

— A Student Newspaper —

THE HIGH SOCIETY

Friday 26 January 2024



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ASTRA School-Centred Teacher Training

10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

**HAVE YOU CONSIDERED TRAINING TO TEACH?
DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO MIGHT BE THINKING
ABOUT IT?**



The application season for Sep'24 start is open now and runs through to June. Part-time options are available and you may be entitled to a significant bursary, depending on the subject.

We have worked with our main provider, Astra SCITT, for many years now, to offer high quality, bespoke and supportive training.

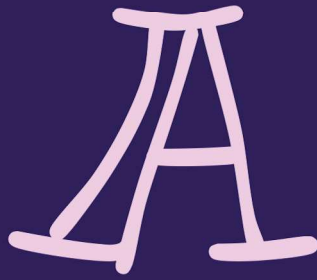
We are well-used to working with career changers who may have much valuable experience to offer.



We'd be happy to welcome you for a day's experience in a relevant department - just email sjeffreys@ahs.bucks.sch.uk to find out more...

FUNDRAISING WEEK

A FACTOR



A Factor was, as always, an amazing part of fundraising week. There was a great sense of community and festive cheer. There were many incredible acts, including the Desi Girls and Cabinet among others. The winners were crowd-favourites Xiy and Tyra, whose rap performance won them a well-deserved first place. Well done to everyone who took part, you were all really good!



Nathalie 11C

STAFF KARAOKE



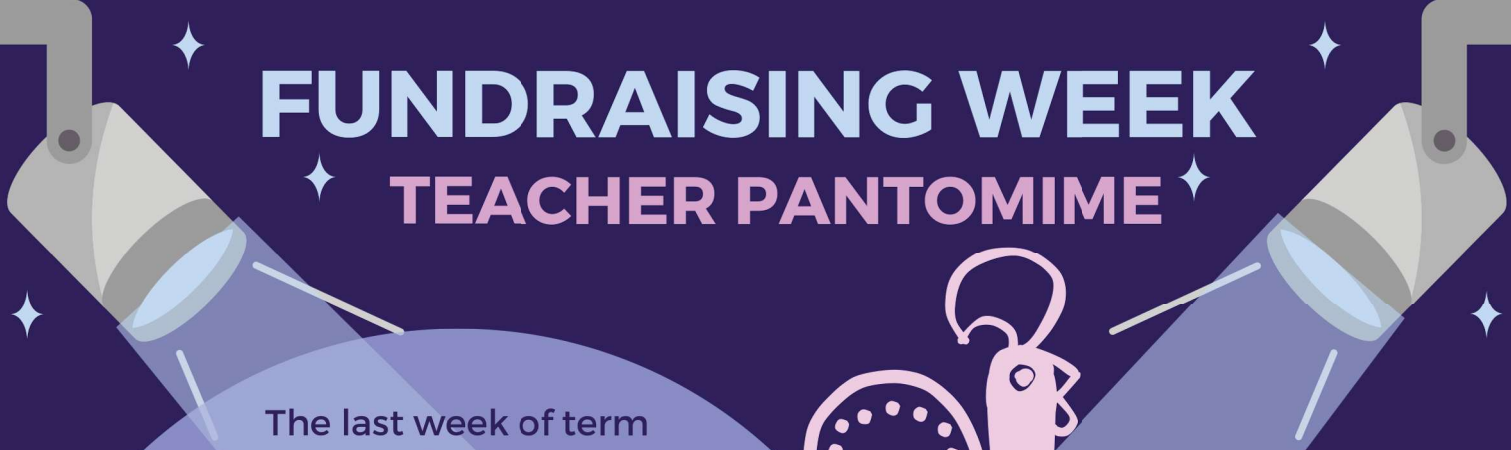
As always Fundraising Week this year finished with a bang as Staff Karaoke took place. From solos and duos in PE and Economics to massive ensemble numbers in Science and Languages, and even some “Numbers Falling” in Maths, this year's line up certainly did not disappoint. Overall the student vote concluded that Science, who performed a fabulous medley of hits old and new, dancing all the way, had won Staff Karaoke 2023. Congratulations to Science and all the other acts and staff involved this year!

