

A close-up photograph of pink cherry blossoms in full bloom, set against a backdrop of dark, slender branches. The petals are a soft, pale pink, while the centers show darker, more vibrant pink hues. The lighting is soft, creating a gentle, romantic atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image, partially obscuring the blossoms.

# The Quarterly Gazette

*Spring Edition*



## EDITOR'S NOTE



**BY SADIE**

When I took over The Quarterly Gazette from founder Elizabeth Bailey in January 2024, I had a vision for growth. To grow our readership, increase our writers, and expand our investigations and focuses. The Quarterly Gazette was founded from a genuine love of journalism, understanding of its importance in the wider world, and a deep curiosity for the world around us. Our ethos is not only to provide an outlet for this feeling, but to foster it in our wider student population. Now, when many of my initial hopes have been realised, the values of our ethos are more important than ever.

In a time of increasing conflict and change, the future feels unpredictable and incredibly uncertain. The actions of US president Donald Trump have shocked the world: transforming US international aid, conflict intervention, and allied relationships. Whilst information and opinion are easier to access than ever before, with online news platforms and social media, it is often largely misunderstood how important our approach to this wealth of information is. Understanding the bigger picture, thinking deeply about the topic, and formulating our own opinions based on honest, truthful facts, is what journalism should be about. I genuinely believe honest, free journalism should be at the forefront of how we find solutions to the overwhelming uncertainty and polarisation of society the world currently grapples with. As a result, I implore every student to access information with curiosity and a desire to understand; educate yourself on the real world issues and formulate your own opinions, because in the face of misinformation, rising hatred and extremism ideals, education is power.

Supporting individual voices to investigate the biggest issues of today with empathy, curiosity and understanding as editor, is something I am indubitably proud of. I believe so strongly in this process, and I have every faith our next editor, Danielle, will build on these foundations to grow and develop our newspaper further.

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JEMIMA



ZARA



KEMI



PETRA



DANIELLE



JAMES



MADELEINE



RYAN



ECE

# The Quarterly Gazette

Spring Edition

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# Elon Musk: How Bad Could He Possibly Be?

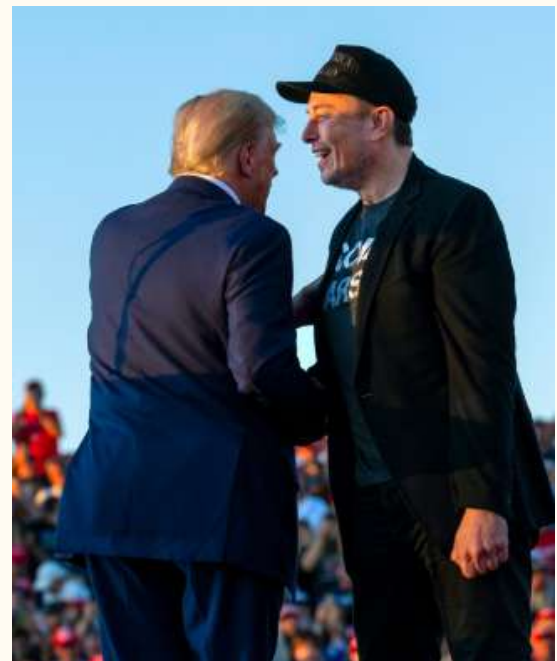
*By Maddie O'Connor*

Elon Musk's infamous Nazi salute at a rally celebrating Donald Trump's recent inauguration rightly caused outrage across the world. The gesture caused concern amongst people online, with many worried that this could point towards America drawing ever closer toward the far right.



Elon Musk is unique as a businessman absolving himself in politics. However, he hasn't always been the power hungry fascist that people see him as today. In fact, he only began supporting primarily republican candidates in 2022, voting for Obama in 2008 and 2012, Hillary Clinton in 2016, and even Joe Biden in 2020. His acquisition of Twitter and hard pivot to right wing politics unfortunately fell around the same time, and he began taking advantage of the platform to spread misinformation. Even before he bought ownership of twitter, he would peddle falsehoods about the pandemic, claiming children were "essentially immune", and claiming there would be "probably close to zero new cases in US by end of April (2020)". In 2024, he fired the teams responsible for fact checking and moderating misinformation and reinstated accounts belonging to neo-Nazis and conspiracy theorists, such as Alex Jones (a far right radio host who has claimed for years that the Sandy Hook school shooting was a hoax). And as the most followed user too, nothing could stop him.

Musk also attempted to tamper with the 2024 election, with twitter posts casting doubt on mailed votes and electronic voting machines claiming "We should mandate paper ballots and in-person voting only". He also tried to dissuade voters in Arizona by criticising the state law that doesn't require proof of citizenship to vote in federal elections, despite the fact that if a non-citizen attempts to vote in Arizona they still face perjury charges (illegal voting). It's no coincidence that Arizona was a swing state in the election, and this was undoubtedly an attempt to help Trump secure the state.





# Elon Musk: How Bad Could He Possibly Be?

*By Maddie O'Connor*

Musk has repeatedly used his power and influence as a media mogul in order to politically interfere in favour of the right, but that's only online. Musk's actions as a new member of the American government are far more concerning.

Donald Trump and Musk created the Department of Government Efficiency on Trump's first day in office. This agency has access to "all unclassified agency records, software systems, and IT systems" of each department in the government.

As the leader of DOGE, Musk has cut government spending by firing thousands of federal workers, notably in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) which is responsible for administering civilian foreign aid. His budget cuts are also reducing the workforce of the Environmental Protection Agency by 65%. The Department of Veterans Affairs could lose 76,000 employees, and Social Security Administration is looking at 12% cuts. DOGE has already lied about its savings, claiming that 105 billion dollars has already been saved despite budget experts easily spotting even the largest cuts aren't more than 10 billion dollars.



Last week at Trump's congressional address, representative Al Green of Texas was escorted out of the hall and has been censured (formally condemned) after heckling Trump, exclaiming that he had no right to cut Medicaid – a program that provides healthcare to underprivileged Americans.

The defining values of Trump and Elon's current reign seem to be lies and greed, and the future of American democracy looks murky. Elon Musk has managed to buy his way to power and influence, ignoring the needs of Americans and foreign citizens that as a member of the American government should be a priority. His direct endorsement of the far-right German party AfD, controversial salute and media manipulation- to name a few- could lead to a frightening four years for America, and the world.

