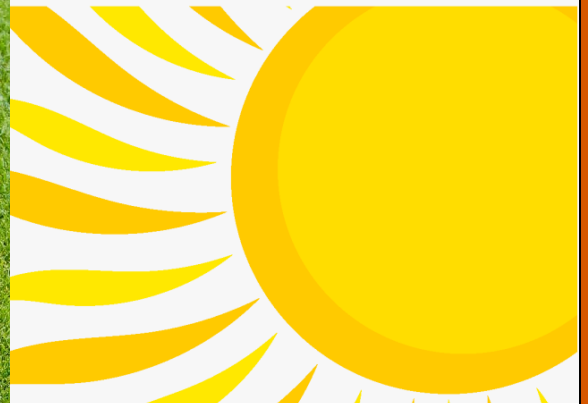




BEST OF THE BETHS



just like us

THE BEST OF JULY



BEST OF THE BETHS

CONTENTS PAGE

- 1). Sports Awards 2023 by Alastair 9H
- 2). Exploring Racism Towards White People by Mustafa 10H
- 3). ‘Wicked’ Theatre Review by Callum 8H, Jack 7W and Riley 9H
- 4). The 4th of July by Nathaniel 10A
- 5). Interviewing Mr Iqbal by Femi 10C
- 6). My Experience as a Year 7 Student by Faeq 7B
- 7). Bletchley Park School Visit by Ronnie 10H
- 8). Why You Should Do DofE by Damilola 10H
- 9). Premier League Transfer Roundup (July) by Martin 10E
- 10). Life In Russia, 17 Months On by Victor 10H
- 11). My Review of Wimbledon by Riley 10W
- 12). JLU Awards Ceremony by Kai 6A5 and Ms Harris
- 13). An Interview with... The Reader’s Choice! by Edwin 10C

Edited and Designed by Edwin, Femi (10C), Nathaniel, Oke (10A)

Sports Awards 2023

By Alastair 9H

It's that time of the year again as Beths held the first End Of Year Sports Awards. On 6th July, Mr Webb gathered parents and students who have represented the school in a sport over the past year. The doors were open from 5pm and the event commenced around 5:40. Snacks and drinks were provided and many knew that we were in for an exciting evening. With many sports to cover, the order went as followed: Football, Rugby, Basketball, Cricket and finally Athletics.

So starting with the Year 7 football teams as the captains made a speech about the team's experiences and rides along this intriguing season. After the speeches, the awards were handed out including 'Outstanding Performer' and 'Players' Player' with the best performers being rewarded with for their excellence over the year. This repeated over the year groups up until the 1st and 2nd XI. We then went through rugby until the interval at roughly 6:20 pm and lasted for 20 minutes. This gave us time to go to the toilet and buy things if needed.

After the awards had resumed, it was time for basketball and the news was shared that the Year 7 & 8 teams had won their trophies. However, there was an emotional aspect when the Year 10 captain had explained how much they missed the part of Ozzy who unfortunately passed away last year. A big thank you to everyone who donated and was a part of the £4000 raised for a new scoreboard in his memory.

As we moved onto the final two sports, cricket and athletics, the excitement grew as people knew the raffle was getting closer. When cricket was finished, we had a quick look at the sports day results and got told who got the most points in their year and Timi Phillips, 9H, won in for the year 9's. Once we saw the athletics, there was one more award to be handed out called the 'Geoff Snell award'. This goes out to a student who not only gives their all representing the school in sport but also behaving well inside of school, as Mr Webb explained. There were nominees from each year and then an overall winner. The award actually went to me!

Overall, it was a brilliant ceremony and a fantastic way to celebrate the achievements over the year. A huge thank you to the staff for organising and all the donations given for the raffle, silent auction, and the scoreboard.

Racism Towards White People?

By Mustafa 10H

Racism: defined

Before delving into the topic of racism towards white people, it is essential to establish a clear definition of the term "racism." Etymologically, "race" refers to the classification of humans based on phenotype, while the suffix "-ism" denotes a distinctive practice or political ideology. However, different interpretations exist, ranging from the systematic oppression of one race by another to preconceived notions influencing decisions. Central to these discussions is the concept of "systematic oppression," which pertains to the ingrained biases within societal institutions like law enforcement, the judiciary, and political power.

Historical Context of Race and Racism:

Throughout history, colonial powers such as France and Britain subjugated people from diverse regions. During these periods of rule, individuals were classified based on skin tone, physical features, and native languages, often enduring derogatory treatment by the presumed "superior race." Recognising the struggles and barriers faced by people of colour (POCs) is crucial, as it acknowledges the existence of historical oppression. While striving for equity and equality, it is important to let go of the past without forgetting its lessons. Prolonging a painful history in an era where people can live in peace and safety regardless of their skin colour would be counterproductive.