Scarlett M 11A



FUNDRAISING WEEK

TEACHER PANTOMIME



The last week of term was extremely busy at AHS as fundraising week had arrived, which included A-Factor, Teacher Karaoke and, most importantly, the panto! Every year the panto is written by a few year 12 students and stars a handful of teachers. This year's panto was 'Jack and the Beanstalk' with Mr Gelinas as Jack, including Mr Elgin and Mr Baird with Oscar-worthy roles of the Beanstalk and Daisy the Cow, respectively. The panto was co-directed by Nusaiba, Isabelle and Emily in Year 12, who have kindly shared what went on behind the scenes:



How did you decide who to cast for each role?

Initially we had to recruit teachers as we had a small cast list. We decided which teachers would be most suited to each role by deciding which casting would be the most iconic and, of course, hilarious.



What encouraged you to write the script for the panto?

At the start we had a group meeting, where Mrs Morris explained what we needed to do. Everyone pitched well-known stories to adapt and we all loved the idea of Jack and the Beanstalk set in Aylesbury, with cows walking the streets and Jack desperate to take Jill to the epitome of fine dining - Nando's.

Overall, what were your thoughts on this experience?

Co-directing the panto was a fun and exciting experience and every rehearsal was full of laughter, planning meetings were bubbling with anticipation, and designing costumes was comical, most notably Mr Baird's Daisy the Cow, and Mr Elgin's Beanstalk.



Helena 11C

HEAD GIRL INTERVIEW

To see what her plans are this year, an interview has been conducted with our Head Girl, Daphne.

How does it feel to be head girl, and what does it mean to you?

Being Head Girl honestly doesn't feel anything different than usual; just added responsibilities that keep me busy and running slightly stressed 24/7 (though it's great fun I promise!).

I have always loved helping out and being involved and now it's sort of just an "official" title that gives me the opportunity to do more. I also looked up to the Head Girls before me immensely, especially remembering the Head Girl's speech at Open Evening back when I was in year 5, and of course I can't ignore the amazing things done by Yi before me.

To me it's a privilege that I'm so glad to have received. But it's not a thing I do alone - I'm supported by and work with my amazing Cabinet and I have all my friends in my corner keeping me positive and calm.

What are your plans for the school this year, and what steps will you be taking to make these plans a reality?

This year, my main goals are to improve awareness and to help broaden the alumni programme in place, especially as I know these will help our school community in so many different ways. I'm lucky enough to be working with Mrs Forster on this to see how we can reach out to past alumnae and build a stronger sense of community.

HEAD GIRL INTERVIEW

One thing I enjoyed doing for this was helping out at the Alumnae Tea Party last half term, where I got to meet so many amazing ex students and even see school reports from the 1960s! My other main aim is to focus and maintain the work of Inclusion and Diversity at AHS. Growing up in this amazingly welcoming school community has been so incredibly rewarding and I want to ensure everyone feels represented, comfortable and has a sense of belonging at AHS.

Finally, while I have my own goals for this year, I also work alongside the rest of the Cabinet on so many big projects (the Year 13 Leavers Ball being a main one) in which we collaborate and work together. I am so grateful to be working with them.



Nathalie 11C

BRONZE ART AWARD

I am very glad to have had the opportunity to take part in the Arts Award Bronze as it allowed me to track and record my progress in my chosen art (Drama) and see how much I have improved from October to the end of June. It has let me explore different plays and performances. In addition, it has helped me build my confidence and given me an opportunity to teach two younger students (year 4) the skills which I gained over the year. This allowed me to have the experience on how to share what I have learnt with others. The amazing opportunity to take part in the Arts Award has enabled me to improve in how I convey emotions in my acting roles through the main elements of character. My year was the first full year group to take part, and I am thrilled every student in Year 8 now has the chance to participate in the Arts Award Bronze, as it really helps to develop your skills and confidence.

