

St. George's School Newsletter

Friday 20th June 2025



From the Head

This week St George's has been filled with activity and energy - no one is slowing down as we approach the last weeks of the year! Within this newsletter, you will find reports on events that have taken place over the past few days: from the final debating fixture of the season, to trips to Oxford and the Olympic Park; from the concluding meeting of the Carnegie Book Club and the inter-house quiz, to the Year 10 Food & Nutrition summer exams, athletics meets, and cricket fixture. It has been a full and exciting week.

Next week is shaping up to be equally vibrant for our pupils, with a wide range of opportunities and experiences ahead: the Duke of Edinburgh Silver practice expedition this weekend, Summer Finals Day, the Lower School production, our Careers Fair, and the PSA Summer Fête to name but a few. There is much to look forward to.

Faith matters

This week, I would particularly like to highlight all things chapel and faith, and celebrate the breadth of activity that has taken place in this area of school life over this term.

It was a privilege to attend the Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes last Saturday, where 26 of our pupils confirmed their baptismal vows in front of family and friends. It was a joyful occasion, and heartening to witness the support those young people receive from their church, their sponsors, and the volunteers who prepared them for the sacrament.

In school this term, our chapel theme has focused on faith. Each weekday, members of our school community have shared how their own faith relates to their area of the curriculum. Colleagues from Science, DT, English, Music, Politics, Art and Sport have all offered thoughtful reflections on how their belief in God connects with their academic passions.

Meanwhile, in Sunday chapel, the Rev. has been exploring faith through the Book of Daniel, particularly the challenge of remaining faithful in a faithless world. He has also conducted interviews with a wide range of individuals - staff, local faith leaders, and pupils - asking them to share their personal journey, how they came to believe, and what advice they would offer to young people.

The regular rhythm of prayer groups, both for staff and pupils, has continued throughout the term, offering space for quiet reflection and connection.

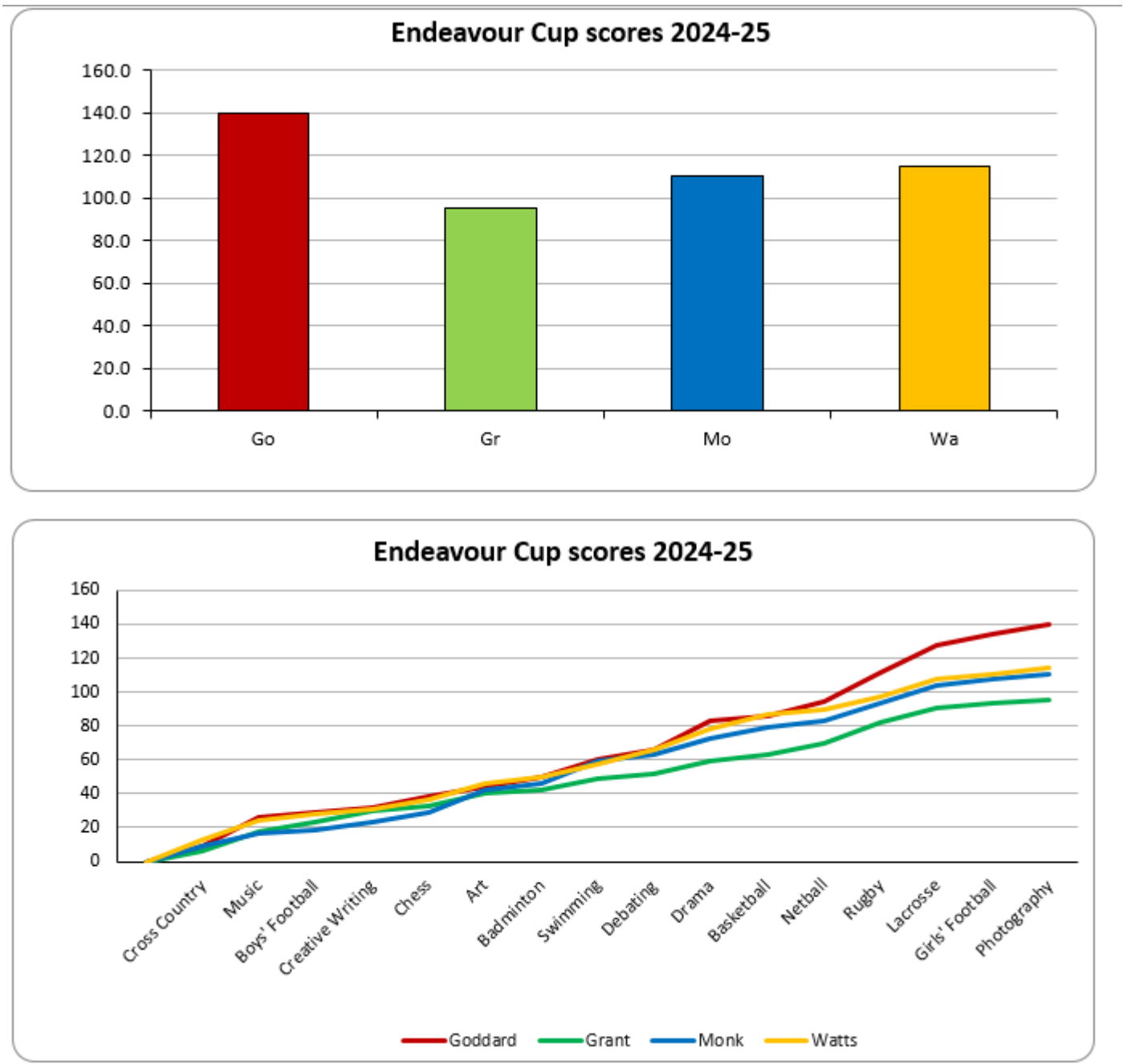
I would like to thank Rev. Warner for his leadership of the chapel: for the inspiration he brings to the ideas and themes we explore, and for the care he shows for the faith and spiritual development of our pupils.

