

**Special points of
interest:**

Join a club this
term. Look at the
back sheet to see
how much fun
they are!

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Mangotsfield Newsletter



Issue 16

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CSI comes to Mangotsfield School



This was the first TAG event for students in Years 7-9.

The day was called CSI Investigates because the 60 students who were lucky enough to be involved had to solve three major crimes that had been committed that day.

It really made students think-through puzzles, work as a team and use everyone's strengths to achieve a common goal.

The first activity was to get to know your team and consisted of having to make a human bridge. The difficulty was that Ian, the leader, stipulated the total number of body parts that could touch the floor, ie four feet — it was more difficult than it sounds!

The next activity was to rescue a bomb from a suitcase with only a rope, then to find the combination lock to the case as well as diffuse the bomb.

The most interesting activity was when the group had to solve the case of the kidnapped gorilla. It involved the team using clues and incident rooms, reading maps and issuing search warrants. All teams thankfully rescued the gorilla which was eventually found near the teachers' staffroom and bike sheds (they were the strongest suspects!!!).

To sum up, most students said it was the best course they'd ever been on.

Keep an eye out for more exciting TAG opportunities this year. Remember that TAG membership is decided new every year, so try to get nominated by your teachers.



Confiscated Clothes

At the end of this term, all clothing which has been confiscated and not collected by students from reception will be given to a local charity shop. This will now happen at the end of each term.

English Trip to Hardy Country

Rain. Thin, drizzly, slate-gray rain. And a seven o'clock start to make it worse! It was the worst weather for weeks and forty Year 10 students, all deprived of precious sleep, were off to deepest Dorset for a countryside walk, no less! We are studying Thomas Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd* and our damp trudge was to take us from Max Gate (Hardy's self designed home) to the cottage in which he was born and wrote much of his early work.

After a protracted wait for a service-station egg sandwich, we arrived at Max Gate and were given a presentation on the writer's life and some background information on the novel. Discussing Hardy's work whilst sat in his own living room gave us an excellent insight into where, how and why he wrote. Then it was out into the garden or some of his later poetry. After staring mournfully for a while at the grave of his best dog, Wessex, we began our hike.

The weather at least was on our side, and it had stopped raining by the time we stopped for lunch by a very Hardy-esque river. Sat on bin bags and munching sandwiches, there was an opportunity to wander up to the churchyard in which Hardy's heart is buried – in the same grave as both of his wives! Being a famous, Victorian novelist didn't seem to affect his more frugal nature! We navigated some young and curious cattle on the way to the cottage and were chased all the way by dark clouds. We stayed dry though, and at Hardy's birthplace we sat at the windowsill on which he wrote *Far From the Madding Crowd*.



General opinion seemed to be about how small he must have been for the doors to be so low, and how problematic to get down near-vertical stairs each morning, especially as a teenager, and how tired we all were! In Hardy's novel, the weather plays a big part in enhancing and reflecting the actions of the characters. We managed to chase away the rain last week, and I'll put that down to the impromptu poetry writing in Hardy's garden! Dorset must have liked us. It was back on the coach then for the drive home, nursing worn-out feet (and a cheese burger this time), and finally home to bed, safe in the knowledge that it wasn't as small as Thomas Hardy's!

Year 13 Extended Project

On Tuesday 28th April, approximately 75 of our Year 12 & 13 students took part in the final assessment for their Extended Projects. This was a presentation of all the work they had been doing since last October.

The Extended Project is an AS level qualification, and the choice of topic is up to the student. It can be an extension of their studies or based on an interest they have. Students have to plan, research, develop, present and evaluate their projects. These skills are greatly welcomed by both Universities and Employers.

We had a huge range and diversity of projects including: Falconry, Building a Computer, The History of Cinema, The History of the Little Black Dress, Bristol City, Designing a house, Bad Driving – the list is very long!

The presentations were in the hall, it was all very informal and students from all year groups were invited to come along and ask questions about the projects. All the students who came were impressed by the work done by the Sixth Formers, and the feedback was extremely positive and encouraging. It was a successful event

and all credit should go to the Sixth Formers who worked so hard to make it work.

Big thanks should also go to the Project supervisors – Mr Thresher, Miss Hawkins and Miss Herbert – and also to ICT Support. I would also like to thank all staff and students who came along to support our Sixth Formers.

Louise Bird
Head of 6th Form

A PDC Lesson. Creative thinkers are...

