

A WADHAM SCHOOL STUDENT PUBLICATION

# THE QUILL



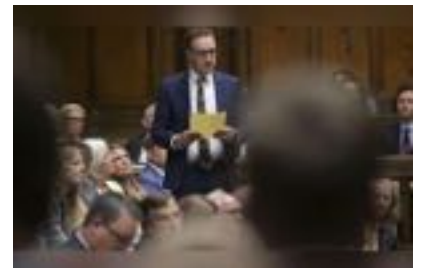
## STILL WAITING FOR THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD



**STILL CRAZY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS**  
Does *28 Years Later* have any bite?



**BRAVE NEW WORLDS**  
Wadham Schools sci-fi book launch



**CHANGE MAKER**  
Somerset MP Adam Dance reflects on a year in politics

**VOICE OF A GENERATION, CONSCIENCE OF THE NATION**  
Catching up with singer, songwriter and activist Billy Bragg



**SCHOOLS OUT**  
Finishing on a high with activities week 2025



**WARHORSE**  
Wadham gives its verdict



**Plus Reviews, Previews and Opinions**



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## Introduction

**We've done it!!! Welcome to edition 20 of *The Quill* and a well deserved and anticipated summer break.**

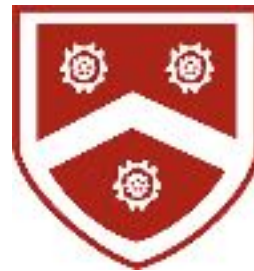
**Like a broken record, I find myself repeating how again I'm amazed at the creative talents of the students here at Wadham, and grateful for the time and energy they have put into what is a bumper volume.**

**In this, our 20th edition you'll find...**

- ♦ **Interviews with Billy Bragg and Somerset MP Adam Dance**
- ♦ **A break down of the trips, visits and activities Wadham students have taken part in this term**
- ♦ **Y7 reflecting on their first full year at Wadham**
- ♦ **As well as the usual stories, articles and reviews of what's interested the great and good at Wadham.**

**Happy reading!**

**Peter Hopwood ~ Editor**



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## INTERVIEW

**WAITING FOR THE  
GREAT LEAP  
FORWARD! – SINGER,  
SONGWRITER AND  
ACTIVIST BILLY BRAGG**

Foreword and interview by  
Harriet Johnson

Since emerging on the music scene in the 1980s, Billy Bragg has become a defining voice in the conscience of Britain. Creating songs and music politically charged with left-wing activism, Bragg was a key figure in the Red Wedge movement, a coalition of musicians and artists who campaigned for social justice in the 1980s. The years since have seen none of his edge become dulled and his call for a better world remains just as strong.



### 1. What does your daily routine look like?

I'm not much of a morning person, so having a job which is mostly night work allows me to get up when I feel like it and ease myself into the day over coffee and toast.

I've been labelled a 'Marmite artist' because people tend to either love me or hate me, but it's something I embrace as I tend to have some for breakfast whenever I'm at home. I like to spend an hour or reading the Guardian online. I used to go down to the nearby petrol station to buy a copy of the paper, but that was one of the things that the pandemic put paid to (along with wearing a wristwatch and listening to the PM programme on Radio 4).

As compulsive communicator, I'm often writing stuff, either songs or something for long form social media or a book project. I live on a cliff overlooking a beach, so I try to take a walk everyday, weather permitting. I break for coffee again at 5pm and read the New York Times online. I took out a subscription when Trump was elected in 2016 in the hope that it might help me make sense of what is going on over there.

Then I'm back writing or perusing the internet until around 7.30pm when I sit down for an evening meal with my partner - who is also my manager - Juliet Wills. Then I slump in front of the tele and go to bed after Newsnight. Life on the road is very different. Up early, travel until 4pm soundcheck. Grab something to eat. Hit the stage at 8pm till 10pm, then in bed by midnight. Repeat for three days then have a day off, probably spent travelling.

### 2. What were you like at school?

Up until the age of 11 I was a pretty good pupil and I enjoyed school. The town I grew up in, Barking & Dagenham in east London, was dominated by the Ford Motor Company. Everyone's dad worked for them or for one of the ancillary companies. Failing my 11 Plus in 1969 meant that I ended up at a

school where boys were educated to work in the car factory and when I told my careers master that I didn't want to do that, he gave me three other options - the army, the navy or the air force. I chose rock and roll.

### 3. What were your most and least favourite subjects? Why?

My favourite subject was history and still is. I think it helps you to better understand the world around you. Who built those earthen mounds on the skyline? Why was my town founded here? How did my family end up there? My least favourite subject was languages. I once got 2.5% in a French exam - although I didn't come bottom of the class.

To be honest, I wasn't a very attentive pupil in secondary school and couldn't wait to get out at 16. There's a comment in one of my school reports that could serve as my epitaph: "Uses his obvious intelligence as a disruptive force."

### 4. Did you have an inspirational figure in your life? If so who were they and how did they inspire you?

Arguably the most influential figure in my life was Margaret Thatcher. She challenged my belief in a compassionate society based on the collective provision of free health care, decent housing and job security. She won her second election by a landslide just as my first record came out and the following years were my political education. I found myself becoming increasingly active in opposition to her policies - playing benefit gigs for striking miners and protesting students, and singing at rallies for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Artists Against Apartheid.



### 5. In 1981 you decided to join the army. Why did this interest you and what do you think you learnt from your time in service?

It's one of the great contradictions of the Billy Bragg persona - how come this raving leftie joined the Royal Armoured Corps? But people imagine the career path of a pop star to be a straight line. That's not the case. I'd been in a punk rock band through the late Seventies and when that came to nothing, I was at a dead end.

Living back at my mum's and with no motivation, I needed a kick up the jaxie. My father, who died when I was 18, had driven a tank during World War Two, so I guess it was always in the back of my mind. And I needed something that pressed the eject button on my previous existence as a punk rocker.

Why did it interest me? I wanted to drive a tank. What did I learn? When you've driven one tank, you've driven them all.

### 6. What other events do you think have made you the person you are today?

I think the most impactful event in my life has been becoming somebody's dad. If parenthood doesn't change your perspective on everything, you're probably not doing it properly.



