

THE RATCLIFFIAN



2025 ANNUAL SCHOOL REVIEW



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CSI INSPECTION

'The Rosminian charism and values underpin all that is undertaken at Ratcliffe College', CSI Inspection, June 2025.

In the penultimate week of the Summer Term, the College welcomed inspectors from the Catholic Schools Inspectorate. The inspection marked the culmination of three years work across the whole College. Having anticipated the inspection for several weeks, Governors, staff, students and parents were eager to share the College's Catholic ethos and Rosminian charism with the inspection team.

School inspections, whatever their type, are exacting. The new Catholic School inspection framework is certainly challenging, placing significant emphasis on compliance laid down by the Bishop's Conference. The College had prepared thoroughly and we were confident that our authentic Rosminian charism and Catholic mission would be evident to the inspectors when they met our school community. The inspection team were extremely thorough in their work, holding all stakeholders to account through their questioning and taking a deep dive into the student's books and folders. Our evidence files were checked meticulously and our self-evaluation document taken to task during detailed conversations with students, staff, parents and Governors, as the inspectors triangulated their evidence.

To the inspectors credit, no one, apart from the Headmaster, had an inkling of the final outcome until the feedback meeting on the afternoon of the last day. It was, therefore, wonderful to witness my colleague's reaction when we were informed that Ratcliffe had been judged as 'outstanding' in all three categories, Catholic Life and Mission, Religious Education, and Collective Worship. Everyone was thrilled with the outcome and a tear or two was shed as the lead inspector shared with us some of the findings from their conversations with the students.

"As a Ratcliffian, I would never be afraid to share my faith and treat people with dignity. Ratcliffe has taught me life lessons that my faith is not always straightforward, and that is okay." Ratcliffe student.

It is always heartening to hear our students share something of themselves in such an undefended and honest way. I have always said that Ratcliffe students are a hopeful bunch, understanding that having a faith and knowing that there is something more, something better, through Hope, is fundamental to their schooling here.

"I understand that I need to be charitable and ensure I always help others, even if that just means listening to them." Ratcliffe student.

As Headmaster, I could not be prouder of the College community. Reading the inspection report, reminds us all of our shared mission as a Catholic Rosminian school. Our collective aim is to help every child know Christ by learning and growing in the light of the Gospel, inspired by the teaching of our founder, Blessed Antonio Rosmini, and his desire that we seek perfection in all that we do through our school motto, 'Legis Plenitudo Charitas' (Love is the fulfilment of the Law).

My sincere thanks and gratitude to everyone who supported the College's efforts to achieve this wonderful outcome. It was very much a team effort from a community that unashamedly puts God at the centre of our College community.

J.P. Reddin

J.P. Reddin, Headmaster.

Welcome to the 2024-2025 edition of the Ratcliffian. I hope that you enjoy thumbing through this year's annual review which highlights in words and pictures this incredibly vibrant school community of which I am so proud.

Whether you marvel at the imagination of our youngest children in the Nursery, wonder at the progress of our Preparatory School pupils or applaud the ambition of our senior school students, I hope that this year's Ratcliffian gives you get a real sense of a school community rooted in faith and united in spirit.

It is a pleasure and a privilege to be part of your children's education. There were so many wonderful moments in 2024-2025. Our harvest gift to the Carpenters Arms, the Immac celebrations, Shrek the Musical, the Picnic Concert, Prep School assemblies, trips and visits galore, sporting success across so many disciplines and being judged as an outstanding Catholic school by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate, not to mention the best ever public examination results this summer. All of these moments were very

special, and yet, what I enjoyed most was simply spending time with your children. Listening to their stories, their hopes, their dreams as well as their fears. They continue to be a hopeful bunch, invariably positive and full of energy. They enjoy their school days and commit themselves to our Catholic mission and Rosminian charism, living out our school motto, 'Legis Plenitudo Charitas'.

I thank the parent body, the Governors and Trustees and especially my colleagues, teachers and support staff for their diligence and care of your children. It is your collective endeavours that ensure that our school community thrives and the children continue to learn and grow in the light of the Gospel.



BOARDING OVERVIEW

Dear Ratcliffians,

Our boarding community continues to thrive as a dynamic and nurturing family within the College. Boarding is a true home away from home for our students. Over the past year, we have worked tirelessly to enhance our facilities, ensuring that every boarder enjoys a comfortable, safe, and welcoming environment in which to live, study, and grow.

One of our major accomplishments this year has been the refurbishment of St Andrew's corridor where all rooms have been redecorated and fitted with new flooring. This transformation has created a brighter and more inviting space that perfectly reflects the warmth of our community and provides an uplifting environment for our youngest boarders. The feedback from students and parents

has been overwhelmingly positive and it is heartening to see how these improvements have contributed to the overall well-being and happiness of our boarders.

In addition, we have successfully added three new rooms to the boys' boarding house which has expanded

our capacity and allowed us to welcome more students into our growing boarding family. At the same time we are delighted to report that the renovation of the girls' boarding house is now close to completion. Almost all rooms have been upgraded in terms of flooring and decoration, creating a modern, consistent, and comfortable standard throughout. These enhancements have not only improved the physical environment but have also helped to foster a renewed sense of pride and ownership among our boarders.

None of these developments would have been possible without the ongoing support of the College Leadership Team, our dedicated Governors, our Old Ratcliffians, and the Parents' Association (PA).

We are especially grateful to our PA for their recent contribution towards the purchase of a PlayStation 5 and an Air Hockey table for our boarders' lounge. These additions have been met with enormous excitement! They have quickly become the centrepiece of friendly competition and laughter during evenings and weekends. The in-house tournaments that have followed have brought great energy and camaraderie among our students and encourage teamwork, sportsmanship, and friendship in a relaxed and joyful atmosphere.



Beyond the physical improvements, one of the most exciting initiatives we have introduced is the launch of our student-led Cultural Weeks. This project, part of our boarding development plan, aims to celebrate the incredible diversity within our community. We believe that understanding and sharing our different backgrounds enriches everyone's experience and deepens the sense of unity among our boarders.

Our first Cultural Week, held last year, focused on African Culture, and it was a resounding success. Students took the lead in organising a vibrant programme of activities, including traditional music, dance, food, and storytelling. The week culminated in a weekend of celebrations which included a Saturday quiz followed by Sunday games and delicious dishes from various African countries. The event was filled with colour, laughter, and a genuine spirit of learning and appreciation.

Building on that success, this year we celebrated our Hispanic Culture Week, again led entirely by our students. It was inspiring to see our boarders take ownership of the event with them taking on tasks such as preparing presentations, cooking traditional meals, and sharing stories and traditions from across the Hispanic world. The enthusiasm and participation from the entire boarding community was remarkable, and it served as another powerful reminder of how vibrant and multicultural our boarding family has become.

These Cultural Weeks have quickly become a highlight of our calendar, providing a wonderful opportunity for our boarders to celebrate who they are, learn about others, and strengthen the bonds of friendship that make our community so special.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to continuing this journey of growth and improvement. With the ongoing support of our Old Ratcliffians, parents, and the wider Ratcliffe community, we are confident that our boarding houses will continue to evolve as places of warmth, belonging, and opportunity for all who live within them. Every new project, every improvement, and every celebration reflects our shared commitment to providing the very best for our students be it academically, socially, and personally.

Jose Estevez
Head of Boarding
Ratcliffe College



A LEVEL SUCCESS FOR RATCLIFFE STUDENTS

The College is very proud of an exceptional set of A Level results this summer. Like the GCSE results, this year's A Level results are among the strongest ever achieved in the College's history. The Class of 2025 demonstrated remarkable academic excellence, resilience, and ambition, achieving outcomes that place Ratcliffe firmly among the top-performing schools in the country.

An impressive 48% of all grades were A–A*, significantly higher than the national average of 28%. This reflects both the academic strength of the cohort and the outstanding teaching and support provided by staff. Across all subjects, students displayed a genuine love of learning and a determination to fulfil their potential.

Adding further distinction to these superb results, Ratcliffe achieved an ALPS Grade 1 for value-added progress, placing the College in the top 1% of schools nationally over the past five years. This measure demonstrates that Ratcliffe students consistently make exceptional progress from their starting points, a reflection of the College's personalised approach to education and its nurturing academic environment.

The outstanding results have helped 90% of Year 13 students gain a place at their first-choice university with the majority attending a Russell Group university. Ratcliffe congratulates all A Level students on their well-deserved success and wishes them every blessing for the exciting journeys that lie ahead.



RATCLIFFE STUDENTS CELEBRATE GCSE SUCCESS

Ratcliffe College was delighted to celebrate an outstanding set of GCSE results this summer. One of the strongest performances in the College's history. The raw GCSE data reveals exceptional achievement across all subjects, reflecting the dedication, perseverance, and ambition of our Year 11 students, the teaching and support staff.

When compared to previous years, this cohort's results stand out as particularly impressive, with over 50% of GCSEs from the new 3-Year GCSE course graded 7-9. Ratcliffe's raw GCSE results surpass even the excellent outcomes of the COVID assessment years confirming a return to, and indeed an improvement upon, the College's pre-pandemic academic strength.

As the Headmaster, Mr Reddin said, when praising the students' achievements, "These results are a testament to the resilience and determination of our pupils, the expertise of our teachers, and the unwavering support of our families. We are immensely proud of the way our young people have applied themselves to their studies and embodied the Ratcliffe spirit."



The success at GCSE is made clear by the independent analysis carried out by ALPS. This shows that the value-added progress places Ratcliffe in the top 2% of schools nationally. This remarkable consistency of excellence across all GCSE subjects highlights the strength of teaching and learning throughout the school.

As our students move forward into Sixth Form, they do so with confidence, character, and a commitment to excellence, all hallmarks of a Ratcliffe education.

CATHOLIC LIFE AND MISSION

"Adorare, Tacere, Godere." Bl. Antonio Rosmini

HARVEST FESTIVAL 2024

For our Harvest Festival in October, the food and toiletries collected were donated to The Carpenters Arms, a Christian rehabilitation centre supporting those struggling with addiction. The school raised over £4,700 worth of food and toiletries for the centre, and also donated artwork created by our Sixth Form students during their Core R.S. lessons, which will be displayed at the centre.

Thank you to everyone who made donations to this great cause.



ACN MASS

In November, Ratcliffe was honoured to host the annual Red Wednesday Mass for Aid to the Church in Need (ACN). ACN is a Pontifical charity whose mission is to support persecuted Christians around the world, and the Red Wednesday Masses play a vital role in raising awareness of ACN's work.

We were grateful to have His Lordship, Bishop Patrick McKinney, celebrate the Mass in our Chapel, and to welcome visitors from many other Catholic schools in the Diocese.



JUBILEE YEAR 2025

2025 marks a special year for the Church as we celebrate a Jubilee Year. Launched by Pope Francis on Christmas Eve 2024 with the opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica, the Jubilee Year is a time of celebration, pilgrimage, prayer, and forgiveness. The theme for this Jubilee is 'Pilgrims of Hope', and throughout the year, students have reflected on the meaning of hope - both for themselves and for those in need. The Jubilee Year is set to conclude on 6th January 2026.



BLESSED ANTONIO ROSMINI DAY

On the last day of the academic year, the College came together to celebrate the feast day of our founder, Blessed Antonio Rosmini. The day began with a whole-school Mass, celebrated by Provincial Fr. Thom Thomas. The school community then enjoyed a festive lunch together, followed by a fun afternoon with the Colour Run.

At the end of the day, students and staff received a blessing from Fr. Philip before departing for their summer holidays.



PASSING OF POPE FRANCIS AND THE ELECTION OF POPE LEO XIV

Ratcliffe was saddened to learn of the passing of Pope Francis on 21st April 2025.

Our first Monday assembly after the Easter holidays was a Celebration of the Word, mourning his death and celebrating the life and pontificate of the late Holy Father, with a particular focus on his dedication to young people.

The College eagerly anticipated the election of the new Pope. Our boarding community, in particular, was each given a Cardinal to pray for during the conclave. Ratcliffe celebrated when we learned that Cardinal Robert Prevost had been elected as the 267th successor of St. Peter on 8th May 2025, taking the name Leo XIV.

We pray that our new Pope will flourish in his ministry and continue to guide the Church into the future.



CONFIRMATIONS

Congratulations to the 17 students and 1 member of staff who were confirmed on 11th May 2025 by His Lordship, Bishop Patrick McKinney. We pray that the Holy Spirit may guide them to grow in Faith, Hope and Charity.



LOURDES PILGRIMAGE HCPT 2025

In July a group of current and former Ratcliffians embarked on a spiritually profound pilgrimage to Lourdes, travelling with HCPT Group 512. This journey, rooted in faith, fellowship, and service, offered participants an opportunity to deepen their spiritual lives while creating cherished memories together.

A particularly special moment was celebrated at Hosanna House, a place of welcome and healing, where Megan, an Old Ratcliffian, received both her First Holy Communion and Confirmation. This sacred milestone, surrounded by a supportive community of faith, was an unforgettable highlight of the trip, a testament to the enduring spiritual journey of the Ratcliffe College family.

As always the Pilgrimage was a life changing experience, and we look forward to returning next year.





SWANS AND CYGNETS

Our youngest children in Cygnets and Swans have had a wonderful year filled with discovery, celebration, and the joy of shared experiences. From their very first sessions in the autumn term, children quickly began to build friendships and gain confidence, supported by the nurturing guidance of their teachers and the strong sense of community that runs throughout our Early Years setting.

Our monthly Parent and Toddler groups, led by Miss Warman and Mrs King continued this year and allowed for opportunities for the Under threes to come and experience a little snapshot of Ratcliffe. These Friday sessions have welcomed families to join us for singing, creative play and shared activities. It is a gentle and joyful way to introduce little ones to the rhythms of school life. The changing seasons brought a variety of celebrations. In the autumn, children enjoyed learning about Harvest, Diwali, and Christmas, with rich sensory experiences and storytelling helping to bring each festival to life.

The highlight of the festive season was the Cygnet and Swans Nativity in the Chapel. With a backdrop of hay bales and a stable, the children sang beautifully and shared the Christmas story in a heartwarming performance for their families. This was followed by our Christingle service, and on the penultimate day of the Autumn term, a shared Christmas lunch with Reception and Key Stage 1 which included a visit from Father Christmas!

In March, children travelled to White Post Farm, where they learned about baby animals and delighted in the chance to stroke and cuddle the creatures in the petting area. Through the Spring term, the children delighted in their outdoor learning opportunities and minibeast spotting became a favourite activity. Then, in June, the Cygnets and Swans proudly hosted their own cake sale, raising £61 and contributing to our impressive Nursery total of £1,554.18 for charity.

Our year ended with a joyful Celebration Afternoon, where Preschool joined Reception and Key Stage 1 to share songs, stories, poems and memories of the wonderful year we have had, with proud families.

As we say goodbye to four much-loved members of staff - Miss Warman, Miss Angus, Mrs Ward and Miss Langton - we do so with heartfelt thanks for their dedication, care, and the special memories they've helped create with our youngest children.

It has been a year of growth, giggles and great beginnings and we couldn't be prouder of our Cygnet and Swan children.



RECEPTION

Reception children began the academic year full of enthusiasm, quickly settling into new routines and friendships. From the very beginning, they were encouraged to be curious, caring, and confident learners and these qualities shone throughout the year.

Joining with the Preparatory School, September's Harvest Assembly was our first service in the Chapel. Families donated generously and the children helped deliver the offerings to the Chapel, a meaningful way to show gratitude and serve others in the spirit of our Catholic values. Our visits to Woodthorpe Care Home were another highlight, with three special trips beginning in October. Whether sharing autumn-themed crafts or delivering handmade Jubilee Pledge cards, the children brought joy to the residents through these intergenerational experiences.

Reception joined the rest of the Nursery and Preparatory School for a whole-school Maths Day in the Autumn Term, transforming the Upper Room into a gigantic city made entirely of 2D and 3D shapes. This hands-on, collaborative project brought maths to life in the most imaginative way.

The festive season was full of celebration, with the children proudly taking part in the Reception Nativity and attending the Christingle service. These moments encouraged reflection, participation, and joy for all involved.



A trip to White Post Farm in March offered opportunities to explore the natural world and develop care and responsibility for living things. Later in May, our Reception Toy Workshop themed 'All the Fun of the Fair' delighted everyone. This day included traditional games, a petting area, and even the chance to design and make their own yoyos!

As the summer term drew to a close, the children enjoyed their final week with a joyful Teddy Bears' Picnic and a very energetic Sponsored Fun Run. Nursery raised an impressive £1,554.18 for different charities through the academic year which is a testament to their generosity and community spirit.

It has been a joy to watch the Reception children grow this year. They have grown in curiosity, confidence and in kindness. As they prepare to move into Year 1, we celebrate all they have achieved and look forward to seeing what they will do next.





YEAR 1

Oscar D

We went to Beaumanor Hall for a Victorian Day and it was so fun but a bit scary too! First, we dressed up like Victorian children and I wore a flat cap and braces. We went to the laundry room and did washing with a big mangle. It was hard work turning the handle and squeezing the water out of the clothes. I got wet and laughed a lot!

Then we visited the Victorian school. It was very quiet and the teacher was super strict. She shouted at a boy for talking and made him wear the dunce hat! We had to sit up straight and write on slates with chalk. I was a bit nervous but I tried my best.

I liked learning about the olden days and how children lived. I'm glad I don't have to go to school like that every day. Victorian Day was brilliant!

Leelah J

A visitor came to our school and did a Dinosaur workshop. It was amazing! First, we sat on the hall floor and he showed us real fossils. We got to be palaeontologists and used little brushes to find bones hidden in sand trays. I found a tooth and a claw!

Then we learnt all about dinosaurs. He told us that some were meat-eaters and some ate plants. My favourite was the Tyrannosaurus Rex because it had big teeth and tiny arms. We saw pictures of different dinosaurs and even learnt how they became extinct.

The best part was meeting a baby triceratops! It looked so real and made noises. I got to stroke its head and it blinked at me. I felt like I was in Jurassic Park!

I loved the workshop and now I want to be a dinosaur expert when I grow up. Dinosaurs are the coolest ever!



Ellora P

In January we went to the Space Centre in Leicester and it was amazing! First, we went inside the planetarium. It was dark and the ceiling looked like the night sky. Stars and planets zoomed above us and I felt like I was flying in space!

Next, we saw lots of rockets. Some were really big and had flames painted on them. One rocket was taller than a house! We learnt how astronauts go into space and what they wear. I saw a space suit and it looked very heavy.

Then we found out about the solar system. There are eight planets and they all go around the sun. My favourite planet is Saturn because it has rings. We played games and pressed buttons to learn more. I loved the Space Centre. It made me want to be an astronaut when I grow up and fly to the moon!

Delilah C

We went to Yorkshire Wildlife Park and it was the best day ever! First, we saw wallabies hopping around with tiny babies in their pouches. They were so cute and fluffy. Then we watched polar bears eating meat. They were huge and had big paws. One of them sat in the water while chewing!

Next, we saw lions lying in the sun. They looked sleepy but I know they are strong predators. The giraffes were super tall and had long necks to reach the leaves. I waved at one and it looked at me! The monkeys were very funny and jumped all over the place. One scratched its head like a person!

We learnt about predators and their teeth. Some have sharp teeth for meat and some have flat teeth for plants. I liked learning about how animals eat. I want to go back again and see even more animals!

YEAR 2

Eliza C

I loved all the trips in Year 2, especially going to Yorkshire Wildlife Park. The polar bears and the giraffes were amazing - I couldn't stop staring! During our art workshop, we worked together to create a giant whale collage! At Christmas, I got to be in the Year 1 and 2 nativity and the angels were my favourite part - they looked magical. In PE, I learned gymnastics and I even learned to play the ukulele in music!

Augustus S

Year 2 was full of exciting challenges and I enjoyed solving tricky questions that made me think hard in Maths. In ICT, coding was so much fun, especially when we got to play games we helped create. The teachers were really kind and always helped us when things got tough. PE was brilliant too - I liked facing all the obstacles and trying to beat them. Our class assembly about the Bumblebee was one of my favourite memories of Year 2.

Nathan E

In Year 2 I loved challenging myself in Maths, especially when we did times tables - it felt great to beat tricky questions! Acting was one of my favourite things in Year 2. I had so much fun performing in the Nativity and our class assembly - they were some of my best memories. All my teachers were very kind and always helped me do my best.



Amaaya J

In Year 2 I really loved making papier mâché islands in geography - they were messy and amazing to build. Our trip to Belvoir Castle was brilliant, especially when we explored the maze in the Rose Garden. My favourite memory of all was performing our class assembly for our parents as we got to celebrate our special gifts and talents!

Jessica T

I loved our trip to the wildlife park - watching the monkeys was the best part. One of my proudest memories was performing in our informal concert on the piano. I felt really brave and happy showing what I had learned. In English, I enjoyed learning all about grammar - it helped me get better at writing stories and reading books. I feel like I had grown so much in Year 2 and had a brilliant time!





YEAR 3

This is our story of our time in Year 3,
With Mrs Gilchrist and Mrs Wetton to help oversee.
Mrs Deacon was part of the fantastic team,
That led us, supported us and taught us to dream.

Mrs Neal, Mrs Leah and Miss Glover helped us too.
Our learning has flourished and we have grown the
whole year through.

The Iron Giant was to visit us first,
Building a companion gave us a great, big burst.
Learning about magnets, forces and friction.
Lots of experiments and lots of predictions.

Back in November, the Romans were here,
Invading our classrooms with their shields and their spears.
We learnt about history from things left behind,
Studied pots, coins and mosaics with beautiful designs.

'Predators' came next and the chance to explore,
With a walk on the wild side and creatures galore.
Some from the ground and some from the air,
Carnivore plants and bugs from your hair.

A visit from friendly Birds of prey
Swooshing and swooping made our day
Dissecting owl pellets was so much fun
Thank goodness we had dried them before in the sun.

Next came volcanoes, tsunamis, earthquakes,
Discovering rocks and tectonic plates,
How fossils are formed that are found at our coast,
Mother Nature kept us engrossed.

Then it was time to pack gas masks and cases,
Evacuated for safety but no tears on our faces.
We hid in the shelter as the planes dropped their bombs,
Curled up with our teddies as we thought of our mums.

WW2 you have been so delightful
The knowledge we gained has been insightful
The allies, the axis, Dunkirk and rationing
Propaganda, fighting, VE day and dancing

There's been so many things apart from our classes,
Like helping to lead assemblies and Masses,
Competitions and concerts to express our abilities,
New sports that allow us to show our agility.

Cake sales to plan for and pounds to remember,
Carols by Candlelight in the dark of December.
Lunch in the Ref and new clubs to explore,
Playtimes and friendships and so much more.

But our trip to Beaumanor was the highlight, no doubt,
The night in the shelter, the raids and blackout.
Our code cracking skills were put to the test,
Our bravery, our courage, we really impressed.

And so as we arrive at the end of this year,
We've had the best time, we've had lots to cheer.
And now we are ready to go to Year 4,
To push ourselves further, to learn even more.

To be part of this wonderful team called Year 3,
Has been a privilege this year, I think you'll agree.
But before any of the teachers get a tear in their eye,
We thank you Year 3, farewell and goodbye.

So, to finish this off we'd like just to share,
A bit of our learning, a final fanfare.
A selection of music we've learnt through the year,
We hope that you like it, we hope that you cheer.
So, give us a clap, give us support,
As we play you a piece that's called 'Airport'





YEAR 4

As we come to the end of Year 4, it is wonderful to look back and reflect on what has been an exciting, busy, and memorable year for our children. From the very first day in September, when they walked into their new classrooms with bags in hand and a mixture of nerves and excitement, they have embraced every challenge and opportunity with enthusiasm.

Our historical studies brought the past to life in imaginative ways. At Perlethorpe, the children stepped into the shoes of Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, complete with tunics, shields, and helmets. A visit from Dr Jo provided both education and amusement, particularly when the children created their own (pretend!) Anglo-Saxon "poo" as part of a lesson in archaeology! Later in the year, they took to the field as Normans, exploring the events of 1066 through marching, writing with ink, and handling replicas of armour and weapons.

Science has also been a source of wonder. A highlight was the visit of the inflatable dome, where the children were transported into the world of the Water Cycle. Sitting in awe, they watched the swirling clouds, falling rain, and flowing rivers, deepening their understanding of how our planet works.

Throughout the Catholic Year of Hope, the children lived out their values, showing kindness, compassion, and care for one another. This year has been as much about friendships and personal growth as it has been about academic learning.

Books and stories have taken us far and wide. On World Book Day, children travelled the globe through literature, collecting "passport stamps" and celebrating the joy of reading.

Our adventures continued closer to home when Dr Jones guided us through the hidden corners of the College, introducing us to its fascinating history and secret passages.

Music and performance have played a big role this year. The children drummed African rhythms, rapped with confidence in English lessons, and performed the Easter story to an audience of families and friends. Their pride in their own creativity has been a joy to witness.

Our commitment to the environment shone through when the children designed inventions to help protect our oceans, showcasing both imagination and responsibility. Meanwhile, our residential visit to Edgmond Hall provided the perfect opportunity to build independence and teamwork. From toasting marshmallows around the campfire to singing "Mamma Mia!" in the woods, the trip gave the children memories that will last a lifetime.

We were also fortunate to welcome a special visitor, footballer Jeremy Monga, who inspired the children with his story and sporting talent. To finish the year, the children demonstrated their musical skills with pride, performing with their fifes to an appreciative audience of parents.

It has been a year full of laughter, learning, and growth. As we say goodbye to Year 4, we are proud of all that the children have achieved. They now move forward with confidence, ready to embrace the challenges and opportunities of Year 5.



YEAR 5

Way back in September was when we arrived,
To new rooms and new friends in fantastic Year 5.
New teachers to guide us and help oversee,
We stepped forward and met them, the wonderful three.

Mrs McCue proud with her Highland cheer,
She will quote Robbie Burns in her tartan gear.
She marked in red, with flair and might,
And doodled wee kilts on every rewrite.

Mrs Don's wrapped in scarves through summer's heat,
Even in June, thick socks on her feet!
"Close that window!" she'll shout with a sneeze,
Though the sun's blazing down at 40 degrees.

In Class 5T, there stands a man,
With a Villa mug and his lesson plan.
His tie has lions, his socks match too,
Even his pens are claret and blue!

With pencils sharpened and uniform clean,
Our brains switched on all eager and keen.
We settled in for the ride of our lives,
Now we were here, it's time for Year 5.

The Tudors were first way back in September,
Henry VIII and a rhyme to remember,
All six of his young newlweds,
Those that survived and those who lost heads.

A trip to Burghley to wander around,
To see wonderful artwork and glamorous gowns,
A meeting with King and a chance to question,
About all his troubles and his odd indiscretion.

Alchemy Island was next on the list,
Experiments, explosions, be a real alchemist.
Mixing some lead with a dragon's sneeze,
Then whispering spells into the breeze.

Maps and coordinates to find hidden treasure,
Routes to plan and grids to measure.
Creative writing about trips through a portal,
Stories of characters strong and immortal.

Off to the Space Centre to visit the stars,
As we learnt about rockets and trips to Mars.
Neil Armstrong's story in 1969,
'The Eagle Has Landed' was the headline.

'A Starry Night' was our aim to complete,
In the style of Van Gogh, we tried to repeat.
Isaac Newton sitting with thoughtful eyes,
Gravity explained as fruit fell from the skies.

Off to Egypt many years ago,
To learn about Tut, the famous Pharaoh.
The discovery of his tomb and all its gold,
Howard Carter's story began to unfold.

A trip down the Nile in all its glory,
A journey past pyramids to write in a story.
On temple walls they wrote in pictures not words,
With snakes and eyes and small little birds.

The topic next was 'Sow, Grow and Farm',
Like Jeremy Clarkson, but a little more charm.
The planning of allotments and what to include,
Plants to look at and plants for food.