I hope you and your families have a restful weekend. If you are able, do encourage your children to take a little time to rest and recharge! There are still plenty of exciting and demanding weeks ahead.

Endeavour Cup Update!

We are nearly at the end of this year's race to win the prestigious Endeavour Cup and there are only six house events left with four weeks to go! Anything could happen! The Mighty Goddard House have been leading this term and have a substantial lead. Just how does Mr Day manage this year after year? Watts and Monk have been neck and neck and Grant is strategically waiting for a last minute fight back. Come on Grant House - you can do it!

Events still to come: Bake Off, House Quiz, Cricket, Rounders, Tennis, Dance and Sports Day. Hoorah!



Uniform Update

Thank you for your continued flexibility and understanding as we adapted our school uniform in response to the recent warm weather. With temperatures forecast to return to approximately 20°C on Monday, we will be reverting to our **normal uniform and dress code** requirements.

Blazers will remain optional until further notice. However, they will be required on **Wednesday** as we will be taking official photographs for our new website.

Summer Finals Day is on Monday

Summer Finals Day (that involves our house cricket, rounders and tennis events) is taking place on Monday. Events take place throughout the day and a significant number of our students are involved. Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate spectators on Monday but Sports Day is coming up on the afternoon of 15th July - we would love parents and carers to come and watch that event so do put it in your diary.

Debating goes from strength to strength

On Monday, twelve of our Y7-Y12 students took part in the eighth Harpenden schools debate competition at Roundwood Park School.

The standard of debate amongst all four schools was high quality, and as usual we gave a very strong account of ourselves. Well done to Florence H & Mollie P (Year 8) for winning best junior pair.

Mr Ellis would like to thank all of the students and staff who have played a part helping to make debating in St. George's such a strength in such a short space of time. We are now one of the strongest debate schools in the county. We look forward to seeing St George's debating go from strength to strength in 25/26!



Radio Ford

The Head featured on Mix 92.6 FM last night talking about current issues such as student engagement, inclusion SEN support, mobile phones, our Christian ethos and foundation as well as behaviour and most importantly how great it is to be the Head of St. George's.

The interview will feature this week on 'The Parents' Show' which is broadcast every Thursday evening from 7.00 to 8.00 pm. Each week, a theme is selected by one of their listeners, and each week a 'top expert' is invited into the studio to respond to listeners' questions and concerns.

The interview was on air last night at 8.00 p.m. and will be repeated on Thursday evening at 7.00 p.m. on FM, DAB and online at Mix 92.6. It's also now available on 'Listen Again' here: <https://player.autopod.xyz/928615>

It is definitely worth a listen!

British Values Week

This week, Mr Ellis delivered a series of assemblies on 'British Values'. The four core British values are 'democracy', 'the rule of law', 'individual liberty' and 'mutual respect and tolerance'. During the assembly, we talked about how these are embedded into our Georgian values and also talked about people who embody 'British Values'. Delivering these assemblies enable us to inform students of these core values and to remind them of their importance and the importance to accept and include everyone.

