

THE STUDENT STANDARD

DENE MAGNA 6TH FORM
MAGAZINE!

*A VERSATILE AND ENJOYABLE MAGAZINE CREATED
BY STUDENTS, FOR STUDENTS!*

careers / lifestyle / cooking / achievements / games / films / trips

Dear Readers,

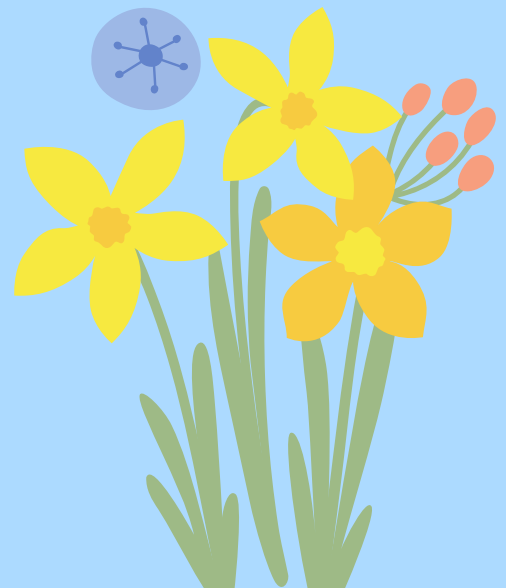
Welcome to your very own 6th Form magazine - The Student Standard!

This magazine is written by our fantastic and very talented 6th Form students and aims to give you an insight into Sixth Form life and what some of you have been up to this term!

In this issue, we look at the past experiences of students and staff at the 6th Form, we quiz Mr Timney on his time at Dene Magna and reflect on some of our student's latest achievements. This issue is jam packed with interesting articles and reviews and we hope you enjoy reading this as much as we enjoyed making it!

Without further ado, please enjoy this term's issue of The Student Standard and have a very Happy Easter!

*The 6th Form
Editorial Team*



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Would you like to write an article or a creative piece for our magazine? Do you have artworks or drawings that you would like us to include!?

If you think you have what it takes to be a part of our Editorial Team, please get in touch with us : 6thform@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk

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Chaos in the Capital

Y12 LEARN ABOUT POLITICS PAST AND PRESENT, AND QUESTION WHETHER MR HARRINGTON REALLY HAS A DRIVER'S LICENSE



Setting Off

The journey to London started bright and early, making it out of the service station unscathed - well, almost. Every time we turned into the service station, we managed to hit the curb, as if it was some kind of offering to the gods of bad driving. In total, we hit the curb five times. Perhaps Mr. Harrington just really wanted to make sure it was still there.

If that wasn't enough, we soon found ourselves lost in central London, missing our turning, and performing a U-turn in dramatic fashion, directly opposite the London Eye. Tourists enjoying the scenic riverside views were instead treated to the sight of a confused school minibus executing a three-point turn in one of the busiest parts of the city. At this point we were basically just a moving tourist attraction ourselves.

Westminster

Once we finally arrived at Parliament, our education guide took us on a fascinating tour. In the House of Commons, we learned about the modernisation of voting, where MPs now use electronic badges instead of walking through lobbies for headcounts. This transition has made the voting process far more efficient, reducing the time needed for divisions and allowing MPs to focus more on legislative debates. We also explored how, due to the televisionation of parliamentary sessions, it has

become easier for the public to gain access to what really goes on in government, increasing transparency and accountability. With the cameras in place, politicians are now under greater scrutiny from the public, ensuring that their actions (or inactions) are visible to their constituents. A particularly intriguing historical detail we uncovered was the role of women in Parliament's history. In the past, female spectators were forced to watch debates from a separate viewing gallery

enclosed with metal bars. This segregation became a focal point for suffragette protests, with activists chaining themselves to the bars to demand the right to vote. The resilience of these women contributed to the broader suffrage movement, ultimately leading to the political rights we take for granted today. Although these physical bars may have been removed, their symbolic presence lingers, reminding us of the struggles fought to achieve representation in government.

We then made our way to the House of Lords, only to find out they were in session. Instead, we sat outside and discussed the composition and role of the Lords in the legislative process. Unlike the Commons, the House of Lords is unelected, comprising life peers, hereditary peers, and bishops. Despite its unelected status, the Lords plays a crucial role in revising and scrutinizing legislation, acting as a check on government power. We also learned about the increasing number of women in the Lords, reflecting the broader push for diversity and representation in British politics. While traditionally seen as a symbol of privilege, the Lords is gradually evolving to be more reflective of modern society.

Art with Meaning

As is well known, Parliament has many artworks that have been commissioned over hundreds of years but there is one particular piece that stood out to us, titled 'New Dawn'. Mary Branson was commissioned in 2015 to create something that Parliament could

proudly display. It was unveiled on the 7th of June 2016, 150 years after the first mass petition to Parliament calling for women's suffrage. This contemporary piece commemorates the long campaign which led some women to gain the vote in 1918, and all women in 1928. It is a metal framework resembling a portcullis, the symbol of Parliament. It combines circular glass scrolls and metal crosses to form the symbol for women or otherwise known 'Venus symbol'.