 **Teodora 9M** 

STEM TALK

by **BETH HALEY**

 **Thannista 11C** 

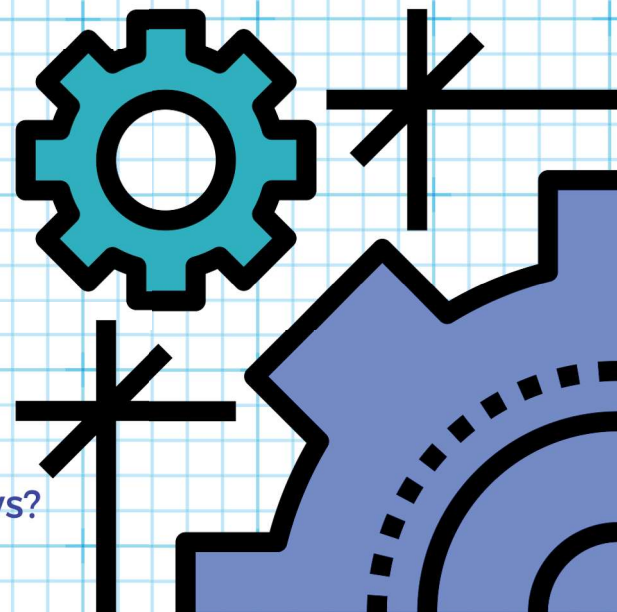
This month we had a very much anticipated return of Beth Healey. For those reading who haven't met her before; Beth Healey is a medical doctor (and for those who are interested, she specialised in Emergency Medicine) who is most known to her trip to Concordia during the Winter months.

Beth talked about how she pursued her dream career and how it came to be, her main message was how she looked for a career in which she could involve the things which she loved as a child, as said in her case; an explorer! She then went for the next best thing available - a researcher - okay, maybe not as exciting, but still incredibly exciting in our opinion. She has also been a TV doctor, in which she'd work behind the scenes to ensure reality TV show contestants stayed fit and healthy.

And that's not all! Beth Healey also works ordinary shifts at hospitals for months at a time, mentioning that it's essential to keep a balance between her extreme and more ordinary jobs.

Not only did she talk about the many intriguing places she's been (including a jungle!) She also taught us all a very important lesson, to try new things.

So, on that note, I would like to encourage you to join us for our next STEM talk, who knows? Maybe you'll find your next dream job!



SIXTH FORM POLITICS TRIP

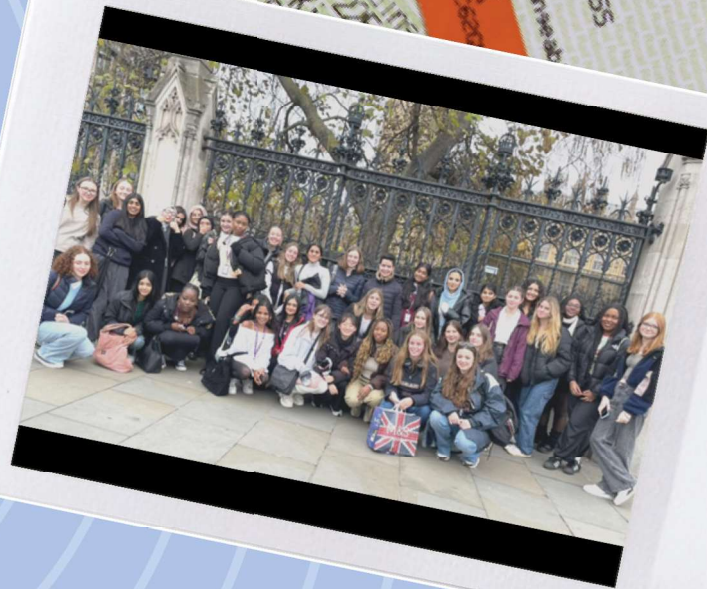
On Tuesday the 21st November, the Year 12 and Year 13 politics students set off from Aylesbury Train Station to head to Westminster. Chit-chat on the train platform was full of excited discussion on what was being debated in both chambers and who we might see.