### 7. What would say have been the biggest influences on you in life and your musical career?

When I was 19 years old, the UK underwent a cultural revolution in the form of punk rock. It's remembered today as little more than spiky haircuts and the Sex Pistols swearing on teatime tv, but it was a movement that empowered young people to make create culture that said something about their lives.

Britain in 1977 was in the doldrums. The post-war economic boom was over and the nation was having trouble adjusting to no longer being an imperial power on the world stage. Rock music, which Britain had excelled at during the previous decade, had also lost it's momentum. The big bands of the 60s were now playing in vast stadiums and pop music was little more than light entertainment.

Punk rock was a reaction to this atmosphere of complacency, an attempt to break not just with our parent's generation, but also with the 60's notion of peace and love. The late 70s were a time of confrontation and punk rock fed off of that edginess.

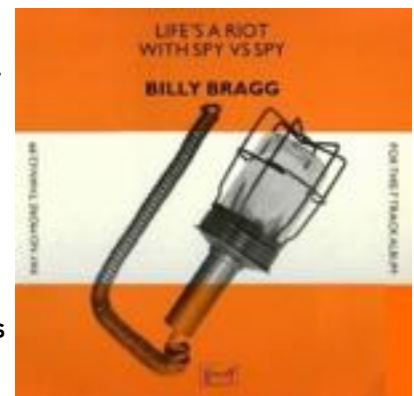
The ethos of punk can be summed up in the words: Do it yourself. It told us that we didn't need any justification for making music or creating our own media via photocopied fanzines, or designing our own clothes. That DIY attitude has stayed with me and continues to inspire. A few years ago, I felt the need to write a book in response to the rise of the neo-fascist British National Party. I didn't ask anyone for permission to write *The Progressive Patriot*, I just set about doing it

### 8. What advice could you give to any young person thinking of making a living as a musician?

Do it Yourself!

### 9. What do you think have been the major changes in the music industry since you released your first album, *Life's a Riot with Spy vs Spy* in 1983.

The means of production, distribution and consumption have changed completely. When *Life's A Riot* was released, if I wanted it to be available in record shops in the USA or Australia, I had to sign a deal with an international record company. They would manufacture the disc, physically distribute it around the world and - most important this - collect the money from the sales. For that, they took 85% of the wholesale price of the record, leaving the artist with 15% - of which probably 20% of that would be taken by their management.



### 10. Do you think the music industry has changed for the better and what challenges does it face going forward?

In the latter part of the 20th century, music was our social media. Your social status was defined by the artists you listened to. It showed you how to dress, who to hang out with and who to avoid. It was how we spoke to one another and to our parents generation. When I was nineteen years old and wanted to express my views about my predicament, the only medium available to me as a working class teenager was to learn to play guitar, write songs and do gigs.

Music still has that role in some communities, but it's not the universal language that it was before the rise of social media. Music is part of the teen experience, not the whole focus. As in other fields, digitisation has led to polarisation. Formerly there were a few places where music fans could congregate - Top of the Pops for instance, or the John Peel show on Radio One - and as a result if you could make an impression there you could build a career.

Now everyone can make an album on their smartphone, the music scene has fragmented, making it

harder to gain the traction necessary to build a following. Digitisation has also made it difficult to earn a living from recorded music. A huge challenge going forward is finding a way to make streaming pay for artists who aren't as massive as Taylor Swift or Ed Sheeran.



### 11. Do you have a favourite festival or music event to perform at? Why?

Glastonbury is my favourite festival. Despite it's size, it's always been a radical festival. I mean, how many other similar size events give their profits to charity? Or take a year off to let the grass grow? When I first played there in 1984, it was raising funds for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and had a huge CND logo on top of the Pyramid Stage. Throughout the 1980s, it remained a place where the forces of opposition and dissent gathered in protest at the policies of the Thatcher government.

Since the early 2000s, I've been part of the Left Field, which is a stage dedicated to domestic UK politics. We have political panels in the afternoon and radical artists in the evening. I recently worked out that since 1984 I have only missed three Glastonbury Festivals. It's like my summer holiday. Some people spend theirs in a caravan by the seaside whereas my caravan is parked in a field in Somerset - with a massive 80 stage festival in my front garden.

### 12. Do you think British music is still influential around the world?

Not as much as it was. I recently saw a US top twenty chart from June 1985 in which 10 of the artists were from the UK - Tears for Fears were at number one with Everybody Wants to Rule the World and Wham! were at number two. I don't see that happening again.

The current US top twenty contains no British artists, but does have six songs featuring someone called Morgan Wallen, who I confess I have never heard of. That couldn't have happened in the 80s. No artists could have six songs in the top twenty but more significantly, no artist could be such a huge hit in the US without being widely known in the UK (I've just checked and no, Morgan Wallen is not currently in the UK top twenty).

Now I realise that I might be sounding like an old man here - I am 67 years old - and Morgan might be huge among the cognoscenti at Wadham, but I feel it's a sad state of affairs when the entire British pop scene has been replaced by a guy named Morgan Wallen.



Joking aside, this is another example of how the industry has changed for the worse. I'd don't begrudge Morgan his success, but a healthy music industry would provide more artists to challenge Morgan for the five other chart places he doesn't really need.

### 13. What has been the most rewarding moment of your career as a musician so far?

Undoubtedly the day when I was able to give up my day job and start making a living as a musician. It's probably the most difficult step of any artist's career, and one that I had attempted a couple of times before. The fact that, since 1983, I've been able to make a living doing something that I love gives me a great deal of pride. I realise that it's a great privilege, that most people are stuck doing jobs they don't enjoy in order to survive. That knowledge helps keep things in perspective for me when I'm having a bad day on the road.



**14. Which projects would you like to be involved with?**

I'm a great believer in the idea that you can't have too much democracy, so replacing the House of Lords with an indirectly elected upper house that represents the nations and regions of the UK would be something I'd like to be involved with.

**15. What album of yours would you recommend the students at Wadham should listen to and why that particular album?**

I would suggest my fifth album, *Don't Try This At Home*, as I feel it best represents the mixture of the personal and political themes that I seek to address with my songwriting.