# Artificial Intelligence: Moral Hinderance or Humanitarian Aid?

By Zara Travers

Advancements in technology have led us to AI: artificial intelligence. It can be used to help people, but is this at the cost of human integrity and life?

The history of AI began in myths and stories with creators, such as the Greek god Hephestus, bestowing their creations with original thought. This idea has since fascinated scientists and lead to the discovery and innovation of AI programmes being written in the 1950s. It has now evolved into the artificial intelligence we know today with the 2020s boom in interest for AI. This has created models such as ChatGPT and Character AI.

Since its creation, AI has been the topic of discussion with its ethicality and fears towards sentience. Characters, such as AM in 'I have no mouth, and I must scream' by Harlen Ellison (1967), have shown the terrifying post-apocalyptic consequences of thinking machines: the main protagonist, Ted, is forced into murder to 'save' his friends and ends the story as a blob, mirroring AM's own existence. This is just one of the influences the creation of AI has had on literature and the creators warnings of its possible impacts. Also, the more popular 'Terminator' (1984) franchise has also shown the dangers of AI with the risk of exterminating human kind. All media created with AI as inspiration has shown potential dangers associated with this technology.

Current AI, such as ChatGPT and AI picture/art generators, were created to help creativity by allowing them to create things they otherwise wouldn't. However, this was created by stealing original data, such as artworks created by artists or essays written by people to be able to create mimicry of this, for when the programme is asked to replicate it.

For example, artists such as SamDoesArts have had their art stolen for it to be replicated for the publics use for when a prompt is inputted into the programme. This has more dangerous consequences with creatives, such as artists now unable to find work due to their jobs being stolen by AI, which prevents them from being able to make a living with their skills. This is because big companies wish to make a profit and thus will use AI in order to be able to pay less for seemingly the same result.



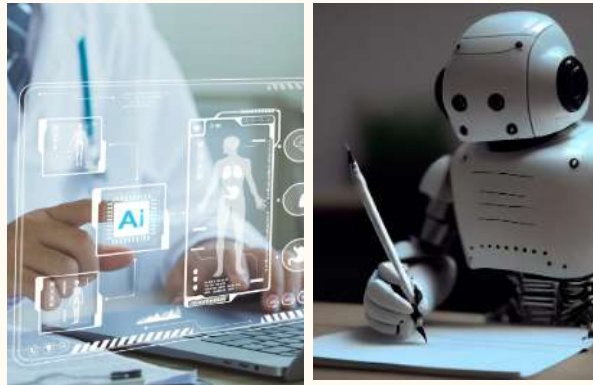
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However, AI can be useful as it allows for advancements in medicine, with applications in scanning for illnesses such as cancer. This has already been used with cases such as Sheila Tooth's, whose breast cancer was detected with AI at the University Hospitals Sussex. Using AI allowed people to be able to start treatment earlier, thus increasing their chance of survival. These AI 'readers' are able to detect what human eyes cannot. This presents a promising future for the application of AI within medicine: saving lives.

Furthermore, AI has been used by Surrey County Council to spot potholes and aid repairs using cameras attached to cars. This allows for further enhancements as it can see things such as, missing signs and overgrown foliage, and thus be able to flag them to be fixed. The council has explained how this would make the whole process of fixing the roads safer due to the highway inspectors not being needed to physically step into the road. This use of AI allows for progression in how road problems are sorted.

On the other hand, it can be argued to hinder human creativity and thus not allow for original thought if people become to rely on it. For example, it is common knowledge that many students are now using AI models such as ChatGPT to write their homework and do their essays.



The main question from this is: how is this impacting our future in academics and our own intelligence? The introduction of AI into academic spaces has led to more fraud, especially within essay-based subjects, and this has led to a lessening of integrity within academic spaces with every essay being put through AI checkers now as standard practice. But, if it is okay for AI to be used like this, when does it stop? If people are now not writing their own essays, it means that they will lose the skills to do so, which can impact their mental capabilities as AI would be what is earning them their qualifications. This could make these 'qualified' people may not be able to do their essential jobs properly. Furthermore, the use of AI means that people are less inclined to do the 'hard work' themselves, which could lead to a process of separation of between the person and their work Marxists call alienation. This is ultimately bad, as the lack of the feeling of accomplishment when you finish a hard task ultimately undermines the point of doing it to begin with.



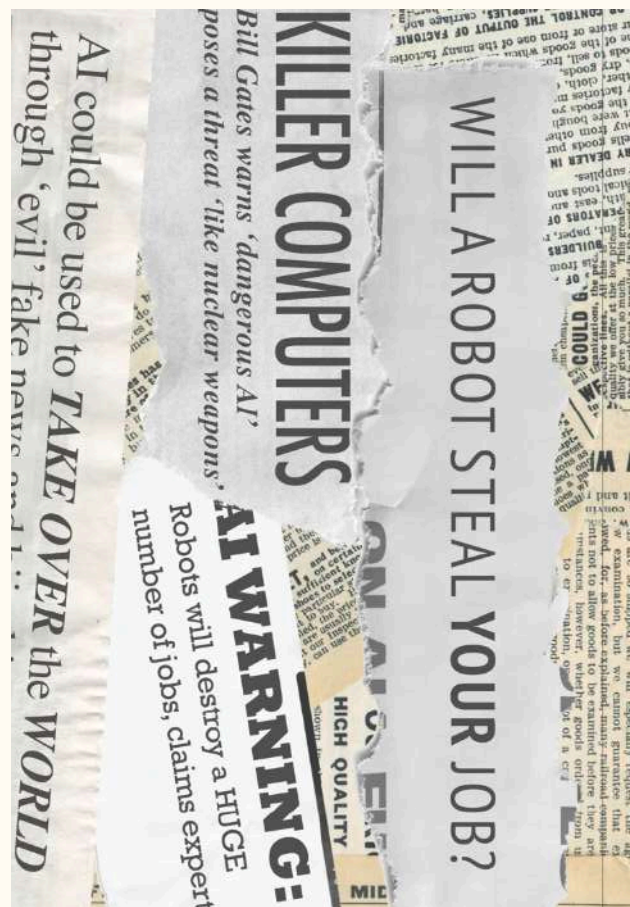
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More recently, there has been concern surrounding AI with the introduction of 'DeepSeek', a Chinese AI model, which is actively threatening the American ChatGPT. This could be seen as useful due to new competition forcing these AI models to be more ethical and efficient. Also, this new market has created doubt towards 'OpenAI' (creator of ChatGPT), which could possibly lead to a more ethical AI as they compete for more users and a more sustainable future.

