

# St. George's School Newsletter

Friday 30th January 2026



## From the Head

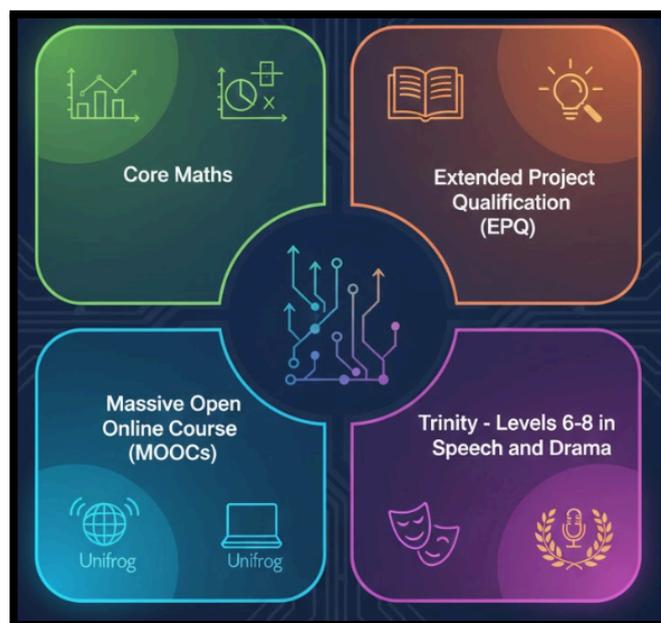
### Talking about... Horizons

In the latest of our "Talking about" series, I sat down with Mr Ben Cullis, Assistant Head with responsibility for the Sixth Form, to talk about St George's new *Horizons* programme. Launching in September 2026 for our current Year 11 students, this programme is designed to better prepare them for the next steps.

Year 12 students will select one of four enrichment pathways:

- Core Maths: For quantitative rigour.
- Extended Project Qualification (EPQ): For "super-curricular" depth.
- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs): Via the Unifrog platform.
- Trinity (Levels 6-8 in Speech and Drama): To build high-level presentation skills.

*(Note: Students studying Further Mathematics are not required to join a pathway due to their academic load, though they are welcome to opt-in to MOOCs if they wish).*



### Why Horizons?

Mr Cullis explained that while A Levels are great, they can be limiting; "The A Level curriculum naturally narrows our students down to three subjects. Horizons will enable breadth of study and give them an opportunity to go beyond what they are doing in the classroom". Mr Cullis emphasised that the goal is "broadening horizons and looking to develop academic giftings and skills that may not be addressed in the normal academic curriculum".

A key theme of our conversation was the importance of independence and agency. He highlighted that "universities and the world of work want to see agency... students working for themselves [and] developing their own passions".

Horizons allows students to demonstrate skills that they will need for the future, such as project planning, organisation, and inquisitive study skills, all done within a supportive environment.

## Preparing for the Modern Workforce

One of the most forward-thinking elements of the programme is the inclusion of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Mr Cullis observed that, "self-guided online learning is an increasingly large part of the workforce in terms of upskilling," adding that "most of our parents will be used to the fact that you have to continually train yourself using online learning platforms. These platforms are increasingly used for University and Apprenticeships now".

By guiding themselves through a MOOC, students learn to be motivated and reflective. These courses are highly bespoke; "Some of our students will select MOOCs which support them in study-skills and learning to learn. Others might want to complement and extend A Levels; for example, a course in engineering might require them to learn skills that go far beyond the standard A Level Physics or Further Mathematics syllabus.

## Next Steps for Year 11

Current Year 11 pupils are already indicating preferences, but they are not yet "wedded" to a specific choice. Firm enrolment will take place on Results Day. During Year 12 Induction Day in September, we will show students exactly what these options will look like in practice.

While Horizons is a vital new addition to our Sixth Form offer, it is just one part of how we develop character at St George's. We encourage students to engage with the wide range of existing opportunities that build leadership and grit, not limited to:

- **Duke of Edinburgh Award**
- **Sports/Music/Drama/Club Leadership**
- **Model United Nations (MUN)**
- **Debating**
- **Peer mentoring and in-class support**
- **Student Leadership Roles** (Prefects, House Captains, Sub-prefects, Sports Captains).

As part of St George's five-year strategic focus on Achievement, we are incredibly excited about what Horizons will deliver, helping our students develop the learning character that will set them apart in the years to come.

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## A Special Reward for Year 11: The Quad Pod Officially Opens!

The wait is finally over! This week marked the grand opening of the Quad Pod, a brand-new, dedicated food service exclusive to our Year 11 students during break times.

The launch of the Quad Pod isn't just about shorter queues and tasty snacks; it's a symbol of the school's support for our hardworking students as they head into a pivotal season. With exams fast approaching, the school wanted to provide a "privilege space" that recognises the hard work Year 11 has been putting in behind the scenes.

The atmosphere was buzzing as students gathered for the official ribbon-cutting ceremony. The honours went to Akeem and Bella, who represented their year group by officially declaring the Quad Pod open for business.