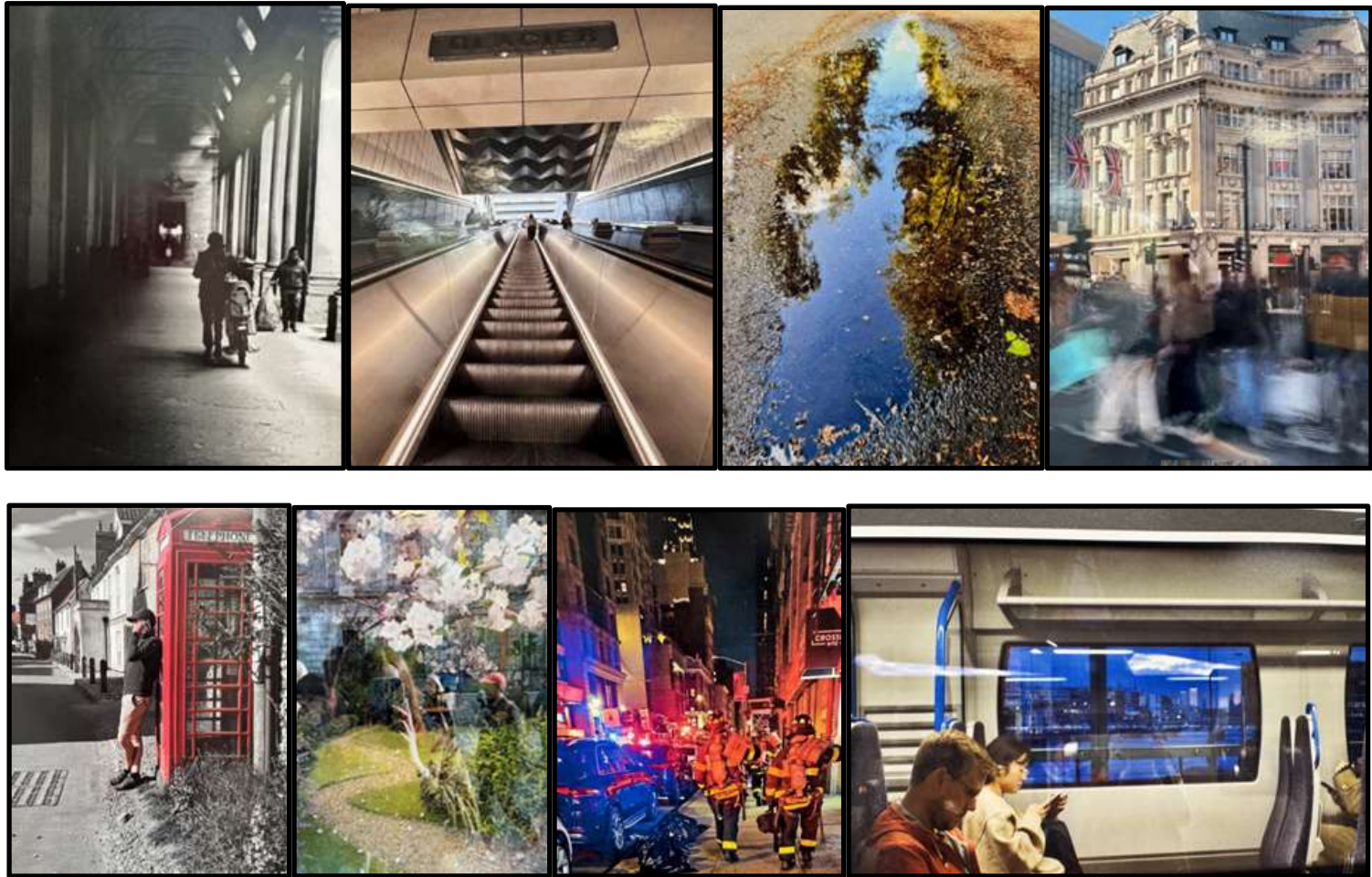
House Photograph Competition: *Moments in Everyday Life*

This year's Inter-House Photography Competition invited students from Years 7 to 13 to capture *Moments in Everyday Life* – and the results are nothing short of inspiring. From quiet morning routines to bustling scenes, each entry offered a unique perspective on the beauty and significance of ordinary moments we often overlook.

All four school houses participated with enthusiasm and creativity, submitting a wide variety of thoughtful and striking images. After careful judging, Goddard House was named the overall winner. The judge was the Chief Times Sports Photographer, Marc Aspland, an ex- St George's parent and keen supporter of St. George's Art Department. Marc remarked that entries this year demonstrated originality, emotional depth, and powerful storytelling. The winning and shortlisted photographs now feature in a beautiful central display in the dining room foyer. This display is currently a focal point, drawing admiration and sparking conversation among students, staff, and visitors alike.