Racism Within POC Communities:

A common misconception exists that individuals belonging to POC communities cannot perpetrate racism against one another. This fallacy is especially prevalent among first and second-generation children of immigrants who feel comfortable mocking other cultures, whether in the workplace or on social media. Similarly, some individuals ridicule their own ethnic backgrounds and racial minorities in countries with systems designed to reduce their chances of success. Certain words may be considered "less racist," despite their negative, harmful, and derogatory connotations. This dynamic sometimes leads to a problematic competition within POC communities, known as the "Oppression Olympics," where individuals argue over who has endured greater adversity or whose slurs are more harmful.

Racism Towards White People?

By Mustafa 10H

Examining Anti-White Sentiment:

In recent years, social media and video sharing platforms have provided a platform for diverse political ideologies. Among these viewpoints is the constant degradation of white presence. Some argue that since white people historically held positions of power and established oppressive systems, they cannot be oppressed or victims of racism. This perspective perpetuates the notion of white privilege, even if white individuals have experienced personal hardships. Conversely, others assert that denying the barrage of insults and stereotypes directed at white people based on their skin colour is itself a form of racism.

The issue of racism towards white people warrants a comprehensive examination that considers historical context, intra-POC racism, and the complexities of anti-white sentiment. Through open and respectful dialogue, we can foster a society that promotes equality, inclusivity, and mutual respect for all races and ethnicities. It is essential to gain a deeper understanding of diverse experiences and perspectives to combat racism in all its forms.



Wicked Theatre

Review

By Callum 8H, Jack 7W and Riley 9H

Spellbinding, Enchanting and Captivating!

As a thank you to those involved in recent Music and Drama performances, Ms Monteith, ably assisted by Mr Babajide and Ms Twomey, took us all to see the West End show, *Wicked*, at the Apollo Theatre. *Wicked* tells the story of the lives of those in the mystical land of Oz, long before Dorothy appears in the more famous tale, *The Wizard Of Oz*.

The performance was filled with original songs, stunning stage design and a plot that kept you enthralled from start to finish. From my perspective, when a musical uses so many original songs it detracts slightly from my enjoyment. Much like seeing a band play their new tunes, you really want to hear the songs you're familiar with.



The performance includes dazzling sets, and a captivating narrative, it immerses viewers in a world of magic and keeps them on the edge of their seat. The imaginative sets and stunning visuals transported us to the vibrant and fantastical land of Oz. *Wicked* is an enchanting experience that will leave you awe-inspired and longing for more.

The first time I went to see “*Wicked*” was in May 2019, and was lucky to see an impeccable performance. However, being younger, I hadn’t really understood every part of the play. Now being able to go again a few years later and the fact that I was in the cast of the “*Wizard Of Oz*” production at school has enabled me to understand the story behind “*Wicked*” better and the link between it and the “*Wizard Of Oz*”.

The performance was excellent but, in my opinion when Elphaba was singing sometimes she would sing off key.

Wicked Theatre

Review

By Callum 8H, Jack
7W and Riley 9H

I loved the scene near the end when Elphaba supposedly died but then Fiyero, as the Scarecrow, returned to Elphaba's castle and opened the trap door where Elphaba rose again. This linked to the "Wizard of Oz", where Dorothy saw and helped the Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion. I liked the use of the trap door as an unseen and unexpected twist.



Joe Thompson-Oubari was excellent, in playing a munchkin called 'Boq', using both his body-language and verbal skills to the max. My favorite "Wizard of Oz" character is the Tin Man, so another plus was seeing how he formed from being a munchkin.

I would like to give a big thank you to Miss Monteith for organising this lovely experience, and to the other teachers for supporting us.

The 4th of July

By Nathaniel 10A

From the fireworks to the barbeques and the parades to the parties, the 4th of July, also known as Independence Day, is a special day to many Americans as it symbolises the birth of the United States as we know it today. This day is often considered to be one of the most important days in the US calendar, celebrated by many through a range of festivities, including concerts and family gatherings.



The 4th of July marks the day that the declaration of independence was adopted, July 4th, 1776, which officially marked the United States becoming its own nation. On this day, America declared its independence from Great Britain. Before America was its own country, it comprised of 13 colonies established by Britain. These colonies included New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York. Tensions began to brew when Britain passed legislation that gave it more control within the colonies, especially regarding taxes. This was because of the debt Britain was suffering from because of the French and Indian war. The Continental Congress, which represented the 13 American colonies, was set up, in 1774, to address the grievances of the colonies and work towards American independence. On July 2nd, 1776, the continental congress voted in favour of independence and two days later, on the 4th of July, the Declaration of Independence was signed, officially marking the birth of the United States of America as a free, independent country.

The first celebration of Independence Day took place a year after the Declaration of Independence was signed, in 1777, in Philadelphia. The celebration included a parade, a 13-gun salute and fireworks. From then, the tradition of celebrating the 4th of July with fireworks continued, with some of the best including the annual Macy's (an American department store) fireworks celebration in NYC and the San Francisco Fireworks show from Pier 39. The 4th of July is a day for families and friends to gather to remember the sacrifices made by the founding fathers to secure their liberty, and to celebrate the progress of the United States since then.

In conclusion, the 4th of July is a holiday of great significance to Americans, one that commemorates the celebration of freedom and independence and a bold statement of the rights of the American people.