Why do some people solve problems more creatively than others? Are people who think creatively different from those who tend to think in a more methodical fashion? Students have been exploring these ideas throughout their PDC lessons of this term, assessing their own levels of creativity and using comprehensive thinking tools to develop their ability. Traditional IQ tests do not demonstrate how imaginative or innovative a learner you are, therefore students have been using thinking tools to interpret their own creativity. From designing free standing bridges made out of sugar paper to solving murder mysteries and

from thinking in reverse to navigating your way through a maze, students have been experiencing an array of activities to develop their creativity. Year 9 students were asked to suggest alternative phrases to describe 'creative thinkers', here are their ideas:

FLUENT - think of a lot of ideas

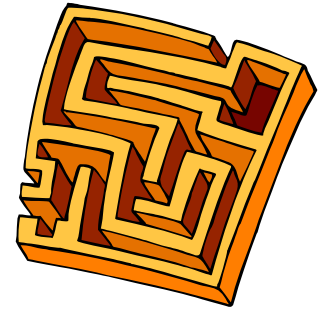
FLEXIBLE - change categories while thinking

ORIGINAL - think of unique and unusual ideas

ELABORATE - add details to further develop their ideas

INNOVATIVE - discovering a new way to complete something

Next term students will be focusing on their final PDC theme; Effective Participators. This will allow all students to examine their contribution to the wider school community and their impact on a national and global scale, actively engaging in all issues.



Year 8 Aim Higher Parents' Evening

This was the first ever Aim Higher Parents' Evening. The aim of the event was to get Year 8 parents thinking about their child going to University.

You may think that Year 8 is a bit early to be thinking of this but recent studies have shown that this is the very age that students

decide whether they will stay on at sixth form.

The evening was a great success with four local Higher Educational Institutions represented including

Bristol University, Bath Spa, Bath University and UWE. They sent a total of 18 students and two Aim Higher Representatives who

delivered four sessions to the 76 parents who came to the evening. The sessions were on the topics of finance, student life and job opportunities.

Keep a look out for future Aim Higher events for your child, and give them a head start on the job market.



to Mangotsfield

nuts, oiling chains, repairing punctures and retuning gears.

Ryan Evans of Bike It explained what the project was all about. "Bike It can only work with twelve schools a year and Mangotsfield was fortunate to be chosen from the eighteen that applied this year. We spend the first year working intensively with each school, encouraging students to cycle to school and use their bikes more often. The success rate is fantastic, in many Bike It schools we have quadrupled the number of students cycling to school. Cycling can give kids so much freedom and teach them many valuable skills while at the same time

giving them a real

sense of responsibility and of actively doing something to help the environment and fight climate change."

Later in the year Ryan is hoping to bring a professional stunt rider to the school to show our students the amazing "flatland" stunts that can be performed on a BMX bike. Keep checking the Newsletter for more information!

See more information about the Bike It project at www.sustrans.org.uk



John and Andy worked hard all day to check and repair dozens of bikes, replacing brake blocks, tightening



**MANGOTSFIELD
SCHOOL
AN ENGINEERING AND
SCIENCE COLLEGE**

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Scientists Create Mobile Foam!



The Science Club were busy filming experiments recently inside and outside of the science labs. A local film company, Suited and Booted, came along and helped the members of the club video some fantastic experiments. Not only did they learn how to create volcanoes, make jelly babies squeal, make a flame thrower from custard powder, produce a lake of foam from a test tube (among other things), they also learned how to film and produce videos in a documentary style using hi-tech equipment on loan from Suited and Booted.

Potato Gun

Vacuum cleaners usually suck but, in an impressive experiment using a long length of pipe, the members of the club showed how it can fire a potato over 10 metres. The vacuum gun proved quite accurate and no windows were broken in the experiment!

Another experiment proved that a little can go a long way. A small amount of water and an even smaller amount of certain chemicals became a torrent of foam that threatened to cover the entire lab bench.

Lava Lump

An experiment to show how volcanoes are created involved a layer of wax beneath a layer of "earth" in a beaker. The beaker was heated using a bunsen burner and the wax melted. As soon as it was hot enough it broke through the "earth" layer and flowed like lava.

The videos that were made should be available on-line soon. Check out www.mangotsfieldschool.org.uk



Prom Fashion Show



Bristol based one-stop prom company Meand-myProm.com visited Mangotsfield School on Thursday 2nd April to show off their selection of prom dresses and gents' suits. The company took over the sixth form common room and our students improvised a very colourful fashion display. Students were able to try on the clothes and were given personal advice by the staff. The company makes it

very easy to organise your prom; there are dresses to buy for the ladies and suits to hire for the gents. Helping on the day was Ajay Bhakri who previously completed a six week internship at the company as part of the Finance Academy course he is studying at Mangotsfield Sixth Form.