**16. What are some misconceptions people might have about the life of a musician?**

That it's glamorous. It might be for Dua Lipa, but for me the closest I get to glamour is wearing proper shoes on stage rather than trainers. Also, some people assume that if you've had a hit single you must be loaded. That wasn't true in the old days and it's definitely not true now.

**17. Looking ahead, what are your aspirations or goals for the next few years in both your professional and personal life?**

I write songs to try and make sense of things, but sometimes the situation is so challenging that I feel the need to up my game. When a dozen councillors from the far-right British National Party were elected in my hometown of Barking and Dagenham in 2006, I was fired up to write a book in response. In *The Progressive Patriot*, I laid out the reasons why I loved my country and why we on the left should not cede patriotism to the right.

I find myself in a similar situation now. Trump's election is a challenge to all of us who believe in the notion of universal rights and the importance of fact-based discourse, so I'm currently working on a book that sets out a three dimensional notion of freedom based on liberty, equality and accountability.

**19. If you could have a dinner party and invite any four people from history, who would be on the guestlist and why?**

I'd invite George Orwell, as he's my favourite political writer, William Blake, for his poetic vision, Woody Guthrie because he's the father of the singer-songwriter tradition of which I am part, and Peter Ustinov as his presence would guarantee an evening of wonderful repartee if the other three were boring.

**21. What's next for 'Billy Bragg'?**

Once I complete this questionnaire I'll start packing for Glastonbury Festival, where my partner and I curate a stage called the Left Field. I've only missed three Glastos since 1984 and since we began running a stage in 2010, it's been the big event of the summer, the culmination of months of booking the right artists and activists to create an engaging and entertaining weekend.

**22. What five words describe 'Billy Bragg'?**

Big Nosed Bard from Barking. That's what it says on my Facebook profile.

# Wadham School on the move!

## YEAR 8 TRIP TO YEOVIL COLLEGE

**By Laura Andrews**

Year 8 had a fantastic My Futures Day at Yeovil College this week. The whole year group got to experience a subject or course, use the college facilities and get stuck in with practical activities. It was a great insight into their potential progression routes in the future. Thank you to Yeovil College for putting on an amazing experience for our students.



## CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN IN ENGINEERING DAY – 23RD JUNE 2025

**By Beth Church**

Wadham girls were lucky enough to be invited to local company Numatic to celebrate International Women in Engineering Day (INWED). A group of year 9 girls were selected for this trip and we had a busy morning.

Mia and Lexi Mae explain how the day went - today we went to Numatic and we had to dis-assemble and re-assemble a part of one of the machines – the 440. We also had a tour around many of the different factory areas. Then lastly we had a talk about working at Numatic and saw all the different types of hoovers over the years.

Blossom adds that “on the tour we got to see some of the individual pieces being made. The talk was about Women at Numatic and how working for the company is good for them. We also saw a museum of hoovers over the years.”



Jenny says “one thing that surprised me today is that they gave a Henry Hoover to at the time Prince Charles, now King Charles. Part of our practical task was to dis-assemble and re-assemble the bottom of a Numatic 440 in 20 minutes. Charlie Jane said the task was very difficult but also very fun.

Charlie Jane adds “We got to look in Numatic’s museum of very old vacuum cleaners. We finished the session with some free stuff, which included a Henry keychain, a note book and a Henry face! I was surprised at how much effort goes into making a henry Hoover”.



I was also surprised that there is over 70,000 parts held in the Numatic factory”. All the girls (and Wadham staff!) were surprised at how big the Numatic site is and how big the factories are.

The girls have come away from this trip with an amazing insight into this large employer, tucked away in Chard. They have found out about different job roles within the company and got to experience what goes into making a vacuum cleaner with practical demonstrations and doing it themselves too.



**By Eliza Sugar**

I really enjoyed going to Numatic in chard on international women in engineering day as it was a very interesting and exciting experience to see how henry hoovers and other products have been developed and made over the years. I also enjoyed seeing what the work environment was like there and the different roles people play to ensure the products are being made to the best of its ability. It gave me a good insight into what I could do with my future and career.

# To infinity and beyond!



Futures day comes to Wadham

**By Laura Andrews**

On Tuesday 8th July Wadham School had a drop down day to focus on all things Careers and Personal Development. Students engaged in a variety of sessions throughout the day.

We welcomed 3 local colleges in the morning to discuss post 16 options, apprenticeships and university - Strode, Bridgwater & Taunton and Yeovil. Year 7 and 8 heard about the vast array of jobs within the NHS. Year 10's started preparing for their mock interviews and college/ apprenticeship interviews.

In the afternoon we welcomed 7 employers into school where students were involved in a carousel of talks. We welcomed the Navy, RNLI, Market Street Bakery, MAWfit and MAWbuild, Abri, Boeing and Thales. Thank you to all those in our community for supporting this day and our young people for their engagement.



# POWER TO THE PEOPLE!



## WADHAM STUDENTS LEARN THE VALUE OF DEMOCRACY

**By Laura Andrews**

On June 3rd of this year students in KS3 were invited to an interesting and interactive lecture about politics and some of the Fundamental British Values from an education

outreach worker based in UK Parliament. We were very proud of the students that attended the talk, who asked meaningful questions and showed respect and courtesy to our visitor. We hope to offer this opportunity and perhaps even a trip to the Houses of Parliament to more students in the next academic year!

# WADHAM STUDENTS CONQUER DOE!

**By Alan Greenough**

A group of us at Wadham have completed our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award. For the DofE we've been visiting Madelaine farm every week where we've done lots of walking, and we feed the cows, pigs and chickens.



Last week we completed a 4 hr walk and 1 day stay at Madelaine farm, it was quite fun but very hot. We stayed in tents, we had to carry all of our stuff, there were 8 of us.

Mrs Barrett was with us on first day and Mrs Brown came for the camping the next day Mr Coombs came was with us. We cooked our own food on tranjeers, me and Kai cooked noodles everyone else had pasta. I've done loads of camping so that stuff wasn't new to me but it was still really good fun.

We got chased by cows on the walk, 2 people in the group read the map and the rest of us followed.