Interviewing Mr Iqbal

By Femi 10C

1. What inspired you to pursue Maths at a further level?

Well to be honest, I did my research at an early age. I realised that Mathematics is a very valuable subject to Universities and employers. If you look at entry requirements for Universities, courses ranging from Engineering to Medicine will require you to have a very good Maths foundation. But I also enjoy Maths a lot, I used to do a lot of riddles/puzzles in my childhood which really helped with the skills of problem solving in Maths. If you approach every question in Maths as a puzzle, you may enjoy Maths more the same way I did.

2. How do you make Maths engaging for your students?

A lot of students know how to answer a Maths question, but they don't understand the concept behind their working out. I try my best for students to understand concepts such as how Mathematical formula's are derived, why does $\pi = 3.14$, how transformations of graphs happen the way they do and many more!

3. Do you have any other interests besides Maths?

Growing up, I spent a lot of times playing games. I had all the Playstations, Super Nintendo & Nintendo Wii. My biggest achievement in Gaming is that I got a World Record in Mario Kart Wii (which only lasted a few days). I played a lot of FIFA, COD and Overwatch in recent years. During lockdown my friends and I would play Warzone every evening and we managed to get over 150 wins together. I don't really have much time now to play anymore, but maybe during the summer holidays I can wipe the dust off my PlayStation! I'm a huge football fan, I support Manchester United and I play 5-a-side every week.

Interviewing Mr Iqbal

By Femi 10C

4. How do you encourage students struggling with Maths to overcome their challenges?

Believe it or not, I was bad at Maths when I was your age. I was not in Set 1, I was performing badly in my exams even though I was revising which lowered my confidence significantly. My teacher gave me a quote which stuck with me till this day “ When people work out, they push their muscles to the limit, they get tired but they come back stronger the next day. Your brain is a muscle, so you should challenge your brain by pushing yourself and do harder questions. This will make you continuously think and work your brain, you will mentally get tired but after a good night rest you will wake up a better Mathematician ”. I realised I wasn't being efficient with my revision, after I altered my revision techniques I saw immediate progress and eventually moved into Set 1. If I can get better at Maths, then you could too!

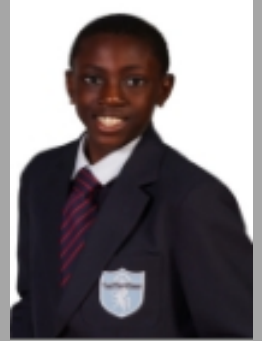
5. What year do you find the most interesting to teach and why?

I don't have a preference, as teachers we enjoy teaching students who are passionate about the subject. Teaching Year 11's and 13's is rewarding because of results day, we finally see our hard work throughout the academic year paid off. This is my first year at Beth's and I can proudly say I enjoyed teaching all of my classes this year.



My Experience as a Year 7 Student

By Faeq 7B



For me, joining Beths as a student felt nerve-wracking, yet immense. Just like others within the community, the family they belong to would have some history with the school through older or younger siblings. To me, it seems as though there are these many expectations that I must live up to so I can fly the flag for my family.

Reflecting on how the year has gone, I feel like I am meeting many expectations already and I am slowly marching my way towards some more of them. Stepping into a new school can feel like entering a whole new world at the same time, but as life goes on, you continue to adapt to your new place. As a Year 7, you meet new people, yet make new friends as well, along with collecting many memories. During this year, I have been feeling more secure, not forgetting that I have also had to take on more responsibility, just like the 191 students around me. It can potentially be a struggle, but you have a wide variety of people around you that are willing to give you support.

I have been thinking about being organised a lot during this year. Others may interpret differently, but for me, it is part of the recipe for having as good a day as you can. The recipe also consists of behaving like you did in primary, or even exceeding that behaviour, and conducting yourself to a secondary school standard. That may seem easy, but it is harder than it may look. Being involved in many house competitions while representing Brampton seems different to an Eardley perspective. My older brother was here and achieved many things, including the prestigious Colours award. However, I feel proud of being in a mini community that forms a community that has not won the House Cup since 2014.

My brother has had an impact on the history of the school, and I feel like I can do the same as well. Heading into Year 8 next year, it feels as though it is “a fresh start. A new chapter in life waiting to be written. New questions to be asked, embraced, and loved. Answers to be discovered and then lived” in what will be a “transformative year of delight and self-discovery.” I feel like the weight of my brother’s 7 years here will be on my shoulders. Though it is possible for me to emulate him. No pressure.

Bletchley Park School Visit

By Ronnie 10H

Back in May, students were able to opt in for a trip to Bletchley Park, a prevelant and valued station which was crucial to the Allied forces during World War 2. Over the large area, there were various buildings that each had their own significance – such as the manor, shown to the right, and even smaller buildings that held the motorcycles used when travelling across the country to transport information during the World War. Each building, each room and each step the students took and explored were once the working bases of those who helped decrypt codes and work against the Axis just over 80 years ago.