However, despite these progresses, AI can have devastating impacts on the individual, with it being used to create fake images of people and also, for some, chatbots replacing actual human interaction. Ever since AI has been optimised and popularised, it has been used for disgusting things such as creating AI-generated child abuse imagery, which is being produced at a 'chilling rate' and is 'disturbingly realistic'. As of recently, there is now laws in place to target the means of production for creating these kind of images, but there is now pressure on governments to ensure that laws are made for the safety of all people.

Overall, I believe that, although useful, AI is a dangerous tool which should be regulated properly as it is currently not being used for the correct purpose due to individuals' greed.





# Joint Enterprise and The Need for Reform

By Jemima Robinson

Announced in October 2024 with the aim of mitigating abuse and undermining of the UK's criminal justice system, the parliamentary inquiry into Joint Enterprise is crucial for investigating its controversial use which allows someone to be charged with another person's crime. If it is believed that they foresaw it and intended to encourage or assist the direct participants of illegal activity, individuals could endure brutal and lengthy punishments, including prison sentences for convictions of murder, under our legal system. Do you believe it is fair and lawful for our justice system to hold people to account for crimes they did not directly commit?

Investigating this question, the Westminster Commission for Joint Enterprise, (launched by the newly-formed All-Parliamentary Group on Miscarriages of Justice and chaired by Labour MP Kim Johnson) aims to reform the law so that only those who make a 'significant contribution' to a crime are held criminally liable. Johnson argues that wrongful convictions of joint enterprise highlight serious dysfunction in the justice system, 'leading to devastating consequences for individuals, their families and their communities'.

Against joint enterprise are critics who believe it to be an unjust legal doctrine that punishes individuals who have little or no involvement in a crime.

  
**END GUILT BY  
ASSOCIATION**  
NO CONTRIBUTION, NO CONVICTION  
REFORM THE JOINT ENTERPRISE LAW

Many recognize the volatility of a law that bases convictions largely on foresight rather than direct intent or direct participation because it significantly lowers the threshold for guilt and results in unjust outcomes. For example, the 2016 Supreme Court ruling in *R v Jogee* acknowledged that the law had been misapplied for decades due to the heavy reliance on judicial discretion and interpretation.

Additionally, the disproportionate number of Black and minority ethnic defendants convicted under this doctrine raises concerns that racial profiling and discriminatory policing practices influence charging decisions. Campaign groups such as JENGbA (Joint Enterprise Not Guilty by Association) have highlighted cases where young Black men were convicted primarily due to associations, social media activity, or music preferences rather than concrete evidence of their involvement in a crime. Deviations in how judges treat joint enterprise has made the law highly controversial and problematic because it disregards evidence of an individual's direct participation in illegal activity and instead, places greater importance on whether judges believed an individual foresaw that an associate of theirs was likely to commit an offence.

# Joint Enterprise and The Need for Reform

*By Jemima Robinson*

Furthermore, is it fair for individuals to be found guilty of crimes and endure harsh sentences purely based on their association?

Many believe that joint enterprise undermines the principle of individual culpability by punishing individuals for the actions of others. Assigning guilt by association rather than personal responsibility creates instability within the legal system because association can be judged and interpreted in different ways.

For example, Joseph Appiah was just 16 when he was found to have killed another teenager and sentenced to 12 years behind bars. Despite, being 200 yards away when the fatal stabbing took place, he was convicted of murder under controversial joint enterprise laws and released 11 years later at the age of 25. This has caused existential problems for the rest of his life including difficulties in securing employment, having stable relationships and his identity in terms of how he views himself and how he viewed by society.

With Appiah and more than 1,000 suspects convicted of murder and manslaughter under joint enterprise between 2010 and 2020, it is arguable that the entire principle of Joint Enterprise is hugely problematic because it destabilises the UK's legal system; justice is frequently undermined when people are punished for crimes and given life-altering sentences simply because of their association.

However, despite these criticisms, some may argue that joint enterprise is a necessary legal tool for tackling serious crimes such as gang activity and violence. It forces accountability to be upheld in those who knowingly participate in criminal activity regardless of their lack of direct involvement. Arguably, without joint enterprise, it may be significantly harder to prosecute gang leaders and those who facilitate violent crimes from behind the scenes. As a deterrent, law enforcement agencies advocate joint enterprise as a vital mechanism pivotal in helping to discourage criminal activity by making individuals think twice before involving themselves in potentially illegal actions. Is it fair that people go unpunished for crimes they facilitated simply because they were not directly perpetrating illegal behaviour? Joint enterprise ensures that those who knowingly assist, encourage, or enable crimes cannot escape responsibility.

So how could Joint Enterprise be reformed to minimize its controversy?

In response to increasing concerns about its controversy, the Westminster Commission is considering several reforms to address the flaws in joint enterprise law. A key area of reform they are exploring is based on Kim Johnson's bill which want to ensure that only those who make a 'significant contribution' to a crime are held criminally liable.



# Joint Enterprise and The Need for Reform

*By Jemima Robinson*

In cases where weak circumstantial evidence has been used to convict people under this law (such as Joseph Appiah), a 'significant contribution' reform would diminish unfair use of the law where individuals are punished with severe sentences merely because of their association – however big or small.

A 'significant contribution' reform would also pressure the Prosecution to increase their burden of proof so that evidence presented leaves the jury without any doubt that someone could be convicted of a crime without their direct involvement. For example, if Prosecutors were required to demonstrate that the defendant was guilty of clear intent and active participation rather than relying on foresight alone, this would strengthen the restraints on joint enterprise so that its broad use would be limited to cases where evidence could support its principle of accountability. This would substantially reduce the risk of wrongful convictions by upholding fundamental constitutional ideals of a fair and lawful justice system that everyone can trust to protect their individual rights.

With such a staggering effect across the nation, where individuals and communities feel seriously let down and have lost faith in the law, the outcome of the inquiry is crucial for evolving joint enterprise into a legal principle that truly serves justice.

While it is valid to consider joint enterprise as a vital mechanism for prosecuting serious crimes, its broad and deviated application has led to significant miscarriages of justice. For example, statistics from the Crown Prosecution Service reveal that black people are 16 times more likely to be prosecuted under the principle than white people and the sentencing of more than 1,000 people for murder and manslaughter under the law from 2010 to 2020 is highly dysfunctional.