A Day in the Life

Later, we got the chance to create our own manifestos, which quickly devolved into something resembling political theatre. Orla and Tana formed a coalition (presumably for strategic survival), Sawyer declared himself the "savior" (although of what, we're still not sure), and Jack's speaker was none other than Nigel Farage which raised more questions that answers. Harrison, against all odds, was the only one who actually proposed real policies. Democracy at its finest.

Once we had discovered that none of us were fit to run for Prime Minister anytime soon, we had the amazing opportunity to sit down with our local MP Matt Bishop, and learn from a first hand account what it's truly like to be a Member of Parliament. He shared with us that his win was not only a shock for the constituency, but also himself, as he had only received proper funding in his final week of campaigning. Mr Bishop also explained the difficulties of campaigning, the importance of connecting with voters, and the immense pressure that comes with representing a

constituency. Although only a few questions were asked, he did have an answer to our most pressing issue: will the bus prices go back down to £2? The answer, maybe. This is due to the bus prices being controlled by Gloucester City Council, rather than the constituency. So, although he will be working with them, the answer to that is unknown.

Minibus Mayhem

Overall, our trip to Parliament was an eye-opening experience. It provided amazing insight into not only the evolution of Parliament, but also the immense history we have as a nation. Whether it was debating policies, meeting an MP, or watching Mr Harrington wage war against the curb, we won't be forgetting this outing any time soon.



Editor's note: we believe Mr Harrington is in fact a very competent driver!

Swimming Achievements



James and Monty recently competed in the County Swimming Championships, just some of many races they have participated in already this year.

MONTY:

100M FREESTYLE 1ST, 55.04
50M BUTTERFLY 2ND, 27.27
50M FREESTYLE 2ND, 24.29
400M FREESTYLE 3RD, 4:38.18

Monty has achieved three regional times already.

JAMES:

200M BUTTERFLY 1ST, 2:28.42
100M BUTTERFLY 1ST, 1:00.01
100M BACKSTROKE 2ND, 1:04.43
50M BACKSTROKE 3RD, 30.00

James achieved two more regional times, bringing his total to three.

Working with MCIT:

SHADOWING THE POLICE THROUGHOUT THE TRIAL OF A LOCAL MANSLAUGHTER CASE

Major Crimes Investigation Team

Macy Redding in Y13 has recently been lucky enough to secure a really fascinating work shadowing placement with a Major Crimes Investigation Team. *We caught up with Macy to find out more about her experience as she attended a high-profile trial...*

Why did you choose to undertake this placement?

In the future (after my Police apprenticeship which starts in September), I would like to join the MCIT team, so when they offered me the chance to participate in this experience, I thought it would be very worthwhile!

Was it easy to secure? How did you go about this, and have you had to do other work experience before reaching this point?

I am currently a volunteer already with the Police, however, when I was allowed to meet the MCIT team I later on emailed them and told them that if they ever needed any volunteers or help anywhere, I would definitely be interesting in assisting them. They then later emailed me along with five other volunteers to help in a trial at Bristol Crown Court.

Tell us how the day went - what did you get to observe and do?

Each day presented a unique experience! It provided me with the opportunity to sit in the courtroom alongside detectives, a space restricted from the public, and to interact with numerous barristers and court personnel. Throughout the day, I gained insights into the trial process, observing how any arising issues were addressed. Additionally, I witnessed the significant impact a witness can have on a case, and how their testimony can influence the outcome and verdict.

Which part was the most interesting, and why?

The most interesting part was definitely watching the witness give their account. It



"Volunteering in the Police has been one of the best experiences"



was really captivating to hear their firsthand account, and it made everything feel so real. Listening to them talk about what they went through added a whole new level of seriousness to the case.

What soft skills did you need to employ throughout the placement?

During my work experience, I was expected to adhere to a professional dress code, which involved wearing a suit jacket along with an appropriate skirt and tights. Additionally, I was required to greet everyone with a handshake and maintain a polite and professional demeanor to create a positive impression. Effective communication with all the detectives was essential, and at one point, I also interacted with the defendants. It was crucial for me to treat them with the same respect as I did everyone else in the courtroom.

Do you feel that you gained any new skills from this experience?

During my time with the Major Crimes Team, I made a lot of progress in my skills, particularly in communication and listening. One of the biggest challenges I faced was spending an entire day in court - this experience really tested my listening abilities and pushed me to focus more on what was being said. I learned how important it is to pay attention to details and understand different perspectives. Overall, this opportunity helped me become a better communicator and listener, which are essential skills in any situation!

Would you recommend this kind of experience to others, and why?

I would definitely recommend this type of experience to anyone else, volunteering with the Police has been one of the best experiences I've had. Even if you don't see yourself in a career in the Police Force, it's a very rewarding experience and it's also something really positive to put onto your CV or UCAS statement.

STAFF REWIND

We are very sad to say goodbye to our wonderful Lab Technician, Kevin Timney this term. Kev is about to embark on some exciting new adventures as he enjoys the start of his retirement!