The day started with a coach-ride to Milton Keynes, where Bletchley Park is located, and then we were given some initial information of the park. During World War II, higher-powers from Bletchley Park would scout out the most intelligent and skillful minds in England, inviting them via a private letter to arrive at Bletchley Park ASAP.



Those who were invited had little to no idea where this place was or what their job was going to entail – they were coming in blind, one may say, and had to take a leap. Eventually, upon arrival, they would be checked for any possible items or devices they may have been carrying which could possibly compromise the anonymity of the park – and, if none were found – their journey to helping the Allied forces win the World War began.

and, if none were found – their journey to helping the Allied forces win the World War began.

Bletchley Park School Visit

By Ronnie 10H

Once this brief information had been given, we were then passed the opportunity to explore buildings which had extremely detailed information regarding the work of the decryptors during World War II and the events leading up to the Allied forces' win within the area. This was also presented in a visual form as students could opt into watching a 15-minute-or-so video that illustrated the key events of WWII and what Bletchley Park did to combat them. Both were very informative and enjoyable!



After that, more touring was conducted as we could listen to old recordings from the 1930s and 1940s, as well as observe old artifacts that benefitted Bletchley Park. Once this was concluded, students were brought to a room where they were given pieces of paper with different lines of codes on each page and were asked to decrypt said code, being given the basic

manual for each. Though this was hard, it challenged our brains and showed us all just how hard the men and women alike had to work all those years ago just to give us the life we have today. As we finished this activity and were walking out, we were also given the opportunity to touch an Enigma Machine – an extremely valuable decryption device made by the Germans of which had varying decryption types that consistently changed and were almost impossible to break – but nothing was too hard for those in Bletchley.

Overall, this was an amazing experience and if you did not get the chance to go with the school, I highly recommend you go on a personal visit as it was extremely eye-opening and fun.

Why You **By Damilola 10H**

Should Do DofE

Two weekends ago (8-9th June), my half of the year went on their final Duke of Edinburgh expedition, and it was a great experience to say the least and I highly recommend that anyone who is up to a challenge or wants to build qualities such as leadership and perseverance should definitely participate.

There are three sections of the Bronze DofE Qualification; Volunteering, where you help your community or environment, Physical, where you do a sport or physical activity and Skills, where you develop an expertise for a specific activity that isn't physical. In this article I'm going to focus more on the things I learnt on my expedition but for the other three sections, two must be done for three months and one for six. More information on this can be found on <https://www.dofe.org/do/sections/>.

For Volunteering I did Sports Leadership where me and other sports leaders in the year group organised events for the local community such as primary school tournaments which helped us build our teamwork as we had to communicate clearly to each other and children.

The expedition consists of 2 days of walking, approximately 16km on each one, and an overnight stay at the campsite. In my opinion, the walking wasn't too bad and that's due to my team's preparation. We made sure to get lifts for each other to the starting points and had more than enough food between us. To add to this most of us had synthetic clothes instead of cotton so they could dry quicker.

I, however, had a showerproof winter jacket from

Mountain Warehouse which wasn't sufficient to protect me from the treacherous rainfall, so we had to hide under some trees for cover and eat our lunch. To add to this, correct rucksacks and appropriate footwear is essential if you want maximum comfort. I followed the DofE recommendations and only experienced mild aches at the end of the day at the campsite.



Why You Should Do DofE

By Damilola 10H

Should Do DofE

My group was first to get to the campsite and we set up our two tents with ease, working together efficiently before helping other groups set up theirs. Then we had to cook our food. After my practice edition I realised that instant noodles were a really good option as they're quick to make and it creates an easy clean up after. To entertain ourselves at the campsite we played many card games like Uno. The sleep quality wasn't the greatest, but personally this didn't affect me till after the expedition when I fell asleep at least ten times on the drive home.

During Day Two however, I felt that I had so much energy and was determined to finish this once and for



all. To keep the group motivated on this much harder route, I had to make sure petty quarrels were cut out instantly and the mood was kept positive. If not, we could easily get lost and due to anger and tension rising, and it could've led to further complications. So we started singing and chanting while we walked, played Eye Spy and had some deep and interesting conversations which helped maintain a positive spirit as we persevered through Ashdown Forest towards Gills Lap Car Park, our finishing

point. Before we were sent home, we had to complete a group evaluation on our individual performances and attributes during our expedition which really helped us to see what skills we learnt and how our teammates perceived us. This also helps to build admirable team qualities such as perseverance, quick thinking and communication.

To conclude I would definitely do DofE again and I recommend you, if you aren't already, do too, not only because of the skills you can gain but because the experience was so unique and it gave me the opportunity (as corny as it sounds) to really experience and connect with nature and appreciate its beauty.



Transfer Roundup (July)

Manchester City: Following the most successful season in the club's history, ending with the lifting of the Champion's League and the treble, City has been uncharacteristically quiet in the transfer market. The only signing made by City so far has been Mateo Kovacic for a fee of £25 million; this signing was likely made to attempt to replace the club's long-time captain, Ilkay Gundogan. Gundogan left City for Barcelona late last month and he was an undeniably influential player who stepped up in big moments for the club. In particular, his goals in the FA cup final last season against Manchester United and his goals against Aston Villa in the final matchday of the 21/22 season will be remembered for a long time by City and football fans alike. City have also been heavily linked to Josko Gvardiol; the young Croatian centre-back has been heavily coveted by Europe's top clubs, and with Leipzig's steep asking price of £100 million, it seems City are the front-runners for his signature.