To uphold the integrity of the legal system, a parliamentary inquiry is crucial for investigating potential misuse of the law where concerns of racial bias and injustice can be addressed and corrected to uphold the integrity of our legal system. Reforms proposed by the parliamentary inquiry, such as raising the burden of proof and addressing racial disparities, will vitally shape the nation's legal system so that it is fairer with a more just application of this law.



## Trump: Why Is He Playing King?

By Ryan Hunter

Now that Donald Trump is beginning his second term, we're witnessing a flurry of executive orders—already reaching more than 73 within a span of months. The rapid-fire pace of these policy choices raises an intriguing question: Why is he doing it?

A probable explanation is that Trump is using executive orders to avoid legislative gridlock and public debate. His leadership style has never been discreet, and in the eyes of many of his supporters, that is what is required in a political climate where Congress regularly bottlenecks key legislation. However, others worry that this increased reliance on executive action demonstrates a trend toward an unbalanced balance of power, where policy decisions are made with less and less input from elected representatives and the public.

But historical context is important here, Trump's approach is similar to those leaders who have attempted to consolidate power through executive action rather than legislative negotiation. For example: Franklin D. Roosevelt, whom Trump has often invoked, issued 3,721 executive orders in four terms, using them to bypass opposition during the Great Depression and in World War II. But Trump is not facing a crisis on that scale, which raises questions about whether such an approach is truly necessary or merely a demonstration of power.



Another possibility is that Trump is deliberately asserting his authority, sending the message that he is the one who can bring fundamental change. Executive orders allow him to bypass a frequently obstructive Congress, even when his party is in control. While many presidents have used executive actions in the name of efficiency, the sheer volume of Trump's orders suggests a broader shift in governing style—one that emphasizes one-sided decision-making over bargaining and negotiation. His stance on foreign policy also illustrates this desire to show strength. In a recent call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, Trump reportedly declared, *"This war would have been over in three days without us."* While some may regard such a statement as evidence of leadership, critics argue that it harms diplomatic relationships and betrays a transactional approach to international conflict.



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Aside from executive orders, Trump has placed the opioid crisis—more particularly fentanyl—high among his talking points. Fentanyl-involved deaths in the U.S. grew 279% between 2016 and 2021, and thus it is certainly a legitimate crisis that necessitates action. However, instead of focusing on domestic healthcare reform and rehabilitation initiatives, much of Trump's apologia is aimed at China and Mexico, framing the crisis in the narrative of foreign menace rather than as a structural issue.

Though it is true that fentanyl is trafficked across borders, critics say blaming foreign countries is an oversimplification of the crisis. It will take policy solutions at home to address addiction to drugs, such as better mental health services, tighter pharmaceutical controls, and more money for rehab programs.

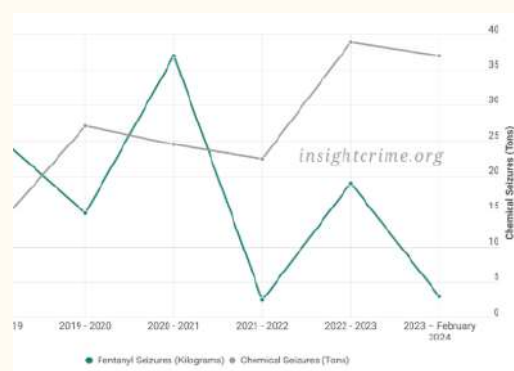
Public response in America to Trump's executive orders has been mixed. On the one hand, many of his supporters view the flurry of executive activity as a justified assertion of authority—a way of circumventing political gridlock and implementing his agenda. A 2018 Gallup survey showed that 45% of Americans approved of Trump's handling of the economy—his central reasoning for signing so many of these orders. His supporters argue that swift action on immigration and healthcare matters shows a commitment to fulfilling his campaign promises.

However, critics have cautioned concerning eroding democratic norms. By a 2020 Pew Research analysis, 60% of Americans were concerned about the growing centralization of power in the presidency, seeing it as a threat to the equilibrium of government. Public opinion has also been divided over Trump's foreign policy, especially his unilateralism on international matters. Many Americans have questioned the judgment of a president who appears to see diplomacy as a tool of self-advertisement rather than multilateral cooperation.

### What Comes Next?

Trump's increasing reliance on executive action raises serious questions about the balance of power in American democracy. While some see his approach as a necessary response to political gridlock, others fear that it sets a precedent for governing that limits checks and balances. If the trend continues, the United States can expect a fundamental shift in the exercise of power—one in which executive power is under fewer constraints.

The real question is: Do Americans see this as efficiency, or as a step toward an unchecked presidency?



## SPORTING SPOTLIGHT

# Recently at Gordon's School

by Petra Oshiga

Over the past 2 months since the last edition, Gordon's School has showcased outstanding talent and sportsmanship through multiple activities.

### Netball

The first netball team shone in the Plate Final at Seaford College, where they battled their way to a well-deserved victory. After a series of hard-fought matches, the team's resilience and skill on the court were evident as they claimed the title, leaving their opponents with little chance to make a comeback. The squad's commitment to teamwork and focus on strategy played a pivotal role in their success. Their triumph is a testament to the hard work and dedication of both players and coaches throughout the season.



### Rugby

Meanwhile, the under 18 Boars 7's rugby team demonstrated remarkable skill and determination at the 7s tournament hosted on their home turf. The team competed fiercely, showcasing their agility, strength, and tactical awareness. After a series of intense matches, they narrowly missed out on the top spot, securing a strong 2nd place finish. Though disappointed by their close finish, the players should be proud of their performance and the strides they made in their development as a team. In addition to the weekend, the Bulls squad took part in the Middlesex 7's, with the team getting all the way up to the semi-finals and just losing by a few short points. The 7s Teams have been active over the past few months, with very recognisable performances from the U15 and U13 teams who have also taken victories of their own and showing a lot of commitment to the school and their teammates. In the most recent weeks, the sports world has been abuzz with significant developments across various disciplines, highlighting both individual achievements and organizational changes.





## SPORTING SPOTLIGHT

# Recently Around The World

by Petra Oshiga

### Football

In the Premier League, Arsenal's title aspirations suffered a setback with a 1-1 draw against Manchester United. Midfielder Declan Rice's second-half goal canceled out Bruno Fernandes's free kick, but Mikel Arteta's men couldn't find a winner, impacting their pursuit of the championship. Meanwhile, in the Baller League UK, a new six-a-side competition, television presenter Maya Jama and footballer Alisha Lehmann have made history as the league's first all-female managerial duo. Their team, MVPs United, is generating significant fan excitement ahead of the league's kickoff.