Kev sat down with the *Student Standard* team and was quizzed at length about his career journey and his time at Dene Magna Sixth Form. What emerged from the interview was his continuing passion for science and a positive reflection on a role that's helped hundreds of students over the years.

On behalf of everyone (staff and students alike) at Dene Magna - we are going to miss you Kev!



Q: Hi Kev! What University did you study at and what subject did you study?

A: I went to Loughborough University of Technology and studied Chemistry

Q: Why did you choose this University in particular?

A: I wanted to go to a University that offered a year in industry as part of the course. Loughborough was one of the few that did. I spent my time in industry working on an oil refinery in the New Forest. It was a fascinating experience.

I was the first in my family and also the first from the council estate in Newent where I lived to go to university. I knew nobody who had been to university who could give me an insight into what was involved. Loughborough was a campus university and felt more like a community than others that I visited, giving me a slightly less scary feel to going to Uni.

The fact that the student union had a bar that was in the Guinness Book of Records for having the most number of beer taps in the country may also have played a part!

Q: Did you enjoy your time as a student and was it a good degree to study?

A: Yes, it was hard at times but I enjoyed my time as a student. The degree was a good one to study. It helped me get my first job as Technical Manager in a company manufacturing polythene film and adhesives. It also helped me when I ran my flower nursery business and then to get my job as a School Science Technician.

Studying at university exposes you to a wide range of society, teaches you to think more abstractly and to work independently.

Q: What influenced you to get into this field?

A: I just love working in a lab and doing practical science.

Q: How long have you been a Lab Tech with Dene Magna?

A: I started at Dene Magna as the Sixth Form Science Technician in July 2019, helping to get ready to have the labs ready for our first intake of students in September 2019

Q: Have you got a standout memory from your time here?

A: I love the nice calm atmosphere at the campus. The standout for me are the students. They have been such a lovely group of people to work with. It is so nice to see them develop from slightly scared, adolescents into young adults during their two years at the Sixth Form

Q: As a Lab Technician, you have conducted many interesting experiments with our students - what has been your favourite and why?

A: I love the practical we do that uses lactase immobilised in alginate balls to remove lactose from milk. Making the balls is fun and I particularly like the fact that the method used is actually used in the food industry to make lactose free milk.

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Q: What is your favourite piece of equipment in the lab and why?

A: Probably the Van Der Graaff Generator. It is fascinating to see the sparks fly and to give students a (safe) electric shock!

Q: What's one fun fact about science that most students don't know?

A: Those that know me will not be surprised that this is an answer about plants (OK, strictly speaking non-animal living organisms). Many people imagine that animals are the fastest moving living things on earth but the *Pilobolus* species of fungi can emit their spores at up to 5,500 mph, a cheetah or peregrine falcon is like a snail compared to this! This fungus also has a lens that directs the spores towards a light source. How cool is that!

Also, magnolias are thought to be the first of the flowering plants to evolve. They evolved before bees and relied on beetles for pollination.

Q: If you could do any science experiment with unlimited resources what would it be?

A: Trying to produce a practical nuclear fusion reactor to give us a clean, pollution free, almost limitless supply of energy.

Q: If you could invite three people from Science to dinner, who would they be and why?

A: This is a hard one. As a Chemist I would probably choose Dmitri Mendeleev for his development of the Periodic Table and prediction of the properties of elements that were unknown at the time. Albert Einstein for turning physics on its head and contributing to quantum mechanics. Leonardo da Vinci, a real polymath, so far ahead of his time in many areas including science. And how about Richard Feynman, again a polymath, but this time of the 20th century and a great scientist not only in quantum physics.

Q: If you could invent a new science gadget, what would it be?

A: A gadget that could quickly reduce the carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere back to a pre-industrial level to hopefully halt global warming.

Thank you Mr Timney - we wish you all the very best with retirement!



Future Ready: What Work Experience Taught Us

Tom Manning - Year 13

My Week in Mark Harper MP's Office

My Work Experience was at Mark Harper's MP's office. I've always had an interest in Politics and I envision a career in Politics and Economics in the future so it was hugely beneficial for me to spend some time with his staff, learning how things work and even spending time with the man himself!

It was a great experience to meet people in the industry and get a feeling of working in a specific environment and learn new skills. I had to wear a shirt and tie each day - very different from my usual casual wear to 6th form at the moment.

Every day was different - I learnt what it was like to work in an office environment on a day-to-day basis, how to write reports and policies, use various computer systems that were new to me, answer emails from constituents and observed as the team dealt with endless phone calls!

On the Friday of my work experience week, I got to meet with Mark and was very privileged to be allowed to come along to a council meeting with him. The meeting was really interesting and I got to listen to Mark discussing policies regarding speeding in the Forest with Gloucester Council, Gloucester Highways and the Parish Council.

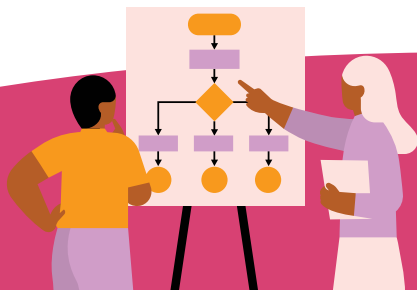
I gained lots of new skills from this week including report writing (which I'd never really had to do before) and using a parliamentary website for case workers in the Forest of Dean and Gloucestershire.