From Scottish land to Cornish coast,
We mapped where farms appear the most.
In the style of Cezanne, we drew with great care,
Each one with passion, each one with flair.

We finished the year looking back at the past,
Travelling through time to the first and the last,
From dusty books to screens so bright,
The classroom's changed but still feels right.

We travelled through corridors from Ratcliffe's past,
Looking at photos with questions to ask.
Their stories, proud history, all black and white,
The future, not written, our time to shine bright.

Year 5 have stood proud and performed to the masses,
Their assemblies this year in each of their classes.
We acted and spoke; we shared our theme,
We were proud we delivered, what a fantastic team!

Teamwork is needed and we all play our part,
On the sporting field with passion and heart.
We had the chance to represent school,
On the pitch, on the track and down at the pool.

We have got talented players, runners and swimmers,
The medals they've won just stand out and glimmer.
National finalists, champions elect,
With Mr F at the helm, it's what you'd expect.

Our musical talents have shone so bright,
Our singing and playing, a pure delight.
Instruments and voices, drums that roll,
Every note played straight from the soul.

We have measured, painted, written and drew,
Explored the world and learned what's true.
With every match and every song,
We have found a place where we belong.

Our friendships bloomed like flowers bright,
We helped each other make things right.
Through ups and downs, we have found our way,
And made the most of every day.

And so, it's time to say goodbye,
To classrooms where our dreams could fly.
We will take our courage, hope and cheer,
Year 6 now calls us on from here.





YEAR 6

Year 6 at Ratcliffe College was a year of discovery, leadership, and unforgettable experiences. The staff created a vibrant and supportive environment where pupils were encouraged to explore new ideas, challenge themselves, and grow in confidence. Each term brought exciting learning opportunities, with topics including Mountains and Climates, Crime and Punishment, and Britain at War.

The year began with a visit to The Warning Zone in Leicester, where pupils learned essential lessons about staying safe in both digital and real-world environments. Through interactive exhibits, they explored the dangers of railway lines, substance misuse, and online risks, gaining practical knowledge to help them make safe and responsible choices. The Autumn Term concluded with the much-loved Carols by Candlelight service, a religious and joyful celebration of the season.

As the oldest pupils in the Prep School, Year 6 embraced their leadership roles with pride. Early in the year, several were appointed to positions of responsibility, including Head Boy, Head Girl, Deputy Heads, and House Captains. Each class also delivered a class assembly, helping pupils develop confidence and poise in public speaking.

In the first part of the year, pupils focused on preparation for their 11+ examinations, showing dedication and resilience. To support their well-being and spiritual growth, they took part in a calming yoga workshop designed to help them reflect and recharge. They also began attending lessons in the Senior School, gaining early exposure to subjects such as Art, Drama, Music, Science, Languages, ICT, and Latin.



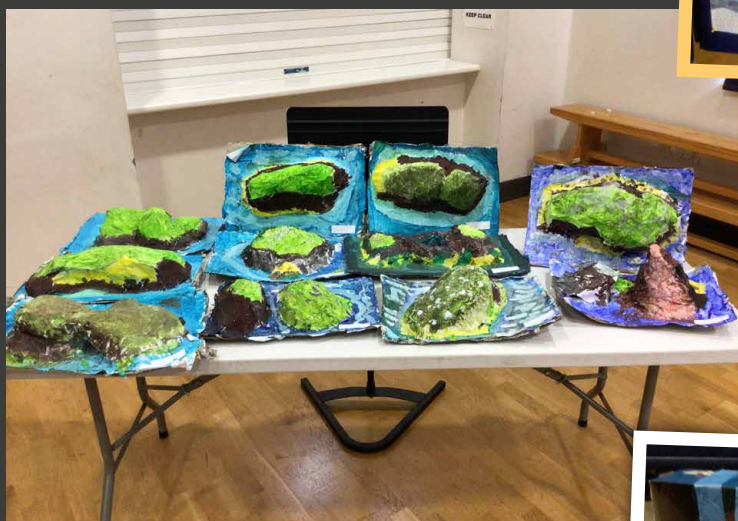
The Leadership Programme continued to inspire, with pupils working towards Gold level by demonstrating initiative, supporting charitable causes, and guiding visitors during Open Morning.

The Summer Term was a celebration of achievement and adventure. Pupils travelled to Condover Hall in Shropshire for their residential trip, set in beautiful surroundings. There,

they built lasting friendships and challenged themselves through activities such as raft-building, high ropes, archery, and team-building games. The year concluded with a lively and entertaining performance of Shakespeare Rocks, where pupils showcased their talents and brought joy to families and friends.

Year 6 pupils leave the Prep School with confidence, gratitude, and excitement for the future. Their final year was filled with learning, laughter, and leadership, thanks to the dedication of their teachers and the strength of their friendships. They now look forward to continuing their journey in the Senior School, ready to embrace new challenges with enthusiasm.





ART & DT

Big changes were seen this year in Preparatory school Art and Design, with the introduction of The Preparatory school's inaugural Art Show and the return of Art Week in its new Biennial slot.

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The Art Show has highlighted the best that the Preparatory school has to offer the world of Art and Design. All children in the preparatory school have had the opportunity to have their best work exhibited and celebrated across the whole school community, and in a few cases, across the wider Local community. The Show was topped off with a collaborative art project created by all visitors.

The 'Art of the week' award continues to encourage more dedicated young artists and designers to push their abilities to the limit, with the aim that they can 'Begin Here and Go Anywhere'.

This year has seen some excellent individual and collaborative art created in each class, with all children taking part and growing their skills and abilities. We have seen creative works themed around the topic work, a wide range of creations such as undersea creatures, metal robots, solar systems, melting clocks, perspective landscapes and much much more.

Take a look at some of the wonderful work created this year.

Mr A Ferrari



MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Nurturing a Love of Languages at Ratcliffe College Prep School

At Ratcliffe College Prep School, we believe that learning languages opens doors not only to communication but also to understanding and appreciating the rich diversity of the world. From the earliest years in our nursery, our pupils are introduced to Latin, French, and Spanish, allowing them to develop their natural linguistic abilities right from day one. Research shows that learning multiple languages enhances cognitive development by engaging both sides of the brain, strengthening memory, problem-solving skills, and overall mental agility.

Our team of language teachers are all bilingual or specialists in teaching these languages, and their passion is evident in every lesson. They tailor their teaching to the individual needs of pupils, recognising that every child has a unique learning style. Through kinesthetic, auditory, and visual methods, lessons are designed to be interactive and fun. Pupils enjoy role play, videos, visual aids, flashcards, puppets, and outdoor games, ensuring that learning is engaging and memorable.

Beyond the classroom, we integrate the study of different cultures into our language curriculum, fostering diversity and inclusivity



in line with our Catholic values. Children gain an understanding of traditions and perspectives from around the world, helping them grow as compassionate and culturally aware individuals.

We also embrace technology to enhance learning, using platforms like LinguaScope to consolidate knowledge in an interactive way that can be accessed at home or at school. This approach ensures that

learning is flexible, exciting, and adaptable to every child's pace.

Ratcliffe College Prep School is unique in combining linguistic education with cultural awareness. Our aim is not only to teach languages but to cultivate a positive outlook on global cultures, encouraging pupils to learn from everyone and every country. By fostering curiosity, confidence, and respect for diversity, we prepare our pupils to thrive in an interconnected world.



MUSIC

It has been an exciting time as Music in the Prep School has continued to flourish from strength to strength.



Our Instrumental Music Schemes are a highlight of the Prep School music department. Year 3 flourished with all children learning to play cello and violin. Year 4 fife scheme has been a resounding success with many children progressing on to the flute. Mrs Cook's talent and passion for brass has enabled Year 5 children to learn either trumpet or trombone in their class music lesson. One class wowed us with their learning in the Year 5 Informal Concert after only a few brass sessions. The grand finale with 60 children playing their brass instruments at the end of year assembly was simply a show stopper.

Ensembles in the Autumn term were busy rehearsing. One of the musical highlights of the Autumn term was Chapel Choir and Newman Orchestra's performances as they performed at the Music Department Christmas Concert in December. They took the stage by storm in a sparkling performance. Our celebration of Carols by Candlelight was truly magical and brought the Chapel alight with fabulous music and traditional carols..

Christmas in the Prep School is certainly a time where music fills the corridors throughout the day. Nursery, Reception and Lower Prep performed magical Nativities.

Informal Concerts for pupils in Years 1-6 enabled parents to reconnect with the musical development of their children.

It is often after these concerts when both parent and child are inspired by a particular performance that a child decides to sign up for individual instrumental lessons. This in turn feeds into ensembles and orchestras.

A number of children took ABRSM music exams and were rewarded with certificates in assembly.

The Spring Term continued to be a musical bouquet with many opportunities to perform. Every year group performed in their own Informal concert which had fantastic parental support, six concerts in total.



As well as this we looked to promote opportunities for children to experience live performances. Children from Years 5 and 6 performed at 'Young Voices' in February 'The largest School choir in the World'. The children prepared songs and performed at the World Resorts Arena, Birmingham along with 5000 Primary School children. The experience was truly electrical and Children, Staff and Parents fed back what an amazing experience it was.

Along with the instrumental performances our Year 4 performed a top class Easter Passion play with soloists, dancing and wonderful singing.



Mrs Cook's determination for co-curricular clubs is thriving and String Stars is now bursting with players from year 3-6. Newman Orchestra has players in all sections as well as fabulous support from senior school students and Mrs Cole's expertise. The guitar club is going from strength to strength and Chapel choir has now over 40 members.



Everyone in Prep School was also very excited about the House Music Competition. Many students performed solos to a fantastically high standard. The school then took their houses for the ever

competitive House Music Song Competition, where songs were learnt and the performances were fantastic.

Mrs Cook's big dreams for our young musicians was certainly in force in June when our musical highlight of the Summer term was taking all children in Years 3, 4 and 5 to the Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham to play alongside other primary schools and the World famous Halle Orchestra. This truly showcased everything that the instrumental schemes Mrs Cook teaches as we created a massed orchestra and even got to watch the Halle Orchestra play a concert. This is a fabulous memory that we will treasure forever.

We were once again stars of the stage as String Stars, Newman Orchestra and Chapel Choir performed at the Music Department Picnic concert. This was a magical performance for the String Stars as being young year 3 children it was a big ask for them to perform at such a prestigious event. A night to remember showcasing our talents and hard work throughout.



Music making has certainly been at the core of the Prep School, thank you to all our young musicians who have made this possible.

Mrs Cook
Head of Prep School Music



SPORT

The sporting year in the Prep School has once again exceeded expectations. At the dawning of each new school year, the sports department prepares itself to do whatever they can to enable the children to realise their sporting dreams.

To make their indelible, immortal mark on the history of Prep School Sport. To be added to the pantheon of Prep School Sporting greats is no easy task, but a task that all our children are ready to attempt, few may achieve it, all of them try and this year many succeeded.

Let us begin where all epic odysseys start, at the beginning. The autumn term sees the boys tackle the rugby season and the girls sweep into the hockey season. All the boys and girls in Y4, 5 and 6 yet again had the opportunity to represent Ratcliffe Prep School on the rugby or hockey pitch, and all did so superbly. To be marked for greatness however, it is how you perform when the cold, wet winter days are heated up by the intensity of competition.

The boys rugby season was ultimately curtailed when for this year at least the heat of competition was frozen out by a freakish cold weather front that covered our rugby pitches in snow on the very day that the boys were due to play in the IAPS Regional Rugby Festival. All that they had worked so hard for was blown away in an unforgiving blizzard, but the snow eventually melted, but the boy's determination was only forged stronger, and they would get their chance to unleash their rugby power at the prestigious Rosslyn Park Sevens Festival at the end of the spring term, where they performed brilliantly.

The girls were not to be outdone in their hockey season, playing an electrifying brand of high tempo hockey that took them to the precipice of qualifying for the IAPS National Hockey Finals. Unfortunately, they missed out on this fleeting opportunity in a penalty shootout, finally finishing third when only the top two teams qualified. This disappointment drove the girls forward with an increased desire to achieve something special and that they did going onto be crowned County Hockey Champions before

reaching the Semi Finals of the England Hockey Midlands Finals narrowly losing again by a solitary goal. Although ultimately not what the girls had hoped for, their courage and determination throughout will stand as an inspiration to those girls that follow.

Also, in the autumn term our cross-country runners excelled on the unforgiving terrain of Mallory Park eventually winning both the boys and girls Cross Country Team Trophy as well as finishing 1st, 2nd, and 4th in the individual boy's competition. A quite phenomenal achievement which demonstrates the strength of running talent within the Prep School.

January saw the Spring term begin with our traditional sporting opener, our annual Cross Country event. Once again, we dominated with team awards and individual victories. This positive start to the spring cross country season would lead to our boys coming third overall in the National Prep Schools Cross Country Championships, another amazing achievement when you consider that all the boys in the team were running against boys a year older than them.

The boys had left the rugby pitch behind and were now focused on emulating or possibly exceeding the girls' achievements on the hockey pitch. Unbelievably and unfortunately the boys would mirror the girls exactly by missing out on a place at the IAPS National Hockey Finals by one place after yet again losing in a penalty shootout. The boys though would also go on to retain the County Hockey Championships for the 4th consecutive year before playing some strong hockey in the Midlands finals before being knocked out at the group stage on goal difference. Although the results may indicate an unsuccessful season, the way the boys conducted themselves throughout was yet again something for the boys that follow to look up to.



SPORT *continued*

The girls were now competing on the netball court and yet again they set themselves the highest standards. Once again, they did not disappoint managing to finish higher than any team ever has in the Regional IAPS Netball Tournament. They did not qualify for Nationals, but they competed as hard as they could which is all that you can ever do.

The spring term also saw our Prep School swim team swim at the IAPS Regional Gala. Yet again our dedication to early morning swim training was rewarded with 4 swimmers qualifying for the national swim Finals at the London Aquatic centre, 3 in individual strokes and for the first time ever we qualified a relay team as well, a truly remarkable achievement. On the big day the boys all swam PBs which is all that you can do, if you swim faster than you ever have before then you can sleep easy.

It almost goes without saying that every child in Y4 – 6 represented the Prep School at hockey and netball during the term and those in Y4 and 5 will be inspired by what their older counterparts have achieved.

Finally, we come to the summer term, but our sporting feats were far from finished. All our boys and girls were ready for the cricket, athletics and tennis season. Again, all the children in Y4 – 6 played Cricket for the Prep School and every single child throughout the Prep School had the opportunity to celebrate their love of sport in our annual Sports Days, which once again brought our school community together in a celebration of athletic achievement.

Our U11 Tennis players had the opportunity to experience tennis at the highest level when they played at the Loughborough University Tennis centre. All the boys and girls played superbly and rose to the intimidating occasion with maturity and confidence.

Our young athletes continued from where they had left off in the cross-country season. We had some fantastic performances at the Cambridge Athletics Championships with wins in the boys and girls 200m, a second place in the boys 800m and a third place in the girls Long Jump amongst other great performances in both track and field finals.

In the Bedford Championships we had even more outstanding performances with one of our Prep School athletes qualifying for the National Prep Schools Athletics Championships in Birmingham where he came second, a phenomenal result as once again he was a year younger than the rest of the competitors in his final. Bedford also saw three other Prep School athletes narrowly miss out on the National finals which again shows the strength in depth that we are producing in the Prep School.

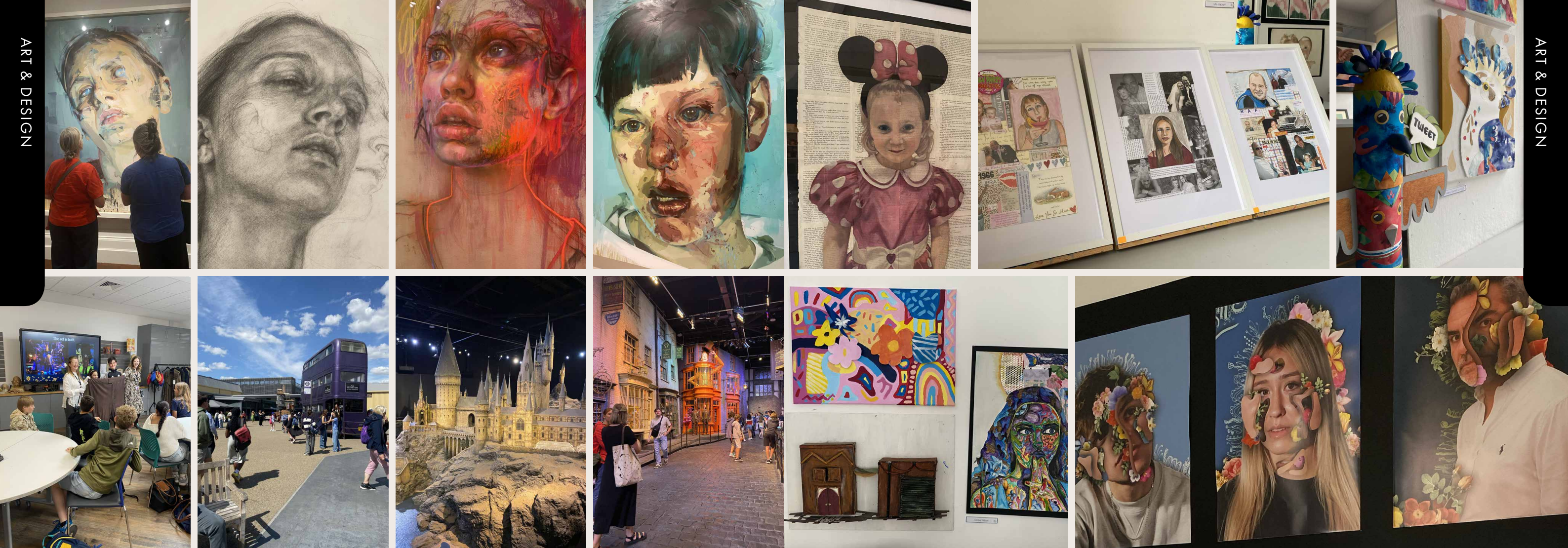
Now we come to the cricket season and it will come as no surprise to realise that once again our U11 boys and girls did not disappoint, achieving even more landmarks in what was the shortest summer term for a long while. Our boys and girls played very well in both their respective IAPS Cricket Festivals demonstrating good technical and tactical of a tricky game to master, but it was their behaviour and etiquette that drew the greatest compliments from neutral observers. Something that can be overlooked but not in the Prep School where how you behave in a sports pitch is as important as how you play. The boys and girls then combined to form a mixed team to compete in the inaugural Prep Schools Mixed Hardball Cricket Competition.

The team blended perfectly and went on to the final where agonisingly they lost by a solitary run. This ended the girls sporting year, not as they would have hoped but overall, on reflection they should be extremely proud of their sporting achievements in 2024/25 as the Prep School Sports Teachers certainly are.

The boys still had one more bite of the cherry of immortality as they had the ESCA Midlands Hardball Cricket Final to play. This match would determine whether they would make the final step and qualify for the National Cricket finals. This time nothing would stand in their way and they duly won and qualified for the ESCA National Hardball Cricket finals. At the finals themselves the boys conducted themselves and played their best cricket representing Ratcliffe College at a National Finals with an exemplary attitude proving that our central ethos of being the best that you can be is more than just words but a mantra that drives all of the Prep School children in every sporting endeavour they undertake.

And so, we come to the close of another sporting year in the Prep School. Legends have been made, the bar has been raised, and the expectation has reached fever pitch. The summer holidays act as the calm but the Prep School Children prefer the storm, roll on September.





ART & DESIGN

Celebrating Creativity in the Ratcliffe Art Department

The Art Department has enjoyed a vibrant and inspiring year, filled with creativity, collaboration, and celebration of our students' talents.

During Activities Week, Year 7 pupils immersed themselves in the magic of film and design with a memorable trip to the Warner Bros Studio Tour. From exploring the sets to discovering the artistry behind costumes and props, pupils gained a fascinating insight into the creative industries that bring stories to life.

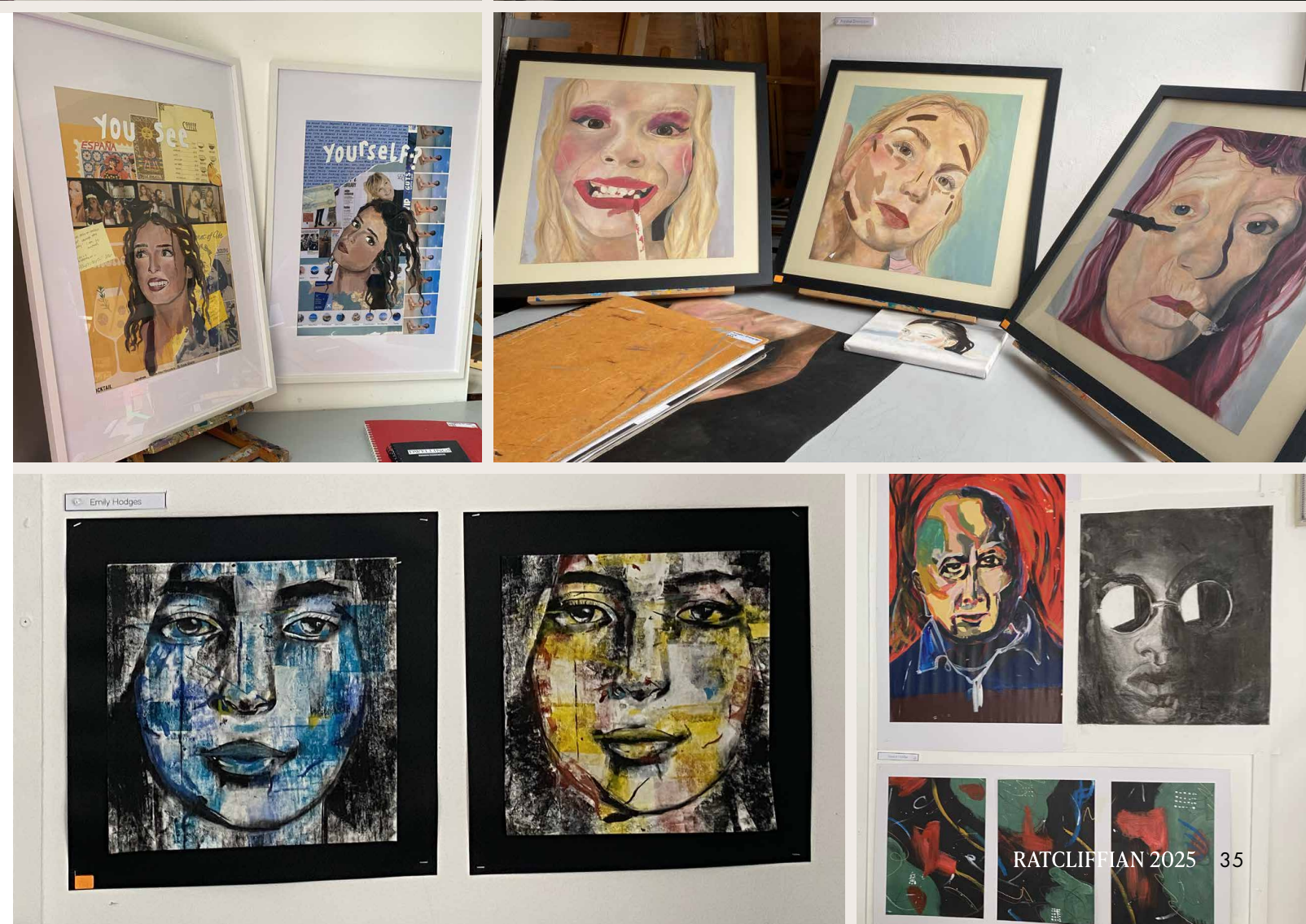
We were also delighted to welcome Nottingham-based illustrator Laurie Hastings into school for a workshop. Her session encouraged pupils to experiment with new techniques and approaches, sparking fresh ideas and reminding them of the joy of creative play.

Meanwhile, our Year 12 students travelled to London to visit leading galleries and exhibitions. Experiencing world-class artwork first-hand offered inspiration and insight as they continue to refine their own practice at A Level.

Back at Ratcliffe, the department hosted a stunning summer exhibition, showcasing the work of our talented GCSE and A Level students. The display captured both the technical skill and imaginative vision of our young artists, and was warmly received by staff, families, and peers alike.

We are also proud to celebrate the success of Arabella Hampson in Year 13, who won the national CISC Christmas Card Competition. Her beautiful design was chosen from entries across the country and is a testament to her talent and dedication.

The Art Department looks forward to another year of creativity, inspiration, and achievement.



BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

Another Year of Exceptional Success

The Economics and Business Department has enjoyed another outstanding year, marked by excellent results and strong student engagement. Both subjects continue to attract large numbers at A level, with a healthy balance of male and female students.

The popularity of these subjects reflect the relevance, challenge, and inspiration that they offer.

Economics remains one of the school's highest-achieving subjects. This year, 67% of students achieved A*-A and 87% A*-B; a remarkable set of results that highlight both the analytical strength of our students and the expertise of our teaching team. With an **ALPS score of 2**, Economics sits within the **top 10% of schools nationally** for added value on this subject. Clear evidence that students consistently exceed expectations.

Business also celebrated excellent results, with 36% of students achieving A*-A and 55% A*-B. An **ALPS score of 3** places the subject in the **top 25% of schools nationally** for value added performance on this subject, reflecting the effectiveness of our curriculum and the commitment and dedication of our staff. Together, these results underline not only academic excellence but also the department's collaborative ethos. The enthusiasm of our students, combined with the support and subject knowledge of our teachers, continues to make Economics and Business two of the school's most successful and forward-looking departments.

CO-CURRICULAR

The **Business and Economics Engagement Club** continues to enrich students' understanding of real-world issues. Through debates and case studies, members explore how theory applies to practice, developing critical thinking, decision-making, and ethical leadership skills. The club ensures students leave Ratcliffe College not only with excellent grades, but also the insight and confidence to thrive in the ever-changing world of business and economics.



ACADEMIC SPORT

The academic year 2024-2025 was another hugely successful one for the Academic PE department, with students thriving across the GCSE, A Level and BTEC pathways.

We are extremely proud of their commitment and determination, which translated into another set of outstanding results in the summer.

Our GCSE cohort continued to excel, with an increase once again in the percentage of students achieving the top grades 7-9, as well as significant improvements in the number of students achieving grades 6-9 and passes overall. Well done to all our GCSE students and thank you to the GCSE teaching team for another excellent year.

At A Level, our students produced the best outcomes we have seen since before Mr Cole joined the school (83% achieving A*/A grades) continuing the upward trend from previous years. Some exceeded expectations, demonstrating not only their ability but also their excellent work ethic. Mr Woodcock also deserves an extra pat on the back for taking on the delivery of Paper 2 this year for Year 13 and did a fantastic job.

BTEC results also continue to improve year on year, with outcomes ranging from top marks D*D* through to MM. This demanding course requires sustained effort and resilience, qualities that were clearly evident among the group. As a result, the majority were able to move on to their first-choice destinations beyond Ratcliffe College. This course is equally demanding on teachers' time and effort so again a big thank you to the BTEC team for the endless hours marking the pages and pages of coursework, it has been worth it.

This year also saw an exciting addition to the team. We welcomed Miss Lewis as Second-in-Department, whose experience with the GCSE curriculum has already strengthened our provision. Next year we welcome Mr Biddle, who will cover Mrs Quigley's maternity leave (congratulations again, Mrs Quigley!).

Looking ahead, we are excited to build on the success of this year, continuing to support and inspire the next generation of Academic PE students.

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

This year has been a creative and productive one in the Design and Technology Department, with students across all year groups developing practical skills, problem-solving abilities, and confidence in design thinking through a range of exciting projects, some of which are detailed below.

Year 7

Our Year 7 students began their DT journey by designing and manufacturing their own Birdfeeders and sweet dispensers. These projects introduced them to basic workshop tools and materials such as pine and acrylic. Students learned about accurate measuring and marking out, and the importance of planning and evaluating their work. The end results were both fun and functional!