### Athletics

British athlete Keely Hodgkinson's remarkable journey to winning Olympic gold in the 800 meters at the Paris 2024 Olympics has inspired many. Overcoming significant health challenges, including a skull tumor and post-Olympic depression, Hodgkinson's story is a testament to resilience and determination.



### Basketball

Golden State Warriors star Steph Curry has taken on a ground-breaking role as assistant general manager for his alma mater, Davidson College's basketball teams. This move makes him the first active major U.S. sports player to assume a front-office position with an NCAA team. Curry's involvement includes contributing to a substantial fund aimed at supporting Davidson's basketball programs.

### American Football

The NFL's legal tampering period has commenced, allowing teams to negotiate with potential free agents before the official start of free agency. Fans are closely monitoring moves, especially concerning the Los Angeles Chargers' decisions on key players like Khalil Mack. Analysts suggest strategic pursuits to bolster defensive strengths in the upcoming season.

### Sports Administration

In Australia, Kate Jenkins, the new chair of the Australian Sports Commission, is advocating for enhanced protection of women and children in sports. Responding to recent allegations, Jenkins emphasizes the need for ongoing reforms and robust support systems to ensure athlete safety and well-being. The prime minister even opened a women safety summit by addressing the uncomfortable truth that women in the workplace were not safe, and that as a country, Australia is working to improve the conditions and create a safe environment for any woman in the workforce.



## SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

# An Interview with Peter and Charles, Leaders of Politics Society

**What does a typical politics society look like?**

**Peter:** A typical politics society begins with choice. The choice of what people want to discuss: much of what we talk about comes from the society members. However, in the same way that “there are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen.” Hence, we find ourselves in both slow and fast news weeks. There are weeks where we simply don’t have time to discuss everything that is happening in the political world. Accommodating for people of varying political understanding is a key part of politics society and finding compromise between potentially boring those who have a strong knowledge and that people aren’t alienated from conversation because they perceive themselves to not know enough. In many ways, society is a forum of education as much as it is one of discussion.

**Charles:** Typically politics society consists of people arguing and shouting back and forth while trying to solve the “real” issues in the world, and a few loud personalities challenging Mr Butler’s political stance while others are just taking in the atmosphere.



**Peter, how do you manage maintaining a respectful political debate?**

Keeping respectful political debate is a fine balance but it comes from a place of trust and mutual agreement. I must be able to trust the people in the room that they are asking questions in good faith. This is in an effort to engage and enhance the understanding for everyone within the room. In the same way they must trust me that I will engage conversation in a neutral matter, addressing my own political biases and giving a free voice to those of all political camps. Of course there will be rabble and moments of disorganisation, after all it wouldn’t be politics if there wasn’t! I’m not a chair: I don’t set a motion or allocate a time for speaking. Part of facilitating discussion is being able to run the line of formality and authenticity. Therefore, peaceful and respectful debate is not something written up on a whiteboard or some doctrine but achieved through mutual understanding and the exchange of ideas.

**Charles, what do you think your biggest challenge as politics society leader will be?**

Trying to keep peace in the room and try to have a properly productive debate.



**SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT**

# An Interview with Peter and Charles, Leaders of Politics Society

**What role do you think young people play in today's political climate?**

**Peter:** Young people are everything. Politics is very much perceived as an old man's game, but we live in an age where politics is no longer confined within the pages of history books and political thesis; today, we all have access to it. Often, it's inescapable. It's the first thing on our phones TVs and radios. However, there are the dangers. Our increasingly polarising newsfeeds are often a confirmation of our predisposed beliefs and void of discussion and human connection. So, now more than ever it's important that we talk with people about the issues of today, having open and free discussion irrespective of disagreement. We can find ourselves easily caught up in the folk devils of politics whether it be raving emotional liberals who don't understand the real world or right wing racists who are uneducated and only care for their own self-interest. Yet these are only folk devils in reality; there's only people. People with different values, goals and life experiences and the only way to properly address these perceived conflicts is to understand the other side. Despite my biases, I truly believe the best place to engage in understanding is at politics society.

**Charles:** Young people play a small part in today's political climate, with not enough people turning out to vote. Their voices drowned out but the older generation and a lack of direction in what they feel they need.

**What is your take on our government's reaction to Donald Trump's presidency?**

**Peter:** I must preface, I'm far from his greatest supporter, in my eyes he has done damaging things both within and outside of the oval office, such as his incitement of the Jan 6th riots, his obstruction of justice and recent withholding of aid from Ukraine. But he is president elect, there will be no revolution, as observers we should be working to best understand who is he, such that we can analyse why he does what he does. Trump in the eyes of many, is the prototypical strongman. Most importantly of these strongman tactics is his use of language. Amongst his favourite words are: winning, family, strong and tariff. But to truly understand Trump, the word that comes up often repeatedly in justification of his executive orders and outlandish policy decisions is mandate. He proclaims his "mandate of the people" creates the impression of Trump not as a servant for the people but as the commander of the people. We can use this to understand the undermining of the Trans-Atlantic alliance. Western democracy does not align the current declarations and actions of the Trump administration. When on Jan 22, 2025, many of us asked ourselves how will Trump's second term be different to his first. We will look back on the Trifecta of the house, senate and presidency. With increasingly less electoral opposition, it appears that Trump vision of Commander-in-chief may be coming closer to reality than we believe.

## Gordon's MUN 2025

*By James Taplin*

On the 1st and 2nd of March, Gordons School hosted its annual Gordons School Model United Nations conference. 6 Schools attended, bringing with them 151 delegates to participate in debate. Being managed by our Secretary Generals, Ewan McCormick and Aashi Shah, and our President of the General Assembly, Hamish Donaldson-Sinclair, the conference ran smoothly, and it was described by many as our best conference we have ever hosted.

Like most other conferences, GMUN had the normal Committees, for example SOCHUM, SPECPOL, DISEC, etc, however, one of the most interesting and sought-after committees was the GMUN Special Committee: The War of the Worlds. In this committee, delegates debated ways to combat a hypothetical Martian invasion, and many ideas were brought up, the most prominent one being the proposal from North Korea that the humans should reproduce with them, in order to create a more Superior species, to a surprisingly high amount of agreement from fellow delegates.