Even though the working days were longer than a usual school day (09:00 - 5:30) I didn't mind as the work was interesting and the team were really pleasant.

I was surprised by how much people who work 'behind the scenes' actually did - there were a lot of people always dropping in, with a whole array of different questions - you certainly have to be able to think on your feet and multitask to work in his office. The team was also much bigger than I thought - Mark had 3 members of staff in the office where I was based and 2 more in his London office.

From my experience, work experience is a fantastic opportunity to become active in the world and your interests, find your career path and gain expert knowledge in your chosen field.

I'm still not sure if I want to go to University or not but I do know I would like a career in this area of interest in the future and this experience made it feel possible - who knows, maybe one day I might even run for MP myself!



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Keliahgrace Tobias - Year 13

KPMG Work Experience

“In Year 12, accessed through Uptree, I had the opportunity to participate in a work experience placement at KPMG, one of the world’s leading professional services firms. As someone interested in accounting, finance, and the corporate world, I was excited to gain first-hand experience in a company known for its expertise in audit, tax, and advisory services. My placement was designed to give me an insight into how a major firm operates, what skills are needed to thrive in the industry, and how I could apply these lessons to my own future aspirations.

A Typical Day at KPMG

Upon arriving at KPMG’s offices, I was introduced to a team of professionals who work across different departments, including consulting, risk analysis, and financial services. The day began with an informative introduction to KPMG’s core values and the wide range of services they offer. I then shadowed employees in various roles, gaining exposure to real-world financial projects and problem-solving tasks. One of my key responsibilities was assisting in data analysis and report reviews, where I observed how professionals interpret large data sets to provide valuable insights to clients. Additionally, I was involved in team discussions, where I had the chance to contribute ideas and ask questions about the different career paths within KPMG.

Skills Gained & Challenges Overcome

One of the biggest takeaways from my placement was learning how to work effectively in a fast-paced, professional environment. Time management and analytical thinking were essential skills I had to develop quickly. I also gained confidence in professional communication, as I engaged with employees across different departments and learned how to present ideas succinctly. A key challenge was understanding the technical terminology and financial jargon, but I found that by asking questions and actively engaging in discussions, I was able to grasp complex concepts more easily..

Standout Moments & Reflections

A highlight of my experience was participating in a group problem-solving exercise with a few other students who signed up to the work experience. We were given a business scenario and had to propose strategic solutions

This exercise gave me insight into how KPMG consultants approach challenges and deliver recommendations to clients. It was also incredibly rewarding to work as part of a team, share ideas, and see how diverse perspectives contribute to problem-solving. While the experience was overwhelmingly positive, one aspect I found challenging was the long periods of intense focus required for financial analysis tasks. However, this taught me the importance of attention to detail and the ability to work efficiently under pressure.

How This Experience Has Shaped My Future Goals

My work experience at KPMG has solidified my interest in pursuing a career in accounting, finance, or consultancy. Seeing first-hand how professionals apply analytical skills to real-world financial issues has motivated me to develop my critical thinking and problem-solving abilities further. The experience has also made me more aware of the different pathways into the corporate world, whether through apprenticeships, internships, or university routes.

Overall, my placement at KPMG was an eye-opening experience that has given me valuable insight into the world of professional services. I am grateful for the opportunity and excited to apply the skills I have gained to my future studies and career aspirations”



SIXTH FORM FUNDRAISING

QUIZ NIGHT

25 APRIL

ARRIVAL FROM 7PM
QUIZ STARTS AT 7:30PM

£3 PER PLAYER, MAX 6 PER TEAM
PAY AT THE DOOR (CASH)

DENE MAGNA SCHOOL HALL

OPEN TO ALL: STAFF, STUDENTS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS!
CAN YOU BEAT YOUR TEACHERS?
THERE WILL BE A RAFFLE AND REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE



FILM REVIEW



BRIDGET JONES

MAD ABOUT THE BOY

Reviewed by Alex Groom

Bridget's back! Yes, 2025 has already brought us a lot and a fourth Bridget Jones film has now officially come out. In this review, I'll be helping you decide whether or not you should be Mad About the Film. I will be answering all the important questions: can this film properly balance its serious and light-hearted moments? Was it a mistake bringing Daniel Cleaver back? Does this film bring Bridget's story to a satisfying end? Read on and find out!

The fourth and final *Bridget Jones* film is based on the best selling third book (confusing) by Helen Fielding, also titled *Mad About The Boy* (not so confusing). It takes place after Mark Darcy's death, meaning that it is a bit of a tear-jerker, whilst still being full of witty jokes as any *Bridget Jones* film should be. The big question for Bridget is should she start another relationship even though she is now a widow with two young children? With her family and friends all giving her different advice, Bridget must navigate through this difficult situation and decide what she wants.