After stopping for a group photo (check us out on Twitter @politics_ahs), we arrived at parliament and split off into groups for a guided tour around the buildings. We started in the central lobby, a bustling space with all sorts of people from MPs to tourists travelling through, and decorated so very intricately with homage to the four home nations of the UK as well as a variety of influential figures in British historical politics.

After a range of fun facts, we were rallied into the public gallery of the House of Commons to watch some live debate in action! Despite a rather large amount of green leather on show, some famous faces included Priti Patel, Therese Coffey, and Aylesbury's very own Rob Butler, who paid a visit to the school recently to speak to the sixth form. As our tour came to an end, we were just getting started on our very own political careers.

We had a workshop from the educational team at parliament on laws and debating, where we recapped what we had learnt about the legislative process at school, and then had a go at making our own political parties (complete with colourful hats) and debating on a range of topical, controversial issues such as the death penalty and the legalisation of cannabis. Time was tight, so we only managed to stop by the building of the Supreme Court, before we headed back to Aylesbury, absolutely exhausted by a busy day of politics!

Lottie 13C





CHRISTMAS CONCERT



5.12.23

On Tuesday the 5th of December AHS hosted the annual Christmas concert in conjunction with AGS. The participants ranged from Year 7 to Year 13 and were very enthusiastic as well as passionate about music.

String ensemble played "Medallion Calls" from pirates of the Caribbean which was tastefully done, not to mention very fun and a tune that is very recognisable. Following this performance was the classical guitar ensemble, which combined AHS and AGS, that played an acoustic rendition of Mr Blue Sky which definitely captured a comforting and relaxing atmosphere. After that was jazz band, a definite crowd favourite. Jazz band really managed to encapsulate the cheeriness of the holiday. They also had an incredibly powerful and strong performance with 3 songs. Jazz band also had combined AGS and AHS participation. Succeeding this was Brass ensemble who played a variety of festive tunes that certainly maintained high spirits. The joint choir rounded off the evening with their beautiful performance which was conducted by Mr Warner.



Here are a few words from Mr Warner-

"Our local grammar schools are very talented. It has been an amazing night that everyone participating should be very proud of. We have incredible students here and it is good that we are using the talent of our students."

This was an amazing performance from both schools that everyone should be very pleased with!

Bella 11C



Y13 CERN TRIP

On the 29th November, two Physics teachers and 28 students set off to London Heathrow and off to Geneva, Switzerland - the beginning of a short but amazing trip. For the students, including yours truly, this experience was the culmination of hard work throughout Year 12 and a lot of anticipation leading up to the trip. When we landed in Geneva, Switzerland, we were tired but excited at the prospect of finally being on Swiss soil, despite being greeted with rain.

On Saturday morning, our entire group set off bright and early to visit the state-of-the-art CERN exhibition centre, which opened only around 2 months before our arrival. We were given the unique opportunity to interact with a range of immersive events, and explore exhibition centres such as the quantum world, the Big Bang and more. After, we had an early lunch, then started the CERN tour. We were given an insight into the inner workings of CERN, the important work that is being done and the achievements they hold. For those who don't know what a particle accelerator is, it is exactly as its name suggests, a massive machine that, with the clever use of superconductor magnets and linear accelerators, has the ability to fire particles at each other at speeds close to the speed of light. From these collisions, new particles are created, and CERN engineers and scientists can study these particles, and make new discoveries in the worlds of dark matter, standard particles and more.

One of the definite highlights of the trip was getting the opportunity to visit the CMS, Compact Muon Solenoid, Experiment, just past the border in France. After a short coach ride, we were treated to a small video and a talk about CMS in particular and how it works. Then, we were split into groups and taken into the currently dormant CMS to actually see it in real life, around 100 metres underground, to actually observe where “ground-breaking science happens”. This was incredibly exciting for all of our students and teachers, and you can imagine that many photos and selfies were taken in front of the machine!



After coming back from CERN, students had the opportunity to visit the Geneva Christmas Market, which was filled with different food stalls from around the world, as well as different jewellery, clothes and other gift stores that were fun to browse. Despite some groups getting lost, it was still an amazing experience, and a great way to explore Swiss culture! The next day, we checked out of the hotel, and went to the Science Museum, a short walk from our hotel. We were treated to many exhibitions and rooms from the different parts of Physics: electricity, forces, astronomy and more! My personal favourite was the forces section, a place with interactive exhibitions that demonstrated different systems, showcasing the work of many famous scientists, such as Einstein, Newton and Galileo. The science museum was fascinating, and built on knowledge gained from both GCSE and A-Level Physics, and so was great fun to explore.

After some more free time to grab lunch and explore Geneva further, we checked out of our hotel and made our way back to the airport. A cancelled flight scare, a missing passport, a missing flight ticket and a rocky plane landing later, we were back in the UK. Though it was tiring, it was an extraordinary experience,



one that we will not forget anytime soon. The trip was an amalgamation of being able to explore both Geneva and Switzerland, as well as be exposed to cutting-edge science and technology, and it was wonderful to be able to explore Physics in the real-world. Mrs Brittain said: 'Another fabulous trip this year with a wonderful group of students who walked for miles in the rain, were enthusiastic and withstood the various challenges with good grace'.

Mrs Nicholls said: 'This was my eighth trip to CERN but each one has been different and has offered me a different experience. This time we were fortunate enough to actually go down and see the collider and the emphasis was very much on detection of particles as opposed to the workings of the collider itself. Geneva itself is beautiful with its shimmering lake surrounded by snow capped mountains. The atmospheric Christmas markets are a must, although expensive - the variety of food is amazing.'

Y13 CERN TRIP

Thank you to Mrs Nicholls, Mrs Brittain and all of the students as well as the other teachers who made this trip possible; it was an amazing Year 13 experience!



CHEMISTRY EVENTS

We are thrilled to announce the outstanding achievements of our talented students in the field of chemistry, here are their recent remarkable accomplishments!

ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY SCHOOL ANALYST COMPETITION

The Royal Society Competition is designed to allow students to work in teams in order to solve difficult challenges and answer stimulating questions with the reward, for the winning teams, of a certificate and an exhilarating opportunity to be entered into a second round against other winning teams within our region. This year, in a pursuit to uncover "Who sabotaged the Bake Off", three teams of Year 12 students participated in this prestigious competition. We are proud to announce that the winning team consisted of Teena, Ayesha, and Anne! Here is a photo of our victorious students enjoying a non-sabotaged cream tea as a part of their victorious celebration.

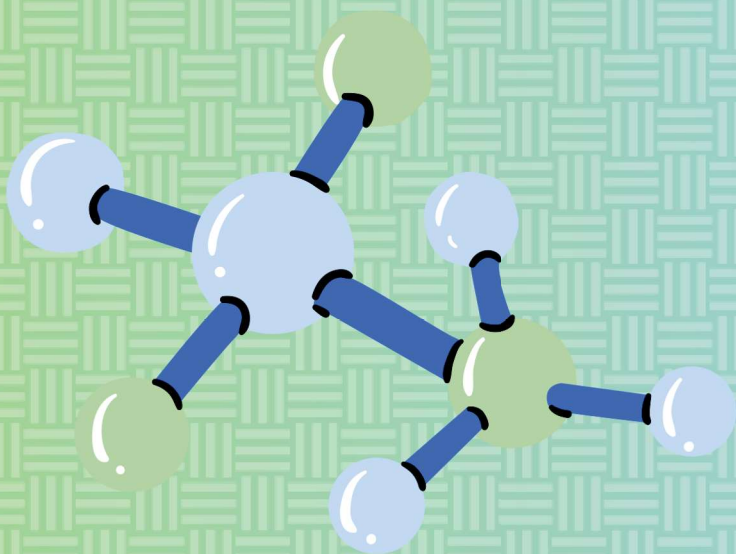


CAMBRIDGE CHEMISTRY CHALLENGE

Over 10,000 students from more than 600 schools participated in the Cambridge Chemistry Competition, where they completed a 90 minute written paper which aimed to challenge the students through their knowledge of chemistry, by encouraging them to think of the science 'beyond the syllabus'. Seven of our students ended up attaining the esteemed Copper award, Joanna Davies (who achieved the highest AHS score) Mady Carter, Teena Thiruarulselan, Sara Awan, Reva Peddaparum, Ruby Cooper, Ayesha Moeen, and Anne Qin.

Ulaina and Naima 11A

CHEMISTRY EVENTS



WARWICK UNIVERSITY'S SCIENTIFIC THINKING CHALLENGE

This is yet another competition we entered, in which over 13,000 students participated, across over 200 schools. This challenge is made particularly for students in year 10 where the participants look at data, graphs and text and make deductions, spot trends, suggest hypotheses and identify anomalous results. Three of our students received levelled certificate awards: Richell Mathews & Thannista Suresh were awarded with bronze certificates and Zara Mahmood secured a silver certificate!

CHEMISTRY WEEK

In November, we hosted a chemistry week where we explored and hosted lots of different informative activities around the UN Sustainability Goal of clean drinking water. We invited Thames Water to give a talk, exploring the importance of clean water and its impact on our health and the environment. The Junior Med Society also delved into the topic of water-borne diseases, raising awareness and discussing preventative measures. As part of the activities, we even had the opportunity to analyse water samples, discovering ways to make water portable. In an intriguing twist, we also explored how the ancient Mayans achieved this task. We are very proud of our events this year and thank you to everyone who took part!



CHEMISTRY EVENTS

SPECIAL CHEMISTRY GUESTS

Last term, one of our alumnae, Ella Chandler, returned to speak with some current students about her fascinating work in neutron scattering.

Aneslin says:

Today we had a special guest, Ella Chandler, the first of our new 'Special Chemistry Guests' series. We were really lucky to learn about her work in neutron scattering development, the insight into what she does in her placement, along with the pathway she took to her position. Ella was also an ex-AHS student and left a few years ago and we got to hear about the strange end to her school life. She was a student of the year affected by the pandemic, but despite disruptions and not getting the chance to do exams, she successfully made it on to work in a placement in a field she really enjoys. Ella also gave some advice to the students, which she remembers from Mrs Sutton and refers to as the 'Sutton Principle': "It is not about what you do, but the skills you learn from it"



We thoroughly enjoyed this session ; learning about pathways in Chemistry, transitioning through different academic stages and welcoming our first guest of Special Chemistry Guests.

We thoroughly enjoyed this session ; learning about pathways in Chemistry, transitioning through different academic stages and welcoming our first guest of Special Chemistry Guests.

YOUNG SCIENTIST OF THE YEAR NOMINATION



We are incredibly proud to announce that Teena Thiruarulselvan has been nominated for the prestigious Young Scientist of the Year award. Teena's exceptional dedication and passion for science have earned her this well-deserved recognition. Mrs Nicholls later accompanied Teena to the Awards Evening where the evening ended with some fun activities.



JUNIOR MEDICINE SOCIETY

Our school offers a range of clubs, clinics and societies to attend, covering all different aspects of the world. This term was the continuation of our entirely student-run Junior Medical Society which offers a large variety of activities each week. This is run superbly by year 11 students Evie Leung, Thannista Suresh & Zainab Koker so come along to find out more about a possible career in medicine, curiosity or interest.



lunchtime

YEAR 13 A-LEVEL GERMAN



TRIP TO BERLIN



Berlin, a city in the heart of East Germany so loaded with culture and history it would take far more than this article to explain. AGS and AHS Year 13 German were fortunate enough to be taken to learn about and experience this city for 4 days in October. The main focus of the trip was to contextualise Berlin, Damals und Heute [then and now].

As the capital city of Germany, Berlin serves as a constant acknowledgement of the country's past. Following events of the 20th century such as the Holocaust and the division and subsequent Wiedervereinigung [reunification] of Germany, it would be very easy for Germany to put it all behind them, into the past. Instead, every street of Berlin honours and pays homage to people affected by the atrocities of conflict, in a concept called Vergangenheitsbewältigung [coming to terms with the past]. Examples of this lay all around the city, in street names changed to honour victims, in countless Denkmäler [memorials, literally thinking time], and even under your feet.

The Stolpersteine are an example of the way Germany (and now most of continental Europe) are coming to terms with their past. Stolpersteiner, or literally stumbling stones, are little brass plaques cemented in to the pavement next to the homes of former Jewish residents murdered by the Nazis

during the Holocaust. On each plaque states the name, the date of birth, and the year of abduction.

Following this information is a single word, ermordet, murdered.

Seeing the shine of these small, unobtrusive memorials in the corner of your eye, will constantly remind you of how the history of Berlin is so embedded into how the city presents itself today.



YEAR 13 A-LEVEL GERMAN



TRIP TO BERLIN



Some of the most notable parts of the trip for me, included the Jewish Museum, in which the architecture made you feel lost in the horrors experienced by Jewish communities during the Holocaust. The East Side Gallery on the Berlin wall was a beautiful expression of peace and how Berlin will grow as a city and community, as well as a place for artists all over the world to display their work. The DDR Museum really effectively

illustrated life in Germany under communist rule (and helped to contextualise the movie we study, *Das Leben Der Anderen*!). Finally, exploring the city with my friends in our free time was some of the best fun we've had together!

The trip has been my highlight of Year 13. It was continuously fascinating, fun, and really thought provoking. I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone considering A-Level German, and would like to extend my gratitude to the members of staff who made it possible to go. Danke schön Mr Sloan and Mrs Lemonde.



MADRID TRIP

On the 28th October 2023 at 4:30am, a group of Year 13 Spanish students left for Madrid. Despite the early start, we prepared ourselves for Señora Medley's jam-packed four day itinerary and were immediately engulfed into Spanish politics, greeted by a Catalan Independence protest as we alighted from the metro. Following up on our



'Patrimonio Cultural' unit, the museum trip to La Reina Sofía in which we saw Picasso's infamous 'Guernica' was particularly poignant as the sheer size of the anti-war painting strongly resonated with us. We have also discussed the Velázquez self-portrait 'Las Meninas' in class and we were privileged enough to see it in the flesh at the Museo del Prado. Indeed, we cemented our knowledge on Latin America's history at the Museo de América, debating the morality of displaying a Spanish colonial exhibition in the capital.

Our guide Javier took us on a Spanish walking tour of Madrid, visiting the Plaza del Sol, statues of Don Quixote and Federico García Lorca - a hugely successful poet and playwright whose work we study for our A-level course; this memorial was one of a few Civil War symbols that we saw along the way. We visited the Royal Palace and could partially see into the grounds. The monarchy was hugely prominent in Madrid as Spain and its military celebrated Princess Leonor's 18th birthday, swearing her allegiance to the King.



For many of us, a huge highlight was 'El Rastro' flea market in which we spent hours haggling with local sellers. With rammed suitcases, friendships cemented and stomachs full of tapas and churros, we left the lovely hostel and ran for our evening flight home.

A huge thanks to Señora Medley and Señora Gamero for taking us. We made some truly unforgettable memories on our last school trip with AHS!