During General Assembly on the Second day of the conference, Donald Trump (Played expertly by Aaryan Oliver) came to the stand to blame China for a meteor strike in New York, then Xi Jinping (Performed by Harry Self) arrived and proceeded to blame the Americans for the deaths, claiming that it was all a conspiracy from the US government. This led to all nations being forced to take sides and trying to figure out ways to prevent Nuclear war between the USA and China, a struggle which has been going on in real life for far too long.



After much back-and-forth debate, an emergency report was received from the UN, and it was discovered that the Meteor was actually sent from a Race of Fascist aliens, who revealed their ambitions to turn the entire globe into their garbage dump. Upon hearing this, the nations of the world gathered together, and unanimously decided to combat the invasive force that threatened their home.

Overall, the conference was enjoyed by all who attended and had high praise from all school advisors. Special Thanks go out to Mr Blatch for all his hard work and effort as the GMUN Head and the organiser of the entire event, Mr Coles for helping all weekend and also to Miss Lockhart for her work with reprographics and procurement.



## WORLD BOOK DAY

World Book Day is an annual event celebrated globally to encourage reading and highlight the importance of books in education and personal growth. On this special day, schools, libraries, and bookstores host various activities to inspire a love for reading in people of all ages.

At Gordons, we celebrated World Book Day with a variety of whole-school competitions, where students from all year levels participated. The main event for the day was a Creative Writing Competition. The competition saw students receiving random words throughout the day in their classes and then coming together in house to create the best story they could.

Houses only had 24 hours to get to work and the results were very impressive.

The competition not only brought the school community together but also sparked conversations about the power of storytelling and the joy of reading. Congratulations to the winners Victoria House and the runners up Woolwich House. You can read their stories below.

WORLD  
**BOOK  
DAY**

4 MARCH 2021

### WINNER VICTORIA



### RUNNER UP WOOLWICH





# Baz Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet: How Fashion Enhanced A Tale As Old As Time

By Kemi Williams

Whether you have watched the classic film, or not, Baz Luhrmann's 1996 rendition of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet remains one of the most recognisable films in popular culture. The movie takes a classic love story and tells it through a kaleidoscopic lens, it is an almost hallucinogenic re-telling of a tale as old as time.

Costume designer for the film, Kym Barret, met Luhrmann through their shared background in theatre. This theatre background serves as the key ingredient to the distinctive costuming, as job delineations are typically far less rigid than in film, creating a cohesive feel that Barret said was brought to set. Taking a classic play with as many previous interpretations as Romeo and Juliet has and making it drastically distinctive meant starting with a clean slate and returning to the drawing board when sourcing inspiration. Barret and Luhrmann took to the streets of Miami, making video vinaigrettes, drawing inspiration from the surfers, beach goers and tourists. When speaking to British Vogue in 2021 for the 25th anniversary of the film, Barret stated that "Shakespeare isn't a normal medium for film. I think we needed to be really solid with the vision and really tight, so that all the visuals supported the language and people could relax into it and understand what was happening."



Costume being used to support language is evident repeatedly during the film, predominantly during the ballroom party where our two star-crossed lovers meet. With a budget of only \$15 million, much of the costumes were handmade by a team of seamstresses flown into Mexico City from Montreal and Italy. Barret also struck up a deal with Dolce & Gabbana, Prada, and Yves Saint Laurent who pulled old stock that the team could use. Barret populated the ballroom scene with Shakespeare characters to tell stories in themselves of the two families. "Lord Capulet is a Roman emperor and Lady Capulet is Cleopatra. Then Paul Rudd as Paris is a bit on the outside, and a bit of a space cadet, so an astronaut felt right. I always thought of him as floating out a bit beyond reality."



# Baz Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet: How Fashion Enhanced A Tale As Old As Time

By Kemi Williams

As the ballroom scene bleeds into Juliet on the balcony, we see Claire Danes in a white wedding-gown-like dress. Barret printed written lines from the script onto the dress. "Romeo says in the script, 'Oh, speak again, bright angel,' which is why I dressed her as an angel, but I also printed that dialogue from that scene into her dress with white print". Costuming from the film has had a lasting impact within popular culture, with Juliet's angel costume becoming a popular Halloween costume, as well as Romeo's wedding suit. For this outfit, Barret called Ms Miuccia Prada who agreed to make him a suit.



Barret creates a stark contrast between the design of the Capulet and Montague costumes in order to "serve the characters and [make] them memorable." She came up with the idea of ornate, bulletproof waist vests for the Capulet family, saying she wanted them to have a "kind of gunslinging, gangster, low-hipped, cowboy-boots kind of vibe." The designer pulled these items from old Dolce stock which in her words "we were able to bastardise some things - we chopped the sleeves off, or we over-dyed them to age them or threw dirt on them."

On the contrary, the Montague family "are more flyboy. They're like the guys in Hawaii that leave from the ship. They're still fighters, but they're more laid-back and relaxed and American in a way." For their costumes, Barret painted catholic iconography onto Hawaiian shirts with a dreamy, romantic Technicolour motif that she found at a Miami thrift store, using Leo's shirt that he wears in the cathedral at the end as the jumping-off point for the rest. The design team painted onto one of Leo's shirts, a bleeding heart and death lilies that acted as a foreshadowing for what was to happen.



This film provided the MTV Generation with a post-modern view of a classic tale, having a lasting impact on pop culture and the way we view Shakespeare. From its iconic soundtrack featuring songs by Radiohead, Garbage, and The Cardigans, to its perfect costuming down to the minute detail, this film is a must watch.

## LITERARY REVIEW

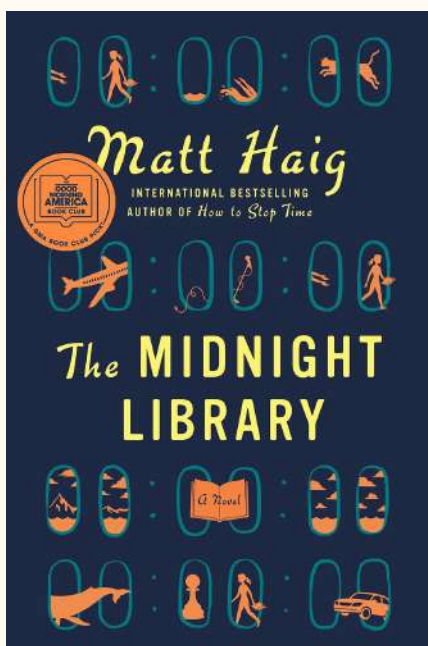
# The Midnight Library

*By Danielle Tan*

Regrets are something that everyone has. Whether that is regrets for something big or something small, they're always there. I'm sure that everyone wonders how their life would be different if they had done something else instead – if they had revised more for the key assessment tomorrow or if they had gone to bed earlier. Anything from simple trivial things to deep unanswered regrets that you've had held up inside you. The Midnight Library by Matt Haig is a beautifully written book that encapsulates the other lives a person could have lived if they had chosen things differently.