Year 9

Year 9 GCSE students focused on form and function through the design of laminated wooden lamps. This project challenged them to work with curved wood using lamination techniques, while safely incorporating electrical components. It was a great opportunity for them to combine creativity with technical skills.

Year 11

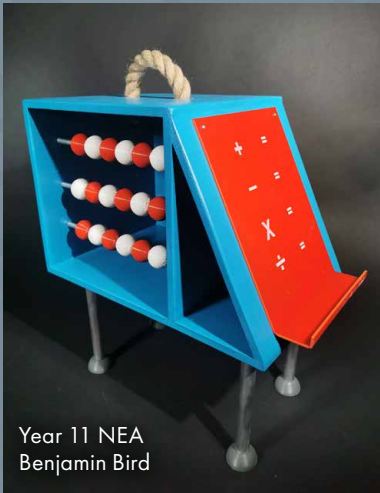
Our Year 11 GCSE students had a busy and inspiring year, working through the design process to develop creative solutions to a range of real-world design briefs. They explored ideas and produced high-quality prototypes in response to a range of themes. Prototypes included seating, educational play products and sporting achievement displays.

Across all year groups, students have shown fantastic enthusiasm, resilience, and creativity. We are proud of the skills that they have developed and look forward to seeing their continued progress next year!

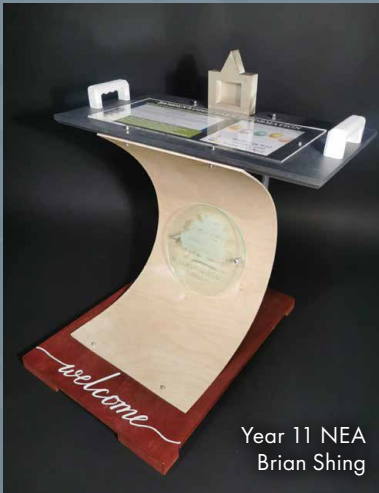
Year 9
Laminated
Lamps >



Year 11 NEA
Alex Garbutt



Year 11 NEA
Benjamin Bird



Year 11 NEA
Brian Shing



Year 11 NEA
Mayan Patel



Year 11 NEA
Robyn Parker Toon



Year 11 NEA
Reuben Slade



Year 13 NEA
Henry Westley



Year 13 NEA Shane Mawby



Year 13 NEA Kyan Gohill

DRAMA

DREAMWORKS Shrek The Musical



In the week before February half term, Ratcliffe Performing Arts departments were delighted to present their first licensed school musical, 'Shrek'.

We prepared in earnest for this exciting endeavour from the very start of the academic year. Auditions were held at the start of September and then rehearsals began on a weekly basis. After months of hard work, the stage was set, and it was time to perform!

Ben Cameron-Smith truly encapsulated the role of Shrek in every way – he had the look, the style and even the accent! A true professional, Ben carried the show and was the perfect leading man. His 'noble steed' Donkey, played by Eddie Karanja, again embodied the role brilliantly with wonderful comic timing, and our Fiona, Freya Mackay, wowed the audience with her wonderful voice and characterisation. She was perfectly complimented by her younger counterparts, Grace-Ava Smith and Seraphina Konstandi – their beautiful ballad 'I Know It's Today', describing the day when the Princess would finally be rescued by their Prince Charming, was a highlight of the show.

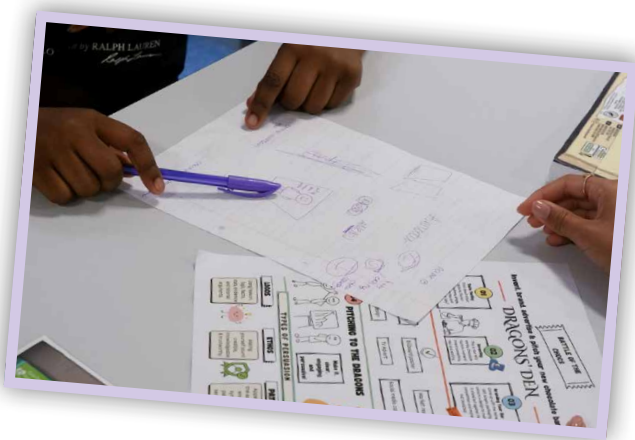
The costumes for the production were outstanding, but it is probably fair to say Joe Rapsey won the battle for best item in his role as Lord Farquaad, whose menacing portrayal of the arrogant, cowardly ruler had the audience in fits of laughter. Holly Ridley's Dragon was close however, with the large tail and headdress contributing greatly to her dominant performance.

Various larger ensemble roles were fulfilled excellently by our extended cast – Grace Martin was an outstanding Pinocchio and Phoenix Castledine was a powerful Captain of the Guards. Also worthy of a mention are Amelie Westley as the Gingerbread Man, Penny Hathaway as the Wicked Witch, Siena Lanza as the Pied Piper and Ame lie Wilson-Knight as Peter Pan. However, in truth, the outstanding success of the production was down to the strong ensemble work of the whole cast, who all worked together brilliantly to bring the magic of Shrek to the stage and captivate two packed audiences.

A huge thanks also go to the dedicated staff who worked so hard to put the show together and make this dream a reality – Producer and Musical Director Mr Harris, Director Mrs Munton, Choreographer Mrs Craven, Assistant Director Ms Woodey, Assistant Choreographer Mrs Harris, Stage Manager Miss Murray, Deputy Stage Manager Mr Finn, Technical Manager Mr Allin and Wardrobe Supervisor Mrs Viccars. Thanks also to Dave Ricks from Light Up Creative for his superb technical support and Bath Theatrical Costume Hire for making our cast look truly spectacular.

This all goes to show that when many brilliant heads come together, something magical results! It is so greatly heartening to see how passionate our young people are about musical theatre, something that brings such joy to so many and something we were so privileged to be able to do. Here's to a big, bright, beautiful future of Performing Arts at Ratcliffe.

ENGLISH & LIBRARY



As a department we love to encourage our students' creativity both in and outside of the classroom. This year we celebrated National Poetry Day and as well as running a poetry writing competition for all year groups, we hosted a poetry recital in the Emery Library in which students and staff came to share their creations.

This year's theme was 'Time' students interpreted this in wonderfully innovative ways, from reminiscing about a loved one to describing what the future holds on earth. It was terribly difficult to choose winners, however: Aishah Egbewo and Marcin Ostrzewski-Dausse from Year 7; Devashree Raniga, Tilly Hathaway, Grace Martin from Year 8 and Jonelle Famutimi from Year 12 were awarded the winners' certificates and trophies.

The Emery Library has continued to be a vibrant hub of activity this academic year with students across the school diving into a diverse collection of reads and imaginative book-focused activities. World Book Day brought a buzz of excitement with our "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" challenge and a fun bookshelf guessing game where students matched teachers to their favourite reads. KS3 library lessons have sparked both curiosity and creativity – from thoughtful book reviews to designing book-themed board games. During break times, the library has remained a lively and welcoming space, with students enjoying a growing selection of board games and getting creative with LEGO builds. With the Emery Library's ePlatform available anytime, students can continue discovering stories wherever they are.

Book Clubs have continued to thrive and students have especially enjoyed being able to put forward their own book choices for us to read. For our Key Stage 3 book club, 'The Light in Everything' by Katya Balen was a book the students really engaged with; inspired by the characters, we all had a go at making paper cranes, and a special thank you goes to Sanvi Nair who created bookmarks for everyone and Issac Madden Smith who created an art piece.

Our Key Stage 4 Book Club concluded with the Carnegie Award Shadowing scheme, where students got to read and discuss a range of fiction books. The dedicated group of Year 9 students had the privilege of meeting with 3 of the competition judges and shared their views and predictions of who would be the winning book. After a nail-biting wait, the judges' winner was 'Glasgow Boys' by Margaret McDonald which was our winner too!

Year 12 students and staff members met fortnightly to discuss a wide range of novels. These included 'The Colour Purple', 'The Underground Railroad', 'A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian', 'The One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margo', and 'The Wasp Factory'. The book club remains vital in encouraging our Sixth Formers to read and allows Year 12 students to explore texts ready for coursework choices.

Sixth Form students also visited The National Theatre, where they watched a superb production of 'The Importance of Being Earnest', starring Ncuti Gatwa. It was a real pleasure to see how much they enjoyed the performance and how much they gained through watching this live performance.

As well as nurturing students' love of reading, we also provide students with opportunities to express their views. Year 8s entered the National Literacy Trust's 'Wicked Writers' competition in which they had to write a letter about a change they wished to see in their local area. From funding for young people's mental health and more social spaces for teenagers, the entries were sophisticated and written with passion and conviction.

Throughout the year our Public Speaking Club met every week and students enjoyed having lively discussions about issues such as equality, the impact of social media and AI. With such a competitive streak, they are looking forward to entering competitions next year.

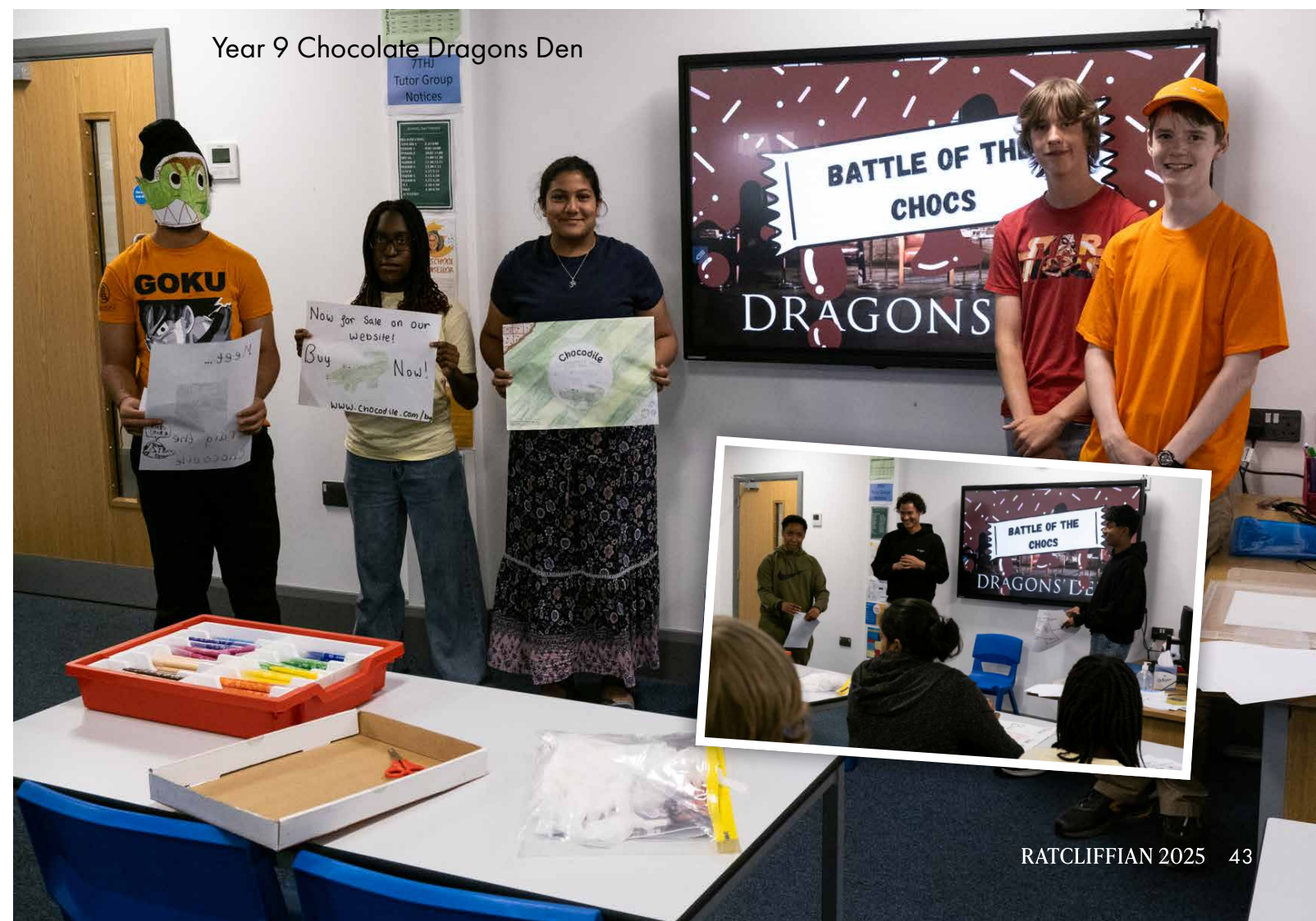
Script Writing Club saw students developing concepts for their own play. We looked at how to write in script form and how to turn creative writing into a script. Completed scenes showcased the students' own personal interests and gave an insight into how the students see the world they are in.

In Activities Week, the English classrooms were transformed into the Dragons' Den, and students had to design and promote their own chocolate bars. Of course, it was only right that research was needed before any creating could begin, so a selection of delectable chocolates treats were sampled by students. This was then followed by groups working together to come up with a marketing campaign and presentation to the 'Dragons'!

Mrs E Edwards
Head of English



National Poetry Day



Year 9 Chocolate Dragons Den



ENGLISH

AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

A Year of Growth and Achievement in EAL

This year has been an exciting and rewarding one in the EAL department, marked by new beginnings, hard work, and impressive successes. We were delighted to welcome a new teacher, Mr. Tom Nixon, whose energy and expertise have been a fantastic addition to the team. His support has helped strengthen the learning environment and provided students with even more opportunities to thrive. We also welcomed students from a variety of backgrounds. They all settled in quickly and soon adapted to their new environment.

Our students have achieved outstanding results in international examinations, with successes across the IELTS and the Cambridge English exams, ranging from A2 through to C2. These achievements reflect not only their determination but also the hours of dedication put in by both students and staff.

Beyond English, many of our learners have also made significant strides in their own languages. Year 10 students completed GCSEs in their home languages, while Year 12 students successfully completed A levels in theirs. These accomplishments highlight the value of multilingualism in our community and the pride our students take in maintaining their cultural and linguistic identities alongside their English studies.

The year concluded with a particularly meaningful project: a research investigation into climate change. Students explored the global impact of the crisis, examined how governments are responding, and considered the practical steps individuals can take to make a difference. They showcased their findings through an engaging and creative medium - a podcast - where they recorded group discussions to share their insights and solutions.

We have seen a year of real progress, achievement, and collaboration in the EAL department. With strong results, creative projects, and the continued growth of our teaching team, we look forward to building on this success in the year ahead.

We bid a fond farewell to all our student leavers, the majority of which are Year 13 students, and we wish them well in their future endeavours, be that studying at other schools, university, or entering the world of work. We look forward to hearing about the next phases in their lives, while congratulating them on all they have achieved in their time at Ratcliffe.



FOOD SCIENCE & NUTRITION

Our Food Science students continue to thrive, and it was great to see one of our Year 13 students go on to study Nutrition at Plymouth University.

We always enjoy welcoming our new Year 7 to Food Science as they start their journey through food safety, healthy eating, nutrition, and learning vital practical skills that we hope will remain with them. As always it is a pleasure to hear the excitement building in the corridor as the students peer through the door and quiz each other 'Is it a practical, experimental work or a theory lesson?'

We continue to be amazed by the skill level of all of our KS4 students and sixth formers and the many students that enter our competitions throughout the year. Many of the products that they make are impressive and achieving professional standard.

We always enjoy the Christmas Food Competition, and this year we again had many entries. The high level of skill, the time, thought and effort that the entries showed were fabulous as always and made it hard to choose our winners. The task this year was to make a festive bake inspired by the Nativity. Well done to our winners; Tulip Masson, Fraser Winfield, Zach Hilton, Elizabeth Litchfield and Teresa Chmurovicova.



At the end of the Spring Term, we saw the return of Ratcliffe's Bake Off Competition. This year's challenge was to make a Victoria Sandwich Cake in 75 minutes. All students were given a recipe card, method and ingredients and shown a model Victoria Sandwich Cake. On the evening Tulip Masson was the winner. Well done, Tulip.

Annually our Year 10 students completed their mock GCSE practical exam in June, their resulting products were very professional and tasted great, we do have some very talented budding chefs! The students had three hours to complete two products with accompaniments. Some of the skills seen were; deboning fish, jointing chicken, sushi making, producing lemon meringue pies and profiteroles.

Karen Burton

GEOGRAPHY

It has been another busy, productive and successful year for the Geography Department.

The 2024-25 academic year started very positively following excellent public examination results for our GCSE and A Level students, acting as inspiration for our Year 11 and 13 cohorts as they worked towards their own examinations. This is an opportunity to pay tribute and thank our Year 11 and 13 students this year - both cohorts were an absolute delight to teach and to see around the department, demonstrating a passion for this subject and a curiosity to explore geographical issues beyond the curriculum.

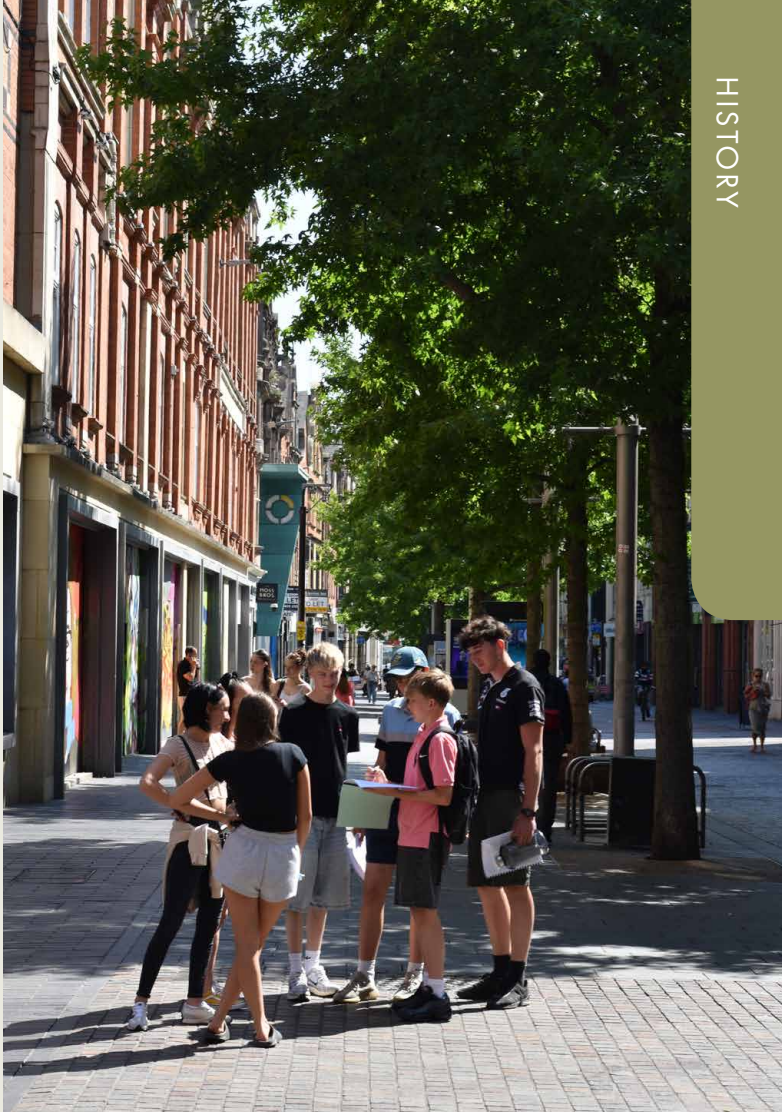
Our Year 13 students took part in our North Wales residential, investigating glacial landforms and the journey of ice through the landscape, along with urban studies in Birmingham. A small cohort of four Year 12 students demonstrated a similar enthusiasm for the subject and participated in field days in Leicester and in the Peak District. Year 10 students engaged with field days in Leicester and

Nottingham, developing their investigative techniques and collecting the data they need for their GCSE examinations. We also had successful field days in Skegness with a large Year 9 cohort.

Our younger geographers in Years 7-8 have demonstrated enthusiasm and interest, always inquisitive and willing to ask questions. Healthy numbers in Year 8 again opted to continue their study of the subject to GCSE level.

Mrs Battrum departed on maternity leave at the start of the spring term, with congratulations to her and her husband on the subsequent arrival of Henry. I would like to thank Miss Selby, who acted as maternity cover for the remainder of the academic year, in particular for her valued guidance of the students, especially those in the examination years.

Mr Lambert, Head of Geography





HISTORY

2024-2025 was an exceptionally busy and successful time for the History Department.

This summer saw the second best A Level results from the last ten years, with 75% of students achieving an A grade. The GCSE results were even more impressive, with the Department being well within the top one percent of schools nationally for value added. This was a testament to the commitment and dedication of our wonderful historians and the incredible support provided every week by Mr Snowden and Mr Newman.

Away from the classroom, Mr Newman organised a tremendously successful trip to the Battlefields of France and Belgium. The students had a thoughtful and moving time on this academic trip, showing particular interest in their visit to the battlefield of Waterloo and the museum in the Cloth Hall at Ypres. A poignant moment was being able to pay our respects at the resting place of three Old Ratcliffians in the Gordon Dump Cemetery.

There were again some wonderful entries in this year's decorate an egg as a historical or political competition. This year's winning entry was Cleopatra. Well done to Luca Stephenson and Aliya Silwamba for their fantastic work.



Battlefields Trip



Battlefields Trip



Battlefields Trip



Battlefield of Waterloo



Battlefield of Waterloo



Gordon Dump Cemetery



Cleopatra



Luca and Aliya



Battlefields Trip

ICT AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

OPENING

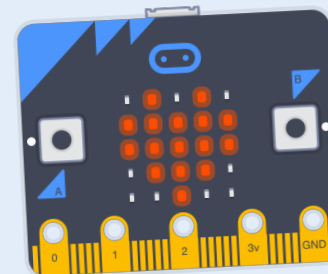
This has been another year defined by innovation and discovery in our computing classrooms. We are not just keeping pace with the rapid advancement of technology; we provide our students with the tools to lead the way. We want them to feel confident and empowered as they use this technology, at the same time we also want to ignite their curiosity. Whether a student is drawn to the logic of programming or the artistic expression of digital design, we encourage them to explore, create, and find their own unique path. The world of technology is vast, and fast-changing, and there is always something new to inspire them.

YEAR 7

Our Year 7 students are stepping into the future by exploring the newest forms of technology, including the innovative uses of Artificial Intelligence (AI). They are mastering essential digital literacy with Microsoft products and letting their imaginations soar with a project to design and build their own websites, manipulating images to create something truly unique.

YEAR 8

For Year 8, the focus is on building the mindset of a problem-solver. Using modern software such as Construct 3, they are designing their own games, an experience that teaches them vital skills in teamwork and logical thinking. This is a hands-on way for them to discover what it is like to be a Computer Scientist and to see the impact of their logical and creative choices. This also includes



covering vital information based around networks and Cybersecurity so that they may stay safe online and have an appreciation of what the internet is and how it works. They also have the opportunity to practice their first steps in Python programming, where they will experience the use of Microbits to make small programs.

YEAR 9

Our Year 9 students are working diligently on their Digital Literacy examination, the International Certification of Digital Literacy (ICDL). It is rewarding to see that the majority of our students have successfully completed this full award and Certification.

The ICDL Level 2 course helps students to use popular software with confidence, no matter which subjects they have chosen to study. The course is covered in a compulsory lesson for all Year 9 students.



GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE AND A-LEVEL

We are committed to helping students unlock their potential through GCSE and A-Level Computer Science. In a world driven by technology, we teach them the essential skills of algorithmic thinking and programming, while also mastering the use of software for remote collaboration. We show our students what it is truly like to think and innovate as a Computer Scientist, helping to spark their passion and guide them toward a future filled with exciting opportunities. Our continued support is designed to help them take on this challenge and to show their creative capabilities; coding is deeply creative work!

BEBRAS CHALLENGE

The UK BEBRAS Challenge is an online competition that introduces students to computational thinking. This year, our students will take part in this exciting event, which takes place annually around November and involves over 3 million students globally. The challenge consists of a 45-minute session where students will tackle a series of interactive tasks designed to encourage logical thinking and problem-solving skills. The difficulty of the tasks is set to match different age groups, so everyone gets a fair chance to participate. The competition promotes computational thinking and shows that these skills are not just for those interested in programming but they are also useful for everyday problem solving.



MICHAEL JONES

Mike has been a valued member of the Ratcliffe community for many years. As Head of ICT and Computer Science, he has played a key role in developing students' digital skills, while also teaching subjects such as Maths and Media Studies.

Beyond the classroom, his dedication has always been clear. From being House Guardian for Arundell and a Head of Year to his memorable performance as Snape in House Drama, he fully immersed himself in school life.

I am personally very thankful for his mentorship during my ECT years. We wish him all the best as I step into the role of Head of ICT and Computer Science.

Miss Demi Graham
Head of ICT and Computer Science

LATIN

Congratulations to Ethan Carroll who achieved a superb 8 grade in his Latin GCSE, and we wish him well for his studies in the Sixth Form.

This year, Years 6, 7 and 8 have all enjoyed balancing their study of the Latin language with learning about varied elements of Roman life and culture and aspects of Greek Mythology. We hope that this will inspire many students to choose Latin for GCSE, and we look forward to extending our provision to Year 5 this year.

In April 2026, twenty-nine students and four members of staff will be travelling to Italy and visiting some of the most significant classical sites in both Rome and the Bay of Naples. We are very much looking forward to this trip and giving Ratcliffe students this exciting opportunity.



MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2025

Fourteen students from Years 10-12 representing the delegations of Norway, Somalia and Thailand travelled to Bath for the 34th annual Bath International Schools Model United Nations (BISMUN) at Kingswood School.

Delegates sat on Human Rights, Historical, Political, Environment, Science & Technology and Security Council Committees. They debated a wide variety of issues including biodiversity, the Rwandan Genocide, the rights of women, conflict between Israel and Palestine, preparing for pandemics and the war in Ukraine. The students threw themselves into debates with enthusiasm. A number of resolutions were presented and three passed alongside amendments to the Somali delegation during the final General Assembly.

Special mention goes to the following students:

Commended Delegates were Charlie Waldeck (Norway, Science & Tech), Bella Simpson (Somalia, Environment) and Amelie Westley (Thailand, Environment). Ben Woodley was a Highly Commended Delegate (Norway, Historical), and Best Junior Delegate on the Security Council was Joe Ibbotson (Somalia).

Congratulations to all the students for their enthusiasm and for representing the College so positively and eloquently!

Mr Cantrill, Miss Corbinzolu and Mr Lambert

MATHEMATICS

Year 8 students made the most of the warm weather this Summer while applying their Mathematics skills from lessons to real-life situations. Using clinometers and trigonometric equations, they were calculating the height of tall buildings and trees.

As always, the Mathematics Department has remained a source of inspiration, providing opportunities for students of all ages and abilities to appreciate Mathematics in its own right. It also helps them to become more skilled, enhancing their performance in other subjects while ensuring thorough preparation for Public Examinations.



THE MATHEMATICS CHALLENGE

Another year of outstanding success in the UKMT Maths Challenge across all year groups, with many students earning Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards. Some students went even further, qualifying for, and excelling in, the subsequent Kangaroo rounds.



KANGAROO ROUNDS

Ratcliffe had two qualifiers who took part in the UKMT Pink Kangaroo round, placing them among the top 6% nationally in the Intermediate competition for their age group.

Having already achieved the prestigious Gold Award, they demonstrated exceptional problem-solving skills, ranking amongst the very best in the UK.

In the Pink Kangaroo round, TJ Dunstan (Year 11) achieved a superb Silver Award with an impressive score of 80 points which was a truly great achievement. Yichao Wu (Year 11) went even further, achieving a Gold Award with an outstanding 90 points and the Best in Year Certificate. This exceptional score is one of the highest we have ever seen, placing Yichao comfortably within the top 0.6% nationally.