The feedback from the students has been overwhelmingly positive. Many shared their appreciation for having a space of their own, noting that the gesture makes them feel seen and valued during this demanding year.

"It's great to have something just for us," one student remarked. "It makes the long study sessions feel worth it when you know the school is cheering you on."

Of course, none of this would be possible without the heroes behind the scenes. A massive thank you goes out to our incredible catering team. They have worked tirelessly to coordinate this new service, truly making the "Year 11 dream" a reality. Their dedication to fuelling our students' success—both nutritionally and morale-wise—does not go unnoticed.



### Post-18 Progression Update: Celebrating Our Students' Next Steps

It has been an incredibly busy and rewarding few weeks for our Year 13 students as they begin to see their hard work translate into exciting opportunities for the future. Whether it's university study, apprenticeships, work placements or planning global adventures, the "Class of 2026" is making its mark.

We are absolutely delighted to share the news from the recent Oxbridge admissions cycle. This week, we learned that six of our students have received offers from Cambridge University. Combined with the two offers received from Oxford University earlier this month, we are incredibly proud of these eight students for navigating such a rigorous selection process.

The UCAS cycle is now in full swing, and offers are arriving "thick and fast." It is wonderful to see so many of our students receiving positive news daily. While university remains a popular route, we are equally thrilled to support the diverse ambitions of our cohort who are currently navigating the competitive application process for high-level apprenticeships, seeking to combine practical experience with further study.

We look forward to sharing more success stories as the term progresses.

# Case Closed: St George's Debaters Sweep Regional Competitions

Last week was a historic week for St George's debating, as we entered teams in the Oxford and Cambridge BP regionals (for the first time). In between that, we also took part in the Rotary Debate Competition at Aldwickbury Gold Club where our inters and seniors took home silverware! Well done to Florence H, Mollie P, Áine W (Y9) and Clara A, Freya W and Charlotte V (Y12).

At regionals, all of our teams performed to an exceptional standard with Cailin E & Emilie Z winning two of their four debates, and Enny J and Natasha M coming within a whisker of qualifying for nationals (in their first BP competition!)

Our house and school debaters also got to attend a public speaking workshop on Thursday, aimed at improving their presentation and debating skills. Our guest speaker was incredibly impressed by their engagement and talent.

Mr Ellis said, "It has been an exhausting week, but the most rewarding and ground breaking one for St George's debating in my time at the school: and I am very grateful to all staff who have assisted, but most of all to our wonderfully talented and dedicated team of debaters." The sky is the limit for this group!





## Year 10 Interview Morning - we need your help!

We are looking for parents and carers who would be willing to come into school on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March between 9am and 11am to help Year 10 learn and practise their interview skills. By volunteering your time to conduct short, friendly interviews, you will give students a valuable opportunity to practise speaking about their strengths and answering questions clearly and confidently. This experience helps to build essential communication skills and prepares students for future potential university, college, apprenticeship, and job interviews.

If you would be willing to support this event, please fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/Us617g1yrycqST5d8>  
If you have any questions, please contact [esabato@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk](mailto:esabato@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk)

## Behaviours for Aiming Higher

Next week, our Behaviour Curriculum focuses on developing independence in learning habits. We encourage parents to support this by prompting their young person to take greater ownership of their organisation, homework, and use of feedback - key skills for success both in school and beyond.

### OBVIOUSLY RESPONSIBLE...

## Independent Learning



**Be prepared** – Bring the correct equipment every day; pack your bag the night before.



**Be proactive** – Check Google Classroom regularly, plan ahead, and ask for help before deadlines if you're unsure.



**Be organised** – Complete homework on time and to the expected standard.



**Be reflective** – Use feedback from lessons and prep to improve.



**Aim Even Higher** – Treat homework like revision for the future: start early, work without distractions, and take pride in the finished product.

## Co-Curricular Update

We believe that some of the most profound lessons happen outside the classroom. Whether it is on the pitch, on the stage, or in the debate hall, our extracurricular programme is where our students find their voices and help build the resilience they need for the future.

Our clubs are not just hobbies; they are the places where over 895 of our students forge friendships, relieve stress, and learn leadership. Thank you to all of you that have donated to our Co-Curricular programme so far, we are incredibly proud to have a parent community that is so supportive of our students – THANK YOU! (Please note that as of this academic year, we ask for your permission and donation on a termly basis rather than annually)

As we have no official Lacrosse matches this weekend, we are running interhouse Lacrosse matches. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, U15 & U14 teams will be playing after school on Friday at Harpenden Rugby Club.

Timings are as follows:

3-4pm – 3rds V U15s / U15s v U14s triangular

4-5pm – 1sts v 2nds

Parent transport is required to HRFC but we are trying to ensure there are both school minibuses which can shuttle any students that are unable to get to HRFC. Lift sharing is encouraged. Parent collection by 5.00 p.m. from HRFC.

Saturdays Lacrosse will start at 8.45 a.m. for U12 & U13 teams and will finish around 10 a.m. at school (not HRFC)

Next week is another jam-packed week with Netball matches against KWS and St Columba's, Rugby 7s competition for our U18s, the GCSE Spanish trip departs and we have our Culture Day to celebrate along with the Interhouse Swimming Competition at Harpenden Leisure Centre. What a week!