Going into this I had no idea what to expect. It was merely a recommendation I had received and thought I might as well give it a try since I have nothing new on my shelves. I do admit that I didn't read this traditionally since I thought I would give audiobooks a go and subscribed to a free trial to Audible. Little did I know I'd only be able to listen to one book for free and not as many as I liked which did make me feel a bit bitter. Nevertheless, I dedicated 9 hours of my life to listening to The Midnight Library and I don't regret it.

**“Sometimes  
just to say  
your own  
truth out  
loud is  
enough to  
find others  
like you.”**



Nora Seed is a woman in her mid-30s who feels as if she's done everything wrong with her life. She quit swimming just as she was about to make it, she pulled out of the band that was going to be world famous, and she got cold feet in the engagement she was going to be in. In a way, Nora's life had no redeeming factor and that was the reason why she decided to take her own life. Yet she wakes up in a library with a familiar face as the librarian. With the help of Mrs Elm she explores all the regrets she held in her life and how changing one of those decisions could have led to different lives – one where she was an Olympic swimmer or a rockstar – and in the end she would have to choose one to settle in.



## LITERARY REVIEW

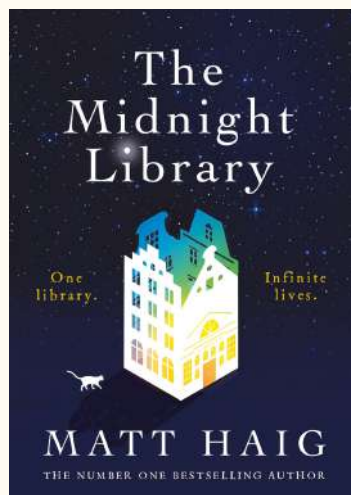
# The Midnight Library

By Danielle Tan

I've always heard people say that a book was "beautifully written" and truth be told I never understood what that meant. Sure, I've liked, even loved, some of the books I've read but I don't think I've ever read something that makes me question my own actions. If there was one thing that enraptured me about this book it would be the metaphors that Haig manages to interweave within his words. The concept of this book is something I'm sure we've all asked questions about. The other lives we could have lived. The mere thought sounds exciting but to see what other pathways you had for you if you had done something different could arguably cause more pain than joy.

Personally, what made this book so interesting was the slow realisation that Nora and the reader had along the way. I think what was so clever about this book was how Haig managed to string both Nora and the reader through the different lives and ultimately to the conclusion. I do think that the ending did let me down a bit, with such a complex concept that only kept building the ending seemed underwhelming. However, that doesn't mean I didn't enjoy what was written as even if the ending wasn't up to my expectations I still thoroughly enjoyed it.

**"You don't have to understand life. You just have to live it."**



**"Aim to be you. Aim to look and act and think like you. Aim to be the truest version of you. Embrace that you-ness. Endorse it. Love it. Work hard at it."**

The Midnight Library truly did make me wonder what I could've done differently with my life and reflect on my past. It sounds corny but I do think this book makes a person do that. It's nothing too literary challenging but that doesn't diminish its worth as a book. It's definitely a novel worth reading and a high recommendation from me.

## FILM REVIEW

# Would you take “The Substance”?

By Petra Oshiga

“The Substance” is a 2024 released Horror film, starring Demi Moore and Margaret Qualley alongside Dennis Quad and more. Beside the star studded cast, the story of “The Substance” follows Elisabeth Sparkle (played by Demi Moore), as her career as a top actress is falling right before her eyes. As her show gets cancelled and her confidence is at an all time low, a hospital visit introduced Sparkle to “The Substance”.

A black market serum that promises the user a ‘younger, more beautiful, more perfect version of themselves’. Intrigued, Sparkle takes the substance and in fact creates a version of herself called ‘Sue’. In order to maintain a level of balance, Sue and Elisabeth must switch between themselves every 7 days, both living the lives that they want. Sue thrives in Elisabeth's world, becoming an overnight sensation in Sparkle's former industry. However as a consequence of not switching, Elisabeth pays the price of her younger self, by withering and decaying as Sue seems to continue to thrive.

In a world where we see Ozempic-infected celebrities everyday, we don't know what is real. Is there a healthy way to achieve your dream self? Especially in the celebrity world, looks are like a currency. As fans of popular TV shows, we always have a sense of attraction to a particular character on the screen, that makes us want to watch again. The film industry is a profit making business, the choices that they make with their actors is what ends up bringing in the revenues. However, what we don't see is the behind the scenes. How the actors and actresses go to extreme lengths to be able to book big career jumping jobs. However, what happens to the older actors and actresses?



Well for some actors, they do appear to be reported as losing their youthful glow that they were so known for. How the concept of aging has unfortunately reached them, and they are no longer marketable. While some of us criticise the easy way out of using drugs like Ozempic as a form of Weight loss. In the film industry, it's a method of actors prolonging their careers. Chasing youth as many people call it. With the growth of fillers, botox, and veneers, not only are the icke prices to Turkey rising by the month, but we aren't able to recognise people anymore.

There is no shame in having work done, alterations to one's appearance can be a way of people boosting confidence when out in the world. Life long insecurities somehow vanish after an augmentation or a removal. However, where do we draw the line at fixing insecurities? While methods of losing weight have been tried and tested for what seems like centuries, it almost like Ozempic is the magic potion that removes the shame, the body dysmorphia that has followed some for their whole life. What an easy fix to a solution, with little effort required.

## FILM REVIEW

# Would you take “The Substance”?

By Petra Oshiga

That's what many people who have taken the drug have since faced intense side effects that have damaged their long term health. According to the World Healthline, the drug has had long term effects such as diabetic retinopathy (damaged blood vessels to the eye), inflammation in the pancreas, thyroid cancer and the list continues. But people still choose to take this drug. Is this what society means by beauty is pain? Is this what it takes to fit the codes and conventions that society has placed on us?

“The Substance” has done incredibly well during the award season, with Demi Moore winning best actress at the Golden Globes, and the movie having 5 nominations at the Oscars for best actress, best supporting actress as well as makeup, hair and costuming. Movies like the substance are almost like a simulacra for the modern day world. A copy of a copy, something that builds familiarities with audiences. The concept of aging and beauty being explored brings a scary reality for most people. While “The Substance” does not end with tears of joy and hugs from loved ones, the film does successfully reflect societal pressures and adds a retrospective outlook to modern day issues.

Overall “The Substance” can be summed up as terrifying, fascinating and enlightening to the realities of so many people. The idea of chasing youth and being that ‘Perfect’ version of yourself rings true to some, the modern problems of beauty treatments like Ozempic highlights the complexities of the entertainment industry and unrealistic beauty standards. An amazing watch for audience members wanting a scare or a psychological tragedy.



Currently you are able to watch "The Substance" streaming on MUBI, MUBI Amazon Channel. It is also possible to buy "The Substance" on Apple TV, Amazon Video, Sky Store as download or rent it on Amazon Video, Sky Store, Apple TV online.



## The 'Suits' Effect: How Media Can Influence Career Choices

*By Ece Tagmac*

For years television has influenced generations to pursue career paths they may not have otherwise considered. One show that draws our attention is 'Suits', which aired from 2011 to 2019, played a significant role in persuading people to go into the legal profession. With its clever dialogue, high-stakes drama, and incredibly dressed lawyers, 'Suits' romanticized the world of corporate law, inspiring many to consider a career in the field. This is often referred to as the "Suits Effect" which is simply proof of the power of media in shaping career choices.

Suits revolves around the inner workings of a top New York law firm, Pearson Hardman. Harvey Specter, a very successful and charismatic closer with Mike Ross, a brilliant college dropout with a photographic memory, brings an element of excitement and thrill to corporate law. Their dynamic as a duo combined with the tailored outfits, dramatic power moves, and luxurious lifestyles makes law seem more glamorous and simpler than it often is.

But here's the catch: the real-life legal profession is not nearly as glamorous as 'Suits' makes it seem. While the one and only Harvey Specter wins cases very quickly, actual lawyers spend hours drafting contracts, researching, preparing their legal arguments. And of course, the 3-year grind at university of endless reading, case briefs and exams that are conveniently skipped over by the show. In the real-world corporate law involves a lot of paperwork, intense competition and excessive work hours. And you are not guaranteed the six-figure salary or the luxury offices. However, many people only come to this realization in university. If you're prepared to approach the challenges of law with ambition and enthusiasm, then it may be the right path for you. However, a thorough and realistic consideration of what is demanded is very necessary.

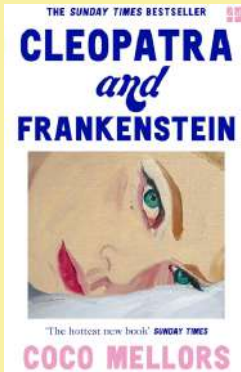


Although we cannot know the direct impact of 'Suits' on law school applications, there is plenty evidence that suggests that the show has had a massive impact. Law schools reported students referencing 'Suits' in personal statements, and social media is filled with aspiring lawyers that refer to suits as their original motivation.

The 'Suits Effect' shows both the positive and negative influences of media on career choices. While the show undoubtedly sparked interest in law, it also did set unrealistic expectations. Those who are inspired by suits must recognise that while law is exciting and truly thrilling, it requires dedication, resilience and years of hard work. But who is to tell you to not follow your 'Suits' dreams, just maybe earn that Harvard degree the old-fashioned way.

## Recent Recommendations

### BOOK



#### SIXTH FORM ONLY

##### **Cleopatra and Frankenstein- Coco Mellors**

This debut novel details the hasty marriage between a young woman needing a green card and an older successful man, and the shockwaves the decision sends through their communities and friends. The story follows seven characters on their own personal journeys, touching on addictions, heartbreak and self-destruction in a humorously heart-breaking manner.

### MUSIC



##### **Born to Run- Bruce Springsteen**

This album is considered not only one of Springsteen's best, but also regarded as one of the greatest records of all time. "Born to Run" incorporates rock, pop, R&B and folk rock to tell stories of young people trapped and fantasizing about the American dream, combining roaring crescendos with melancholy saxophone and piano solos.

### FILM

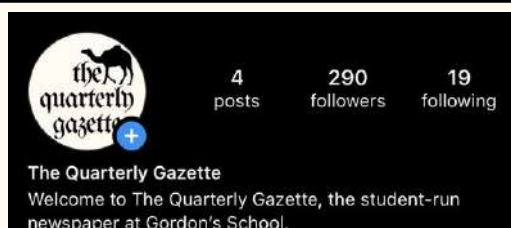


##### **One life**

This movie is based on the true story of Nicholas Winton, an English humanitarian who assisted in transporting 669 children from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia just before the outbreak of World War II. Featuring performances from Anthony Hopkins and Helena Bonham Carter as Winton and his mother in flashbacks between 1938 and 1988.

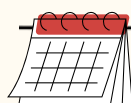
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## UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE SUMMER TERM

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>APRIL 21</b> <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 	22 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> Boarders Return at 7:00pm 	23 SUMMER TERM <b>Yr12 Mock Exams Begin</b> 	24	25	26	27
28 <b>GCSE Exams Begin</b>	29	30	<b>MAY 1</b> <b>Y9 Core Exams Begin</b>	2 <b>Y12 Mock Exams End</b>	3 <b>EXEAT</b> 	4 <b>EXEAT</b> 
5 <b>EXEAT</b> 	6	7	8 <b>A Level Exams Begin</b>	9 <b>Y9 Core Exams End</b>	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 <b>Sports Day</b> 	24 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 	25 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 
26 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 	27 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 	28 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 	29 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 	30 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 	31 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 	<b>JUNE 1</b> <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 
2	3	4	5	6	7 <b>Parade &amp; Fun day</b> 	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 <b>GCSE Exams End</b>	19	20 <b>A Level Exams End</b>	21 <b>EXEAT</b> 	22 <b>EXEAT</b> 
23	34	25	26	27	28	29
30	<b>JULY 1</b>	2	3	4	5 <b>Annual Parade &amp; Prize Giving</b> 	6 <b>HOLIDAYS</b> 

FILL THIS IN WITH ALL YOUR UPCOMING DATES!