It's been nine years since the last *Bridget Jones* movie and the franchise has gained hundreds of new fans over the years. So, this film is trying to please different generations, which is a difficult thing for a film to do. It incorporates modern ideas such as social media and online dating, making it appeal to younger fans of the series and showing that the films can change with the times, especially as the original film *Bridget Jones's Diary* came out in 2001!

Bridget has always had to choose between two men in each entry in the series, and this time she is enchanted by her son's teacher (awkward) Mr Wallaker, and a young blonde ripped man named Roxster (even his name is cool). However, Bridget is now 53 years old and Roxster is the ripe young age of 29! But surely it would be awkward and difficult to date her children's teacher?

The thing that strikes me most about this movie is how well it balances dark and light-hearted moments. The film easily changes its theme depending on how it is trying to make the audience feel. Mark Darcy's death is mentioned several times throughout the film, however, Bridget's ditzy characteristics and the bizarre situations she finds herself in ensure that the film remains hilarious,

meaning that it stays true to the others in the series

.It's also important to discuss the return of Hugh Grant as Daniel Cleaver. This was a surprise for fans as Daniel was killed off in the previous installment, *Bridget Jones's Baby*. Is it really necessary that Daniel is present in this movie? No, not really. It would seem that Daniel is only there for gags and he doesn't appear to serve any other purpose in this movie, making his inclusion a simple piece of fan service. It reminds me of when Stan Lee was in all the Marvel movies, but this was done well as his inclusions only lasted a few seconds and it was something people would look out for and enjoy. Here it is very different, as Daniel is supposed to be one of the main characters in the movie - he's even on the poster! Although even he has a character defining moment...

Verdict: 10/10

Bridget Jones: Mad About The Boy is a hilarious, feel-good comedy that might even make you shed a tear or fifty. The cast are fantastic, the jokes are funnier than ever, and the emotional moments are incredibly impactful. The only negative thing I have to say about this movie is that the inclusion of Daniel was completely unnecessary and they could have easily left him out of the movie and made it even better!



Hopefully Hugh Grant can redeem himself with *Paddington 4*

Nature's Promise

Submitted Anonymously

Geese flock in twos,
The unspoken promise of eternity. People
Split, break apart as easily as a stream
Meets a lone rock. As easily as butterflies
Wings fall apart in a strong gust of wind.

Ignorant to the spoken "I do"

Geese tend to each other,
Not a word spoken between them,
Not an undesired or harsh hand used.
People are unpredictable.
Gentle words contrast their unwanted touch

As it is, vows are only promises

Geese will die for their partners.
Caring till there's no hope left,
Staying till the end.
People leave at the sign of pain,
Heartache, or loss

"in sickness and in health" are only words

Animals stay together,
Geese, swans, even eagles.
The possibility of freedom
With but a flap of their wings.
Yet they stay, care for one another.

"To love and to cherish" is as temporary truth

People leave.
Leaving a trail of pain and heartache,
Flying at the first chance of freedom.
Lies, rumours, and betrayal lingers,
Years on and people will still remember

That "til death do us part" was all a facade

People hurt, people lie
People will taint others
And yet no consequences befall them,
Only the trauma and pain is left
Those they make suffer continue, even when they're gone

"To have and to hold" wasn't a promise. It was a threat.

TOADS ON THE ROADS

Every spring, as the weather warms and rain arrives, toads begin their annual migration to their ancestral breeding ponds across the UK. They follow the same route, regardless of what gets in their way, which sometimes leads to them crossing roads. We get a toad vs. traffic scenario and the toads inevitably come off worse.

The Toads on Roads project registers these sites as 'migratory crossings' and helps coordinate local Toad Patrols. Patrols can apply to their local council for road warning signs to be installed and actively help the toads across the road. The Toads on Roads project has been running for over twenty years and there are several in the Forest of Dean - Scan the QR code below or go to: <https://www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk/toads-on-roads> to find your nearest patrol and get involved!



Everything You Need to Know about Toads

Despite its warts and ancient associations with witches, the common toad is a gardener's friend, sucking up slugs and snails. It is famous for migrating en masse to its breeding ponds.

Scientific name: Bufo bufo

Length: 8–13cm

Weight: up to 80g

Average lifespan: up to 4 years

Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.



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Habitats:

- Grassland
- Heathland and moorland
- Freshwater
- Farmland
- Wetlands
- Woodland

Common toads are amphibians, breeding in ponds during the spring and spending much of the rest of the year feeding in woodland, gardens, hedgerows and tussocky grassland. They hibernate over winter, often under log piles, stones or even in old flower pots!

Toads are famous for their mass migrations back to their breeding ponds on the first warm, damp evenings of the year, often around St. Valentine's Day. Common toads tend to breed in larger, deeper ponds than common frogs. Toad tadpoles contain toxins that make them unpleasant for predators to eat, allowing them to survive in deep ponds containing fish, which would eat the tadpoles of frogs. Adult toads also contain these toxins, stored in their skin glands.

Common toads mainly feed on slugs, snails and other invertebrates, but larger toads have been known to eat small slow worms and grass snakes, and even harvest mice.