After achieving Gold Awards and Best in Year certificates, both Ethan Zhang (Year 13) and Kylo Weng (Year 12) qualified for the Senior Kangaroo papers, placing them among the top 11% nationally in the first competition. The Kangaroo papers are one hour challenges, and to achieve a Merit, candidates needed to rank within the top 25% of entrants, which required scoring more than 50 points. Ethan Zhang excelled with an outstanding 75 points. This performance put him comfortably within the top 1% of students nationwide.



CECM

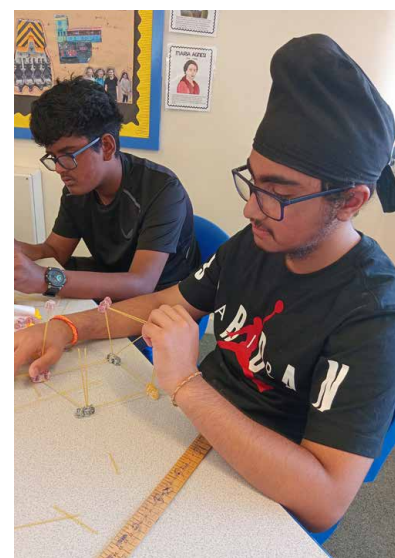
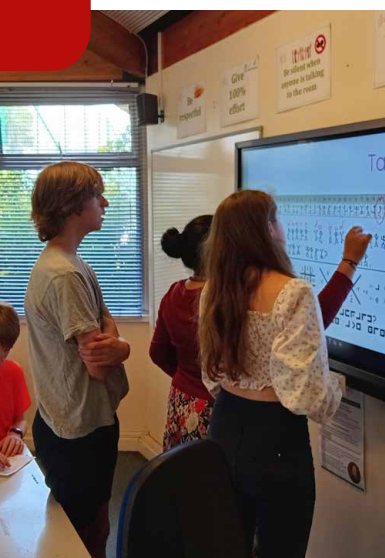
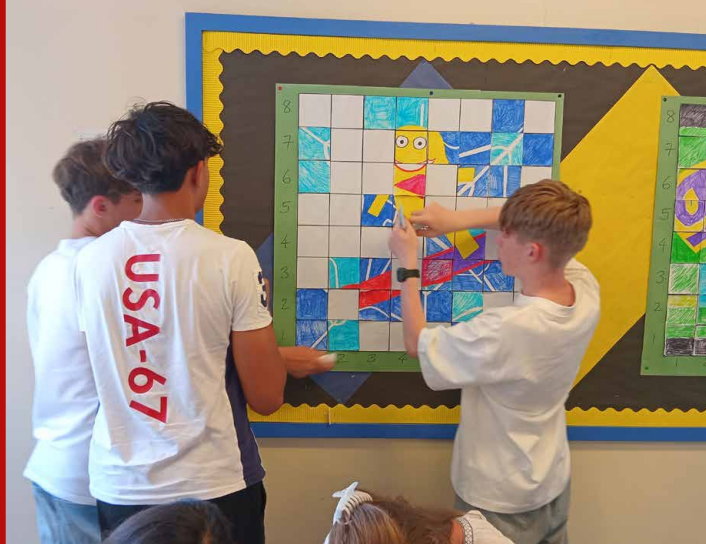
The Centre for Education in Mathematics and Computing (CEMC) is the largest outreach organisation of its kind in Canada, aiming to increase interest, enjoyment, confidence, and ability in Mathematics and Computer Science among learners and educators both in Canada and internationally. This year, for the first time, our Year 12 Further Maths students took part in the CECM's Euclid Contest as a team, competing against 1760 other schools from around the world.

The contest presents a unique challenge to senior-level secondary school students, using innovative problems that draw upon their accumulated mathematical knowledge while fostering creativity and effective communication. With a mix of short-answer and full-solution questions, including some of the most complex and demanding problems across all CECM contests, the Euclid contest is designed to build perseverance in mathematical problem solving.

Our team consisted of Shivam Javahar, Edwardz Li, Megha Thakrar, Beverley Wang, and Kylo Weng. All students performed exceptionally well, placing them 165th out of 1,760 schools competing worldwide, which was a top 10% finish as a team. Individually, Kylo Weng, Edwardz Li, and Beverley Wang all achieved Distinctions, placing them within the top 25% of all contestants.

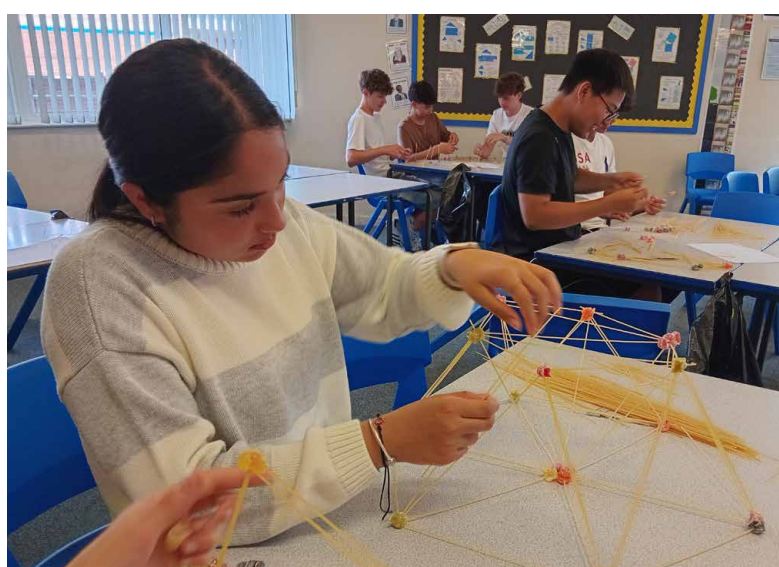
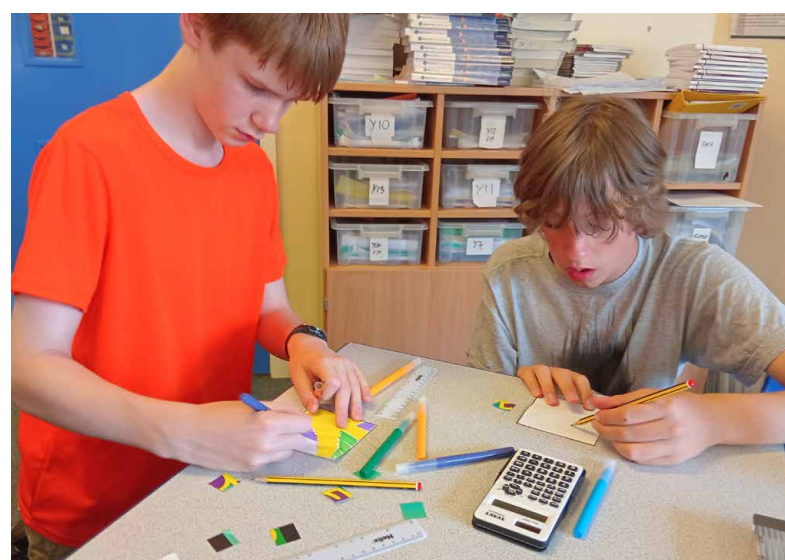
Very special mentions go to Beverley Wang, who achieved an incredible score of 88%. This outstanding result earned her a place on the Student Honour Roll at the University of Waterloo, Canada, with both her name and Ratcliffe College's published on the list. She ranked an impressive 251st out of 27,092 students worldwide and was awarded a special medal in recognition.





ACTIVITIES WEEK 2025

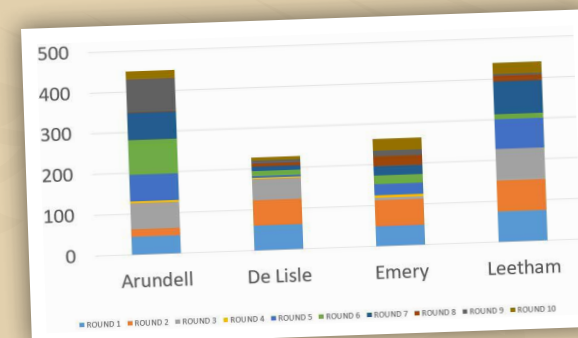
Year 9 and 10 students took part in a series of challenging and enriching Mathematics activities, tackling tasks in Enlargement, Code Breaking, and Engineering. These sessions not only developed advanced problem-solving, logical reasoning, and real-world application skills but also provided an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all involved.



HOUSE MATHS

Many thanks to everyone who took part in House Maths this year, which saw 2501 entries throughout the year. Congratulations to Arundell for maintaining their comeback and taking 1st place over Leetham by just 12 points. A superb effort. Thanks also to Ethan Zhang (Y13) for his hard work and help with designing questions throughout the year.

• 1st Arundell • 2nd Leetham • 3rd Emery • 4th De Lisle



Well done also to the following two students who won individual prizes for their overall performance throughout the year. A great performance by both with nine out of ten questions being answered correctly.

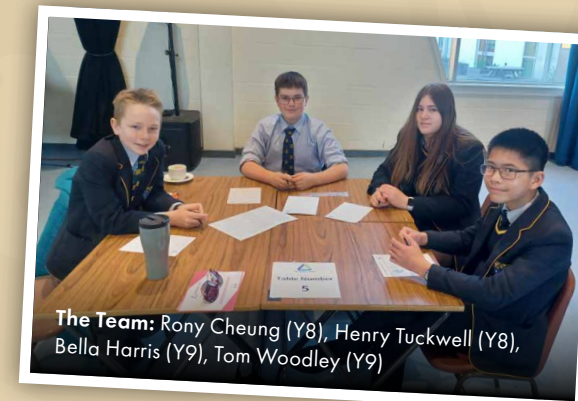
- 1st (tied), 9 Points – Kyson Chan, Y12, Emery
- 1st (tied), 9 Points – Megha Thakrar, Y12, Emery

We look forward to our Year 13 Maths Ambassador, taking the lead this year in running the competition and designing the questions.

JUNIOR TEAM CHALLENGE

After weeks of enthusiastic lunchtime team trials, four students from Years 8 and 9 were selected to represent Ratcliffe in the regional Team Maths Challenge at Leicester Grammar School on 18th March.

They prepared thoroughly and worked brilliantly together on the day, finishing 11th overall in what was a very tough competition. The team performed particularly well in Rounds 1 and 2 (the Group and Cross Number rounds), scoring almost full marks. It was a fun, enriching, and memorable experience for all involved.



CONSISTENTLY OUTSTANDING AT A-LEVEL

As always, the dedication and expertise of the Mathematics Department staff have enabled students to achieve outstanding results, with Value Added scores consistently ranking the department among the very best in the UK.

This tradition of excellence has inspired and equipped the majority of our Year 13 students at Ratcliffe to pursue Mathematics or related degrees, many of them at top-ranking universities.

Abiodun Ayobomi - Imperial College London, Chemical Engineering

Alam Nafeesa - University of Southampton, Mechanical Engineering with Foundation Year

Arthur NJ - University of Birmingham, Chemical Engineering with Industrial Study

Bird Harry - University of Bath, Economics

Carpenter Charles - University of Birmingham, Economics

Chukwueke Didi - University of Birmingham, Computer Engineering

Clark Harry - University of Sheffield, General Engineering

Clark Oliver - Loughborough University, Automotive Engineering (with placement year)

Garttan Agastya - University of York, Chemistry

Gohill Kyan - Lancaster University, Finance (Industry)

Hollington Tobias - Newcastle University, Mechanical Engineering

Lake Millie - University of Warwick, Management

Li Daniel - University of Nottingham, Product Design and Manufacture

Onasanya Seyi - University of Birmingham, Chemical Engineering with Industrial Study

Walker Kate - Durham University, Natural Sciences

Westley Henry - University of Exeter, Civil Engineering with Year in Industry

Zhang Ethan - Imperial College London, Mathematics

We wish them and all Ratcliffe College leavers the best of luck for their future.

Dr S Jones



MEDIA STUDIES

Ratcliffe's Media Department has had an outstanding year. Exam results put the department in the leading 1% nationally. We saw some exemplary coursework from both GCSE and A Level students across the music video and magazine briefs.

From the music videos produced, special plaudits go to Thea Appleyard, Fran Best, Mia Hackett and Annabel Emmerson for their music videos, all of which can be viewed by scanning the QR codes. GCSE Media students also produced stunning, creative and technically accomplished music magazines for their final coursework.

Media co-curricular provision goes from strength to strength. *Ratcliffe Round Up* is a bi-weekly, student-led podcast, available on YouTube. Episodes this year have included *Beat the Teacher*, *Meet the Head Boy & Girl*, and a *CCF Special*. You can watch all our fantastic episodes on the *Ratcliffe Rambles* YouTube channel.

Beyond the classroom, the department has also fostered a close relationship with DMU Media & Film, participated in the Into Film Festival screenings, and contributed to Activities Week in July, where students produced a short film in just one hour (scan the QR Code above).

House Mastermind was a roaring success, with a very high standard of knowledge displayed on diverse topics such as *Finding Nemo*, *The Smiths*, and *The Hunger Games* films. 2025 also saw the return of the VMAs – a celebration of Media students' work held in the Theatre in June.

Mr. Lissaman

MFL

2024/25 - A Year to Remember... 2025/26 - Ready for More!

The Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) department has had another incredible year filled with activities that have enriched students' experiences both inside and outside the classroom. From exciting trips to cultural workshops, 2024/2025 has been a year to remember!

One of the highlights was the Year 9 MFL linguistics trip to Barcelona, led by Mr Masterton, Mr Chorley, Mrs Fleckney, and Miss Bolívar Medina. Twenty-three enthusiastic students took part in this unforgettable experience, where they impressed both school staff and local hosts with their excellent behaviour and active involvement. During the trip, students had the chance to practise their language skills firsthand by cooking traditional paella and chocolate. They also explored the stunning works of the famous architect Gaudí, including a visit to the iconic Sagrada Familia – a perfect tie-in with our school's Catholic ethos. Students also visited the aquarium and took in the sights of famous Barcelona landmarks such as Port Vell and Poble Espanyol, making the trip both educational and fun.

Back at school, Key Stage 3 students enjoyed the much-loved French annual theatre production, expertly organised by Mrs Reddin. This tradition is always a highlight of the year and is incredibly popular among students. Additionally, the department continued fostering international connections through letter exchanges with partner schools in Germany and other French-speaking countries, encouraging students to practise their language skills and learn about different cultures.

Looking ahead, the department is thrilled to offer another exciting trip in December to Cologne, led by Mrs Parris. Students will visit one of Europe's most spectacular Christmas markets – an experience sure to create lasting memories!

In September 2025, we proudly continued the national tradition of celebrating the European Day of Languages – but at Ratcliffe College, we took it a step further! We didn't just celebrate European languages; we embraced all languages and cultures from around the world. Our vibrant "Celebration of the Word" on the 26th of September was a joyful and unifying event. Students and staff who speak other languages shared prayers in a wonderful variety of tongues, including Dutch, Spanish, French, Catalan, Hindi, Gujarati, Ukrainian, Portuguese, Italian, and German. We even sang a beautiful song with Latin lyrics! It was a truly heartwarming moment of global unity, cultural pride, and festive celebration.

Cultural activities this year also included a lively salsa workshop, where students learned about Latin music and danced their hearts out. Our Language Assistants, native speakers who work with students regularly, have continued to provide invaluable cultural insights and authentic language practice.

2024/2025 has truly been a year of success for the MFL department. Our GCSE students have performed above the national average, reflecting the hard work and dedication of both staff and pupils. We can't wait to see what this academic year holds – more success, more fun, and more opportunities to explore the fascinating world of languages!



MUSIC



AUTUMN TERM

We began the academic year with the truly wonderful announcement that Ratcliffe College was to become an 'All-Steinway School', enabling the Department to continue to thrive for years to come with simply the finest instruments in the world. We are truly thrilled at this development and the recognition of the importance of Music at Ratcliffe, which cements our provision as some of the very best around. At the beginning of July, myself, Mr Finn, Mrs Markham and four lucky Music scholars had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit the Steinway factory out in Hamburg, Germany, where we enjoyed a fascinating tour and actually had the chance to choose our new instruments. I continue to be so exceptionally grateful to the Governing Body for their invaluable support in making our dream a reality.

On Wednesday 18th September, we were overjoyed to take delivery of our fourteen brand new Steinway pianos. The atmosphere across the College as the two delivery lorries arrived was electric, and it was certainly difficult to contain the excitement as our new assets were unloaded one-by-one into the Chapel and meticulously assembled by the team of experts. Following some careful arrangement, we just about managed to squeeze all fourteen into the middle.

The highlight of the day was a magical and poignant fourteen-piano lunchtime recital, a true once-in-a-lifetime experience for the participants and the appreciative audience. To have so many fine instruments in one place playing together was a sound I will never forget. Whilst we are now established as becoming an All-Steinway School, this is truly only the beginning of something extremely exciting and I cannot wait to see what the future holds.

The final highlight of the first half term was the Year 7 Informal Concert. In what was their first public performance in the Senior School, and for some of them their first ever public performance at Ratcliffe, the students absolutely thrived on the stage and many of them benefitted from playing our brand new Steinway Concert Grand – not many Year 7 students can say that! It was a lovely evening and a real pleasure to meet so many of our new parents.

The Scholars' Concert on Thursday 14th November was a great triumph, showcasing the plethora of abilities our wonderful Scholars have at their disposition. It was wonderful to hear the diverse musical interests across the age range demonstrated in the variety of repertoire chosen – in fact, the only constant was the outstanding talent on display from start to finish. Our Scholars really are the nucleus of everything that happens in the department, and are fundamental to the special environment we have, so I continue to extend my heartfelt thanks to them for everything they do.

On Friday 22nd November, we were honoured to travel down to Steinway Hall in London and experience a major benefit of our new partnership, receiving masterclasses from the internationally renowned concert pianist Andrew Zolinsky and giving an evening recital to benefactors and cherished friends of the College.



I was delighted that seven of our finest pianists were able to join Mr Finn and I for this remarkable occasion, and I would like to give special recognition to them for their outstanding ambassadorial work – Teresa Chmurovicova, Niky Pattni, Violet Rudkin, Edward Black, Ethan Zhang, Joseph Ibbotson and Fimidara Adenle. Each of these students had worked extremely hard to perfect their piece, and responded excellently to Mr Zolinsky's feedback to ensure a first class performance that evening. We are very excited for future events such as this in partnership with Steinway and Sons.

The Christmas Concert on Friday 29th November was a joyous celebration of our department and a true triumph. The beautifully-adorned Chapel provided the perfect location for our biggest departmental event of the term, and the phenomenal effort from our students and staff in putting together something so magical was evident for all to see. The audience were captivated by performances from our larger ensembles, including our Swing Band's renditions of 'Man With The Bag', 'I Want It That Way' and 'Best of My Love', our Choir's 'Coventry Carol' and Taylor Swift medley and our Orchestra's spine-tingling medley from 'The Phantom of the Opera'. We were also delighted by performances from our smaller groups including the Guitar Ensemble, Brass Ensemble, String Ensemble, Woodwind Ensemble, Flute Choir and Gentili Ensemble, and were honoured to be joined by some Prep School students performing in the Newman Orchestra and Chapel Choir.

We were thrilled to once again be invited to participate in the Menphys Carol Concert at De Montfort Hall on Friday 6th December, with over twenty other Catholic schools in the area. This is always a wonderful event and the most recent was no exception, with the Choir in fine voice throughout and showing outstanding resilience when a distressing medical emergency occurred. I am pleased to confirm the person in the audience is now recovering, and we send our thoughts and prayers to his family. After a long pause in proceedings, the Choir returned to the stage and delivered a resolute performance of Jude Obermueller's 'I Heard the Bells' that left everyone with goosebumps. I do not think I have ever been so proud of our musicians.

Throughout the term, the departmental ensembles also continued to contribute substantially towards the liturgical life of the school, lending musical support and providing an outstanding accompaniment to all our Masses, as well as other key events such as the Harvest Festival, the Remembrance Service and of course the Carol Service on the final day of term, with the whole school joining in with 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' with some impressive gusto!



SPRING TERM

The term began with the Choir and Orchestra providing immaculate musical and liturgical accompaniment to our Senior School Epiphany Mass on Wednesday 15th January. It was a great pleasure to interview five Year 6 candidates for September-entry scholarships.

On Thursday 23rd January, an important event in the departmental calendar took place – the GCSE and A Level Informal Concert. This is a key occasion for our GCSE and A Level students to receive experience of performing in front of an audience, as performance is such a key part of both qualifications. Indeed, many of the performances were recorded, and we may well use some of these recordings for Year 11 students to send off to the exam board later. The evening was once again a triumph and my congratulations to all involved.

It goes without saying that the main event this academic year was our production of *Shrek the Musical*, in collaboration with the Drama department. Please see the “Shrek” article in this Ratcliffian for a full summary of this key event in the history of Ratcliffe, one that was so hugely well-received.

Following the February half term break, our musicians once again provided exceptional contributions to the Ash Wednesday Mass - we really are privileged to have such wide musical contributions to our key liturgical events, helping to further enhance and promote our ethos as a leading Catholic independent school. The Orchestra gave wonderful accompaniment to our hymns, and the Choir not only supported the congregational singing but also gave an outstanding performance of John Rutter’s arrangement of ‘All Things Bright and Beautiful’ during communion.

On Wednesday 17th March, Year 13 student Ellie Moss completed 35% of her Music A Level, by performing a 12-minute recital on her Tenor Horn for a live examiner. Despite the pressure of the situation, Ellie did herself very proud and her focus now shifts to completing the remaining aspects of her A Level. Congratulations to Ellie, and we wish you well with your composition and final exam.

Outside of the gates of Ratcliffe, I was privileged to attend a day of professional development at Ampleforth College in North Yorkshire on a chilly but bright Tuesday in early March. I met their Director of Music and interacted with his colleagues and students. I returned to Ratcliffe the following morning truly inspired and empowered to grow our department even further, following Ampleforth’s example. I was also very pleased to attend the Old Ratcliffians London Dinner on Friday 21st March, and was delighted to accompany their powerful rendition of ‘Jerusalem’ - the next step is to try and encourage students to do the same during a Friday morning service!

Towards the end of March, the results came in from our recent session of ABRSM exams and goodness me, were they something to shout about. Happily, every single student passed their exam, but of note are Year 11 students Joseph Ibbotson and Edward Black, both of whom achieved Grade 8 in Piano and Singing respectively. For Joe, this is the most remarkable achievement having only started piano in Year 8 as a beginner, and this is not only Edward’s second Grade 8 in as many terms, but also his second Grade 8 Distinction. My heartiest congratulations to them both.

The Spring Concert on Friday 28th March was yet another triumph for our special department. We opened proceedings with the Ratcliffe Orchestra, who gave a stirring rendition of a Jurassic Park medley, and this was followed by the Guitar Ensemble’s version of the Eagles’ classic ‘Hotel California’. The String Ensemble gave a beautiful version of Vivaldi’s Concerto in G major, after which it was my privilege to introduce Sam Leake, the self-taught pianist who only started learning last year, playing his Coldplay medley. The Woodwind Ensemble and Year 11 drummer Marco Misso followed with excellent performances, and the Gentili Chamber Ensemble closed out the first act with an arrangement from ‘Spirited Away’ by Old Ratcliffian and last year’s Head Boy, Ewan Metcalfe.

The second act opened with a bang, courtesy of the Swing Band, whose performances of ‘Dance The Night Away’ and ‘ABC’ had every single audience member tapping their feet. The Flute Choir then gave the audience chills with their version of ‘River Flows In You’, which was followed by Year 12 student Jonelle Famutimi showcasing her songwriting skills. The Brass Ensemble then picked up the pace with a couple of Beatles numbers, after which Joe (our Grade 8 pianist mentioned above) enchanted the audience with his talent. The Ratcliffe Choir closed off proceedings for the night, firstly with some John Rutter compositions, then three movements from Bob Chilcott’s ‘A Little Jazz Mass’, a piece that perfectly combines our ethos as a traditional Catholic school with a contemporary musical twist. A huge thanks to everybody who worked so hard to put this magical evening together, but a particular mention to my Senior School colleagues Ms Woodey and Mr Finn, whose support and friendship I value every day.

One of my favourite days of the year arrived on Thursday 3rd April, with the Easter Service in the morning and the House Music competition in the afternoon. The Easter Service was another triumph, and of note was the Choir’s contributions, singing the Jubilee Hymn (*Pilgrims of Hope*), Chilcott’s *Agnus Dei*, Rutter’s *All Things Bright and Beautiful* and the Taize chant *Watch and Pray* to accompany the moving on-stage re-enactment of the Easter story.

The afternoon’s musical celebrations were a wonderful affair - House Music is the most valuable event as not only is it one of the only times in the school calendar that the entire student body fully engages in music, but it also encourages student leadership with House Captains and senior musicians taking a leading role in organising their house’s participation. The whole student and teaching staff body were treated to a wonderful afternoon of music, with four outstanding vocal solos, another four excellent instrumental solos, four ensembles (led by students) and four boyband classics sung by every student in each house. Congratulations to our category winners, Seraphina Konstandi (Year 7 - Vocal Solo), Ethan Zhang (Year 13 - Instrumental Solo), Emery (Ensemble) and Leetham (Unison song), with the overall winner being Emery.

The afternoon ended with a charity version of *The Masked Singer*, led by De Lisle house, with several famous Ratcliffe teaching faces donning large costumes and singing karaoke classics. It was the audience’s job to guess who was behind the mask!

Congratulations to our winner, Miss Penna, who gave an incredible rendition of *Bohemian Rhapsody*.

SUMMER TERM

We returned in late April 2025 very much in exam mode for our Year 11 and 13 students, however in terms of co-curricular, our first key event of the Summer Term the Year 8 Informal Concert. Congratulations to all who performed – Isabelle Cullen, Tilly Etty, Grace-Ava Smith, Nia Hughes, Florence Rudkin, Grace Martin, James Proctor, Cristina Chmurovicova, Patrick Ojo and Rony Cheung.

We then said goodbye to our Year 13 students with a rousing rendition of ‘Viva La Vida’ in the morning whole school Celebration of The Word, and a moving Leavers Mass in the afternoon. Wishing them all well for the future, with huge thanks to those who contributed to the Music department during their time with us, we hope we were able to give you memories you will be able to cherish forever. The previous day, farewell was said to a truly lovely Year 11 GCSE Music class, however we look forward to lots of them joining us again next year to study A Level Music.

The following week, we were finally able to host our Lockhart Garden Recital, eight months after originally planned! Finally, the rain stayed away and we were able to host a lovely lunchtime recital underneath beautiful blue skies amidst the stunning Ratcliffe landscaping. Congratulations and thank you to all who took part, showing outstanding willing and resilience – Eashaan Acharya, Florence Rudkin, Abigail Cole, Sanvi Nair, Khushi Keshwala, Teresa Chmurovicova, Sam Leake, Abigail Jarjou and Joe Ibbotson.

Congratulations to the Prep School for their hosting of an excellent House Music competition in early June – Ms Woodey loved judging the house songs, and I thoroughly enjoying listening to and judging the solo talent. As ever, we continue to be extremely lucky to have such consistent and high-quality Music provision across the College, so my thanks go to all of the Music staff for the wonderful work they do throughout the campus, particularly Mrs Cook and Mrs Markham. Later that week, Years 3, 4 and 5 had the experience of a lifetime performing with the Halle Orchestra at the Royal Concert Hall in Nottingham, which was a fantastic success.