The competition has been a brilliant way to engage students with photography, encouraging them to observe the world around them more closely and appreciate the value in everyday experiences. It has also provided a fantastic opportunity for creative expression across year groups. It is a great opportunity to get involved in a house event. Congratulations to **Goddard House**, and well done to all who took part. Your work has truly shown how extraordinary the ordinary can be.

A big thank you to Mrs Turner and the Art Department who inspire our students every day.



Students visit Oxford's dreaming spires

Last Thursday, some of our Year 10 and Year 12 school debate team got to spend a day in Oxford. They were given a guided tour of the city and of Balliol and Worcester colleges by Ruby S-F (St George's alumna). This was followed by a Q&A with Oxford students and staff.

We then had a visit to the famous Pitt Rivers' museum, before a leisurely dinner. The highlight of the day was a debate workshop and tour followed by getting to watch the evening debate in the Oxford Union.

Four of our Year 12s got to speak in front of the Union in the opening debate, which showed remarkable skill and poise!

It was a wonderful day, and all of our students were a credit to St George's. We are delighted that we are able to provide these opportunities for our students: and thank all of those who helped organise the day and who gave up their time on the day to make it such an engaging and enriching experience.



The PSA needs your help!

The PSA writes: As we are now competing with the carnival, could we ask that families make an extra effort to support this crucial fundraising and school community event in aid of improvements to the assembly hall. Support your school!

We are looking for vital volunteers to help make this year's Summer Fête a real success! A huge amount of effort, coordination and creativity has already gone into the planning, and we need your help to make it happen. We really can't do it without you! We need enthusiastic helpers to run games and stalls, serve food and drinks, sell raffle tickets and to run the entrance. We'll also need a heavy gang to help set up and take down the event.

Whether you can give an hour or a whole afternoon, your time will make a real difference. Not only is the Fête one of the biggest fundraising events for the school, it's also genuinely a lovely, feel-good event. Volunteering gives you the chance to chat with other parents, soak up the atmosphere, and be part of something that brings our community together.

Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/stg-psa> Look out for the full donation letter in your email. Thanks.

Food Glorious Food!

This week, we have been mightily impressed with our year ten Food Tech students who have whisked up some fantastic meals as part of their summer exams. We'd like to thank the Food Tech teachers for their continued support and advice to ensure that our students have lots of experience to excel. Bon appetite!

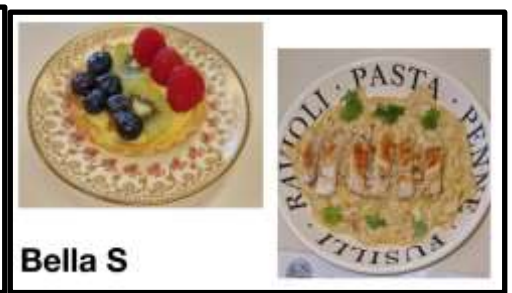




Danny F



Isla G-M



Bella S

Lower School Play: 'Daisy Pulls it Off'

Join us for a terribly splendid evening of 'madcap adventures' as we join Daisy Meredith (daredevil, adventurer, possessor of a brilliant mind, exuberant, quick-witted, fond of practical jokes, honourable, honest, courageous, straight in all things and...an elementary school pupil) start her first term at Grangewood School for Girls (a school very much like St George's - only without the boys!)

The Drama Department are chuffed to bits to present a simply spiffing rendition of Denise Deegan's *Daisy Pulls It Off*. This frightfully funny spoof of an old English adventure novel (think Mallory Towers and Famous Five) is guaranteed to tickle the whole family. Daisy Meredith, a scholarship pupil at the esteemed Grangewood School for Girls, has an awfully tricky time of trying to navigate life at her new school. So, imagine her astonishment when she finds herself solving an age old mystery and saving the school!



And don't forget to bring your shillings for a spot of fizz - rumour has it there might even be a BBQ. How absolutely first-class!

The show will run for two nights – Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th June. Tickets cost £5.00 for both adults and students, and are only available via ParentPay. Please indicate clearly on the 'Notes' section on ParentPay which night you would like to purchase tickets for and how many tickets you would like.