How to identify:

The common toad has olive-brown, warty skin, copper eyes and short back legs. It walks rather than hops, and lays its spawn in long strings around aquatic plants, with two rows of eggs per string.



eeeeek!



LEARNING TO LEAD

Lessons from my Training Year

We recently had the pleasure of having trainee teacher, Mr James, join us in 6th Form. Mr James is hoping to qualify as a Psychology Teacher at the end of his teacher training and he was kind enough to share a glimpse into his journey so far...



It was a nice surprise, and indeed an honour, to be asked to write an article for the Dene Magna 6th form magazine.

That said, there is also a high bar set - I have read many high-quality articles from students, ranging from politics, starting a debating society, film reviews, school achievements and a thoroughly inspiring article by Luna Clarke on being a young carer- so I will do my best to make sure what I write is at least mildly interesting!

So, I decided to retrain as a teacher a couple of years ago, following on from doing my Masters degree in Psychology during the pandemic. While there are a number of different directions one can take after studying psychology (See Mr. Matthews classroom for more), I decided to go with teaching, ultimately, because I like helping people, not just with their studies, but also with fulfilling their potential.

In terms of the training, I think the consensus is that it is a tough year- It is very busy, there are a lot of plates to keep spinning and there is a regular stream of deadlines. As with any course or day job, there will be swings and roundabouts, but with every challenge, come rewarding parts.



It would take too many words to fully outline how much I enjoyed my time at Dene Magna, but I will try and summarise in a paragraph: Before your first teaching placement, I think most people would naturally be nervous (I am a bit of an overthinker, so I was probably on the higher end of the scale). However, Mr Matthews did assure me that I had 'lucked out with this placement'- I can say that having completed placement one and now being in my second placement school, that was absolutely right. The welcome and support I had from Mr Matthews, Mr Griffiths, Mrs Balmer, Mr Mooney, Mr Osbourne, Mr Harrington, Mrs Russell, Mrs Davis and many others, made me feel like part of the team, and I hope in my own way, my contribution was valuable.

Of course, the students that I taught and worked with also made my time at Dene Magna, very positive. From Years 12 and 13, to some of the lower school for Yellow Week, I enjoyed getting to know everyone and being supportive and helpful where I could. In terms of the classes I taught, I know that from a student perspective it can be tricky working with a new teacher, in a subject that is relatively new as well, but I think it was a strong team effort and I hope a fair majority of you can reflect on that time as fondly as I do. It is widely believed that you never forget your first class and I will certainly never forget mine. While it can be challenging and perhaps daunting thinking about your future and deciding what you want to do in the long term, it is also exciting. There are a lot of different and differing priorities you will each have. I would say that if you find what you are doing enjoyable and fulfilling (at least the majority of the time), then you are in a good place!



key dates for PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS

Transition Day: Friday 20th June 2025

Enrolment Day: Thursday 21st August 2025
Come along once you have your exam results!



Enrolment Information
page and revision links



Sign up for the
Transition Day here

We are looking forward to welcoming you to Dene Magna Sixth Form this September, and encourage all Y11 applicants to come along to the Transition Day. This event is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy A-Level teaching for the first time, meet your teachers and classmates, and explore our beautiful campus.

Wishing you the best of luck for your exams, work hard!



SIMNEL CAKE



*The truth is
frequently
found in
the simplest
of things.*

INGREDIENTS

- 225g sultanas
- 100g currants
- 50g mixed peel
- 2 lemons
- 1 juiced and 2 zested
- 50ml orange juice
- 50ml brandy
- (optional)
- 225g butter
- softened
- 225g light muscovado sugar
- 4 medium eggs
- 225g self-raising flour
- 100g glacé cherries
- quartered
- 2 tsp mixed spice

For the topping

- 500g yellow marzipan
- 1 tbsp apricot jam

**CELEBRATE EASTER
WITH A SPRINGTIME
SEASONAL BAKE. THIS
CLASSIC SIMNEL CAKE
IS PACKED WITH DRIED
FRUIT AND SPICES AND
TOPPED WITH
MARZIPAN**

HERE'S A TASTY RECIPE FOR EASTER THAT WE THINK YOU'LL LOVE...

METHOD

STEP 1

PUT THE SULTANAS, CURRANTS AND MIXED PEEL IN A BOWL WITH THE LEMON JUICE, ORANGE JUICE, AND BRANDY, IF USING. MIX WELL, COVER AND LEAVE TO SOAK OVERNIGHT.

STEP 2

HEAT THE OVEN TO 150C/130C FAN/GAS 2. LINE THE BASE AND SIDES OF A 20CM ROUND CAKE TIN WITH BAKING PARCHMENT.

STEP 3

ADD THE REST OF THE CAKE INGREDIENTS TO THE SOAKED FRUIT AND STIR UNTIL WELL COMBINED. SPOON HALF OF THIS MIXTURE INTO THE BOTTOM OF THE CAKE TIN AND LEVEL IT OFF SO IT'S AS FLAT AS POSSIBLE. ROLL A THIRD OF THE MARZIPAN INTO A CIRCLE 20CM DIAMETER AND PUT IT ON THE TOP. GENTLY ADD THE REST OF THE MIXTURE, LEVELLING THE SURFACE AGAIN.