However, the highlight of the term was of course the truly outstanding Picnic Concert. Once again, we filled the marquee to the brim with an anticipative audience, and our musicians did not disappoint. The breadth and depth of our ensembles is one of the department’s greatest strengths, and this was no exception – the Swing Band had the audience on their feet with their renditions of The “Pink Panther” Theme and ‘Soul Bossa Nova’, the Orchestra gave mesmerising performances of the “Mission Impossible” Theme and “Live and Let Die”, and the Choir’s James Bond Medley left the entire marquee both shaken and stirred. Our Musical Theatre Club made us all extremely excited for next year’s production offering with their version of the finale from ‘Six’, the Woodwind Ensemble were truly enchanting with renditions of the Taylor Swift classic as well as ‘La Bamba’, the String Ensemble had our toes tapping with three Latin American Dances, the Gentili Chamber Ensemble soothed us perfectly with Elgar’s ‘Chanson de Matin’, we couldn’t get enough of the Flute Choir’s version of the Depeche Mode classic, the Brass Ensemble’s exhilarating performances of ‘Lay All Your Love On Me’ and ‘Gonna Fly Now’ were a force to be reckoned with, and who will ever forget Mr Reddin’s on-stage debut with the Guitar Ensemble.

We were also delighted to be joined by three of our Prep School ensembles – the Newman Orchestra, the Chapel Choir and the String Stars. We are so fortunate that our students receive simply the best musical groundings to their education from the very start here at Ratcliffe, and to have the opportunity to showcase this at our biggest musical event of the year and give our younger children such a wonderful musical experience is a blessing. To complete the programme, we also had a number of Senior School soloists – Holly Ridley gave a spellbinding version of ‘Back to Black’, Vidhi and Sanvi Nair’s flute and saxophone mash-up of two recent James Bond themes was a joy to behold, Edward Black gave a breathtaking performance of Wieniawski’s ‘Le gende’ on the violin accompanied by the Orchestra, John Bowden and Teresa Chmurovicova showed exceptional talents with piano solos, and Grace-Ava Smith’s version of ‘Heart of Stone’ from ‘Six’, also accompanied by the Ratcliffe Orchestra, was enough to make hairs stand on end.

The evening concluded with every single participant uniting for a rousing rendition of ‘I Wanna Dance With Somebody’, the perfect sentiment for a truly perfect evening. Yet another night showing how special our Ratcliffe Music community really is – a place where every child who walks through our doors is comprehensively known, genuinely nurtured and wholeheartedly celebrated – not just for their talents, but for who they are as individuals. For so many of our young people, the Music department is so much more than a building – it’s a sanctuary, an irreplaceable home away from home where they feel safe, valued and free to grow in confidence and joy. It is a privilege beyond words to be part of their journey, and I am endlessly grateful for the opportunity to serve this remarkable community. My heartfelt thanks go to all involved with putting these special events together, with a particular mention to Ms Woodey, who temporarily departs us next year for the most wonderful of reasons – to become a mum. We will miss her terribly, but we wish her every happiness as she starts this new, blessed chapter of her life.

Exhibition Day the following week was another triumph – of course, the Music department contributed greatly to proceedings, with the Orchestra, Gentili Chamber Ensemble and a number of soloists reviving their numbers from the Picnic Concert to showcase their talents to the wider school community.

To conclude the academic year, there were two large-scale musical activities to enrich our students’ experiences during Activities Week. We were delighted to be joined by representatives from British Youth Music Theatre who led an all-day session workshoping a brand new musical with our Year 7s and some of our Year 10s. Later in the week we also held a trip to London for fifty of our students to watch an inspiring performance of *MJ: The Musical* at the West End.

Yet another outstanding musical year for Ratcliffe has come to an end, but it is stronger than ever and I cannot wait to see what we achieve next year.

Mr M Harris, Director of Music



PSHCE

Nurturing Growth and Preparing for Life

At Ratcliffe College, our PSHCE programme plays a vital role in supporting students' personal development and preparing them for life beyond school. Covering all statutory Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) topics—including mental well-being, gender identity, substance awareness, and resilience—our curriculum is both comprehensive and responsive to the needs of today's young people.

Sessions are delivered by experienced educators in a safe, inclusive, and age-appropriate environment. We also welcome guest speakers who bring fresh perspectives and life experiences, enriching the learning journey and deepening student engagement.

Our programme is designed to be transformative, promoting emotional well-being and equipping students with essential life skills such as conflict resolution, time management, and stress management. These practical tools empower students to thrive both personally and professionally.

We are proud of the nurturing atmosphere created by our dedicated teaching team and external contributors, which ensures every student feels valued and supported. Pastoral care is central to our approach, and our curriculum is carefully crafted to reinforce this. This year, students have responded enthusiastically to our new thematic structure and interactive platform, which meets all statutory requirements while sensitively addressing complex topics.

Feedback from students and staff remains overwhelmingly positive, and the programme continues to be championed by the Senior Leadership Team, Governors, and our PSHCE department. As we look ahead, we remain committed to delivering a robust, relevant, and inspiring PSHCE provision that reflects the realities of the modern world and supports the holistic development of every student.

The accompanying photographs showcase the breadth of topics explored during the 2024–25 academic year.

Miss Tiffany Spencer,
Head of PSHCE

PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

The students in photography club excelled in 2024-25, with images from around the college, undertaking challenges to capture photos on specific themes such as technology, summer and minifigures, as well as learning more about lighting and focus depths. Each of them have clearly grown in their skills whilst having fun in their Monday Lunchtimes!

Some students have even taken photos of school events, a special thank you to James Proctor for capturing the Ratcliffe VMAs so well.

Mr. Allin



RELIGIOUS STUDIES

'Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord, and saviour, Jesus Christ'.
(2 Peter 3:18)

The extracts from the CSI report, throughout the article, summarise the OUTSTANDING report.

'The vision is to be a strong department academically, spiritually and morally, bringing these three aspects together, acknowledging that all pupils are able to achieve in religious education at different levels, so that they all feel that they have a positive experience' (CSI)

'Students make outstanding progress in Religious Studies at Ratcliffe'. (CSI)

GCSE RESULTS

The GCSE results in RS were excellent with 62% of students achieving 9-7 grades and 96% achieving 9-4. Several of these students are now studying A Level Religion, Philosophy and Ethics.

YEAR 7 DAY

In September 2024, all students in Year 7 took part in the Year 7 Religious Studies retreat morning. The students were introduced to some of the key themes of the school with regards to the Catholic Ethos, including a talk from Fr President, Fr Philip.

ROSARY

During October, many of the students, including all students in Year 7, prayed the Rosary in their RS lessons.

ADORATION

During Advent and Lent, all students went to the Chapel for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Fr Lorence also visited Year 7 classes to speak about Adoration.

6TH FORM SPEAKERS

In 6th Form Core RS, we were fortunate to have speakers from CAFOD, ACN (Aid to the Church in Need), The Carpenters Arms and Open Heaven Church.

Also, following the death of Pope Francis, students observed the events leading to the election of Pope Leo XIV.

HOLOCAUST CENTRE

In Year 10, all students visited the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre, near Newark to find out more about the terrible atrocities of the Holocaust. During the visit, they were fortunate enough to listen to a Holocaust survivor who shared their experience and spoke of the lessons that we can learn from it.

The students were moved and humbled by this experience as the following account shows:

'Significant events such as Kristallnacht were also explained and I learnt about its events and impacts. I also learnt about individual stories that were shown in the exhibition. This made me feel extremely sorrowful.'



OTHER FAITHS

Students in Year 7 studied Hinduism, including a project on Diwali. Students in Year 8 looked at key aspects of Islam, including the five pillars. In Year 9, students started the GCSE course and were introduced to key themes in Judaism.

'Pupils achieve very high results in Religious Education and are extremely religiously literate.' (CSI)

'Students speak with confidence about the impact that religious education has had upon them...providing a strong moral compass'. (CSI)

'Students are exceptionally religiously literate and have sound theological knowledge'. (CSI)

'Students receive a clear understanding of how they are doing and appreciate constructive feedback from teachers.' (CSI)

'Progress in religious education across all key stages has led to outstanding outcomes.' (CSI)

'The teaching of religious education exemplifies consistently high standards across the college'. (CSI)

'Teachers have an excellent understanding of the impact religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of the pupils.' (CSI)

'Learning about other faiths supports the pupils' understanding of tolerance and respect.' (CSI)

'Governors are highly visible... exceptional support for the religious education strategy... support to activities such as lesson 'learning walks', 'pupil voice' discussion and scrutiny of workbooks.' (CSI)

SCIENCE

YEAR 12 BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD

The Intermediate Biology Olympiad is a prestigious national competition that challenges students with a passion for biology to showcase their talents.

Many of our students' performances were commendable, with two students receiving official commendations and three awarded with high commendations. Particularly noteworthy were the achievements of Emma Beale and Christie Cheung, who were each awarded Bronze certificates—placing them within the top 30% of all entrants. Most impressively, Eloise Allsager received a Gold award, placing her among the top 5% of candidates nationwide.



CAMBRIDGE CHEMISTRY CHALLENGE

We are delighted to share that our Senior Student Chemists at Ratcliffe College have once again demonstrated their talent and dedication in the prestigious Cambridge Chemistry Challenge — a national competition designed to stretch and inspire Lower Sixth Form students with a passion for Chemistry.

For the first time, we are thrilled to announce that a Year 13 student Kylo Weng has been awarded a Gold Award — a remarkable achievement that reflects exceptional performance and deep understanding of Chemistry beyond the curriculum.



ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY ANALYST COMPETITION

In the summer term, the Royal Society of Chemistry shortlisted Ratcliffe to host a heat of the Schools' Analyst Competition 2025. The Schools' Analyst Competition enables teams of Year 12 students to demonstrate and expand their chemistry knowledge, skills and aptitude for analytical science through practical analytical experiments based on relevant societal or industrial problems.

This year, our student chemists worked with the 'Department of Housing' to assess an old industrial site for residential development. The area, once used for clothing, pottery, and electronics manufacturing, had been abandoned since the 1990s. Students analysed soil and waste heap samples for contaminants such as heavy metals and organic pollutants. Using techniques which included spectroscopy and chromatography, they successfully determined whether the land was safe for housing.

The Winning Team from Ratcliffe was **Christie Cheung and Bernice Cheung**. Well done all the Year 12 student Chemists who participated.

CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD

This year our Chemistry Department has experienced another successful year in the annual Royal Society of Chemistry Olympiad. The first challenge for the students was designed to test chemical knowledge through a written test with a real-world chemistry problem.

Ethan Zhang was awarded a Gold Award, the highest award a Ratcliffe Student has received in recent years.

Gold (1)
• Ethan Zhang (Yr 13)

Silver (1)
• Megha Thakrar (Yr 12)

Bronze (5)
• Seyi Onasanya (Yr 13)
• Agastyia Garttan (Yr 13)
• Harry Clark (Yr 13)
• Kylo Weng (Yr 12)
• Harriet Dickerson (Yr 12)



INDUSTRIAL CADET BRONZE PROJECT

A group of six Year 9 Physics students won the Most Innovative Project award in the science and engineering competition, Industrial Cadets Bronze Project, a popular, nationwide scheme designed to involve students with engineering projects.

The triumphant students were Livia Arcadio, Tom Woodley, Will Seager, Henry Nickerson, Isaac Madden-Smith and Oscar Liu, who worked with mentors from the company Kindeva on their Theme Park of the Future project.

This was an inspirational piece of work, and was highly commended at the Celebration Event, held at De Montfort University on 4th July. Their spectacular models and insightful report impressed all the judges, who were particularly complimentary about the students' focus on sustainability and innovation.

YEAR 7 SCIENCE CREST AWARD CLUB

Three Year 7 students earned themselves a Bronze CREST Award for their hard work in various projects. Arthur Barnes investigated how the ratio of bicarbonate of soda to citric acid affects the bubble rate of a bath bomb, Freddy Nouraei investigated how the temperature of a piece of elastic affected its elasticity, and Tudor Baciu investigated how the amount of vitamin C varies in different fruit juices.

ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT TRUST: INDUSTRIAL CADETS GOLD AWARD:



In collaboration with Kindeva Drug Delivery, a group of six Year 12 students took part in the Engineering Development Trust's Industrial Cadets Gold Award. The engineering team, consisting of Kylo Weng, Shai King, Torres Fung, Jonelle Famutimi and Shivam Javahar, undertook the task of developing an efficient, automated system to improve the safety and consistency of the inhaler testing processes. The team attended a two-day workshop at De Montfort University, where they were able to use professional-grade programs and equipment to build an effective prototype of their design.

Congratulations to the team; we are very proud of their final design and excellent report.



PHYSICS OLYMPIAD SENIOR CHALLENGE:

Thirteen of our Year 12 Physics students took part in the British Physics Olympiad's Senior Physics Challenge. The results were as follows:

Commendation: Beverley (Xuya) Wang, Angus Lau, Onki Weng, Stewie Yang, Torres Fung, Jonelle Famutimi.

Bronze: William Daniels, Shakikra King, Shivam Javahar.

Silver: Edwardz Li.

Gold: Kylo (Qi Cheng) Weng. Kylo's achievement here is outstanding, placing him within the top 7% of entries.

THE NATIONAL SPACE CENTRE TRIP: YEAR 7

During activities week, Year 7 students had the incredible opportunity to spend a morning immersed in interactive activities at the National Space Centre in Leicester. The students journeyed through the solar system in the planetarium show, and learned the principles of rocket science through educational demonstrations. In the afternoon, students returned to school to delve into the mechanics of how rockets work and put their learning into practice. Working in small teams, students designed and built their own rockets—before launching them and competing to see which design would soar the furthest. It was a perfect blend of creativity, teamwork, and scientific thinking.



CAREERS

Ratcliffe College Careers Programme 2024/2025

The 2024/25 academic year has been another landmark year for Careers at Ratcliffe, with students across all year groups benefitting from a rich programme of events designed to inspire ambition and prepare them for their next steps.

We began the year with the biennial **Higher Education Fair**, which brought universities from across the UK to Ratcliffe, giving students and parents the opportunity to explore higher education pathways and ask direct questions about courses, accommodation, and student life.

A highlight of the year was **National Careers Week** in March, which culminated in the **Sixth Form Networking Event**. Alumni and parents from business sectors including law, finance, IT, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, property, and design offered insights and guidance, while helping students develop confidence and a better understanding of the "unwritten rules" of networking. Many students have already followed up with mentoring and work experience opportunities, making this a standout event in our careers calendar.

The **INSPIRE Talks series** also connected students with industry experts. This year's programme featured **Tim Dillon (OR '85)** on fast-moving consumer goods, **Charles Grattan (OR '16)** on motorsport, **Lara Scott Ellis**, a parent, on law and the Bar, **Henry Rowe** on civil engineering, and a media-focused session on *The Traitors* TV show by **All3Media**.

During February's **National Apprenticeship Week**, students engaged in workshops and talks designed to prepare them to secure apprenticeships, learning about applications, expectations, and the balance between work and study. Following this, several students successfully gained competitive degree apprenticeships, including Oliver McGunnigle at Pick Everard, Harry Hings at Davidsons, and Francesca Turner at JCB.

The **Careers Development Fund Competition**, sponsored by **Unique Windows** and **Old Ratcliffian Mir Patel '14**, once again supported Year 12 students in pursuing their goals. Funding was awarded to projects ranging from veterinary work experience to psychology resources and engineering ambitions, with judges impressed by the quality and drive on display.

Careers education remained embedded across the **PSHCE programme**, with tailored sessions for Year 7 to Sixth Form. In an end-of-year survey, students confirmed that careers stood out as the most consistently valued area of provision, with memorable highlights including the **job-guessing activity for Years 7 and 8**, **options workshops**, the **enterprise event for Year 10**, **mock interviews for Year 11**, and **personal statement, UCAS and targeted pathway support for Sixth Form students**.

During Activities Week we saw our highest ever number of students undertaking **work experience** across Years 10, 11, and 12. Placements ranged from engineering and healthcare to law, finance, and creative industries, giving students invaluable exposure to the world of work and helping them make informed decisions about their future careers.

This year's successes underline the strength of Ratcliffe's careers programme and the invaluable contributions of alumni, parents, guest speakers, and staff. We are especially proud that **90% of our 2025 Year 13 leavers secured their first-choice option for their next steps after school**. We look forward to building on this momentum in 2025/26, ensuring every student is equipped with the confidence and opportunities to thrive.





BOYS' HOCKEY

U14

The U14s had an excellent season. Opening wins over Hill House and Bedford Modern built confidence and they went into the county cup on good form, beating Loughborough Grammar and Leicester Grammar to claim the title and qualify for regional finals. Further wins were gained against Leicester Grammar and Nottingham High, before they sadly had an off day at the regional finals, struggling to find their form and ultimately ended with two narrow losses, one win and one draw. They finished off the season with further wins against Derby, Worksop and King Henry's before the final game of the season, after the boys had spent the week playing rugby at Rosslyn Park 7s, proving a game too far. Overall, it was an excellent season, although maybe it did not live up to the very high standards they set themselves. Sam Macleod-Smith was exceptional, Fin Howitt was a workhorse and Isaac Traynor was very effective in various positions.

U13A

A playing record of won eight, drawn one and lost four reflects the excellent season this team have had. They have been a pleasure to coach, showing a good attitude and willingness to improve. Highlights of the season include the fantastic teamwork in convincing wins against Bedford Modern, Nottingham High, Leicester Grammar and King Henry's. When the boys played as a cohesive team, passing early and moving to create overlaps they were unstoppable. Everyone in the team improved significantly, but special mention to our "Players Player" and Captain, Seb Smith, who was consistently excellent, the "Coaches Players", Felix Mulligan and Ethan Matthews and the "Most Improved Player", Remy Haddon who by the end of the season was the first name on the team sheet. Well done to all.

Mr M. Kaye

U13B/C

Well done to this group on their efforts throughout the term. There have regularly been over twenty boys available for fixtures, which shows the popularity and enthusiasm for boy's hockey in this year group. This bodes well as we move into eleven-a-side hockey next year. All the players have made good individual progress in both their skills and game understanding and this led to steadily improving performances as the season progressed, culminating in an excellent two all draw against Loughborough Grammar in the last game of the season. Joe Rapsey and Phoenix Castledine have won the "Coaches Player" and "Most Improved Player" awards whilst Oli Backmore has been outstanding in goal and was voted the "Players Player" by his peers.

Mr M. Kaye



GIRLS' HOCKEY

As we reach the end of the Girls 2024 Hockey season, it is with great pride that I write about such a positive and successful performance.

We have fulfilled ninety-four fixtures, winning thirty-three, drawing sixteen whilst losing forty-five. These stats reflect a win ratio of 35%. However, what is also measurable is the breadth of players who have represented the school. Every age group has had either a 2nd X1 or a 'B' team experiencing fixture. Many girls have rotated across the 'A' teams too, allowing development opportunities for more players at a higher level. Girls who have had an opportunity to play up in the 'A' teams or 1st X1 were;

- **1st X1** - 25 Girls
- **15A** - 17 Girls
- **2nd X1** - 31 Girls
- **14A** - 24 Girls

Our Junior A teams play at 7-a-side format, making these figures even more impactful.

- **13A** - 24 Girls
- **12A** - 24 Girls

Seeing how many girls have represented at 'A' team level is fantastic, learning to play together, use kindness and empathy towards new players. They have also taken on leadership responsibilities by encouraging and taking initiatives on and off the pitch. These are just some of the developmental rewards that rotating and gelling lots of girls together brings.

It is also worth mentioning that some 'B' team girls, did not make it up to the 'A' team this year, but have wholly enjoyed being part of their 'B' team. Some do like the safety and security of a less intense, lower commitment that playing in the 'B' Team affords. I have worked with several of these teams and really do enjoy seeing the girls have a go and enjoy wearing the Ratcliffe shirts.

We reached the regional finals at U18, reaching the final itself, but finishing as runners up and sadly we narrowly missed out on a trip to the National Finals.

Our U15 Girls played up in the U16 Regional Finals, finishing third in their group on goal difference.

The U14 Girls also made it through to the U14 Regional Finals day, playing some good hockey but unfortunately failed to make it through to the knockout rounds.

We look forward to the U12 and U13 in two hockey County cup matches in 2025, I am hopeful that both our U13 and U12 teams will follow their elders and progress to the Regional stages.

I would like to thank all the coaching and teaching staff for their dedication and support of our players along with our support staff, medical team, catering department, marketing, and grounds staff. Without these unseen supporters we could not offer such fantastic opportunities and care for our students.

May I also thank those parents who have supported the girls either pitch side and/or in transporting their daughters to our matches and (often early) meet times.

Finally, a big "thank you" and a "well done", to each and every young lady who has taken part in our Hockey programme this season. It has been an absolute pleasure to witness so many happy and exciting moments, even in the cold and rain! Well Done, Girls!

Mr Clarke



U14B

The U14B girls opened their hockey season with a narrow 1-0 loss to Kimbolton at home. Despite it being her debut, goalkeeper Grace Hardy-Smith showed great confidence and made several impressive saves. Their second match saw a confident 3-0 win over Repton at home, with goals from Jess Youatt, Mali Willmott, and Sienna Dhameja. Player of the match went to Mali for her impressive spatial awareness and finishing. The final fixture was an internal match against the U15B team, where several U13s stepped up admirably in their first 11-a-side game. Lilac Austin and Isla-Violet Jones earned players of the match, while Molly Wrisdale scored Ratcliffe's sole goal.

Miss Jeggo

U15A

The U15A girls have been incredibly committed to their hockey this season, with excellent numbers of participants during Games and high levels of commitment for extra-curricular clubs and fixtures. As a group they have a thirst to their approach with learning, improving, and competing and are a wonderful group to spend time with. They work incredibly hard and this has reflected in their group progression, as well as in their individual improvements.

Throughout the season they went from strength to strength, displaying some excellent hockey. Particular highlights from the 16 fixtures that were played are the impressive wins against Micheal Ham School, Repton School, Wellingborough School and King Henry VII School. Along with some tough fought out draws against Loughborough Schools Foundation and Kimbolton School.

This group are a credit to Ratcliffe College and a huge "well done" for your involvement in hockey this season. I wish you all the best as you move forward into the senior programme next year.

Miss Cockayne



RUGBY



U12 A AND B

The U12's have had an incredible season. With 23 different students representing the team, and all making lots of progress, with selection very difficult for the coaches each week. There were many notable individual and team performances along the way. The two losses of the season were tough, which no doubt affected the boys' motivation to train and play more rugby. Harry Calver and Will Gribbon were both impressive with and without the ball, both being selected to play up for the U13's. Jude Cave and Cesear Vellar-Milner showed their skills throughout the season, with many strong runs and tackles. Josh Booker also showed his speed and athletic ability when given space. Rushi Patel took on the scrum half role and made it his own. Harry Proctor was destructive at the breakdown and started to show some good decision-making skills. Ethan Webster showed his power and football skills with many kicks and chases! Tom Seager, Sam Brouillette and Charlie Slack enjoyed the physical carries with the ball nearly as much as they enjoyed the breakdown. Aaron Davies, Jason Agunbiade, Ted Lomas, Toby Smith, Toby Rumsby, Laksh Patel, Daniel Markham, Eashaan Acharya, Milo Patel, Andre Ighogboja and Aum Joshi all contributed with their fine performances throughout the season.

Thank you to all the boys for their hard work and dedication to training each week. Without this, we really wouldn't have made the progress we have. A big thank you also to Mr Chapple, Mr Parry and Mr Bailey for their time and excellent coaching skills this season. I have no doubt that there is much to come from this group of players and indeed the year group, if they continue to commit as they have done this season, to training each week.

Mr Cole

	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	Win Ratio
Boys U12A	10	8	0	2	307	157	150	80%



U13A

Ratcliffe under 13 A team had a brilliant season and finished with only three losses. The team's enthusiasm, willingness to learn and their obvious enjoyment of rugby has been great and as coaches, myself, Mr Eaton, Mr Kaye and Mr Chapple were immensely proud. They played fourteen games, scored two hundred and eighty points and conceded one hundred and seventy-five. Top try scorer goes to Felix Mulligan but the tries were spread throughout the whole team. All the results this year were down to great teamwork. Everyone, no matter what position they played, their size, or their speed, played for the team and the camaraderie and friendships were obvious both in the games and in training.

The way they applied the game plan this year was amazing. I will never forget the final ten minutes of the Wellingborough game where they came back from 10-25 down, stringing phases together to pull off an amazing 25-25 Draw. Nor will I forget the immense pride I had when the team beat a very strong Oakham team, 15-5 in the Oundle Tournament. The brand of rugby the U13A team have played this year has been exciting, free flowing and physical. What more can I say? An amazing season for a talented team. I cannot wait to see what they will accomplish in Year 9!

U14

The U14s had an outstanding season. They warmed up with 'friendly' wins over Loughborough and Hill House, before moving onto the season proper, opening up with a slightly rusty win over Wellingborough. The only blot on their copybook came in the next game, where a sadly underwhelming performance against Loughborough saw them knocked out in the National Cup first round. To their credit they bounced back in style, with consecutive wins against Worksop, Birkdale, Derby Grammar, Bablake, Lutterworth High, Wisbech and Leicester Grammar. The game against Nottingham High was cancelled due to poor weather. The County Cup is now almost exclusively played after Christmas, which presents challenges as the focus for the College has usually moved onto hockey. However, the U14s rose to the challenge.

Despite not playing their best rugby they won multiple games to get through to the final, to face Lutterworth High for the second time in the season. They raced into a 14-0 lead but then lost their way, as refereeing decisions went against them. Lutterworth enjoyed plenty of possession and pulled two tries back, before Ratcliffe broke the shackles to score two more, eventually running out deserved winners 28-14. It was a fantastic and well-deserved way to finish off a fine season. Nearly 30 boys played for the team over the course of the season, which is testament to their enthusiasm. They were an absolute delight to work with in training and matches. Sam Thompson, Benji Wilkes, Matt Wood and Theo Pietrzyk were standout players in the forwards. Louis Jones was a great recruit at scrum-half, whilst Arthur Adey and particularly captain Fin Howitt - who was outstanding - were a real threat in the backs.

Mr Woodcock



U15/U16

Excluding the pre-season warm up games against Loughborough Grammar and Hill House, the boys were involved in 12 fixtures this year, either as full U15s or combining with the U16s or the U14s. A playing record of won 7 and lost 5 is probably a fair reflection of the year. There have been some fantastic games played. The U16/U15 team put in a superb defensive effort to hold out and beat a strong Lutterworth team. The U15/U14 team played a thrilling game against QEGS Ashbourne in the National Cup, losing agonisingly in the last few minutes to go out of the competition. The best game of the regular season was against Leicester Grammar in the last match of the term. We were short of players due to illness but played superbly to beat a strong Leicester Grammar team who had beaten us convincingly earlier in the term. In the Spring term, the team did exceptionally well to win through to the County Cup final against Loughborough Grammar, beating Lutterworth College and Robert Smyth along the way. In a tense and exciting final that ebbed and flowed, we lost narrowly 28-20 but it was a terrific effort. Hugo Misiuda and Ben Kay have led the team with great tenacity. Dan Freeman and Ed Crawley were outstanding attacking threats and James Spencer has been the most improved player, taking a lead in the line out and excelling at the breakdown. Well done to all on a good year.

Mr M Kaye

1ST XV

The 1st XV rugby squad has had a good season. They have developed and continued to grow over the course of the season, finishing the season strongly and going on a 3 game winning streak. The 1st XV finished having played 9, won 4 and lost 5. The players' commitment to training has been excellent with numbers high on both training nights.



1st XV continued

The results have all been fairly close apart from Wellingborough, where we fielded a bare team and performed bravely, but against strong opposition and their big bench it was always going to be one sided. The result against Robert Smyth was fantastic and the players really stood up and played our exciting brand of rugby. This game was the turning point in the season, and the team went on an unbeaten run for the remainder of the season. One of my favourite games was against Bablake where the boys showed amazing grit and determination to grind out a win away from home 19-12. The final game of the season against local rivals Leicester Grammar was by far the best performance of the season, winning 31-5. The tries that they scored were well worked and included some slick and accurate handling, which is at the forefront of training sessions, so that is always pleasing.

The 1XV this season have been a pleasure to coach, they have been great fun, they are always willing to listen and they work so hard for each other. The commitment to the game this year has been amazing and all players representing the 1XV this year have done themselves proud.

I am looking forward to the 7s season after Christmas and seeing how we proceed in this. I am sure it will be a success!

Mr Chapple



ROSSLYN PARK - RUGBY 7S

The Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens has evolved into the world's largest school rugby tournament with over 10,000 boys and girls aged 11-18 competing annually. We were proud to have a place for our U18, U14 and U13 squads.



GIRLS' NETBALL

FIRST TEAM

The First Team have experienced a season of both promise and challenge, showcasing determination and resilience against strong opposition throughout the year.

The season began positively with convincing wins over Repton School (26–14), Loughborough High School (31–9), Nottingham Girls' High School (31–6), and Cheltenham Ladies' College (24–17). These early victories demonstrated the squad's attacking flair, tight defensive pressure, and ability to convert opportunities into points.

However, as the season progressed, the team encountered tougher opposition and several narrow defeats. Matches against Stamford (11–30) and Princethorpe College (19–40) highlighted the strength of the competition, while fixtures against Denstone College (22–23) and RGS Worcester (22–31) were closely fought contests where the side was unfortunate not to secure a win.

Despite these setbacks, the team continued to show competitive strength and perseverance. A hard-fought victory over Worksop College (30–28) was a season highlight, reflecting the squad's teamwork and determination to close out tight matches. Several fixtures were cancelled, but the squad continued to train and prepare with the same commitment throughout.

Although results later in the season saw defeats against Rugby School (12–42), Nottingham High School (16–37), and King Henry VIII School (19–36), the team's spirit never wavered. Each player demonstrated resilience, always striving to improve and support one another both on and off the court.

Overall, this season has been one of growth and learning. The First Team can be proud of their efforts, particularly their strong performances in the early fixtures and their ability to challenge tough opposition. With continued hard work and development, this group has the potential to turn narrow defeats into victories in future seasons.



U14A

The U14A girls have been incredibly committed to their netball this season, with excellent numbers of participants during Games and high levels of commitment for extra-curricular clubs. They worked incredibly hard, and this has shown in their group progression, as well as their individual improvements. As the season went on, they went from strength to strength, displaying some excellent netball. Particular highlights from the 15 fixtures that were played are the tight wins against Nottingham Girls' High School, Loughborough Schools Foundation and King Henry VII School.

This group are a credit to the school and a huge well done with your involvement in netball this season. I wish every player all the best as you move forward into next year.

Miss Cockayne

U14B

The U14B girls have shown outstanding dedication to their netball this season, consistently turning out in great numbers for matches and demonstrating impressive commitment to extra-curricular training. Their hard work has been evident in both their team development and individual progress. As the season progressed, they continued to build momentum, producing some excellent performances on court.

Among the twelve fixtures played, standout moments included the closely contested matches against Nottingham High School, Loughborough Schools Foundation, and Worksop College.

This group has been a real credit to the school, and their enthusiasm and effort throughout the season deserve high praise. Congratulations on all you have achieved, and best of luck as you move forward into next year.

Miss Cockayne

U14C

The U14C netball team drew 7-7 with Repton at home in a thrilling match. The game remained evenly matched throughout, with strong performances across the court, especially within defence. Rosie Smith and Lauren Harper earned Players' Player for their excellent defensive work, after consistently disrupting Repton's attacks. Poppy Tallis, made her debut as Goal Attack at Ratcliffe, received Coaches Player for her intelligent play and precise finishing, contributing significantly to the draw.

Miss Jeggo



U13A

The U13A team have had a competitive and encouraging season, with many strong performances and plenty of development shown across the squad. With 13 matches played, the team recorded 5 wins, 1 draw, and 7 losses, scoring 253 goals in total – a reflection of their attacking determination.

The season began with an excellent victory against Trent College (21–14), giving the team a confident start. Although back-to-back narrow defeats followed against Bourne Grammar School (12–15 and 10–15), the girls responded well, showing resilience and a positive attitude in training.

One of the standout performances came in January with a hard-fought win over Princethorpe College (28–22), followed by another strong display against Worksop College (26–22). The girls also recorded an emphatic 30–16 victory against Loughborough Schools Foundation and a dominant 34–15 win over King Henry VIII School, highlighting their ability to control matches and convert turnovers into points.

The team also showed great character in a thrilling draw against Leicester Grammar (28–28), where every player worked tirelessly up to the final whistle. Although some matches were more challenging, such as the defeats against Nottingham High School (9–13),

Nottingham Girls' High School (8–34), and Wisbech Grammar School (10–21), the girls never lost their determination. Even in a close contest against Stamford (11–16) and a spirited effort against Trent College (24–30), they showed continued progress.

Overall, the U13A team should be proud of a season full of effort, growth, and exciting netball. They have developed their skills, built strong teamwork, and gained valuable match experience that will serve them well as they move up through the school. With their commitment and enthusiasm, this group has great potential to achieve even more success in future seasons.



U12B

The U12B Girls Netball team enjoyed a successful first season in the senior school, with experience being gained every match. They secured notable wins against St. Martin's (5-2), Nottingham High (11-3), Worksop (24-5), Denstone College (9-4), Loughborough High (12-5), and Wisbech (4-1), with one draw (4-4) against King Henry VIII School. Player highlights included Martha Traynor's consistent shooting and Isabelle Ryce's outstanding defensive efforts, earning her multiple "Player of the Match" awards. Kosi Romans also made a significant impact, particularly in the final two matches where she excelled in defence. The team demonstrated depth with flexible player rotations, allowing many girls to showcase their progress and versatility. The players included Ava Brett-Pitt, Isla Hallam and Emmie-Rose Power. Despite narrow losses to Princethorpe, Stamford, and Trent, the girls maintained strong performances. The next generation of Ratcliffe netballers have an exciting future ahead!

Miss Jeggo



BOYS' CRICKET

1ST XI

The 1st XI played a largely successful season. Despite the short term, they managed to squeeze in ten fixtures. The season started with some tough fixtures, losing to both the MCC and Rothley Park Cricket Club. With a couple of cancellations, the midseason exam break arrived without a win on the board. However, post-exams, the boys really found their feet, gaining strong wins against the Old Ratcliffians, The School Masters and, for the first time in a number of years, the perennially strong, Emeriti.

The team finished the term with their annual cricket festival, hosted at home this year. Wins were gained against Rydal Penrhos and Wirrall with a rather fatigued performance on the last day against Bolton rounding off their season. The final season results of six wins and four losses was probably a fair reflection of how the team performed. They were consistently good in the field and with their bowling; five bowlers qualified for Wisden and the team members were recorded on the school honours board for 5 wicket hauls, namely Ollie Thomas, Oliver Clark, Ernie Hoggard and Jaiden Patel. The team's main problems lay in the batting, where performances were either very good, or really rather poor, hence there being not a single draw in the season. Captain Oliver Clark topped the runs, Hari Jobanputra topped the batting averages. Ben Macleod-Smith contributed well and also qualified for Wisden. All in all, it was another enjoyable and winning season and the boys should be proud of how they showed resilience in the second half.

Mr E Woodcock

U15

The U15 boys have had an up and down season, winning three and losing three of the six games played. If the early season commitment had been the same as the end of season these results could have been even better.

A number of boys have chosen to play club cricket over school cricket this year which has been rather disappointing. After the slow start the boys knuckled down and worked hard on improving skills and technique, which has reflected in improved performances in matches. Adi Brahmhatt has been the leading batter, getting starts in every game and scoring 159 runs in the five games he played. Ben Kay has been consistently good with both bat and ball and never missed a match or training session, showing his outstanding commitment to school sport.

He deservedly wins the Coaches "Player of the Season" award. Henry Lawrence, new this year, has shown good all round ability and given great 'energy' in the games he played. Jack Muston in his batting and Oscar Gray in his bowling have been the most improved players and Sam Daynes, George Appleyard, Lucas Whieldon and Hugo Misiuda have shown regular glimpses of their undoubted talent.

Mr M. Kaye

U14

The U14 squad at Ratcliffe College enjoyed a season filled with learning, development, and plenty of memorable moments. It was a mixed season in terms of results, with some impressive victories showcasing the team's potential, balanced by a few challenging matches that provided valuable lessons.

What stood out most across the season was the team's spirit and togetherness. Every player contributed at some stage, whether with bat, ball, or in the field, and the squad showed resilience even when results did not go their way. The improvement in teamwork, communication, and tactical awareness from the start to the end of the season has been remarkable.

Mr J. Chapple

U13

Ratcliffe's U13 boys had another extremely strong season, showing that they knew how to win in every way possible! Four of these boys have played 1st XI cricket this year, and some representing the county! After the early season disappointment of being knocked out of the National Cup (still an incredible achievement, as the first Ratcliffe side to qualify!), they really showed their quality against all the opposition. A last-over thriller against Birkdale was a particular highlight, whilst more comfortable chases against Mount St Marys, Wisbech & King Henry VIII highlighted their ruthlessness, topped off win a comfortable 87 run win against Derby Grammar.

Sixteen boys have represented the A team this season, which is testament to the cricketing quality in this year group.

Zach Hilton was the leading run scorer at the top of the innings. His extremely mature temperament to his bowling allowed him to take some very important wickets and he was a level above in the field. Zach also co-captained the side very impressively with Rhys Snutch. Rhys was exceptional behind the stumps all season, and when called upon with the bat, he showed all his class. Zach was a deserved winner for Coaches Player of the Year and Rhys a favourite winner for Players' Player.

I could write so many great things about all the boys who have represented the team, but I will just mention a few who stood out for their enthusiasm, availability and ability. Vir Patel really shone with the ball, making that opening bowler slot his own. Thomas Gowdrige is an exceptional cricketer, excelling in all disciplines, opening the batting and bowling whilst fielding with a rocket arm. Marcus Redshaw attended every training session with a great attitude, and really took his opportunities when they came. Remy Haddon showed a lot of raw skill with a brilliant cricket brain which will prove very handy in future. Leo McAllan was a deserved winner of "Most Improved Player", having never played for the A team last year and now becoming a regular. Thank you to all the boys who represented the team, you've made my first cricket season a dream!

Mr J. Mountain

GIRLS' CRICKET



U13A GIRLS

The Under 13A Girls Cricket team opened with a dominant win over Nottingham High School, setting the tone with strong fielding and standout batting from Millie Warburton. Building momentum, they clinched a thrilling victory at Mount St Mary's, highlighted by Grace Martin's six and Poppy Standings fast bowling. A friendly fixture against Wisbech Grammar saw a blended team impress, with Sophie Kay and Annie Sudhir standing out. Against Worksop College, despite a narrow loss, the team showed grit, with Lourdes Norton excelling in bowling. The season concluded with a confident win over Princethorpe, featuring mature batting partnerships and sharp fielding, as well as individual top performances from Tilly Etty, Poppy Appleton and Amber Cole.



U14 GIRLS

The U14 girls have been incredibly committed to their cricket this season, with high numbers of participants during Games and extra-curricular clubs. As a group they have a thirst to their approach with learning, improving, competing and are a wonderful group to spend time with. Sadly, some matches have been cancelled by opposing teams, but their opening game against Nottingham High School went down to the wire. A highly entertaining fixture, with runs being made, catches happening and some wonderful wickets being taken. The group as a whole have improved, along with individual players, and the partnerships that the girls are playing within. This group are a credit to the school and a huge well done with your involvement in cricket this season. I wish you all the best moving forward into next year.

Sarah Cockayne



U12A GIRLS

The U12A girls' cricket team enjoyed a fantastic season, securing three impressive victories and facing three cancelled fixtures. Their dedication and teamwork were evident throughout.

The season began with a solid 53-run victory over Nottingham High, where the team scored 293 runs to restrict the opposition to 240. Ivy's powerful innings earned her Player of the Match, with key contributions from Emmie, Felicity, Izzy R, and Siena. A standout performance followed against Mount St Mary College, resulting in a commanding 113-run win. The team amassed 345 runs, with strong batting and effective bowling. Ivy and Violet Deacon received Players of the Match honors for their exceptional contributions. The season concluded with a joyful win against Princethorpe, finishing 286 to 232. Emmie-Rose Power was named Best Bowler, and Sophie Kay earned Best Batter, capping off a season filled with spirit and determination. Overall, the U12A girls' cricket team showcased remarkable skill and teamwork. Congratulations to all players for a successful season—your hard work sets a bright future for the team!

Played	Won	Tied	Lost
3	3	0	0

CRICKET FESTIVAL

We hosted the second annual Ratcliffe College Girls' Cricket Festival on Saturday 28th June.

Players from local clubs and schools were invited to join Ratcliffe students to take part in colourful competitive matches.

This exciting event was dedicated to celebrating and empowering young female cricketers from across the region.

The festival featured a variety of engaging activities, including:

- Exhibition "Barbarian" Style matches showcasing the skills of our Girls cricketers
- Coaching clinics led by experienced womens' Leicestershire county cricket players and coaches.
- Networking opportunities for players, coaches, and cricket enthusiasts.

Our goal was to inspire the next generation of female cricketers, foster a love of the sport, and demonstrate the immense talent and potential of women in cricket. By providing a supportive and encouraging environment, we aimed to break down barriers and encourage more girls to get involved in the game.

We have nominated additional boys and girls for trials for the 2025-2026 LCCC winter pathway programme and we wish them good luck!

In addition to cricketing opportunities, Leicestershire County Cricket Club has been able to host outdoor concerts, a Fireworks display and networking events at the Uptonsteel County ground. Forthcoming events are available at www.leicestershireccc.co.uk.

As the 2025 cricket season has now finished and we look ahead to next year, we thank all students, parents and staff who have supported our partnership this year and give our very best wishes to Leicestershire County Cricket.

Mark Cole, Director of Sport and Co Curricular

SUPER SATURDAY CRICKET FESTIVAL

SATURDAY 28TH JUNE

The second annual Girls' Cricket Festival at Ratcliffe College! This exciting event was dedicated to celebrating and empowering young female cricketers from across the region.

The festival featured a variety of engaging activities, including:

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Our goal was to inspire the next generation of female cricketers, foster a love of the sport, and demonstrate the immense talent and potential of women in cricket. By providing a supportive and encouraging environment, we aimed to break down barriers and encourage more girls to get involved in the game.



RATCLIFFE COLLEGE AND LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET PARTNERSHIP

The Official Partnership with Leicestershire County Cricket Club continues to support the development of boys’ and girls’ cricket, and we are proud of the opportunities the partnership offers our students, parents, staff and the Ratcliffe community.

As part of our partnership with Leicestershire County Cricket Club, we awarded tickets for Ratcliffe College students to attend Vitality Blast T20 matches at the Uptonsteel County Ground for the qualifying matches. The following students were recognised by Mr Woodcock, Head of Cricket, and our Sports Department, for either playing particularly well in school fixtures or being a great ambassador of cricket:



Boys	U12A	U13B	U13A	U14A	U15A	1ST
Coaches Player	R Patel	J Proctor	Z Hilton	Wl Seager	B Kay	O Clark
Most Improved	T Seager	J Rapsey	L McAllan	S Turner	O Gray & J Muston	O Clark
Players Player	Z Fish	B Simpson	R Snutch	F Howitt	A Brahmbhatt	

Girls	U12A	U13A	U14A
Coaches Player	S Kay	P Standing	O Pearce
Most Improved	V McGunnigle	A Tebbutt	B Harris
Players’ Player	F Rowe	M Warburton	O Pearce



TENNIS

We partnered with GSM Tennis, Leicestershire’s leading provider of tennis lessons for juniors and adults. They offered private tennis group lessons alongside our PE, Games and co-curricular sessions.

Tennis is an excellent sport for all-round athletic development, benefiting speed, athleticism, hand-eye coordination and fitness.



CROSS COUNTRY

Cross Country and Athletics

Ratcliffe’s cross country and track and field athletes enjoyed a successful year, shining at County, Regional, and National levels, breaking numerous school records across the season.

Ratcliffe hosted the English Schools’ Cross Country Team Cup, where the junior and intermediate girls qualified for Regionals after both placing first. The junior boys also qualified after placing second. At Regionals, all teams improved their positioning from last year, with the junior boys placing 8th, junior girls 6th and the intermediate girls finished an impressive 2nd, earning a place in the National Final. In the Final back in Leeds, the intermediate girls’ team (Matilda Don, Luan Power, Frankie Castledine, Nina Cusack, and Maisie Leake) placed 13th out of 23 teams, an outstanding achievement from a starting field of 497 teams.

Two teams represented at the Under-18 King Henry VIII Cross Country Relays. The A team (Violet Rudkin, Matilda Don, Frankie Castledine and Luan Power) finished an impressive 2nd out of 42 UK schools while the B team placed a determined 33rd.

At the County Championships, also hosted by Ratcliffe, Matilda Don and Luan Power won their age categories to qualify for the English Schools’ Individual Cross Country Championships, with Florence Rudkin also achieving qualification.

The track and field season began with eight year 7 athletes competing at the County Multi-Event Championships in Corby. Competing in shot put, long jump, 75m, and 800m, Harry Calver became county champion, Josh Booker claimed silver and Violet Deacon took bronze, all demonstrating great athletic range.

At the County Track and Field Cup in Derby, 52 athletes from years 7-10 competed for points for the team with all four 4x100m relay teams achieving maximum points. The junior girls’ and boys’ teams advanced to the Regional B Final in Mansfield where the girls finished 3rd and the boys 6th.

At the Area Championships, 55 athletes from across the senior school represented, with 34 athletes qualifying for the County Championships. County 4x100m relay titles went to both the junior girls (Georgia Grace, India Webster, Ivy Deacon, Violet Deacon) and boys (Zach Fish, Harry Calver, Josh Booker, Daniel Markham) teams. Individual golds also went to Luan Power (1500m) and Georgia Grace (long jump). Silver went to Violet Deacon (100m) and bronze medals to Ivy Deacon (200m), Daniel Freeman (200m), Frankie Castledine (300m) and Josh Booker (800m).

Sixteen junior athletes achieved the challenging qualification standards for the East Area Prep Championships in Bedford. Harry Calver retained his shot put title and placed second in the 200m to qualify for Nationals. Violet Deacon (100m) and Josh Booker (800m) both achieved brilliant bronze medals and just narrowly missed out on selection also. At the National Prep Championships in Birmingham, Harry Calver defended his national shot put title and also claimed silver in the 200m, both rare and remarkable achievements.

In the summer, Luan Power and Violet Rudkin represented Leicestershire and Rutland at the English Schools’ Track and Field Championships in Birmingham. Both competed in the 1500m during the 100th year of the prestigious event.

It was another exceptional year for Shai King. Indoors, Shai became the Under-20 England champion in a championship-best performance and claimed a sensational bronze at the British Championships against senior athletes. Outdoors, Shai represented Great Britain juniors at the Loughborough International, winning the 800m. Shai went on to become the England Under-20 800m outdoor champion, breaking a 21-year-old championship record to qualify for the European Under-20 Championships in Finland. At Europeans, Shai won her heat and finished 5th in the final. Shai’s 800m time ranks 6th on the UK all-time under-20 list and notably her 1500m time also ranks highly at 13th.

Miss Jeggo

SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

The Senior Sports Presentation Dinner 2025 at Burleigh Court was a great success, with positive feedback from students and parents. It provided a great opportunity to celebrate and reward our seniors with their commitment to sport during their time at Ratcliffe College. The addition of a Guest Speaker this year - Charlie Dobson, British Sprinter was well received and enjoyed by all.

Hockey

- U15 Girls Hockey Team who participated in the U16 County Cup came second and qualified for the regional hockey finals
- Congratulations to the 1st Girls Hockey team for coming runners up at the regional hockey finals

Netball

- U14 Semi Final County Tournament
- Students representing franchises - Praise Ipinmoye made the Roses pathway
- U15 did well in "Sisters in Sport"

Rugby

- U14 County Cup winners
- U15 County cup runners up
- U13 7s Warwick Plate winners
- U14 Rosslyn Park team reached day 2

Athletics

County Multi Event Championships

- 7 Year 7s competed
- Harry Calver won Gold
- Josh Booker won Silver
- Violet Deacon won Bronze County Track and Field Cup
- 52 Year 7-10 students competed
- Junior Girls/ Boys and Intermediate Girls/Boys 4x100m Relay Gold
- Junior Girls/ Boys qualified for Regionals Area Athletics
- 55 Year 7-10 students competed
- 34 athletes qualified for Counties

Championships

- 16 junior athletes achieved selection
- Harry Calver won Gold Shot Put & Silver 200m
- Violet Deacon won Bronze 100m
- Josh Booker won Bronze 800m National Prep Championships
- Harry Calver won Gold Shot Put & Silver 200m English Schools Track and Field Championship
- Luan Power and Violet Rudkin achieved Intermediate Girls 1500m selection

County Championships

- 34 athletes qualified
- 4x100m Gold Junior Girls, winners were ; Georgia Grace, India Webster, Ivy Deacon, Violet Deacon
- 4x100m Gold Junior Boys, winners were ; Zach Fish, Harry Calver, Josh Booker, Daniel Markham
- Luan Power won 1500m Gold
- Georgia Grace won Long Jump Gold
- Violet Deacon won 100m Silver
- Ivy Deacon won 200m Bronze
- Daniel Freeman won 200m Bronze
- Frankie Castledine won 300m Bronze
- Josh Booker won 800m Bronze Regional Track and Field Cup
- Junior Girls and Boys qualified
- Junior Girls placed 3rd
- Junior Boys placed 6th East Area Prep

Shaikira King's Achievements

- National Under 20 Indoor 800m Gold (Championship Best)
- National Senior Indoor 800m Bronze
- Great Britain Juniors call up and Loughborough International 800m Gold
- National Under 20 Outdoor 800m Gold (Championship Best)
- Great Britain call up and 5th at European Under 20s
- 800m ranked 6th on UK all time under 20 list
- 1500m ranked 13th on UK all time under 20 list New School Records

Senior Achievements

- Daniel Markham Junior 75/80m Hurdles
- India Webster Junior 70/75m Hurdles
- Harry Calver Junior Shot Put & 200m
- Lourdes Norton Junior 200m
- Frankie Castledine Intermediate 300m
- Shai King Senior 300m & 1500m
- Charlie Adkins Junior 800m
- Violet Rudkin Senior 800m
- Isabelle Ryce Junior 1200m
- Sebastian Smith Junior 1500m
- Luan Power Intermediate 1500m
- Remy Haddon Junior Long Jump
- Joshua Pond Intermediate High Jump
- Jonelle Famutimi Senior Shot Put
- Junior Girls 4x100m Relay (Poppy Standing, Anais Chada, Rosie Cromwell, Lourdes Norton)
- Junior Boys 4x100m Relay (Zach Fish, Harry Calver, Josh Booker, Daniel Markham)
- Intermediate Girls 4x100m Relay (Maka Musha, Frankie Castledine, Marley Deacon, Jessica Tuckwell)
- Intermediate Boys 4x100m Relay (Lefa Malebe, Odera Munonyedi, James Calver, Daniel Freeman)



Individual Honours

- Congratulations to Shai King who became the youngest athlete ever to sign a contract with Nike in the UK.
- Remy Haddon was selected to represent the Midlands Football Squad at the ISFA

Tournaments

- Emmie- Rose Power has been accepted into the Leicestershire county tennis squad
- Ben England won his first pony club triathlon of 2025, by over 200 points.
- Emmie-Rose and Luan Power competed at the National Schools Biathlon Final. Luan year 10 came 2nd and Emmie -Rose year 7 came 18th
- Matilda Don, who finished a very impressive 13th place out of 400 runners at the Inter-Counties Cross Country event
- Shai King at the British Championships came 2nd in her Heat in 800m, racing against Senior professional athletes. And her Sister (Old Ratcliffian- Indie King) who came third in her 400m heat
- Shai King who became U20 800m National Indoor Champion, with a time of-2 mins 4 seconds. Breaking a 12 year record of 2.06.8.
- In the British Milers Club race in Sheffield, Shai King ran the 800m in 2:03.57 which ranked her the third best GB Under 20 indoors. This was also achieved without there being a pacemaker
- Shai King started her 2025 track season at the Belfast Irish Milers International.
- Shai King competed in the 800m international race, placing 5th in a time of 2:01.65. This time is a European Under 20 standard and ranks Shai 8th on the all time UK list
- Ben England won the PC triathlon area 7 qualifier in Birmingham in January. with a personal best in the run and the swim and secured a place at the championships
- Ben England put in a fantastic effort to finish second at the winter triathlon champs in the junior boys class

Individual Colours Awarded 2024 - 2025

Rugby:

Henry Westley, Harry Bird, Olly Clark, Kim O'Sullivan, Alex Hancock, Josh Blick, Jack Turnbull, Ben Bird and Billy Harris

Netball:

Hattie Ashford-Clarke, Lydia Haggis, Katie Bradley, Emma Beale, Aliyah Silwamba, Charlotte Shield, Ruby Doran and Millie Lake

Girls' Hockey:

Lyla Izzet, Charlotte Shield, Millie Lake, Alice Bower, Lydia Haggis and Isabella Westwood

Boys' Hockey:

Sam Leake, Ayo Abiodun, Henry Westley, Kim O'Sullivan, Olly Clark and Michael Joy

Boys' Cricket:

Jaiden Patel and Olly Clark

Athletics:

Shai King and Violet Rudkin

Football:

Kim O'Sullivan and Shane Mawby

Full Colours

Boys':

Henry Westley, Olly Clark and Kim O'Sullivan

Girls':

Millie Lake Lydia Haggis

Ambassador Award:

Lydia Haggis and Kim O'Sullivan



SPORTS DAY 2025

Ratcliffe College's Sports Day 2025 was a vibrant celebration of athletic spirit, house pride, and individual excellence. Blessed with fine weather and a buzzing atmosphere, the day featured thrilling competitions and standout performances from students across all year groups.



The entire senior school took part in a packed programme of track and field events alongside retro sports, designed to promote both competitiveness and enjoyment while encouraging mass participation.

We were honoured to welcome Charlie Dobson, Olympic 4x400m bronze medallist from the Paris 2024 Games, as our special guest. Charlie presented medals to the individual event winners, offering inspiration to our aspiring athletes.

The morning session saw strong performances from the junior age groups, Years 7 and 8, Arundell House led the way with 244 points, followed closely by Leetham with 232 points, Emery with 228 points, and De Lisle with 185 points. In the afternoon, the intermediates from Years 9 and 10 and the seniors from Years 11 to 13 competed. A determined showing saw Leetham surge into first place, finishing with a winning total of 740 points. Arundell were placed second with 717 points, followed by Emery with 608 and De Lisle with 598.

Individual awards were presented to those who achieved the highest combined points in their age and gender categories. Junior and intermediate athletes competed in up to three events, such as two track and one field event, while seniors could take part in as many events as they wished. In the junior category, Charlie Adkins was awarded Victor Ludorum and Lourdes Norton received Victrix Ludorum. The intermediate titles went to Louis Jones and Georgie Ridley, both impressively achieving their wins despite being in the younger year of their category. In the senior division, Oscar Jenks and Oma Addison were named Victor and Victrix Ludorum respectively for their exceptional performances.

To conclude the day, staff joined the action in the ever-popular 4x100 metre relay, providing a fun and spirited finale. Arundell House took the win in an exciting race.

It was a memorable day filled with energy, teamwork, and exceptional effort. Congratulations once again to Leetham House, who were crowned overall champions of Sports Day. We already look forward to Sports Day 2026.

Miss Jeggo

BOARDING

Dear Ratcliffians,

It gives me great pleasure to share with you an update on the latest developments within our boarding community at Ratcliffe College. Our boarding community continues to thrive as a dynamic and nurturing family within the College and acts as a true home away from home for our students. Over the past year, we have worked tirelessly to enhance our facilities, ensuring that every boarder enjoys a comfortable, safe, and welcoming environment in which to live, study, and grow.

One of our major accomplishments this year has been the refurbishment of St Andrew's corridor, where all rooms have been redecorated and fitted with new flooring. This transformation has created a brighter and more inviting space that perfectly reflects the warmth of our community and provides an uplifting environment for our youngest boarders. The feedback from students and parents has been overwhelmingly positive, and it is heartening to see how these improvements have contributed to the overall well-being and happiness of our boarders.

In addition, we have successfully added three new rooms to the boys' boarding house, expanding our capacity and allowing us to welcome more students into our growing boarding family. At the same time, we are delighted to report that the renovation of the girls' boarding house is now close to completion. Almost all rooms have been upgraded in terms of flooring and decoration, creating a modern, consistent, and comfortable standard throughout. These enhancements have not only improved the physical environment but have also helped to foster a renewed sense of pride and ownership among our boarders.

None of these developments would have been possible without the ongoing support of the College Leadership Team, our dedicated Governors, our Old Ratcliffians, and the Parents' Association (PA). We are especially grateful to our PA for their recent contribution towards the purchase of a PlayStation 5 and an Air Hockey table for our boarders' lounge. These additions have been met with enormous excitement! They have quickly become the centrepiece of friendly competition and laughter during evenings and weekends. The in-house tournaments that have followed have brought great energy and camaraderie among our students and encourage teamwork, sportsmanship, and friendship in a relaxed and joyful atmosphere.

Beyond the physical improvements, one of the most exciting initiatives we have introduced is the launch of our student-led Cultural Weeks. This project, part of our boarding development plan, aims to celebrate the incredible diversity within our community. We believe that understanding and sharing our different backgrounds enriches everyone's experience and deepens the sense of unity among our boarders.

Our first Cultural Week, held last year, focused on African Culture, and it was a resounding success. Students took the lead in organising a vibrant programme of activities, including traditional music, dance, food, and storytelling. The week culminated in a weekend of celebrations - a Saturday quiz followed by Sunday games and delicious dishes from various African countries. The event was filled with colour, laughter, and a genuine spirit of learning and appreciation.

Building on that success, this year we celebrated our Hispanic Culture Week, again led entirely by our students. It was inspiring to see our boarders take ownership of the event by preparing presentations, cooking traditional meals, and sharing stories and traditions from across the Hispanic world. The enthusiasm and participation from the entire boarding community were remarkable, and it served as another powerful reminder of how vibrant and multicultural our boarding family has become.

These Cultural Weeks have quickly become a highlight of our calendar, providing a wonderful opportunity for our boarders to celebrate who they are, learn about others, and strengthen the bonds of friendship that make our community so special.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to continuing this journey of growth and improvement. With the ongoing support of our Old Ratcliffians, parents, and the wider Ratcliffe community, we are confident that our boarding houses will continue to evolve as places of warmth, belonging, and opportunity for all who live within them. Every new project, every improvement, and every celebration is a reflection of our shared commitment to providing the very best for our students.

Once again, thank you to all our Old Ratcliffians for your generosity, encouragement, and continued interest in the life of the College. You remain an important part of our extended family, and your legacy continues to shape the experiences of our young boarders today.

With heartfelt thanks and warmest wishes,

Jose Estevez
Head of Boarding
Ratcliffe College







SIXTH FORM

The 2024/25 academic year was another very busy and exciting one for Sixth Form students, with a huge amount taking place both in and out of the classroom.

Congratulations to Year 13 who achieved some of our best A Level and BTEC results ever. Over 90% of the year group were successful in gaining places at their first-choice destination for life after School. We wish them all well on their chosen university courses, apprenticeships and careers, and very much look forward to hearing about how they get on in the future.

Leavers' Day provided Year 13 students with an opportunity to reflect on their years at Ratcliffe with their teachers, parents and each other. The day began with a rousing performance of Coldplay's 'Viva La Vida' during Chaplaincy assembly, and culminated in a moving Mass in the College Chapel. This included beautiful music from Ellie and Ethan, a heartfelt reflection from Mia, and a second performance of their song!

Year 12 have also had a very positive first year in the Sixth Form and adapted successfully to the demands of their courses. Nearly a third of the year group were new to Ratcliffe, and with the support of their peers and teachers, they settled into their new school and routines quickly. We look forward to seeing this year group emulate previous cohorts' successes in their final year at Ratcliffe.

The Year 13 Senior Prefects did a fantastic job working in support of the School and their peers, and one of Harry's and Alice's initiatives was to establish a tradition of the Head Boy and Girl leading a reflection in their final assembly. Sixth Form students led by example in many House competitions over the course of the year, while they also made the most of opportunities to broaden their horizons by participating in the co-curricular programme and educational visits.

This year, weekly social events in the Sixth Form Centre have been established with themed food from around the world, and these have proved to be very popular and well attended. Our INSPIRE programme has been supplemented by particularly high-profile speakers, including Baroness Nicky Morgan and comedian/ anaesthetist Dr Ed Patrick. As ever, the Sixth Form Summer Ball was the highlight of the social calendar, enjoyed by all.

I would like to thank the Sixth Form team and tutors for all their hard work in support of the students once again, and congratulate all students on their contributions to Sixth Form life over the last year.



SIXTH FORM HEAD OF YEAR REPORTS

BENJAMIN WOODLEY HEAD BOY

Hello, I am Ben, and it is both an honour and a privilege to have been appointed Head Boy for the 2025/26 academic year. Throughout the year, my goal is to support every student—from Nursery through to the Sixth Form - in making the very most of their time at Ratcliffe, both inside and outside the classroom. I firmly believe that the experiences gained beyond the classroom are just as valuable as the achievements earned within the exam hall. During my time at Ratcliffe, I have played 1st Team Rugby since Year 11, performed on the clarinet and saxophone in the School Orchestra, and been an active member of the CCF. Opportunities such as these are, in my view, what truly set Ratcliffe apart from other schools.

As Head Boy, I want to encourage all students to participate in as many co-curricular activities as possible. Whether it is playing sport, learning a musical instrument, or joining any other extracurricular pursuit, it is the memories forged through these experiences that will ultimately define your time at Ratcliffe.

Together with the Senior Prefect Team, we have launched a Sixth Form Instagram initiative, through which we have filmed a variety of school events and offered an authentic insight into Sixth Form life from the perspective of the students themselves. We hope this will help to further unify the school community and bridge the gap between Year 11 and the Sixth Form.

To demonstrate our commitment to serving the whole school - Prep, Senior, and Sixth Form, we are also hoping to introduce 'Hot Chocolate Mornings' with the Prep School. In my role within the CCF, I have already visited the Prep School to speak about Remembrance Day and to support their assemblies. This was a wonderful opportunity to meet younger pupils and reinforce the message that the Senior Prefect Team serves the entirety of Ratcliffe College.

Over the course of the year, I hope to continue engaging with students across all age groups and encouraging them to take full advantage of the outstanding co-curricular opportunities offered at our College.

ARABELLA HAMPSON HEAD GIRL

Hello, my name is Arabella, and I have the privilege of serving as Head Girl for this academic year. This position holds great personal significance for me, as it provides an opportunity to give back to the school community that has offered me such invaluable support, encouragement, and opportunity since I first joined Ratcliffe in Year 4. Over the years, the school has shaped not only my academic growth but also my confidence, resilience, and sense of responsibility, qualities that I now strive to embody and promote within my role. I take great pride in being able to bridge communication between students and staff, ensuring that new ideas and perspectives are shared, discussed, and, where possible, put into action.

One of the projects I am most passionate about this year is the introduction of a social media initiative. This idea was developed to strengthen the sense of unity across year groups by sharing relatable, engaging, and authentic student-led content. More importantly, it aims to celebrate our Sixth Form, its excellent facilities, opportunities, and community spirit by offering a genuine glimpse into daily life at Ratcliffe from the perspective of its students. Through this initiative, we hope to not only showcase what makes our school unique but also to foster connection and pride among the wider student body.

Being entrusted with the role of Head Girl is both a privilege and a challenge that I approach with gratitude and dedication. It has given me the platform to turn ideas into action, to support and encourage others, and to contribute to the ongoing development of a community that has meant so much to me. Above all, this experience has deepened my understanding of leadership, strengthened my commitment to service, and reinforced the values of empathy, collaboration, and integrity that I hope to carry with me far beyond my time at Ratcliffe.



SIXTH FORM SUMMER BALL



CHAPLAINCY TRIPS

BRIARS 2024 TRIP

In the last week of the October half-term, Year 7 embarked on their first Senior School residential trip to The Briars, the Diocesan Catholic Youth Retreat Centre located in Crich, Derbyshire. The focus of their retreat was learning that each of them is "fearfully and wonderfully made," and that as young people, they should see themselves not as society sees them, but as God sees them.

Year 7 took part in lots of fun activities and games during their stay at The Briars, including a talent show, with a rousing rendition of *Last Christmas*, sang by Ethan Diza and a disco. They were also fortunate to be joined by Fr. Philip, who came to celebrate Mass on the final day of each retreat.

It was a wonderful opportunity for Year 7 to bond and to end their first half-term in the Senior School on a high note.



Megan Mulligan and Guy Gamble ready for the fancy dress party at Hosanna House. This year's theme was the letter 'H'.



Fr. Anthony Meredith praying for Megan Mulligan as she is confirmed in the Hosanna House chapel. Mrs Teresa Gamble is her sponsor.

THE LOURDES TRIP

In mid-July I went with the HCPT Group 512 (Ratcliffe College) to Lourdes on their annual Pilgrimage, and it was such a fantastic experience.

We spent a week staying in Hosanna House in the Village of Bartres, just ten minutes from Lourdes, with the most amazing views of the Pyrenees. I was lucky enough to share my week with a group of lovely people, who also supported and guided me through my first Holy Communion and Confirmation.

We visited the Grotto on many occasions. We attended the International Mass in the Underground Basilica and celebrated Mass at the Ukrainian Church in Lourdes. On the Monday, we visited the Caves at Betharram, which were amazing. On the Wednesday, we spent the day hiking in Gavarnie, in the Pyrenees, after the annual duck race in the River Gave. One evening we had wine tasting,

which was definitely the best night, and the rest of the time was filled with laughter, good food, and plenty of quality time together.

I would highly recommend this trip - you really do come home with so many happy memories.

Lots of young OR's attended this year's trip including James Clark-Pratt (23), Guy Gamble (23), Richard Gamble (65), Teresa Gamble, Fr Anthony Meredith (57), Megan Mulligan (23), Peter Tetlow (78)

We warmly welcome all Old Ratcliffians to join us in 2026.

Written by Megan Mulligan & Teresa Gamble



Guy Gamble, Megan Mulligan, Bella Barton-Jacques, Issy Elsby and James Clark-Pratt on the Terrace of Hosanna House with the Pyrenees in the background

RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

RYDER CUP

PRINCES LINKS
1ST - 3RD JULY 2025

The Ratcliffe College Ryder Cup Golf Tour was played in Kent this year, based at the world renowned Princes Championship Links Club in Sandwich Bay.

This was the first time that the Golf Tour had ventured to Southern England since the inaugural golf tour in 2011. Kent is often called, "The Garden of England" due to its abundance of fruit orchards, hop gardens, and agricultural produce. Sandwich Bay provided a stunning backdrop for our annual tour to decide the winners of the coveted Mir Patel Golf Trophy. The European Captain, Sam Leake, (now a 2 handicapper) led a team of Will Seager (15) and Lucas Zhang (18). Joe Driver (14) led team USA with Oscar Carlisle (36) and Mr Reddin, Headmaster, (12). Despite the diminished number of golfers this year, there was much anticipation as we packed the minibus and trailer on Tuesday 1st July and headed towards the Kent coast.

Striking a rare balance between modern ambience and historic charm, Prince's Golf Club offers twenty seven Holes of outstanding championship links golf in an idyllic coastal setting. Having undergone a significant redevelopment since 2017, the club held the prestigious 2023 Women's Amateur Championship and hosted the Final Qualifying for The Open Championship from 2018 to 2022.

The club is now ever-present in all Top 100 Great Britain and Ireland rankings and is embarking on perhaps its most ambitious period in modern history since hosting the 1932 Open Championship, famously won by Gene Sarazen, the first golfer to achieve the modern-day slam of all four Majors, The Masters, The US PGA Championship, The US Open Championship and the The Open Championship. Prince's has also been named as the host to the 2030 Walker Cup. Our tour party stayed in the wonderful on-site accommodation at *The Lodge*, with views over Sandwich Bay and Royal St. George's, dining at *The 1932 Grill*. Will, Oscar, Joe and Lucas were delighted to stay in the Collin Morikawa Suite, so named after the Morikawa's win at the 2021 Open Championship at Royal St George's, during which he stayed at *The Princes Links Lodge*.



Day One

Princes Golf Links, Dune, and Himalayas Courses.

An uneventful mini-bus journey crossing the Dart via the Queen Elizabeth II bridge into Kent was followed by a fabulous round which combined two challenging nine-hole courses, the Dune, and the Himalayas on an extremely hot afternoon, with temperatures tipping the mercury at thirty-two degrees as we teed off. It had been decided on the journey down that due to the small number of six golfers, the format of the tour would change this year. For the first two days, there would be two three-ball matches where players representing Europe and USA would play for Stableford Points according to their full handicap. The points would be totalled over the initial rounds, culminating in three two-ball matches on the final day where the winner would receive ten points, with five for a draw and zero for a loss.

Game one was an opportunity for each team to play together in a three-ball match to bond. Europe teed off first, quickly followed by the USA team, all eager to score points for their team.

There was some sparkling golf played, with the pick of the action Joe Driver's stunning Eagle three on the par five sixth hole on the Himalayas, holing a twenty-foot putt! This feat was equalled by Oscar Carlisle's extraordinary three hundred- and twenty-five-yard drive from tee to green on the seventh hole on the Dune course. Using the stiff following breeze and hard fairway, Oscar could not have hit his drive more sweetly. It fairly sailed over the pot bunkers guarding the fairway and bounced and rolled its way past the greenside bunkers to set up a well-deserved net Eagle two and four points for the USA. Brilliant Oscar!

When we all gathered at the eighteenth Green to compare scorecards, the scores could not have been much closer, with the USA team holding a narrow lead, ninety-four points to ninety-one points.

Post-match victuals were enjoyed at, *The 1932 Grill*. Dessert was taken outside the Dining Room on our very own putting green- brilliant! The six companions chipped and putted until the sun finally dipped its head below the horizon at ten o'clock, ending a wonderful first day.

Europe 91 vs USA 94





Day Two

Princes Golf Links, Shore Course.

A rare lie in on a school day until eight fifteen, preceded a hearty breakfast back at *The Grill*. The food was outstanding, all freshly prepared. The maple syrup pancakes were a favourite closely followed by the Eggs Benedict! The weather had changed completely overnight and we had woken up to heavy cloud cover and a mist over Sandwich Bay following overnight rain. There was no breeze off the sea, either. The Captains had considered their team selections carefully for day two which would see the tour party play twenty-seven holes at two different courses. Leake and Driver put themselves out in the first three-ball with Seager. The second three-ball consisted of Carlisle, Reddin and Zhang. The third nine holes at Princes Links is my favourite. As its name implies, the clockwise loop of nine holes initially follows the Shoreline south towards the Lodge at the entrance to the course. The opening drive is straightforward but a par four is still quite difficult to achieve. In contrast the drive at the par five second required the longest carry to the fairway of any hole at Prince's. With its severely undulating fairway the fourth is a daunting hole even for the best golfer. The sixth is the post war eighteenth playing to the same green where Gene Sarazen won the 1932 Open Championship. The seventh begins the return north to the new Clubhouse, an accurate tee shot must be followed by an even more exact second to find the elevated green which slopes steeply to the right. The eighth is a challenging par five with a tight fairway and a par at the last is often hard to achieve. The clubhouse flagpole is an excellent aiming point for the drive which should best find the far right of the fairway to open the approach to the green. The two teams negotiated the course with mixed results. The USA achieved a total of thirty-nine points from the nine holes, highlighting the challenge of scoring on tight fairways and undulating greens.

Team Europe fared better, totalling forty-nine points, with Seager winning eighteen points, the highest of the morning's totals. And so, as we packed the minibus to head off down the coast to Littlestone Golf Club in New Romney, Europe had their noses in front, one hundred and forty points to USA's one hundred and thirty-three points.

An hour's drive led us to Littlestone Golf Club and a well-earned lunch in their historic clubhouse. Heavy rain had followed us from Sandwich but had abated by the time we teed off at half past three with everything to play for. A nearest the pin and longest drive competition had been added to spice up the competition further. This monster championship course played every yard of its six thousand yards off the yellow tees. Bunkers were ubiquitous on fairways and guarding greens, with accuracy a premium. The long par three caught everyone out with no one managing to find the green! The accolade for longest drive looked destined to be the preserve of the Headmaster on the eighteenth hole only for Driver to snatch victory by a few centimetres. Well done, Joe, a fine drive to navigate through the bunkers. As the beautiful late evening sunshine lengthened our shadows as we putted out on the eighteenth green, Europe had extended their lead by a further eighteen points.

A short drive into New Romney and fine dining at 'Ruzzos,' a venerated eatery renowned for its Italian cuisine, did not disappoint. The boys enjoyed a variety of pizza, pasta, and spaghetti as well as the delicious Oreo themed cheesecake – an excellent choice by Seager.

Europe 238 vs USA 213



Day Three

Princes Golf Links, Shore, and Dune Courses.

With the match still in the balance, breakfast on day three provided the Captains an opportunity to review their pairings for the last day with three two-ball matches to decide the destination of the coveted claret jug. Driver, USA skipper, had more to ponder than most, as he wrestled with his decisions and how to try and claw back the lead from Europe.

The Dunes forms an anticlockwise loop of nine holes five out in a southerly direction to the boundary of Royal St. Georges and four back. The dogleg first hole is the most difficult on the course with a narrow green, tricky to hold even with the shortest of approach shots. The par three second offers only temporary respite before three very testing holes particularly the fourth and fifth both challenging par fours. The sixth tee affords fine views across both golf courses and is the start of the excellent par five with hazards both left and right of the green for those choosing to go for the green after a good drive. The approach to the seventh can be difficult to judge whole the par three eighth calls for a long and accurate tee shot. Two good shots are required to find the final green.

The members' favourite nine, The Himalayas, has undergone a major upgrade. Renowned architects Mackenzie & Ebert have reimagined the Himalayas course. The jewel in the crown is the new par three 'Bloody Point' located at the far end of the course, this short hole, set against the backdrop of the sea requires an accurate tee shot to the raised green. The walk from the fifth green to the sixth tee alongside the beach, gives the golfer a little respite before taking on the mammoth par five. The fourth and eighth share of one of the few Championship double greens outside the Old course at St. Andrews. The sixth is the course's longest hole at five hundred and eighty yards, a genuine par five for all golfers. The tee of the par three, seventh affords a spectacular view across Pegwell Bay. From elevated tee to elevated un-bunkered green, into the prevailing south westerly wind the tee shot can require a driver if the wind is strong yet only a short iron with a following north easterly breeze. This par three sees a slight tweak in the new Mackenzie & Ebert design with a sand scrape added on the left side but this par three which affords a swift return to the Clubhouse after seven holes as well as nine. The closing tee shot from the highest tee on the course is similarly affected by the wind and the green, positioned close to the Clubhouse balcony is protected by the Sarazen bunker that collects any overdrawn shot.

European Captain, Leake, would tee it up on the College Golf Tour for his last eighteen holes. To say that Sam has achieved a great deal over the past seven years would be an understatement. Taking up the game of golf in Year seven, Sam has progressed at a rapid rate from a beginner to a two handicapper, who can bring any golf course to its knees with his deadeye accuracy from tee to green and brilliant short game. For his final round, Sam had chosen to play the Headmaster, who would receive ten shots over the eighteen holes, and end a series of matches together on tour since 2019. This would be the final match of three, with their much-anticipated *dual in the sun* between Driver and Seager starting the final day's play. These two had been talking themselves up for this match all week, so bragging rights were at stake as well as points. Match two pitched Carlisle against Zhang, who had played consistently well throughout the tour, driving the ball with great accuracy. Carlisle was receiving a shot per hole, so the outcome was very much in the balance.

With the USA needing victory in all three matches to win the trophy, the bookies had Europe odds-on favourites. Driver and Seager slugged it out with some very tidy golf across their round. However, it was young Seager who triumphed, playing consistently well on the holes he had a shot advantage, despite Driver's best efforts in the final stages. Seager added the closest to the pin title with a fine shot at the allotted par three which nestled just three feet from the cup. Zhang's relentless consistency proved too much for Carlisle. A resounding victory secured on the fourteenth green meant that Europe's win was assured regardless of what happened in the last match. A fast start by Leake saw him take a two-shot lead at the fifth hole. However, Reddin used his shots well and managed to win holes six and seven to reach the turn all-square. Both players scored very well on the back nine but the handicap took its toll on Leake with Reddin achieving dormy three up on the par five fifteenth green with a net birdie to match Leake's fine four. As ever, Leake did not let up in his challenge and secured the longest drive award and won holes sixteen and seventeen. A scrappy final hole was halved in fives, giving Reddin a one-shot victory. Regardless, the day belonged to Leake, Seager and Zhang, as Team Europe, raised the Mir Patel Golf Trophy for 2025.

Final score: Europe 258 vs USA 233



The Presentation of the trophy in the Clubhouse was accompanied by lunch and the awarding of several other prizes. Nearest the pin to Seager, longest drive to Driver and Leake. A well-deserved and special award was made to Carlisle for his gargantuan drive on day 1 – what a mighty blow that was! Golfer of the week, chosen by the players themselves, was awarded to Seager. A fine achievement two years running, well done, Will, much deserved. And finally, an award for *Services to School Golf*, was awarded to Sam Leake. Congratulations, Sam. It has been a pleasure to play golf with you over so many years at Ratcliffe. I am sure that as an alumnus we will continue to enjoy golfing together for years to come. Thank you for all you have done to support the development of golf at Ratcliffe. Thank you to all the tourists this year. Where shall we go next year? Seager whispered that the hallowed turf of St Andrews might be nice. Indeed, it would. We shall see!

**J.P. Reddin,
Headmaster**

FLAME

On the 15th of March, 20 students from our Sixth Form, along with those in Years 10 and 11, joined other young people from across the diocese and the country to travel down to Wembley Arena for Flame 2025. Flame is a national Catholic youth congress featuring inspirational speakers, great music, and opportunities to connect with other young Catholics.

Some highlights of the event included hearing Bear Grylls speak about his faith, as well as receiving a copy of his new book, *The Greatest Story Ever Told* – a narrative retelling of the life of Jesus through the eyes of eyewitnesses. The students also enjoyed the musical acts, particularly performances by Guvna B, Adeniké Adewale, and the One Hope Project.

There was also time for prayer, with Flame concluding in Adoration led by His Eminence, Cardinal Nichols. It was a wonderful experience, thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended, and many are already looking forward to going again in 2027.



MUSIC TRIP TO THE WEST END

On the Thursday of Activities Week, nearly fifty students from Years 9-12 were lucky enough to travel down to London to watch the incredible West End production of MJ: The Musical. Fortunately, the M1 traffic was on our side, so we were able to spend some time in Covent Garden for lunch and some shopping, before making our way to the Prince Edward Theatre for the performance.

The show is a biographical representation of the life of the 'King of Pop', told through a series of scenes replicating rehearsals for his ground-breaking 1992 'Dangerous' world tour. The show guided us through his life, from the very beginning with 'The Jackson 5' all the way through to the early nineties, not shying away from some of the more troublesome events that shaped his path.

Musically, a great number of Michael's hits were included, and it was wonderful to hear these played so confidently by the outstanding live band. The cast also did not disappoint, with the choreography and vocals almost impeccable – quite how the lead actor managed to recreate the subtle nuances of Michael Jackson so perfectly is beyond me.

Overall, it was an outstanding show and one we would thoroughly recommend, and students were a credit to the College throughout.

Mr Harris, Director of Music



SKIING TRIP

I thoroughly enjoyed this year's school ski trip to Les Deux Alpes, which provided me with many invaluable memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the trip was sharing the wonderful experience with my friends. We all progressed in our skiing this year, with many becoming proficient skiers whose confidence soared whilst on the slopes.

The trip to Birmingham airport, then the flight to Geneva and subsequent coach trip to Les Deux Alpes went very smoothly and seeing the snow-capped mountains from the coach just helped to increase the sense of anticipation for the upcoming week.

We settled into our hotel quickly, which provided us with a wide variety of excellent meals, cooked and prepared in-house.

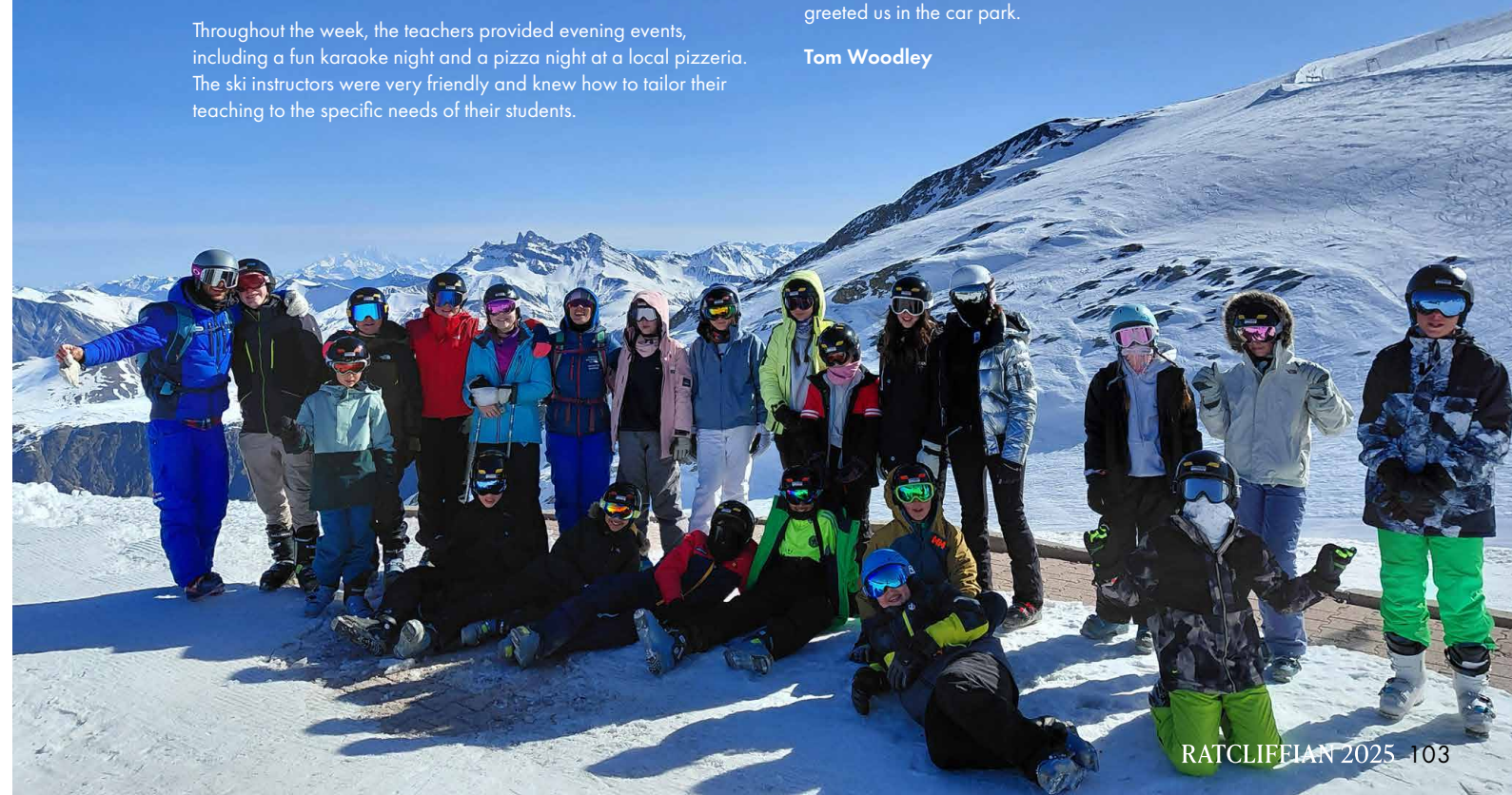
Throughout the week, the teachers provided evening events, including a fun karaoke night and a pizza night at a local pizzeria. The ski instructors were very friendly and knew how to tailor their teaching to the specific needs of their students.

The students on the trip were divided into four separate ability groups with different instructors who took their classes all around the expansive resort (which at its highest point was 3600 metres).

Throughout the week my group progressed from starting on the blue runs to the best in the group getting to go on a black slope called the super devil, which certainly provided a challenge!

Sadly, the amazing week came to an end all too soon, and it was time to return back to Ratcliffe. We packed our bags and travelled back on the coach to Geneva airport before flying to Heathrow and getting on the coach to Ratcliffe, where our parents warmly greeted us in the car park.

Tom Woodley





IMMERSION AND SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMME

Ratcliffe College staff and students have hosted a great number of overseas visitors this year, displaying once again their warmth, welcome and pride in our school.

Through the Immersion and Summer School Programmes, students from South America, Continental Europe and Asia have enjoyed our extensive facilities and excellent education.

The Immersion Programme affords visitors the opportunity to experience life in a wonderful British Boarding School. Following a bespoke academic programme of English language instruction, integrated classes and cultural excursions, our visitors are all able to broaden their horizons and forge new relationships. They also bring their own gifts of adventure and curiosity, which enrich our College community.

The Summer School Programme continued its positive growth this year, broadening the offering to include distinctive tennis and music options alongside the English language and general sporting and creative activities. Leadership of the Activities programme was allotted to Mr James Mountain, who designed and oversaw multiple opportunities for our overseas guests to learn and play alongside

native English speakers. Mr Tom Nixon redesigned the English Language curriculum and joined forces with the formidable Mrs Joanne Reddin to deliver an effective, creative and fun set of lessons.

Across both programmes we have travelled to Cambridge, London, Nottingham and Birmingham; marvelled at museums, galleries and Shakespeare's schoolhouse; toured the halls of Oxbridge colleges and the Tower of London; and explored the sacred spaces of Coventry Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

As ever, I extend my thanks to all members of the Ratcliffe community who work to make the Immersion and Summer School Programmes such a valuable offering. Support, academic and boarding staff reflect a pastoral care that is second to none. Our students create an environment of friendship and help that leaves a lasting impression to our visitors. Thanks also to the visiting students and their families for coming to see just how great an experience it is to be a Ratcliffe student!



A REFLECTION ON SUMMER SCHOOL



Teachers have long holidays and my family, especially, who are not teachers, often say, 'What do you do during this time?' It was an easy reply for last summer as I spent four weeks working as an EAL teacher at the Ratcliffe College summer school.

It was my first time working with international students in English, yet I managed to use my skills of teaching French to excellent use.

Each week, day and lesson were very different, which made the time fly by. We were blessed to host some well-behaved, polite and enthusiastic students, aged between 9 and 15 years old from China, Mexico, Spain, Japan and Thailand. Their knowledge of English was varied, which made the lessons even more exciting as the students, and I had to work together to ensure everyone was learning.

The students were grouped according to their English ability, and we were fortunate to have two classes running at the same time, so numbers were small, however sometimes very mixed in age, so for one class I had a range of ages from ten to fifteen with a mix of Mexican, Chinese and Japanese students. These lessons were perhaps my most enjoyable and the students made the most progress as they could only converse in English and were willing to help each other.

The lessons were based on lots of listening, speaking, some reading and writing in English, including practical and creative tasks. Topics included food from your country, the history of art, science inventions, storytelling, myths and legends and contemporary music and songs.

The food lessons were a particular favourite as after discussing their own country's dishes, the students learned about typical British foods, particularly sweet treats. One lesson involved learning the vocabulary for the ingredients of cupcakes and then baking them in the Food Tech room. A second food lesson involved picking Ratcliffe blackberries and apples from the Rosminian orchard and then baking apple and blackberry muffins.

A further aspect of the lessons involved preparation for the Wednesday trips. Most of Tuesday's lesson time was spent learning about where the students were going for the following day. We went to Cambridge, Stratford and London, so had preparatory lessons on famous British Universities, what punting is, the life of Shakespeare, the history of Henry VIII and iconic London attractions. The first part of Thursday's lessons was always discussing the trips and writing postcards back home telling friends and family all about their adventures.

It is fair to say that our international visitors to Ratcliffe learned an awful lot about British culture, history and well-known British cities. They will have returned home with a far broader knowledge about the United Kingdom, improved English skills and lots of happy Ratcliffe memories. I honestly cannot wait for summer 2026 to welcome more visitors to our amazing summer school.

Jo Reddin





CO-CURRICULAR

Co-curricular activities are very much the life-blood of Ratcliffe College, complementing our academic programme. Opportunities this year have extended students well beyond the classroom.

Ensuring students' passions are explored and developed, ensuring a well-rounded education, giving everyone the opportunity to make new friends, develop new skills and interests, and have a lot of fun along the way.

We continue to use the SOCS Co-Curricular Management system. Helping us to manage who does what, where and when. And with over 120 different clubs and activities each term, it has been a real game changer. Especially as the list of clubs and activities appears to get longer, and more defined as students themselves make their own suggestions for new enterprises. Challenging students to discover what they care about and what they enjoy, and in doing so learning about themselves and their friends.

The Co-Curricular Programme revolves around our Big Six – Chaplaincy, Sport, Music, Drama, Combined Cadet Force and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Students have been encouraged to be curious and try something new, helping them to grow as a person and develop into an independent and confident young adult. Students have enjoyed making choices, especially when deciding how their time is spent.

The INSPIRE talks for Years 9 to 13, continued to give the students a chance to hear stories and specialist advice from experts in their field. These experiences covered a wide range of backgrounds that the students might be interested in.

Our LAMDA students continue to work hard, improving their dramatic performances through Acting, Verse and Prose, Public Speaking and Reading, showing how much hard work they had put in over the year. This hard work was rewarded for those students who were able to sit their exams in June, achieving some excellent results which they should be very proud of.

I would like to thank all the staff for their effort and commitment to the Co-Curricular programme as, without their help, we could not have such an exciting and enjoyable programme. Finally, I would also like to thank parents and students for their continued support and effort that they show to benefit from the activities.

Mark Cole,
Director of Sport & Co-curricular Activities





DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

It was an exceptionally busy year for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award this year. Approximately 120 people started their DofE journey by enrolling for their Bronze award or continued their personal development by moving on to a new level. Participants completed their training, went on expeditions and also dedicated many hours of work to their other sections: playing instruments, helping younger students, being part of their sports team, getting fit, cooking, reading... the list is endless!

October - Gold training day (Bradgate park): our Year 12 students trekked through bracken and heather, past deer - all whilst learning how to accurately measure direction and distance. They found hidden ponds (dry), stream junctions (under the bracken) and other well-disguised places.

November - Gold training day (Edale Round, Peak District): our participants practised their new skills but this time on open moorland. They were now ready for...

April - Gold practice expedition (Brecon Beacons): with Easter being later than normal, the weather was quite kind to us. We had great visibility so saw some glorious scenery. Everybody really improved their navigation and teamwork, demonstrating that they could go anywhere; they were ready for Dartmoor!

May - Bronze training day (Leicestershire): Ten different Year 9 groups walked with a leader and learnt how to navigate their way around the local countryside. They also learnt the importance of teamwork. On return to Ratcliffe they got out their camping stoves and cooked their own supper.

May - Silver practice expedition (Peak District – white peak area): The Year 10s were the only cohort this year to really suffer weather effects. Nobody seemed to sleep well the first night with the tents flapping in the strong winds, although we had better weather during the daytime. The Peak District is a challenging area but, after much practice, they were navigating more accurately by the end of the three days.

June/July - Gold Assessed expedition (Dartmoor): Dartmoor is the ultimate challenge and there was much trepidation before the start. We were so proud of the groups' resilience and determination and they thoroughly deserved their success. They were thrilled to complete the challenge!

August - Silver assessed expedition (Shropshire): Once again, our Year 10s suffered with the weather – more high winds and some very heavy rain this time. Day 2 was pretty miserable; the forecast was only showers but it didn't stop raining for hours. We had a lovely final day and the groups all did really well.

It can be tricky to find groups so we enjoyed having our own trackers this year. We were able to spend more time meeting up with groups and less time searching for them.

As always, a massive thank you to the significant number of staff and volunteers who help with The Duke of Edinburgh's Award – they help us to make it a success!



COMBINED CADET FORCE



EXERCISE RATCLIFFE VENTURER

The academic year began with a Field Training Exercise in Yearsley, North Yorkshire in mid-October. The exercise involved a number of progressive fieldcraft battle lessons, most of which were conducted with either the laser tag weapons or with paintball weapons which added to the enjoyment!



REMEMBRANCE 2024

The annual school Remembrance service took place on Armistice Day in the school chapel. It was a poignant event which highlighted the selfless service and sacrifice made by so many Old Ratcliffians.



ADVENTURE TRAINING CAMP

(14-18 FEB 25)

Three members of the CCF staff led the school's adventure training expedition to the Peak District in February. Eleven students from Year 8 to Year 10 participated in a multi-activity package including, mountain biking, canoeing, climbing, trekking and archery. The trip was a huge success.



SHOOTING WEEKEND

(15-16 MAR 25)

Cadets conducted Skill at Arms training with the Cadet Scorpion Air Rifle and the Cadet GP rifle. They also participated in lessons in survival and competed in an archery competition (which doubled up as the inaugural Inter House Archery Competition).



CCF ANNUAL DINNER NIGHT

(29 MAR 25)

The annual dinner night took place in the Old Library on Saturday 29th March. There were 31 attendees which included serving CCF staff, current sixth formers, Old Ratcliffians and external guests. The Chief Guest was Brigadier Anthony Lamb MBE DL, the current MOD Head of Cadets. Brigadier Lamb spoke eloquently about the benefit of school cadet forces and presented Capt Michelle Reeves with her Kings Coronation Medal.



RAF AIR EXPERIENCE FLYING

(17 APR 25)

Six cadets from the RAF Section visited RAF Cranwell on 17th April to undertake air experience flights in the RAF's Grob Tutor aircraft.



RAF GLIDING (19 APR 25)

Six cadets were lucky enough to be able to undertake gliding as part of their flying training on 19th April, at RAF Syerston.



FIELDRAFT CAMP (6-8 JUN 25)

Cadets and staff participated in the summer term exercise at Beccingham Training Area alongside ten cadets and staff from Stamford Welland Academy CCF. Participants were involved in paintball and laser tag shooting, progressing to full bore shooting from 100m at Beccingham Ranges. The standards were excellent with lots of cadets obtaining marksmanship scores.



COMBINED CADET FORCE



ANNUAL INSPECTION (25 JUN 25)

Ratcliffe College held its inaugural Exhibition Day CCF Annual Inspection. This involved the whole CCF parading in front of the school including parents, on the Headmaster's Lawn in a cordoned parade arena. The Reviewing Officer was Prof Simon Denny, the author of the National CCF Social Study Report – 'The Impact and Value of School-Based Cadet Forces in the UK' (outlined in more detail below). The event was supported by the Catterick Army Band who played a repertoire of music including a brief Beating Retreat, Sunset ceremony and the National Anthem. Overall, the event was a huge success.

ARMY SECTION SUMMER CAMP (5-11 JULY 25)

Ten cadets and four members of the Army Section once more joined forces with the staff and cadets from Stamford Welland Academy CCF to undertake a detailed programme of progressive military and adventurous training skills at Yardley Chase Training Area in Northampton. The camp was a huge success. Cadets took part in numerous activities ranging from live firing at Tamworth ranges, adventure training in the form of mountain biking, raft building and archery, fieldcraft (including 24hrs living in the field in a tactical setting) and a whole range of leadership developmental and problem-solving team tasks. The camp was a fitting way to bid farewell to our outgoing senior cadet, Ellie Moss, who had started her cadet service at the same camp 6 years earlier.



INSKIP CAMP

(18-22 AUGUST 25)

A few Ratcliffe College CCF staff and cadets participated in a joint camp with CCF staff and cadets from Stamford Endowed Schools at the end of the Summer Holidays. Cadets took part in a variety of activities throughout the week, including the Via Ferrata at Honister Slate Mine in Cumbria, multiple activities at the Cadet Centre including air rifle lessons, climbing wall, low ropes, archery, flight simulators and evening laser tag, and a navigation exercise.



CCF OTHER NEWS...

King's Coronation Medals

The following members of the CCF Staff have been awarded their King's Coronation Medals:

- Maj M Blackford – Contingent Commander
- Capt M Reeves – OC Army Section
- Flt Lt H Grant – OC RAF Section
- Capt S Swain – Army Section officer (External)
- CSgt M Stevens – School Staff Instructor

Honours & Awards

The following awards have been approved in this reporting period:

Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious Service

Awarded to:

- Capt Samantha Swain (Army Section)
- Flt Lt Helen Grant (RAF Section)

Lord Lieutenant's CCF Cadet for Academic Year 25-26

Awarded to:

- Cadet CSgt TJ Dunstan (Army Section)

Commissioning

Sgt B Gould (CFAV – Army Section) was formally granted a commission (2Lt) having attended the cadet commissioning board in March.



Courses

In the first week of August, our senior cadet, Ben Woodley (Y13) attended the Master Cadet Course run at the Cadet Training Centre, Frimley Park. This is the pinnacle command and leadership course run by the central training team at the Cadet Training Centre for all senior cadets in the country. His successful completion is testament to his commitment and devotion to the CCF for which he was congratulated at the start of this term in the Headmasters' Assembly.



ACTIVITIES WEEK



HOUSE CONKERS 2024



HOUSE ACTIVITIES

PANCAKE RACE 2025





HOUSE MUSIC



A FILM IN AN HOUR

As part of our July Activities Week, students took on the exciting challenge of planning, directing, filming, and performing in a short film - all within just one hour!

The results were fantastic, spanning genres from comedy and horror to science fiction and fantasy. Students showcased impressive creativity, making use of a variety of campus locations, clever cinematography, and sharp editing skills.



Click on the QR code to watch a highlights reel featuring all the films.

D. Lissaman,
Head of Media



STAFF FAREWELLS



Saying Goodbye to 'Aunty Jane'

17 and a half (remember the half Jane said) years Jane has been at Ratcliffe. Without question like many who have been here for much longer a lot has changed in that time. In recent years and HR has probably changed the most, HR is now more challenging and there does appear to be any light at the end of the tunnel with more challenging new government legislation on the way.

Perhaps the biggest change was Covid-19, Jane and I reacting to the latest developments on a weekly basis, always seemingly having to implement changes a week ahead of any useful new Covid-19 guidance, policy and model letters from the Government. Like everyone there were new words like Furlough, Flexible Furlough, working from home and flexible working requests, etc.

Jane is one for traditions, especially Ratcliffe traditions, and in my early days if I were to dare to suggest something new or end something, I would get the sort of stare that Paddington would be proud of, and then David didn't do that. One of Jane's favourite traditions (and there are a few) is the Office Christmas Decorating Competition, for those that don't know this is where support staff decorate their offices during the last week of the Autumn term, which is then judged by myself and Graham Studd. During the last 3 years Jane has dressed up as Jacon Marley, Jack & T B S mother welding an inflatable axe and then most recently Noddy Holder with an inflatable guitar.

Then came the retirement announcement and Jane almost immediately changed, the responsibilities and stress drained from her body, leaving Jane with a big smile on her face, joyfully telling us how little time she had left on seemingly daily basis. So, we say goodbye to Aunty Jane who will become Nanny Jane and her grandchildren will no doubt love the opportunity to spend more time with their Nanny. I suspect however, no I am sure this is just adieu and not goodbye.

Goodbye to Tracey Nightingale

It was with heavy hearts that we wished Mrs Tracey Nightingale a happy retirement in July 2025 after two decades of service to the College. Most notably through her role as Management Assistant, Tracey supported six Deputy Heads of the Senior School Mr Reddin, Mrs Clayfield, Mr Ryce, Mr Donegan and Mr Rainer with good humour, loyalty, and an outstanding eye for detail.

She loved so many parts of her role but particularly enjoyed championing the voice of students through the School Council and guiding the organisation of the Picnic Concert and Exhibition Day.

Tracey was also a mother to two Old Ratcliffians Jack (18) and Sam (16) and therefore had a fine instinct for how our parental body would feel about the inevitable changes and new opportunities that emerge in a school over time. She was a key supporter of our cricketing programme and led our partnership with Leicestershire County Cricket Club for many years with her customary enthusiasm and passion for the opportunity of sport. She was particularly influential in our decision to move towards Girls' Cricket as a core games offering in the Summer Term.

Tracey will be deeply missed at Ratcliffe by those she worked with and the countless parents who knew that she would have the answer to their question. We wish her and her husband, David - who in recent years as an Invigilator has helped hundreds of our young people through their examinations - the very best in their new adventures in Anglesey and know that she will not be a stranger to us.

RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

The Ratcliffian Association - A Lifelong Community

Whether your child is just beginning their journey at Ratcliffe College or preparing to take their next steps beyond it, their time at school is only one chapter in a much bigger story. At the Ratcliffian Association, we understand this deeply, which is exactly why the Association exists.

Established by former students in 1865, the Ratcliffian Association was created to ensure that the sense of belonging fostered at Ratcliffe doesn't end at graduation. It offers continued support and connection as students transition from school life into the wider world. Leaving Ratcliffe doesn't mean leaving the community; rather, it means becoming part of a wider, lifelong network.

This global network of former pupils affectionately known as Old Ratcliffians or ORs, is made up of over 6,000 members across the world. Every student who leaves the College automatically becomes a lifetime member of this alumni community, gaining access to a network that values friendship, professional connections, and mutual support.

The Association is run by its own Council of alumni, and elected President Louise Watkins (nee Jackson) from Class of 91'. Louise works closely with Amanda Mole, the Association Manager, to ensure the objectives of the Association are met for the benefit of both its members and the College.

Through events, mentoring, and networking opportunities, the Ratcliffian Association ensures that no student ever truly leaves Ratcliffe behind, they simply grow into a new role within its extended family.

What the Association does...

Keeping ORs Connected

The Ratcliffian Association plays a vital role in helping former students stay connected with one another. In a world of instant communication, through Snapchat, messaging apps, and social media, it may seem like losing touch is a thing of the past. However, as time passes and lives move in different directions, those connections can still fade.

That's where the Association truly comes into it's own. With a carefully maintained database of Old Ratcliffians from around the globe, it helps bridge the gap, whether you're reconnecting with an old friend 20 or 30 years on, or looking to make new connections within the wider OR network. The dedicated website provides the platform for former students to connect – www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk.

Giving Back Through the Inspire Programme and Networking Events

As career and life experience evolve, Old Ratcliffians (ORs) are invited back to share their insights with current students through the Head of Careers led Inspire Programme and Careers & Networking Events. These opportunities are not only valuable for students but also offer a meaningful way for ORs to give back to the College community.

Supporting the next generation of ORs allows alumni to reflect on their own journey, see how far the school and its students have come, and develop key skills such as public speaking and networking, all of which look great on a CV.

These hugely popular events are held every other year with this year's Networking Event taking place in March, while the Careers Event was held in September. Both events are invaluable, bringing together young ORs at the start of their careers with established alumni who share their expertise, insights, and experiences – all connected by a shared beginning at Ratcliffe.

Staying Connected Through Reunions and Sport

The Ratcliffian Association offers a calendar of events dedicated to bringing (ORs) back together. From formal London dinners to casual drinks and sports, milestone reunions - 5, 10, or even 50 years on, offer chances to reflect, share updates, and relive cherished memories of school days.

The Ratcliffe spirit is global too. While travelling, Headmaster Mr. Reddin often meets ORs, to continually strengthen international ties and connections.

This year's London black-tie Dinner was a tremendous success, bringing together both younger and older generations of Old Ratcliffians for an evening of connection and celebration. Held in the stunning surroundings of The Crypt in the heart of London, it was a special occasion for everyone to dress up, share stories, and strengthen the bonds of the Ratcliffe community.

In September, the Classes of 2015 and 2020 reunited in the Old Ratcliffian Bar to celebrate 5 and 10 years since leaving. The evening began with a tour of the College, giving alumni a chance to see what has, and hasn't, changed since they left, followed by live music, drinks, and the chance to catch up with former teachers.



In summer, the traditional annual Grand Match took place, with the Old Ratcliffians once again challenging the College's 1st XI Cricket team in an effort to reclaim the Leonard Haines Trophy. Triumphantly, the College team retained the trophy for another year.

A highlight of the day was seeing Matt Hilton (a parent and OR), take to the field and play against his own children who are on the College team, adding a special sense of tradition and continuity to the match.

OR Martin Foulds had the honour of presenting the Foulds Trophy for Man of the Match to student Jaiden Patel.

While the match was underway, over 100 ORs and parents gathered to enjoy live music and a family picnic, all while dodging the great British weather!



RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

Old Rats Golf Society

This year the Golf Society has been hugely successful in bringing ORs together for some friendly competition and good-spirited banter.

Led by Captain Sean Kelly, the team took part in over seven events throughout the year, including two hosted by the Association at Rothley Park Golf Club.

A record 51 ORs attended the Reynard & Tierney Cup event, the highest turnout on record. A highlight of the day was seeing recent school leavers Samuel Leake and Rocco Lanza giving the older more experienced players a run for their money and winning the trophies. Sean Kelly now hands over the reins to Alison Court, who will serve as Golf Captain for 2026. We wish her the very best of luck.



Old Ratcliffian Magazine

As you read this magazine produced by the College with its insight into student life and highlights from the past year, it is worth knowing that the Ratcliffian Association also produces its own annual publication, *The Old Ratcliffian*.

The magazine is dedicated to sharing updates about the College, its history and, most importantly, news from former students. It features everything from wedding and baby announcements to career milestones, travel adventures, charity achievements, and awards.

It also includes updates on past and forthcoming reunions and events, what happened and who attended.

A treasured read for many, 2500 hard copies are printed and delivered to ORs around the world, reaching the doorsteps in time for Christmas.

Old Ratcliffians return to Ratcliffe

Old Ratcliffians greatly enjoy returning to visit their former College, reliving fond memories and seeing how the school has evolved. This year the Association welcomed over 18 ORs for tours, including former teachers Mr & Mrs Davies visiting from Australia with their children, Count Tommaso Leonetti di Santojanni and his family and even a former teacher, Dr Biltcliffe, who had his first teaching post at Ratcliffe from 1962-1966 returned for a visit down memory lane 59 years later!



The Ratcliffian Association supports and connects Old Ratcliffians from their first days beyond Ratcliffe and continues to do so for life. So, in May, as the journey of our Year 13 students came to a close, the Ratcliffian Association President Louise Watkins (née Jackson) officially welcomed them into the Association during their Leavers Mass.

Each student received a welcome gift, a tie for the boys and a charm for the girls, which we hope they will wear with pride and honour as they take their next steps on their life journey.



DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

ENHANCING THE RATCLIFFE EXPERIENCE

The generosity of our parents, Old Ratcliffians, and friends of the College continues to make a profound difference to the lives of our students. This year, thanks to ongoing donations and the tireless fundraising efforts of the Parents' Association, over £23,000 has been distributed across a variety of projects that directly enhance the Ratcliffe experience for students of all ages.

Here are just some of the initiatives your support has made possible:

- Cricket practise nets to support individual training
- Black composite benches for students to enjoy during break and lunchtimes
- Board games in the Library, giving pupils a chance to connect and relax together
- A significant contribution towards the Prep School's OPAL play scheme
- Trackers for the Duke of Edinburgh students for when they are out on expeditions
- New microphones and a light-up sign for the Ratcliffe Rambles student podcast team
- Brass instruments for budding Prep musicians
- A mannequin and sewing kit for the Drama department
- Chess sets for the chess co-curricular club
- Fresh furniture for the Rosmini Room, a chaplaincy space for prayer and reflection
- Gardening tools for the Eco Club, supporting our environmentally minded students
- A complete refresh of the SEND landing area with new furniture, lighting, and a rug – creating a warm, welcoming space for quiet time, small group work, and wellbeing during breaks.

These projects and items, large and small, are a direct result of our community's generosity, and they continue to enrich the daily lives of Ratcliffe students.

Alumni Boarding Appeal

This year also saw the launch of our Boarding Appeal, driven by the heartfelt testimonies of our confident and enthusiastic boarders, who starred in a new video alongside the Head of Boarding. Their stories helped bring the campaign to life, inspiring Old Ratcliffians to reflect on their own memories of boarding life.

We are delighted to share that the appeal has already raised £18,000 towards new furniture and décor for the boarding houses. In recognition of this support, all donors will be acknowledged within the Boarding Houses, with the opportunity to sponsor a room for those wishing to make a dedicated gift.

The generosity of our alumni ensures that today's boarders can enjoy the same sense of belonging, comfort, and pride that so many Old Ratcliffians remember so fondly.

Ongoing Support - Thank You

We remain deeply grateful to all who continue to give so generously to Ratcliffe College. Whether supporting specific projects, contributing to appeals, or providing bursaries for families who could not otherwise afford a Ratcliffe education, your belief in our mission is both humbling and inspiring.

Your support allows us to look ahead with confidence, ensuring that Ratcliffe continues to provide not only an outstanding education, but also a vibrant, nurturing, and faith-filled community for generations to come.

Thank you for helping us make this possible.



THE RATCLIFFE ROUNDUP:

BRINGING THE SPIRIT OF RATCLIFFE COLLEGE TO LIFE

We are thrilled to share the exciting re-launch of The Ratcliffian Podcast, now proudly renamed The Ratcliffe Roundup. Since the rebrand the show has become a vibrant platform offering a bi-weekly behind-the-scenes look into life at Ratcliffe College. The podcast gives parents, students, and the wider community a closer connection to the people, events, and stories that make our school so special.

Hosted by familiar faces from the Ratcliffe community, each episode explores a new theme from student performances and global connections to cultural celebrations and staff reflections.

In one of our most popular episodes, Mr M. Harris, Mr J. Harris, and Ratcliffians Annie and Joe discuss the excitement surrounding the upcoming performance of Matilda. Listeners are treated to an inside look at the audition process, the *friendships* that developed along the way and the buzz building ahead of the February show. It is a wonderful reminder of the creativity and teamwork that thrives in our School community.

Another highlight celebrates European Day of Languages (EDOL), where Mr Newman puts Ratcliffe teachers to the test with a lively language quiz! The episode also reflects on what makes Ratcliffe such a diverse and welcoming environment and a place where students from around the world come together to learn, grow, and thrive.

Listeners also loved our conversation between Headmaster Jonathan Reddin and Sam Pitt from Pitt Study UK, who explored the unique journey of Chilean students studying at Ratcliffe College. From life in Santiago to new experiences in Leicestershire, the episode shines a light on cultural exchange, shared learning and the bonds that connect students across continents.

In a more recent episode we see four dedicated members of staff share their memories and reflections from Ratcliffe College's Day and International Summer School 2025. From unforgettable activities to the strong sense of community that defines these programmes, they capture what makes Ratcliffe such an inspiring place to study. Whether it is welcoming students from across the globe through the International Summer School, or helping local pupils discover new passions in the Day Summer School the Roundup offers a warm glimpse into these enriching experiences.

Looking ahead, the marketing department are eager to expand the audience and continue building connections through inspiring conversations. We would love to welcome guests and Old Ratcliffians onto the show in order to share stories, insights, and memories that celebrate our growing community.

If you are interested in joining us on The Ratcliffe Roundup, please email marketing@ratcliffecollege.com - we would love to hear from you!

Please subscribe to the Ratcliffe Roundup to stay up to date with new episodes and discover more behind-the-scenes stories from life at Ratcliffe College.



Click on the QR code to watch all our fantastic episodes on the *Ratcliffe Rambles* YouTube channel.





EST. 1847

RATCLIFFE

COLLEGE

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