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## Careers in Science: Engineering on the Busiest Motorway in Europe

On 29th January, our 'careers in science' programme hosted Mr Alwyn Samuel, an engineer managing assets on the M25. Around 45 pupils, including A Level Physics students, gained a fascinating look at how science and maths apply to complex, real-world infrastructure.

Mr Samuel explained that engineering spans multiple disciplines: **physics** for modelling, **geology** for foundations, and **environmental science** for protecting wildlife. He shared vivid examples of the job's diversity, from replacing jet fans in the Dartford Tunnel to designing weather-resistant water parks. Pupils learned that while the responsibility for structural safety is immense, the role offers a dynamic environment where "no two days are the same."

The talk also highlighted varied career entries. Mr Samuel discussed his own non-traditional path—working full-time while studying for his degree—and emphasized the importance of Maths and Physics A Levels. Beyond technical skills, he encouraged pupils to network through professional organizations and seek work experience.

We thank Mr Samuel for his realistic and inspiring insight, and extend our gratitude to our science technicians, **Mrs Sandhu and Mrs Green**, for organizing such a valuable session.

## Parent Webinars on County Lines and Criminal Exploitation (Iverson Trust)

The Iverson Trust (formerly Pace) is a national charity working to keep children safe from exploitation by supporting parents, disrupting exploiters, and working in partnership with police and family services. Their work is grounded in a trauma-informed, family-centred approach.

During March 2026, the Iverson Trust is delivering a series of live webinars for parents and carers focused on county lines and criminal exploitation. The sessions help parents understand how exploitation happens, how children are groomed, what warning signs to look out for, and where to access advice and support. Each webinar includes local context, time for questions, and input from a parent with lived experience.

More information and booking details are available at: <https://iversontrust.org.uk/webinars/>

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## News from the PSA

### Summer Fête at Risk: Volunteers Urgently Needed

Despite several recent appeals, we have not yet had any volunteers come forward to help organise the PSA Summer Fête. As one of the school's most important fundraising events and a much-loved occasion that brings our whole community together the PSA Summer Fête may not be able to go ahead this year without some leaders willing to help organise it.

As you know, all PSA funds raised at the Fête go towards a number of school projects, which in turn enhance the student experience.

No special skills or prior experience are needed, just a willingness to help. Volunteers will be fully supported by the PSA committee and the current Summer Fête team.

If you are able to help in any capacity, however small, please do consider getting involved and email [psa@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk](mailto:psa@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk).

Your support could make the difference between this valued event going ahead or not.

### New Date for Quiz & Curry Night

Quiz & Curry Night will take place at **7:00 p.m. on Saturday 7th March** in the Assembly Hall to avoid a clash with the Six Nations Final.

Expect a fun, relaxed evening with great food, good company and plenty of laughs. Enjoy a new and improved curry dinner with delicious brownie dessert by our new chef, a lively quiz and bar snacks and drinks available throughout the evening.

This is an adults-only event at £18 per person. You can join on your own, with friends, or as part of a team of up to eight. Everyone is welcome, with plenty of opportunities to mingle and get to know new people. More details coming soon. Save the date.

### Second-Hand Uniform Sale

Our next sale takes place on Super Saturday, 21st March.

We're looking for volunteers to help with the sale in the morning. **All helpers get the first pick of uniforms!**

If you can help, please email [psa@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk](mailto:psa@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk)



## St George's School

### An Invitation to Invest: Giving Day Transforming the St George's Assembly Hall

St George's is not a school that stands still. We are constantly seeking ways to enhance the educational experience, and this is why we are reaching out to you, our valued community.

We are incredibly grateful that so many of you, past and present, have supported us and continue to do so through regular donations. We understand you are asked to support many worthy causes, but we invite you now to join us in an exciting, focused project.



Watch the Video

Date: 12th February 2026



Please watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/IBpJM11WdKo>

# MUSICALE <sup>Est. 1977</sup>

LESSONS | HOLIDAY COURSES | RENTAL

**Musicale at St George's** Musicale works in partnership with St George's School to support our students' musical development. Nearly 200 St George's students take part in lessons each week and enjoy high-quality tuition delivered by experienced specialist teachers, from first timers through to post-Grade 8. Lesson timings are designed to fit in and around the school timetable.

Spaces for lessons with Musicale are limited, to find out more and sign up, visit <https://stgeorges.herts.sch.uk/music/>

Musicale also offers Easter and Summer [holiday music courses](#). Discounted holiday course places are available to our students with the code GEORGE10 if booked before the end of half term, 22nd February.

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR  
**JUNIOR BAKE OFF**

Aged between 9-15 and love to bake?  
We'd love to hear from you!

[WWW.APPLYFORJUNIORBAKEOFF.CO.UK](http://WWW.APPLYFORJUNIORBAKEOFF.CO.UK)



**APPLICATIONS CLOSE 15TH MARCH 2026**