STEP 4

BAKE FOR APPROXIMATELY 2½ HOURS UNTIL BROWN, WELL-RISEN AND FIRM TO THE TOUCH. A METAL SKEWER SHOULD COME OUT CLEAN WHEN INSERTED. ALLOW TO COOL FOR 20 MINS IN THE TIN AND THEN TURN OUT TO COOL ON A WIRE RACK.

STEP 5

WARM THE APRICOT JAM IN A SMALL SAUCEPAN AND BRUSH ON THE TOP OF THE CAKE. ROLL OUT HALF OF THE REMAINING MARZIPAN TO THE SIZE OF THE TOP OF THE CAKE. PRESS IT DOWN FIRMLY AND PUSH THE EDGES DOWN WITH YOUR THUMB TO CRIMP IT ROUND THE SIDES.

STEP 6

ROLL THE REST OF THE MARZIPAN INTO 11 BALLS (THESE REPRESENT THE APOSTLES). PLACE THE BALLS EVENLY ON TOP OF THE CAKE IN A CIRCLE, STICKING THEM DOWN WITH A LITTLE DAB OF THE JAM. GENTLY BLOW TORCH THE TOP OF THE CAKE UNTIL THE BALLS ARE A LIGHT GOLDEN BROWN, ALTERNATIVELY PUT THE WHOLE CAKE UNDER A HOT GRILL UNTIL THE MARZIPAN TURNS A LIGHT GOLDEN COLOUR.

GAME REVIEWS

About the game: *Seterra* is an educational geography quiz game that lets players test their knowledge of countries, capitals, flags, and more.

How it works: The simple, user-friendly design is accessible for all ages and skill levels, offering a variety of quizzes ranging from basic location identification to advanced topics like rivers and mountain ranges. Players interact with maps, trying to locate places within a time limit, and can track progress or compete in challenge modes.

What makes it good? The game's main strength is its educational value, helping players improve their geographical knowledge in a fun way. While the design is basic, *Seterra* is a fantastic tool for learning geography and is highly recommended for anyone looking to boost their global knowledge.

Will Keene





About: *The Walking Dead* by Telltale Games is a compelling, narrative-driven adventure that immerses players in a world of tough decisions, moral dilemmas, and emotional storytelling.

Story: Set in the universe of the popular *Walking Dead* comic series, the game focuses on the bond between Lee Everett (a former convicted criminal) and Clementine, a young girl he takes under his wing after the zombie apocalypse. The game's structure enhances the sense of urgency and drama, with each chapter building upon the last, which creates a rich, character-driven narrative. What sets *The Walking Dead* apart from other narrative games is its ability to make players feel deeply connected to the characters, often forcing them to confront difficult choices that have no clear right answer. The game thrives on its storytelling, with moments of intense action followed by quiet, intimate character interactions.

Gameplay: Telltale's signature dialogue-driven gameplay and quick-time event mechanics work in tandem to keep players engaged, and the excellent voice acting and character development further heighten the game's emotional resonance. The choices you make have long-lasting consequences, making it one of the most impactful games in terms of player agency.

Visuals: Although the graphics, which use a stylized comic-book art style, may not appeal to everyone, they fit the tone of the game perfectly. The bleak atmosphere, combined with the ever-present threat of walkers and other survivors, creates a tense, gripping experience.

Verdict: Overall, *The Walking Dead* is a masterclass in interactive storytelling, with its rich, emotional narrative and memorable characters leaving a lasting impact on players long after they've completed the game.

Ashton Croker ★★★★★

About: *Noita* is a roguelike game developed by Nolla Games, where every pixel is simulated, offering a physics-based sandbox filled with creative possibilities. In *Noita*, you control a wizard exploring procedurally generated levels, armed with a wand that can cast a variety of spells.

Gameplay: The game's standout feature is its deeply intricate physics engine, where nearly every element of the world is subject to realistic interactions - from liquids and gases to fire, electricity, and even explosives. This level of detail allows for immense player creativity, as you can manipulate the environment in countless ways, often leading to surprising and explosive results! However, its steep difficulty curve and the randomness of the levels can make it quite challenging, requiring patience and experimentation to fully master the game.

The world: The joy of *Noita* comes from the sense of discovery and experimentation that each run offers. With countless wands to experiment with, each spell can interact with others in unpredictable ways, leading to a near-infinite variety of strategies. The game's world is also rich in secrets - from hidden areas to unique enemies and bizarre interactions, rewarding players who take the time to explore its many layers.

Verdict: While the minimalist graphics and cryptic storytelling may leave some players feeling disoriented, the game's sheer depth and complexity more than make up for it. *Noita* is a game where every run feels fresh but also brutal, and for fans of challenging experimental gameplay, it's a journey worth taking.

Jacob Wragg-Jones ★★★★★



Watch this space... more reviews to come each issue!

Feel Good Vibes



Life can get busy but taking care of your mind, body and soul doesn't have to be complicated. We chose our top 12 tips for good vibes, healthier habits and a happier you.