Arsenal: With last season ending in heartbreak for Arsenal, finishing 2nd after over 270 days on top, the club have been busy in the market. Their window began with the signing of Kai Havertz from Chelsea for a fee of £65 million. This move has raised many eyebrows amongst fans. Havertz, coming off of an underwhelming season for Chelsea, is a massive gamble for Arsenal. There is no doubt of his talent, which was showcased at length during his time at Bayer Leverkusen and in flashes at Chelsea, most notably his Champion's League winning goal in the 20/21 season. However, his performances last season, where he only managed to register 10 goal contributions in 47 appearances, leave Arsenal fans questioning his ability. Much more recently, Arsenal broke their club transfer record by signing the defensive midfielder Declan Rice from West Ham for a fee of £105 million (+£5 million in add-ons). Rice is coming off a vastly successful season, having lifted the UEFA Conference League as West Ham captain. However, everyone, even West Ham fans, knew that Rice leaving was inevitable due to the immense interest from clubs all over Europe. Rice was pivotal for West Ham last season as he is a prolific playmaker, great in possession and strong defensively. His qualities will deeply benefit Arsenal, adding much needed backbone to the Arsenal midfield. In terms of departures, the most notable is that of Granit Xhaka. The midfielder left for £21 million to German club Bayer Leverkusen. Xhaka has been a servant of the club for 7 years but he was especially important last season when his good form helped spearhead Arsenal's title challenge. He is a respected figure amongst Arsenal fans and will be missed, but the club have adequate replacements such as Rice and Thomas Partey.

Transfer Roundup (July)

Manchester United: The 22/23 season was one of ups and downs for Ten Hag's Man UTD side; it ended with the club qualifying for the Champion's League and renewed optimism from the United fanbase. It seems that United are on the way upwards for the first time in years. Hence there were big plans for this transfer window, but it hasn't really lived up to the billing quite yet. United's only signing has been Mason Mount from Chelsea for a fee of £55 million and the Englishman will no doubt add much needed creativity to Man UTD's midfield whilst also delivering important experience in Europe. However, his poor form last season worries some supporters that he will not live up to the expectations. In terms of departures, longtime servant of the club and worldclass keeper David De Gea has left the club following the expiration of his contract. The Spanish shot-stopper developed into one of the best keepers in the world and was key for the club throughout his 12 years at the club. His departure leaves a gaping hole in the Goalkeeper position for United. As of the time of writing, André Onana is close to signing from Inter Milan. The young Cameroonian keeper was key in Inter's run to the Champion's League final, making him an exciting prospect for Ten Hag's side.

Newcastle United: Newcastle are back in the Champion's League following a fantastic season under manager Eddie Howe. However, it is clear they vastly overperformed and need strengthening squad-wise. The sole acquisition this window so far has been Sandro Tonali from AC Milan for £55 million. He is one of the brightest midfield prospects in the world, having been a great player for Milan prior to his departure. His arrival will bring class and technical quality to the Newcastle midfield as well as facilitating much needed depth in those positions. Newcastle have had no major departures to note so far in the window.

Liverpool FC: The aftermath from last season has shown that Liverpool desperately needs change, particularly in the midfield. The club has been very active in the window from the very beginning. After missing out on Jude Bellingham, who was instead snapped up by Real Madrid, Liverpool facilitated a steal in Alexis Mac Allister for £35 million. The Argentinian world cup winner was greatly influential at Brighton as he is great in possession and particularly effective going forward, something which Liverpool has lacked in recent times. His low price makes him a coup for Liverpool, who desperately needed a player of his qualities. More recently, Dominik Szoboszlai has joined from Leipzig for a fee of £60 million, he is another attacking midfielder adding yet more creativity to a stagnant Liverpool midfield. Overall, it has been great business from Liverpool in this window. However, it has not been without departures. The most notable departures are Roberto Firmino and James Milner. Firmino is undoubtedly a Liverpool legend and although his level has dropped in recent seasons his consistent goals and assists will be missed at Anfield. As for Milner he has been a loyal servant to a club, embracing Klopp's gegenpressing style of football and playing week in week out at a consistent level. These departures, though they were needed, will hurt the club in the short term.

Life In Russia: 17 Months On

By Victor 10H

'Don't be mad at the mirror if you are ugly.' – Vladimir Putin

On the 24th of July 2023, it will be 17 months after the military invasion by Russian Forces in Ukraine – that's just over 500 days of bloody fighting between a seemingly unstoppable attack and an immovable line of defence. As what happens to any country at war, life changes for the ordinary person.

The sanctions levied on Russia by Western countries has crippled the European energy market, leaving many Brits, as well as greater Europe, in desperation trying to pay increased energy prices, as well as higher food prices and mortgage rates inflating through the roof right now. This has been an attempt by the West to break Russia's economy, regardless of collateral damage to civilians on both sides of the sanctions, in order to run the Eastern Bear out of money to fund its campaign in Ukraine.

Sanctions on Russia not only include obvious ones such as barring military technology to enter the vast country, but also discouraging consumer brands, such as Uniqlo, McDonald's and KFC from having business in the country. The vast majority of brands have either shut down their shops in Russia or sold them to domestic firms. For example, KFC has sold all of its Russian venues to a Russian company, who will rebrand the chain to Russian-made 'Rostik's', a brand prevalent in 1990s Russia, at the height of its economic depression, a company which stopped being able to compete with the Western giants around the mid-2000s. In McDonalds case, a similar thing has happened, and prices now are lower than they was under the Western Thumb; this seems like more a win for the average Russian, as Western governments and the foreign companies lose fortunes in lost revenue and asset write-down. Other Western consumer commodities, such as iPhones, have also been forced to adhere to the sanctions. Although on paper, Apple no longer sells products to Russia, the situation on the ground paints a very different picture. Western Products are sent across the border and sold to Russians at a slightly higher price – Drop-shipping at its core. Of course, it is riskier and slightly more expensive to buy Western goods nowadays in Russia, but nonetheless it's easy to obtain what you want. Once again, the biggest cost goes to the Western companies, and thus the government and its people through lost tax revenue. Something that has affected me personally, as a Russian-Ukrainian individual, is the European ban on direct travel to and from Russia. The only way is to fly through non-sanctioning countries such as Egypt or Turkey, which costs a fortune to the average Russian with family in European countries. All this seems to do is reinforce the idea of Russian isolation and the Western enemy, as they try to rip apart families living on both sides of the block.

Life In Russia: 17 Months On

By Victor 10H

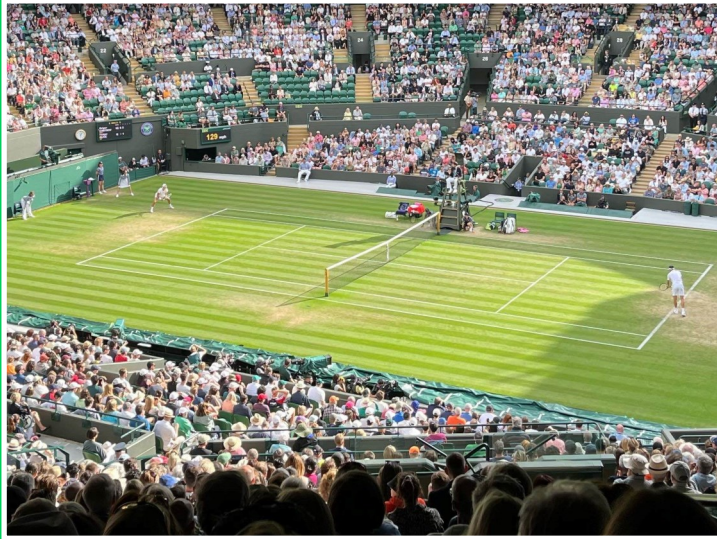
However, the most dramatic change for the worse is the societal attitude in Russia. Ever since the war, or the 'Special Military Operation' as it's called in Russia, started, President Putin has had many crackdowns on freedoms, such as the right to protest publicly. Although it's always been restricted to some extent, protesting nowadays can lead to arrests, prison time, and assassination for the most prevalent protestors. People are suspicious of one another, and they are scared to talk to anybody. This feeds an already politically passive culture and a silent population; nobody wants to risk punishment for something they cannot change anyway. For this reason, it is very hard to determine the percentage of Russians that support Putin and the war.

A recent development in Russia is the mutiny and the seemingly attempted coup by Wagner Group which could be the beginning of the end of this quiet, still stability that seems to reign over Russia right now. This is an indication of a turbulent and unstable time that could turn the tables against Putin's regime. Putin has remained in complete control, simply because he can keep Russia stable during the meat-grinder going on in Eastern Ukraine. After all, the deal made between Putin's party and the Russian people is this: Keep quiet, and do not protest and revolt against us, and we'll gradually improve your quality of life and let you have some private freedoms, such as foreign travel. This is similar to what goes on with China's Communist Party, and suits Russia's culture of silence and passiveness quite well. However, when the country becomes unstable, and a brutal war degrades the country and its socio-economic norm, all hell could quickly break loose with a few slip-ups.

In conclusion, while the West has tried very hard to disrupt the life of an average Russian through sanctions in an effort to siphon Russia's fortunes away from the war, little has changed domestically. Life mostly continues on as normal, however, every Russian citizen is very aware of the deadly political silence and the instability looming over Russia, and they have every right to be worried. Ultimately, Russia's government and its war will slowly destroy itself, instead of some swift foreign sanctions.

My Review By Riley 10W Of Wimbledon

At the time of writing on Friday 14th July, the semifinals of the Men and Women's competition at Wimbledon have just concluded. After thirteen days of whirlwind tennis action, we are down to the grand finals. On Saturday, sixth seed Ons Jabeur will face the unseeded Marketa Vondrousova, with both women bidding to win their first Wimbledon title. On Sunday,



defending champion Novak Djokovic takes on world number one Carlos Alcaraz. Djokovic is going for his eighth Wimbledon, whilst Alcaraz will attempt to win his first. The finals will be very closely contested between some of the world's best players competing for one of the most prestigious honours that the sport has to offer. In this article, I will review how these finalists have made it through the rounds and give my prediction as to who will win.

The women's draw threw up plenty of surprises throughout the tournament, with Marketa Vondrousova making a brilliant run to the finals. The Czech world number forty-two defeated Ukrainian Elina Svitolina in the semifinals and fourth seed Jessica Pegula en route to her second grand slam final. Vondrousova was able to take control of the first set of her semifinal match against Svitolina, achieving a break of serve to win the first set 6-3. She managed to use that momentum to race to a 4-0 lead in the second set. However, Svitolina fought back well, making two breaks of serve to claw back to 4-3. It wasn't quite enough though, as Vondrousova remained composed to win the match 6-3 6-3. Svitolina was also unseeded in the tournament, and the Ukrainian beat four former grand slam champions including the world number one Iga Swiatek during her run to the semis.



My Review By Riley 10W

Of Wimbledon

On the other side of the draw, it was Ons Jabeur who came back from one set and a break down to defeat second seed Aryna Sabalenka in the semifinals. Sabalenka took a back-and-forth opening set on a tie break. Her incredibly powerful ball-striking was slightly too much for Jabeur, as it allowed her to dictate play from the behind the baseline. However, Jabeur showed great speed and precision to win some excellent points in what was a compelling first set. Sabalenka carried her momentum into the second set. She broke Jabeur to make it 4-3 and was in touching distance of the final. However, Jabeur fought back and won the set 6-4. The final set was closely contested but the Tunisian sixth seed held her nerve to reach a second Wimbledon final in a row.

The men's semifinals were not as close with Djokovic and Alcaraz beating their opponents in straight sets. Djokovic played against Jannik Sinner in his semi-final. Djokovic made breaks early on in both of the first two sets to get an early lead against his Italian opponent. Sinner played some great tennis but couldn't take his chances on the important points, and Djokovic made him pay in the third set tiebreak, winning the match 6-3 6-4 7-6 (7-4). Carlos Alcaraz beat third seed Daniil Medvedev in brilliant style to reach his first Wimbledon final. He outclassed Medvedev in the first two sets, mesmerising the crowd with some stunning shots. The third set was closer, with five breaks of serve, but it was Alcaraz who made his advantage stick to secure his place in the final.

In the women's final, I predict Marketa Vondrousova to pull off a surprise victory over Ons Jabeur. She has proved over her last two matches that she can win in different ways, whether producing a great comeback or controlling the match from the beginning. She also proved her ability to up her game when required, and so I think she will win the Venus Rosewater dish on Saturday. In the men's final, I predict Novak Djokovic to retain his title. He has so much experience on the big stage at Wimbledon, having not lost a match on centre court for ten years. I think the occasion may be too

much for the comparatively inexperienced Alcaraz. Djokovic is very good at neutralising his opponents, and this leads me to believe that he will make Alcaraz's powerful forehand less effective due to his quick movement speed, and incredible play on the run. Regardless of what happens though, I am sure both finals will be exciting and should be reflective of the great standard of play we have seen at these championships. A very memorable tournament will hopefully be drawn to a spectacular conclusion in the finals.



JLU Awards

By Kai 6A5

Ceremony

and Ms Harris

Report from Kai Wooten:

We arrived at Charing Cross at 6:15 and walked along the Embankment to the JP Morgan & Chase building (who also sponsored the event). When we arrived at the JP Morgan building, we were greeted by Frankie from 'Just Like Us', a LGBTQ+ youth charity, who told us how the evening was going to run, where the gender neutral toilets were and took us to a quiet room where we could spend time colouring and communicating with the other schools from South Wales and Dorset.



When the time reached 7:30 we went into the award room where the main event took place. During the ceremony, there was spectacular

food from burgers to cakes and there were well recognised icons in attendance such as Corinna Brown and Tobie Donovan (from the cast of Heartstopper), Megan Jayne Crabbe, Char Bailey, Layton Williams and more. During the event there was music which included a performance from Keanan, jokes, speeches and everyone chanting 'Trans people are loved'. Throughout the evening there were many spectacular awards given out such as the 'Inclusive Teacher of the Year' and 'Pride Group of the Year' for which we were nominated (Beths Grammar came 2nd!).



JLU Awards

By Kai 6A5

Ceremony

and Ms Harris

Comments from Ms Harris:

I am so incredibly proud of all of the hard work, dedication and courage of these young people! They represented Beths admirably and we are very grateful to have received a very prestigious second place out of hundreds of schools. It was lovely to see some of the ambassadors that have been delivering speeches at Beths this year as well as an unexpected introduction to an ex-student of Beths, who couldn't believe that there was a Pride Group at the school! Every day, these young people show up as their authentic selves and their courage, resilience and joy constantly inspires me in my role and as a human being. Slowly but surely, we are changing the culture of Beths where it is safe and possible for everyone to be who they are and where compassion, respect and celebration are at the heart of our school culture, regardless of background and identity! Let's aim for 1st place next year, team!



An Interview With...

Mr Blyghton!

By Edwin 10C

Hello Readers! For the last article of the year, I wanted to include some sort of audience interaction. So, we held a Reader's Choice vote, where we had students vote for the member of staff that they most wanted to be interviewed, and the winner was... Mr Blyghton!

So, without further ado, here's what we spoke about:

What encouraged you to become headteacher?

It was an extension of what my role was at the time in that I was Deputy Head and in charge of the timetable – your timetable would have been planned by me. It stemmed from me thinking that I could make a difference. Even this year, I still teach, and I still get that lightbulb moment when people understand what I'm talking about. Funny thing about a former teacher, Dr Maxim. On March 2017, Dr Maxim told us that he was going to leave as he wasn't happy, and phoned in sick the following day: I became Headteacher overnight! We have a good team here and we work well together and that's another thing – working amongst my colleagues when I was Deputy Head also helped.

Can you give us any insight on the Sixth Form Centre developments?

Right. The reason that we have a new Sixth Form building is that we are over capacity for the number of students and number of rooms that we have. The size of the Sixth Form has been increasing rapidly. In recent years, it was around 458 students, and now it's reaching 777. Basically, we'd been looking to bid for a Sixth Form building for years, and only in the last year, the government acknowledged that we were lacking in space and they agreed to the creation of a new building. Right now, a compound is being built with a road. The LRC will be demolished at the end of August, and we hope for the building to be finished by September 2024. It will include 12 new classrooms, a silent study area and a separate food area. Its hoped that when everything is done, we can use the building for sports fixtures too, for example for catering. It will become an area for the Sixth Form to own and not rely on the Chicken and Chips from the village!

What do you think our schools biggest strengths and weaknesses are?

Strengths are the students, in terms of who they are, and the staff, who are uniquely qualified to be able to teach you all. Our weaknesses are structural, such as routes around the school, especially right now with the Sixth Form compound. We have lots of specialists classes, like labs, but not many regular classrooms. We're also in the process of figuring out how we can get our Food Tech room back. (Wink wink?)

An Interview With...

Mr Blyghton!

By Edwin 10C

Thoughts on the current education system, and the future of education?

In our education system, its always been traditional O-Level/GCSE and A Levels. Some schools have introduced the International Baccalaureate, but overall, we are very traditional. In the last 20 years, Michael Gove, the Education Secretary (from 2010 to 2014), turned back the clock. For some people the system works well, and for others, not so. What do I think? Having seen coursework in my own subject, and thinking of the Internet and being able to copy and paste, I can see why schools have gone back to exams. With exams, everything is 'End Product', and from a student's point of view, you have to be able to learn it as you go. If you do, your preparation at the end will be small. A lot of students realise that they have to revise for a test, but they wouldn't have to struggle so hard if the work was done along the way. Plus, at A-Levels, students realise that the body of work is much more extensive, and this way of learning is a necessity. I think the education system is good as it is. What's the point of using AI to generate your coursework? However, we live in a competitive world, where everyone wants to be at the top. Some people reach it, and some people only aspire. It's about realising your capabilities. Academic and working-wise is one thing, but who you become is another, and this school, rightly so, focuses on developing both education and personality so when you go out into the world, you can make it better.

What do you want to say to end off the year?

Have a good summer... but I say that every time... Have a good summer, and do new things that you haven't tried yet. Be kind to people, and maybe go and visit family. And make time to do all the things that you haven't had the opportunity to do in the year.

Oh, and be nice to your brothers and sisters.

Most importantly, have a rest, and be ready to come back in September to face all of the challenges that will be made on you in the next academic year.

And with that, we end off the year. Thank you to Mr Blyghton, but let's also have a round of applause for all of the voters who chose Mr Blyghton as the Reader's Choice, and thank you for reading. I learned a ton from this interview, and I'm sure you have too! And who knows? Maybe we'll do more Reader's Choice interviews in the future? But for now, have a great summer, full of new experiences and extensive revision! See you in September!





BEST OF THE BETHS

Thank you for reading this edition of the newsletter!

In our last edition of the year, we looked at all sorts of events, from sporting ones like Wimbledon and the Premier League Transfers to school trips, with some added interviews too. We hope you enjoyed this final edition where we looked at everything that's gone down in July.

Please let us know what you liked about this article and what you would like to see more of in the next one:

msstevens@beths.bexley.sch.uk

As well as this, let's say thank you, and remember all of the people who have left us involuntarily, and will depart to new schools by the end of this academic year, students and teachers alike. Fly high and good luck.

Congrats on making it through the year, have a great summer, rest, and be ready to return in September with some great summer stories and renewed energy! See you soon!

-Regards from the Newsletter Team