Tickets will be sold on a first pay first served basis so get those orders in quickly – we are limited to 100 seats per performance! No tickets will be issued. Give the booking name upon entry to the Front of House team. The performance will start at 7.00pm and will take place in Grant Quad. It lasts about an hour and will run without an interval. It promises to be a tremendously fabulous end to the school Drama season!

Carnegie Medal for Writing 2025 Winner Announced!

Anticipation mounted in the Library this week as our Carnegie shadowing group, 'St. George's Dragon Readers' waited to hear which shortlisted book had won the coveted Carnegie Medal for Writing Award.

Our group were very excited to hear that the Shadowers' Choice Award 2025 (chosen by all the shadowing groups around the country) went to Nathanael Lessores' book, 'King of Nothing', a very funny novel with a strong male character who likes to think that he is living his best life as king of his school. When he strikes up an unlikely friendship with one of the least popular boys in school, he starts to question everything he thought was important and starts to set his sights on something better.

Our group enjoyed this book more than they thought they were going to, especially the redemptive element, although their joint favourite shortlisted novels were 'Little Bang' by Kelly McCaughrain and 'Play' by Luke Palmer, both of which would have been worthy winners. The official 2025 Medal for Writing was awarded to

'Glasgow Boys' by Margaret McDonald, a striking debut exploring the power of identity, community and the Scottish working class. This coming of age novel provides an incisive look at young masculinity, showing how even the most fraught childhood is not without hope.

Massive thanks must go to 'St. George's Dragon Readers', who have been avidly reading the 8 shortlisted books since their release in March. We have had a great time shadowing the awards this year, with lots of enthusiastic discussions, writing book reviews and eating cake! We are looking forward to doing this all again in 2026!



Exciting news from the Drama and Music Departments

The Drama and Music Departments are joining creative forces to stage a production of the hit musical FAME - to be performed in November 2025!

They will be auditioning in two phases. The first auditions will take place on July 11th and July 14th for students in Years 8 - 12 (principal roles and chorus) and again in September for Years 7, 8 (current Y7) and 12 (current Y11).

Please keep an eye on the notices for further details and requirements. Chorus auditions will be in a group setting (group singing / movement / acting) and Principal roles will be asked to prepare a solo song. Check out the songs 'Bring on Tomorrow' and 'Hard Work' (the opening) for early preparation!

If you have a child in year 11 who may be interested in a **principal role**, please email Ms Humphrey so that she can arrange an audition.

In the meantime - why not come along to the Lower School Production (next week) and the Summer Send Off Music Concert (July 8th)

What is Looksmaxxing and how is it impacting our boys?

We often talk about the problems facing young girls in the social media space. Yet young men are also coming under pressure from the rise of social media. The term 'Looksmaxxing' is used to describe the pursuit of maximising one's physical appearance. This trend is often focused on males.

At its shallowest end, the trend involves positive steps such as basic self-care instruction, personal grooming advice and physical training motivation. However, the escalation ladder can lead to increasingly dangerous advice which can impact on mental and physical health. It can also lead to boys being drawn into the manosphere where their feelings of low self-esteem can be exploited.

While personal improvement is not inherently problematic, looksmaxxing pushes young people toward unattainable beauty standards. The pressure to conform can lead to:

- Body dysmorphia

- Low self-esteem
- Depression, anxiety, and self-harm
- Risky or harmful behaviour, including unregulated procedures and steroid use.

To read more, please follow the link below:

[The Rise of “Looksmaxxing” And How Teen Boys See Themselves](#)

Parenting Courses from ‘Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities’

Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities (SFSC) is a parenting programme designed to support you to raise happy and successful children by getting access to information and strategies for bringing up your children, meeting other parents, and making sure your voice is heard.

Their 13-week course is a group programme with three hour sessions. This course is free but not available in every part of the country. Contact them if you want to find out if there is a course near you, or sign up for the online course first and we can help you access the longer course afterwards.

A shorter introductory option is our six week online course which you can register for by choosing one of the options below depending on the age of your child. This course is currently £150 but there are some free places available depending on where you live.

To find out more about what the difference is between the two types of course and what you can expect, have a look at the different options below or take a look here.

For the Stronger Relationship courses, [click here](#).

[Parenting courses – Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities](#)

Children’s Wellbeing Practitioner Workshops July – September 2025

Workshops are open to all young people & parents/carers of children and young people who attend a school or are registered with a GP in Hertfordshire. A referral is not needed to access a workshop. All workshops are currently being delivered online via Microsoft Teams. For more information about what each workshop covers and to book a place onto a workshop, visit [HCT Children's Wellbeing Practitioners Events](#)