Enjoy moving to your favourite music. Really go for it!

Get natural light early in the day. Dim the lights in the evening

Have a day with less screen time and more movement

**ACTIVE
APRIL
2025**

Spend as much time as possible outdoors

Go exploring around your local area and notice new things

Make sleep a priority and go to bed in good time



Listen to your body and be grateful for what it can do

Move as much as possible, even if your stuck inside

Try out a new exercise or dance class



Eat the rainbow. Fill your plate with colourful fruit and veg.

Stay hydrated. Your body and mind will thank you!

Regularly pause to stretch and breathe during the day



Easter Cake Pops

Get creative this Easter with these adorable and delicious cake pops, courtesy of our favourite - Hobby Craft!

Use colourful deco melts to customise your cake pops, and add sprinkles or your favourite decorations to make each one unique.

This easy baking project will make the perfect activity for your little ones and get them excited for the Easter celebrations!



YOU WILL NEED:

- Any sponge cake - these could be cupcakes, off cuts from larger cakes or even store-bought cakes
- Betty Crocker vanilla frosting
- Deco Melts in white and various colours
- Royal icing sugar
- Food colourings
- 15cm white lollipop sticks
- Piping bags
- Whisk Round Tip No.2

STEP 1.

Crumble the cake into a bowl ensuring there are no large chunks. Add a spoonful of frosting, you won't need much just enough to bring the cake crumbs together into a solid mixture that holds together when squeezed with your hand



STEP 2.

Roll the mixture into balls between your palms and shape into egg shapes, approximately 5cm long and 3cm wide.

Place the eggs on a tray or board lined with a piece of greaseproof paper and chill them in the fridge for 1 hour.



STEP 3.

Melt the white Deco Melts according to the packet instructions.

Dip the end of a lollipop stick into the Deco Melts and then insert it into the wide end of the egg. Stand each egg cake pop upright in a block of polystyrene (or stand them up in cups of rice) to set.



STEP 4.

Dip each cake pop in your choice of coloured Deco Melts, ensuring the cake pop is completely covered. Lightly tap the stick gently and repeatedly on the side of the bowl a few times to knock off excess Deco Melts and ensure a smooth finish.



STEP 5.

You can drizzle the cake pops with a contrasting colour of Deco Melts, or pipe designs onto the cake pops using Royal icing.

Put 4 or 5 tablespoons of Royal icing sugar into a small bowl and add water, 1 teaspoon at a time, to make a stiff but pipable icing.



You've created some lovely sweet treats that will be enjoyed by all!

Easter Egg Wreath

Hung on the front door, this egg wreath will greet guests in style.

To make: Tie a length of twine around a 12-inch biodegradable craft ring, this will be used to hang the wreath. Attach fake or blown real eggs (we used a combination of both) such as goose, chicken, quail, and duck eggs using hot glue. Nestle greens throughout the eggs, hot gluing them in place, if desired. Hang from twine.



Carrot Garland

1. Trace carrot body template onto orange fabric and cut out. Fold in half, with the right side of the fabric facing in, and sew edges together, leaving top open. Turn right side out and stuff with batting.
2. Trace leaf template onto green fabric and cut out. Fold in half, with the right side of the fabric facing in and sew together along edges, leaving the bottom unsewn. Turn right side out and sew bottom closed.
3. Sew a running stitch 1/4-inch from the carrot opening, leaving a 3-inch length of thread on ends. Use thread lengths to pull opening partially closed. Insert leaves into opening and pull opening closed completely; use thread to knot opening closed. Tack leaves into place with a few stitches.
4. To hang: loop twine around neck of carrots, spacing them evenly, and hang from a mantel, side board, or buffet.



JOIN OUR TEAM!

Why join our Editorial Team?

One reason you should join The Student Standard Press Club is the benefit it could have to your personal statement. Sixth Form is the time to start thinking about what you want to do in the future, so anything to add value to your personal statement is important. It will also help with building skills like meeting deadlines, writing and working as a team - and its a lot of fun!

It's not only writing, there are lots of opportunities. From photography and illustration to feature writing, opportunities to do interviews and research, there is so much you can do- get in touch!

JOIN NOW

If you would like to contribute something to this magazine email

Mrs Davis: s.davis@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk

If you are interested in joining the Student Standard Press Club , we hold sessions during enrichment, every Wednesday, P4&5

" IT'S BOOSTED MY CONFIDENCE WITH WRITING "

" I'VE REALLY ENJOYED WRITING FOR THE STUDENT STANDARD AS I'D LIKE TO GO INTO JOURNALISM - ITS A GOOD WAY TO PERSUE MY INTEREST IN THIS AREA "

"ITS NICE TO BE ABLE TO BOUNCE IDEAS OFF OTHER PEOPLE IN THE TEAM AND TALK ABOUT CURRENT AFFAIRS AND TOPICS THAT ARE REALLY INTERSTING"

"I LOVE THE FREEDOM TO WRITE CREATIVELY ABOUT ANYTHING! "

"ITS FUN AND BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER"