hill School as we begin an exciting new chapter with our school rebuild.

The event (held across three sessions – see details above) will provide an overview of the new build and how the school will be transformed in the coming years. There will be a presentation by Nigel Sellars (Headteacher) who will outline the phasing and logistics of the project, including how we will minimise disruption and ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school. Members of the Project Team will also be available to answer questions.

We look forward to seeing you there. Please scan the QR code above to RSVP so we can anticipate numbers.



Artist's impression of the school entrance



CGI of the sheltered outdoor seating areas



Gosford Hill School, Oxford Road,
Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 2NT



Telephone: 01865 374971
Email: office@gosfordhillschool.org

Dates For Your Diary

**New Build GHS Presentation
Evening in the Hall**
Wednesday 11th March
(See poster on left for details)

Sixth Form Interviews
Monday 16th and
Thursday 19th March

PALs Charity Quiz Night
Wednesday 18th March
(5:45pm - 8:00pm in the Hall)

Year 12 Trip to Careers Fest
Thursday 19th March
(1:00pm - 3:15pm)

Non-school uniform day
(Details to follow)
Friday 20th March

Year 13 Geography Field Trip
Friday 20th March
(10:15am - 1:00pm)

BAGU German Workshop
Tuesday 24th March
(4:00pm - 5:00pm)

BAGU Science Workshop
Wednesday 25th March
(4:00pm - 5:00pm)

Year 7 Parents Evening
Wednesday 25th March
(4:00pm - 6:30pm)

Year 9 Battlefields of World War
One Trip to Belgium and France
(26th - 27th March)

Year 8 Sports Tour to Germany
(27th - 30th March)

Southern Science and Technology Challenge Final



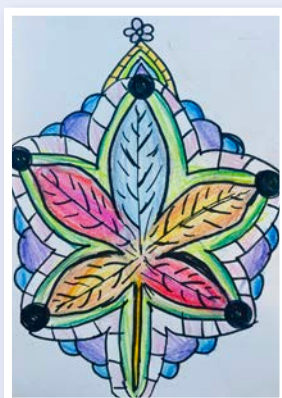
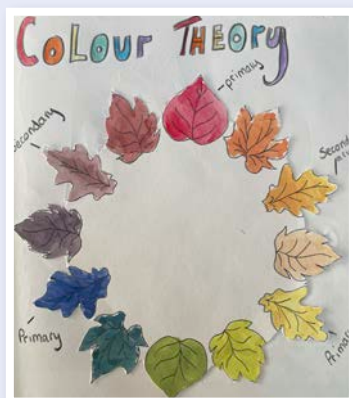
After a successful regional heat in Oxford last year, Mia M-L (Year 9) and Noah M (Year 10) qualified to attend the Southern Science and Technology Challenge Final in London on Friday 16th January. Here they were tasked with programming an EV3 Lego Mindstorm robot so that it could navigate around a 3D maze.

Mia and Noah took on the task with ease, programming their robot not only to complete the maze, but also to use lights as indicators, make an alert noise when reversing and complete a perfect spin! Their hard work was rewarded with second place in the final – a significant achievement.

Miss Hall
Trip Leader

This term in the Art Department

This term, pupils have been exploring a range of exciting themes across the year groups...



Year 7 students have been developing their creativity through the theme of 'Trees', Year 8 have been investigating 'Confectionery', and Year 9 have been responding thoughtfully to the theme of 'Journeys'.



Our GCSE and A Level pupils are continuing to develop their Coursework Portfolios and Personal Investigation. We are incredibly proud of the resilience and commitment they have shown to their artwork.



Beyanna N (12SHS)



Oscar B (13LSH)



Alia S (12GBS)

Mrs Hallmark, Subject Leader of Art

Riya's Recognition from Reading Uni

I am delighted to share some fantastic news about one of our super Sixth Form students, Riya, who has received special recognition from the University of Reading.

After applying to study Psychology, Riya was thrilled to receive a letter from the University commending her for the outstanding quality of her Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), which explored a psychology-based topic. In their correspondence, the University praised the depth of her research, the quality of her analysis, and the professionalism of her presentation.

This is a remarkable achievement and a testament to Riya's dedication, academic curiosity, and hard work. To my knowledge, this is the first time one of our students has received direct praise from a university for their EPQ — making the accomplishment even more special. Congratulations to Riya on this well-deserved recognition. We look forward to seeing what she achieves next!

Miss Barnes, Subject Leader of Social Sciences

BAGU Art Workshop

On 4th February, Mrs Hallmark hosted our most recent 'Bring a Grown Up' workshop in the Art Department. Children in Years 4–6, together with their parents and carers, enjoyed experimenting with a variety of printing techniques and practising different drawing skills to create some beautiful artwork.

Details of our forthcoming workshops can be found in the poster on the right. These free, hour-long family learning sessions are a wonderful opportunity to get to know the school and meet our teachers – with squash and biscuits provided!



BBC Bitesize Careers Roadshow



On the final day of the Autumn term, we were privileged to welcome the BBC Bitesize Careers Roadshow, offering students an exciting insight into the world of work and future careers. Students enjoyed a front-row experience as they heard from a panel of industry professionals, including an Electrical Engineer Technician, a Freelance TV Producer, and a BBC Radio Presenter.

The speakers highlighted that there is no single route to success, with pathways ranging from apprenticeships to university and entry-level roles. They also emphasised the importance of soft skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, and communication, alongside technical knowledge. Students were encouraged to seize opportunities, say yes to new experiences, and use work experience to explore different career options.

The session was a powerful reminder that success can be achieved in many ways and that exploring a range of experiences is often the best way to discover your passions. A huge thank you to the BBC team for inspiring our students to think big about their futures!





Friends of Gosford Hill School

Would you like to support young people at Gosford Hill School and be part of a growing school community?

Friends of Gosford Hill School is a friendly, volunteer-led charity that supports students' education and the wider life of the school. We warmly welcome parents, carers, staff, alumni and members of our wider community. Whether you can attend meetings, help at events or simply offer occasional support, every contribution makes a difference.

As we relaunch the Friends, we're excited to build a strong, inclusive community that celebrates student success, strengthens connections between school and home, and raises funds to provide additional opportunities for our young people.

To find out more or get involved, please contact Mr Bateman via the school office at office@gosfordhillschool.org.



Bring a Grown Up!

FREE Family Learning Workshops at Gosford Hill School

Spring / Summer Term 2026

Suitable for children in Years 4-6

Subject and Date		Description
German Workshop Tuesday 24th March 4pm - 5pm		Put your linguistic skills to the test to find hidden Easter eggs
Science Workshop Weds 25th March 4pm - 5pm		Use Science to help the Easter bunny solve problems!
Geography Workshop Weds 22nd April 4pm - 5pm		Come and learn about our planet on World Earth Day!
Food Workshop Wednesday 13th May 4pm - 5pm		Discover the power of teamwork in the kitchen
English Workshop Thursday 11th June 4pm - 5pm		We all have an inner poet! A creative writing workshop

We look forward to seeing you at one or all of these FREE workshops.

Scan the QR code today to book your place, or visit:
www.gosford-hill.oxon.sch.uk/community/bring-a-grown-up
Alternatively, you can give us a call on 01865 374971



Gosford Hill School Sixth Form



It isn't too late to join our thriving Sixth Form...

We're still accepting admissions for September 2026. If you're interested in joining us, please contact Miss J Brimble, Head of Sixth Form, using the email address below.



Dedicated Sixth Form facilities



Bespoke pastoral support



Consistently outstanding grades

@ jbrimble@gosfordhillschool.org

www.gosford-hill.oxon.sch.uk/sixth-form

PART OF THE
RIVER LEARNING TRUST

WEDNESDAY 18TH MARCH - 6PM

PALS PEER ACTIVE LISTENERS
Here to hear



£5 ENTRY FEE

RAFFLE PRIZES, FREE FOOD & REFRESHMENTS
GOSFORD HILL SCHOOL - MAIN HALL
ALL PROCEEDS GO TO BYHP BANBURY

PRE-BOOK WITH THE QR CODE



Term Dates: 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 – Wednesday 15th 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.

Term Dates: 2026 - 2027

Autumn Term	Monday 7th September 2026 – Friday 18th December 2026
Half Term	Saturday 24th October 2026 – Sunday 1st November 2026
Christmas Holiday	Saturday 19th December 2026 – Sunday 3rd January 2027
Spring Term	Monday 4th January 2027 – Thursday 25th March 2027
Half Term	Saturday 13th February 2027 – Sunday 21st February 2027
Easter Holiday	Friday 26th March 2027 – Sunday 11th April 2027
Summer Term	Monday 12th April 2027 – Wednesday 21st July 2027
Half Term	Saturday 29th May 2027 – Sunday 6th June 2027

INSET Days

Tuesday 1st September 2026, Wednesday 2nd September 2026, Friday 25th September 2026, Friday 27th November 2026, Monday 25th January 2027.

Term Dates: 2027 - 2028

Term dates for the academic year 2027-28 can be found on the school website [here](#).

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**