Next week we're getting our Bronze DofE officially and we're going to have a party.

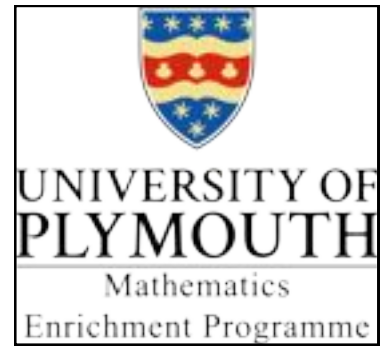
I'd like to do the Silver DofE if I can.



## UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH - MATHS MASTERCLASS

By Andrei Radulescu

On Friday 27th June, me, Lerryn and Leo were invited to go to University of Plymouth to do a Maths Masterclass with other students that attended the Maths Masterclass in Exeter Maths School and other Maths schools in the South-West. When we arrived at the train station in Plymouth the University sent a staff member to pick us up and take us to the University then we were put in a lecture hall and gave us work like starters to get our brains thinking, then they introduced themselves and later we had break.



After, they gave us a 1-hour lesson about strange shapes and the effects that you get after you put twists in paper, then we had lunch. After lunch we had another hour lesson about what you can do with a piece of A4 paper. The last thing we did was a lecture about how statistics shape decisions in medical treatment. After the lecture we finally got to go back home. In my opinion the math masterclass was great because I got to learn new stuff and challenge myself to learn more maths.

## Donuts for all!

George and Evan decided to buy a load of donuts, and then give them out to the community! People took their donuts happily and enjoyed them while in the town. The boys decided it was a pretty small cost to buy 10 or so donuts, so why not give them around and let others enjoy them? The picture shows Evan and George outside the shop, ready to give out these delicious donuts for all to enjoy!



## WADHAM STUDENTS STORM INCLUSIVE ATHLETICS

By Archie Blunn

I was invited by Miss Cross to join some of my other peers in an all Inclusive Panathlon challenge at Bucklers Mead school. We set off once we were registered in tutor ready to compete against other schools in the local area.

Some of the events included were: Sprints, shot put, discus, javelin, a jumping activity and all finished off with long jump. My favourite event was the javelin because I have good upper body strength when it comes to throwing. Our school team placed 4th overall and we had a great morning!



*We all had a lovely day and thoroughly enjoyed it. We finished 4<sup>th</sup> as a team and all got a medal. As they say "It's the taking part that counts"*  
— William Mckelvey

*My favourite activity was the Hurdles because I like to jump over things like Hurdles and I feel I am good at it. I did enjoy all the other activities I done and I enjoyed myself at the event.*

*At the end of the event, we were rewarded with Medals. I am very proud of myself for doing the Inclusive Athletics event and for representing our school too. — Katelin White*



WAR HORSE THEATRE TRIP

By Grace Lock

On Wednesday the 4th of June 2025 a group of us went to Bristol, to watch a theatre production of War Horse at the Bristol Hippodrome. It was a long play of 2 and a half hours and included extremely good puppets of horses and animals.

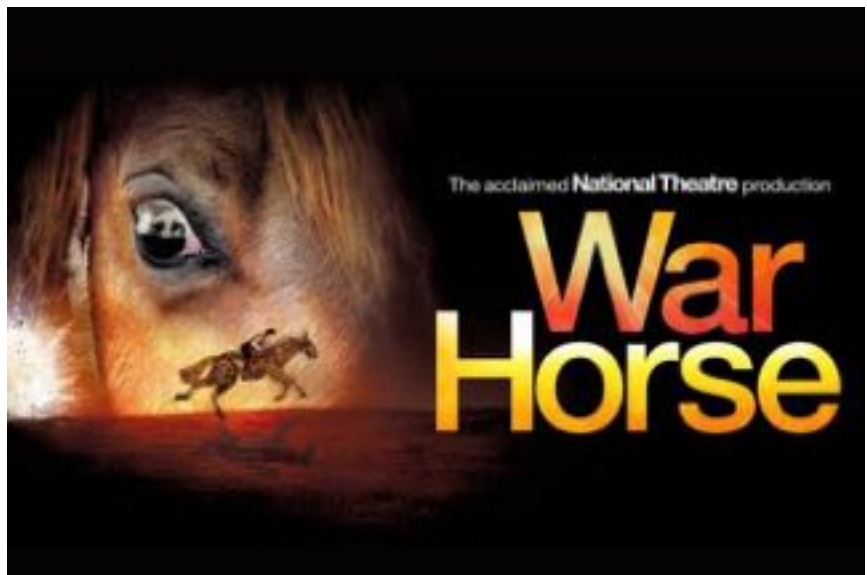
War Horse, is a fictional story, retold as a book, film and theatre production based on World War 1 and what horses were used for during the war.

The story is about a foal being owned by a boy called Albert. The story then follows the horse's life and its different owners, how it was used in the war and finally ending up back with the boy.

I would really recommend going to see it, it is really good. The acting, costumes and set, tie it all together and give it an amazing atmosphere.

You can also pick out the bits you have learnt in history from the story. The puppets make the horses look and act real. They are life size puppets made of cane, aluminium and leather. The puppets have enough room for 2 people to work inside and 1 to lead it.

It is quite an emotional story as you can relate to the feelings the horse and the boy are feeling but definitely worth a read or watch!



# A CUT ABOVE THE REST!

## BRAVE THE SHAVE 2025!

By Amy Cox

July the 11<sup>th</sup> saw Mr Burgas say goodbye to his hair and Mr Straker-Nesbit clean shaven. After a race to raise the targeted amount, the PTFA were joyous to see the total go over £500, the target that got Mr Burgas to a grade one shave!

Students, parents, staff and even governors donated to see that total rise and rise! But a last-minute donation of £20 from a generous governor tipped the scales. It was the amazing collective work of everyone to achieve this goal, that meant this fun event could take place.

This will go with monies already raised to create a calm and reflective space for all to embrace and use. The PTFA are in talks, with where this will be and how it will look. We would love any suggestions or ideas, including any fundraising ideas or further projects that students would like to see the PTFA do.

If you have any suggestions, speak to Mrs Cox, Miss H Osborne or Mrs Webb, you can email or speak to the team directly.



# Sports, Sports, Sports

## WADHAM SPORTS DAY 2025

By Laura Andrews

What a day Thursday was. Well done to the PE Team and all staff for creating such an incredible Sports Day. There was tug of war, capture the flag, assault course run, javelin, shot put, long jump, Boccia ball, track events and more.

The music was playing and the school was on its feet! We suspect the record was broken for the most ice poles consumed in one afternoon!



### ONE YEAR 7 STUDENTS REVIEW OF SPORTS DAY

By Evelyn Patten

On 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2025, year 7-10 took part in the annual Wadham school sports day. Everyone was trying their best in the heat and a competitive air existed between the houses. The day is all about taking part and trying new things. First, we all separated to our different houses and the year 7's started with the tug of war.

Cooper was against Berry on the first round and that left us with Powell against Gibson. After the first match we switched each side of the rope and went again (just to make it fair). This then continued until all the different houses and teams had played each other



### CAPTURE THE FLAG

Next, the year 7's moved over to capture the flag with Cooper against Powell, so Berry was against Gibson. After that match we switched over after about 15 minutes of playing and had a well deserved break.

### OBSTACLE COURSE

After break time we all made our way to the new sports hall to do an inflatable obstacle course. Once shoes and socks were removed, students from rival houses raced each other. The points were racking up.



## ICE CREAM

Meanwhile, Powell and Gibson were lining up to get ice cream from the van outside the sports hall. Once Cooper and Berry had had their half hour slot in the obstacle course Powell and Gibson switched over to the obstacle course and Cooper and Berry went over to the ice cream van to cool off.



## BASKET SHOT, DISCUS, AND VERTICAL JUMP

After ice cream, Y7 all walked over the old sports hall and separated into our houses (Cooper missed out on discus because of waiting for ice cream—a justifiable decision I must say). After this we took part in basketball shot whilst others did the vertical jump.



## THE FINAL RACES

After a short lunch break the whole school met on the top field and did the 100, 200, 300, 400, 500 and 600m races whilst cheered on across the houses. However the drama of the day continued as we left the field not knowing who the winner was. This would come a few days later.



**Sports Day 2025**

The results are in...

Activity	Berry	Cooper	Gibson	Powell
Tug 'o' War	285	270	330	315
Capture the Flag	120	70	60	105
Inflatable Assault Course	83	82	96	101
Boccia	27	15	31	18
Field Events	539	672	596	753
Track Events	433	400	367	330
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>1487</b>	<b>1509</b>	<b>1480</b>	<b>1622</b>

With scores pretty even across many of the activities, it came down to Mr Owen's mantra that 'participation makes points' as the determining factor out on the field, with one House clearly flooding activity sheets and climbing the scoreboard.

I'm therefore delighted to announce that this year's Champions are... **POWELL HOUSE**

Another winning year for Powell – can anyone stop them?



# WADHAM WORK EXPERIENCE 2025



By Sian Grey

Hannah Egge, Oliver Dobrinski, Alex Guise working at Crewkerne museum. They are helping to create a virtual museum by 3D scanning artifacts.



Moken Mills having a very successful work experience week at Barrett Bros butchers in Crewkerne.



A very busy shift For Thomas Baker at Market St Bakery. Being a productive member of a hard working team.



Zuzanna Bamburska doing work experience at Crewkerne Community Hospital. Doing art therapy, wellbeing work outs and therapy dogs. Enjoying her first steps to be a doctor.



Daniel Da Silva and Harry Dean having a great time at Hooke Spring Trout Farm.



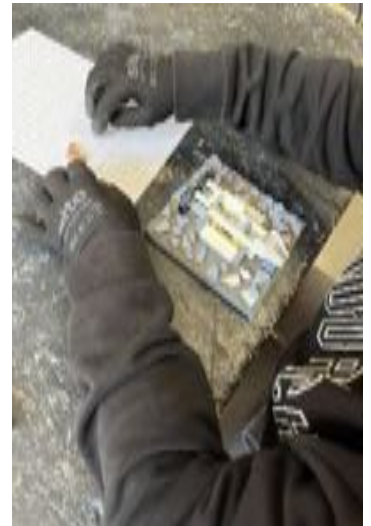
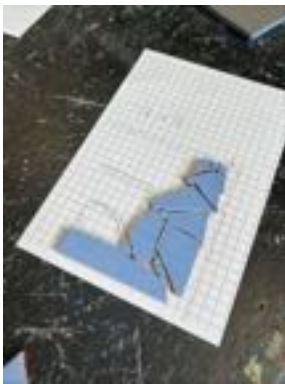
Oliver Taylor making future moves in the world of journalism. On location at the Express Newspaper in London.

## We're so proud of you all!

# WADHAM SCHOOL

# ACTIVITY WEEK 2025

Winding down towards the summer break with some well earned fun and frolics



Mosaic making in the art department



Hooke Activity Days : Raft building, Mud run, Team building, Archery and Bridge Moat!





Hooke Bush Tucker - veg soup, chicken, smoked trout, sourdough and sweet bread. The session also involved learning outdoor survival skills, some foraging advise & fire lighting techniques.



## London Trip - British Museum, Houses of Parliament, London Eye and Outernet display at Tottenham Court Road



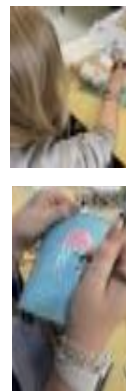
Dinner in Covent Garden before watching Hercules at Theatre Royal Drury Lane.



Last stop on the London tour - Tate Britain to check out the Turner collection amongst other amazing pieces of artwork.



Pictures from the art department creating Festival 'bins' in the style of Yayoi Kusama



Students planning out, designing and making mini films



Woodlands—Nuff said.



Escape room activity in the library



Year 7 rocket launch. Finley and Samuel had the winning rockets



Old school sports day



**A massive thank you to the staff who planned, organised and ran these and all the activities held this year at Wadham. They wouldn't run without them and they are much appreciated.**

# THANK

# YOU!

# Yo ho ho...and a bottle of rum!

## A LOVE OF THE OCEAN BLUE

**By Harry Willmott**

Sailing is a great sport and skill for any age which gives you a great connection to nature.

It allows you to visit and explore amazing places. It's a great sport to do in the UK because there are so many clubs on the majestic coast's lines, lakes and inland reservoirs.

I started sailing when I was five years old at Durliegh sailing club near Bridgwater. Durliegh reservoir is a large body of water owned by Wessex water near the Quantock Hills. I started sailing in an Optimist boat and whilst in this category of boat I achieved my RYA level one and two awards. These awards took me around two years to achieve.

I then moved up to a Laser Pico, also a single hander but bigger and faster. In this boat I passed my level three award. I then went on to sail a Topaz Topper, a faster vessel with bigger sails and more skills to learn. Whilst sailing a Topper I gained my level four award and went on to complete my Seamanship sailing certificate. To achieve this you must also sail in a double hander, which means you have to work with other people as a team. The two double hander boats I have used the most are the RS Vision and a Feva.

This season I have finished the Performance Sailing award, to complete this you must do a range of tasks in boats that are faster and harder to manoeuvre. All RYA Award levels involve a practical set of skills to be assessed on as well as a sailing knowledge theory element.

I am currently working on my Spinnaker assessment, this is the last award I need then I will have completed them all. I have done lots of competitive racing outside of the youth sailing club, my helm and I both won the winter series and came second in the Icicle series.

I have made many new friends through sailing, it's a great way to meet new people and learn valuable skills. We attend a summer trip to Plymouth Sound every year and have a lot of fun sailing all sorts of different boats.

My brother Oli, and I have repaired and done up a performance boat called 'Spice', we had a really good week sailing this around Plymouth Sound. I can't wait to go again this summer.



# COME WITH US NOW ON A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME AND SPACE



## WADHAM SCHOOL SCI-FI BOOK LAUNCH

By Emily Wood and Lucy Wood

Last year, some of our year nine students were taken out of lessons to write a book explaining various science concepts through the medium of creating writing. The short stories were constructed as a demonstration of science theorems. English and science have traditionally been seen as separate subjects that are not often combined, but this workshop aimed to disprove this outdated idea and show how science and English can be used side-by-side to complement one another.



The students had twelve two-hour sessions to create allegories for their selected scientific principles (such as transparency, evaporation, magnetism and gravity, to name a few), with help from the Wadham staff and the generous volunteers from the Bank of Dreams and Nightmares. After a long year, the highly anticipated day of publishing arrived.



The book launch took place in June and was situated inside the Green Dragon bookshop in Crewkerne. It was attended by numerous students and staff from Wadham school. The book went through various adaptations before it reached the perfected edition that exists today, all thanks to the immense effort and dedication put in by the members of the Bank of Dreams and Nightmares, the Wadham staff and the pupils themselves.

The book, called *Is It Science?*, is now available to be purchased in the pre-mentioned Green Dragon bookshop.



Before the official book launch took place, a selected group of students attended a local primary school to read out their stories to the students. This was accompanied by various experiments used to demonstrate the scientific concepts that fuelled each students' work. I personally believe this to have been the most beneficial event as it gave us the chance to fully understand and explain the sciences our stories were attempting to convey.

What's more, it was a great chance to see whether our stories were curated accurately for their intended target audience. The experiment was highly enjoyable, and a wonderful chance for people to step out of their comfort zones and share their work with a wider audience.

## INTERVIEW

# VOICE OF THE PEOPLE FIGHTING FOR THE UNDERDOG: MP ADAM DANCE

Foreword and interview by Josie Bulmer

Adam Dance is a politician and representative for the Liberal Democrats who has grown up here in Somerset, now becoming our local MP. He's risen throughout the Somerset council since 2017, joining parliament in 2024, achieving lots since doing so. I decided to ask some questions about what a job as an MP entails, especially to somewhere so local, and what that job is like.

## 1. What does your daily routine look like?

My routine depends on where I am. If I'm in Westminster, my days are packed with meetings, debates, and reading up on briefings. I usually start the morning by checking emails, going through my schedule with my team, and making sure I'm ready for the day ahead. If I'm in Somerset, I spend a lot of time visiting schools, local organisations, and speaking to people in the community. I always try to find time for a walk – it helps clear my head. My dog, Roo, is very good at reminding me when I've been at my desk too long!



## 2. What were you like in school?

To be honest, I didn't enjoy most of school. I'm dyslexic, and I found learning much harder than a lot of my classmates. Back then, I didn't understand why it was so difficult for me to keep up, and that frustration often came out as me being disruptive. I got into trouble more than I'd like to admit. But I was lucky to have some brilliant teachers who really believed in me. One in particular, Michelle, completely changed how I saw myself – and now she works with me as my Support Worker in Parliament. That's something I never could've imagined back then!

## 3. What was your favourite school subject?

Drama. I loved the creativity and energy of it – and it was a subject where I could express myself without feeling like I was falling behind.

## 4. Have you always wanted to get into politics?

No – not at all. Politics wasn't something I thought was "for people like me". But when the local youth service closed down, it had a real impact on our area. I remember thinking, "Someone should

do something about this.” That planted the seed. I realised that politics could be a way to make real change and help people. I didn’t get into this for the politics itself – I got into it because I care about communities, fairness, and giving people a voice.



**5. What is it like being the local MP for the area you grew up in?**

It’s one of the most rewarding things I’ve ever done. I know this part of Somerset so well – the people, the landscape, the challenges we face – and I care deeply about making it a better place for everyone. Representing the area I grew up in is a huge honour. It gives me a strong sense of purpose, and I never take that for granted.

**6. As part of the Liberal Democrats, have your personal values ever clashed with the party you represent?**

The reason I joined the Liberal Democrats is because our values line up – fairness, equality, protecting the environment, and caring for people. We don’t always agree on the small details, but the big things, the things that matter most to me – they’re at the heart of what the Lib Dems stand for.

**7. What words would you best use to describe you?**

Hard-working, honest, and friendly. I care about people, and I always try to listen properly. I’m also determined – I don’t give up easily.

**8. What would you say you have enjoyed about being an MP?**

Meeting people is easily the best part. I get to hear so many stories, and learn from so many different experiences. It’s also the most challenging part – people come to me with real problems, and I always want to help. But politics can be slow, and the solutions aren’t always simple. Still, being able to make even a small difference is what makes this job worth it.

**9. Would you ever change anything about your job and why?**

I wish things moved faster. There’s so much red tape, and it can take ages to get anything done. Also, as someone with ADHD and dyslexia, I found it really tough at first. Parliament can feel old-fashioned – the way information is shared isn’t always very accessible. Briefing papers are very long and full of complicated language, so it took some getting used to. But the people who work in and around Parliament are brilliant – they’ve helped me find ways to work differently and stay focused.

**10. If you were not an MP, what job would you want to have now?**

I think I’d go back to something community-based or outdoors. I used to be a landscape gardener and I





loved that – being active, being outside, and working with people. I've always wanted to do something that helps people.

**11. If you could give any piece of advice in general to anyone reading, what would it be?**

Be yourself – that's the most important thing. It's okay not to fit into every box or follow the same path as everyone else. Be kind, stay curious, and speak up when something matters to you. You never know what you're capable of until you try.

**12. What opportunities has being an MP given you that you believe have been good for you?**

It's given me the chance to grow – personally and professionally. I've had

to learn a lot very quickly, and I've become more confident in my own voice. It's also given me the chance to stand up in Parliament and speak about things that really matter – like better support for dyslexic students, or protecting our NHS services. That's something I feel very lucky to be able to do.



**13. What things do you enjoy outside of your job?**

Nature is a big one for me. I used to work as a landscape gardener, and I still love getting outdoors, whether it's a walk in the countryside or just pottering about in the garden. Spending time with my dog, Roo, and my family is also one of the best ways for me to relax and switch off.

**14. If you could meet three people in the world, living or dead, who would they be and why?**

I'd love to meet Tutankhamun. He became pharaoh at just nine years old, which is incredible – I'd want to ask him how he managed such a huge responsibility at such a young age. I'd also like to meet Michelle Obama – she's such an inspirational woman. I'd be interested to hear how she found life as the President's wife and how she stayed true to herself while under so much pressure. And last, but by no means least, I'd want to meet my father. I'd like to show him everything I've achieved and let him know how much of a difference I'm trying to make.

**15. On the topic of influential people, who has inspired you out of people that you have met?**

Paddy Ashdown, who was also a Liberal Democrat MP, was a huge inspiration. He had a deep sense of purpose and commitment to public service.

But honestly, I'm most inspired by the people I meet in this job and the people I met when I was a local councillor. So



# Wadham School and after...

By Richard D'Rozario

## 1. When were you at Wadham School?

I was at Wadham for eleven years from 2007 to 2018. It was my last teaching post and completed a thirty-six year career. In that time, I taught in two schools in Hertfordshire, two in Essex, one in Swindon, one in North Somerset and, finally, at Wadham. I was a Head of English in five of those schools. Some people asked me about senior leadership but that was never something I aspired to. All things English really defined my career goals and I did enjoy my time at Wadham.



## 2. Do you have a favourite and least favourite memory of the school?

I, of course, began my career a long time ago, in the early 80s. In those days, schools had much more freedom which I liked, though a drawback was accountability. Then came the National Curriculum and the dreaded OFSTED. I won't get involved in a long political debate about all these changes and their implementation but, suffice it to say, notification of an OFSTED visit was what I liked least but, on the flipside, news of a good OFSTED result was very positive news for the whole school community and everyone was elevated to Cloud Nine!

## 3. What was your biggest success at school?

That's an interesting one. Having been out of the profession for a number of years probably offers a different perspective. I could say things like great exam results or teaching stimulating lessons and, whilst all those things can be true, people who work in a school community never really know what kinds of impacts they are having on young people's lives. Every day just means trying to do your best knowing that it is a privilege to have some influence on shaping futures. A couple of examples: a former student contacted me out of the blue to recall some of my lessons she enjoyed and how they influenced her to become a teacher herself. Again, in my new guise, I have former students who now patronise my shop and it's lovely to see how they've grown and made fulfilling lives for themselves.

## 4. What have you been up to since you left Wadham?

Well, I mentioned the shop which my wife and I opened. It is a small, indie bookshop and in the autumn we will be four years' old. Coming out of the pandemic and noticing the surge in people's reading habits, we decided to take the plunge and try our hand at retail.

We love books, so this isn't a chore and it's far less stressful than teaching! We've proved to ourselves that we have lots of business skills and we are contributing to the well-being of our High Street while promoting our literacy message and getting to know lots of people in the local community. It's a good thing to be doing in our retirement and we get lots of proofs from publishers to read!

## 5. What lessons did you take from working at Wadham?

Wadham was a community school and I really enjoyed the camaraderie of working with some wonderful staff and some wonderful students. They have given me happy memories. The school is not the building; it is the people. My Wadham is no longer there but there's a new one in its place and I wish the whole Wadham community much joy and success in the future.



# Let's Get Creative!

Photos by Sienna Madgin





**Artwork by Poppy Best**

My reasoning for this is because it's ok to feel stuff it just depends on whether you know what you are feeling



**Painting by Casper Crouch**

**Pencil drawings from Lucy Pike**

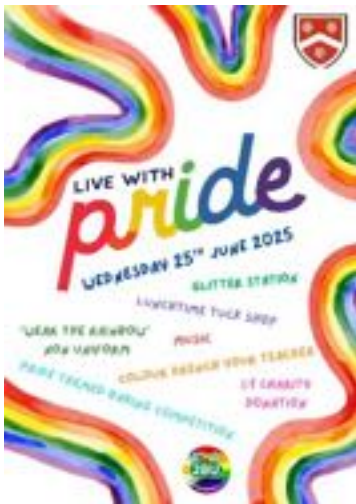


**Digital artwork by Bella Veres**



# WADHAM CELEBRATES PRIDE 2025

Mrs Martin led the celebrations on Wednesday June 25th. Bakes were bought in by Zac, Ella, Olivia, Maggie, Phoebe, Olivia, Abigail, Florence and Miss Whitcombe. We were absolutely blown away by these incredible creations. Staff also volunteered for colour splatting.



# JURASSIC PORKIES

## DEBUNKING THE MYTH ABOUT SPINOSAURUS AEGYPTICUS

By Morris Andrews

*Spinosaurus Aegypticus* is a genus of large spinosaurid theropod dinosaur that lived in modern day North Africa during the Cenomanian stage of the Late Cretaceous period, about 100 to 94 million years ago. The genus was first known from Egyptian remains discovered in 1912 and described by German palaeontologist Ernst Stromer in 1915.

The original remains were destroyed in World War II, but additional material came to light in the early 21st century when German-Moroccan vertebrae palaeontologist Nizar Ibrahim discovered a *Spinosaurus* fossil in Africa's Sahara Desert.

I had the opportunity to listen to Dr Ibrahim talk during the Lyme Regis Fossil Festival. He shared his experience of this discovery and the flaws he's highlighted in the 2001 movie *Jurassic Park 3*.

In the film *Spinosaurus Aegypticus* is depicted as being 13.8 meters long and 6 meters tall when in reality it is 14-18 meters long and an unknown height so it was even bigger than the *Jurassic Park 3* *Spinosaurus*.

The actual *spinosaurus* was even more fierce than the *Jurassic Park* one with a bite force of 4,400 PSI (pounds per square inch). This is lower than most other large predatory dinosaurs. It mostly relied on its size as it was the biggest predator of its time.

One prominent detail of the *Spinosaurus* was its sail which even Hollywood couldn't get right the *Jurassic Park* *Spinosaurus* is shown with a round, small and timid sail but the real *Spinosaurus*' sail was more rectangular and it had a small sail on its head and a sail which followed the tail which made it paddle like to help it move in the water.



# A funny thing happened to me...



## I HELPED A CAT GIVE BIRTH TO 5 HEALTHY KITTENS

By Hope Wood

On the 4 of June 2025 at 10:00 at night, I was lying in bed reading my book. Just then I was distracted by a knocking on my door, my dad was outside saying how the cats' water has broken, and we needed to rush over to the vets in Yeovil.

We were on video call with my dad's girlfriend (the owner of the cat) we were about to leave then realised that she'd already given birth to the first kitten. Me and my dad then jumped in the car, zoomed over and by that time we were arriving she's was prepping for the next kitten. About one hour later another kitten was delivered, followed by another. My job was to pick them up and move them away from the edge of the bed so they couldn't fall off. Even though I was wearing gloves, I could still feel how fragile, small and light they were in my hand.

15 minutes later the 4<sup>th</sup> kitten came out so quickly and we thought it had to be the last, but we were very wrong as about 1 hour later the final kitten made an appearance.

I was so tired but enjoyed every single second and yes I saw her eat 5 placentas and watched her chew every umbilical-cord. What a mum!

I didn't get home till 2, the next day was a Thursday I was tired but still got up at 5:30 ready for school but nothing a monster can't fix.

That was 5 weeks ago they are now bigger and getting fluffy I will attach a photo of how they look now and the night they were birthed.



# WADHAM SCHOOL DOES OUTDOOR LEARNING

By Mrs Vowles

Things are growing well in the Learning Centre garden. The pumpkin plants have lots of large, yellow flowers and you can see the baby pumpkin fruits beginning to grow. The runner beans and sunflowers are also doing well. I think they are enjoying all of the recent sunshine!

We have healthy potato plants growing inside the recycled car tyres and I saw a bee landing on the pretty, blue cornflowers. The work the students have put into watering the plants during this hot spell, is really paying off. Well done all those involved in the Outdoor Learning lessons.

Also, the pond now has it's liner and is beginning to be filled with water. This will be a great addition for the wildlife and mini beasts in the garden. Great effort on digging the pond team!



## "Life in all its fullness"

# My favourite thing about this year was...

At the start of July Ms Davidson tasked years 7 and 8 to tell us about which bits of the last school year they enjoyed the most.

What did they come up with I wonder?

My best day at Wadham was when I got to go to Dorchester cinema with Daisy. We went to see the live action version of *How To Train Your Dragon*. We went to the cinema on a Thursday in term five, and we got to wear non-school uniform which was great because it was hot for school uniform in the cinema. We got to go to on this trip I won a prize in the easter prize draw. It took us around 1 hour to get there, and the same back, and that was with Mr Whites fast driving.



The best part of the day was when daisy brought me a blue raspberry slushie. She put Maltesers in hers and I drank mine in the first 20 minutes of having it. Another great part of the day was when we had to run to the bus, so we were not late. The movie was also super good and made Daisy cry at the end.

## By Poppy Spurway

One of my favourite things at Wadham School has been doing lots of summer fixtures like rounders, football and netball and travelling to play games. Another favourite of the stuff I've done in year 7 is making and meeting new friends like Nancy, Beau, Sophie, Kornelia, Sophia, Josie May and Louisa. I'm so happy I came to Wadham because if I didn't go I wouldn't have met my best friends. I'm so happy I met them because they always know how to put a smile on my face and make me laugh. I met Beau and Nancy in tutor and we have been friends ever since. I met Sophie in English because we were sat next to each other. I met Josie May around school in the corridors with Nancy. I met Louisa around school with Nancy, beau and Sophie. I met Sophia through TikTok and the transition day. I met Kornelia in PE and through Sophie. Mary doesn't go to this school but she's Nancy's friend. I'm really grateful for them because they always stick up for me and they've shown me what a genuine friendship looks like.

By Amelie Richardson

The best thing at Wadham has not happened yet but it will, it's the camping trip on the 16th of July because it is going to be my birthday and it is putting some of my favourite things together like scouts my friends and lots of other things.

A good thing that has happened is the start of school when we first joined Wadham it was really nice meeting all of the staff and who we had for our lessons some of our lessons. Having this memory is nostalgic because its nice having something to look back to as we are moving up to year eight.

Another good thing this year was the cheddar Gorge trip it was super fun exploring the caves and we got some amazing photos of the stunning caves.

Also, the tour guide was super cool. We got to go on our phones at lunch and the view was stunning when we ate.

By Oscar Dart



In Wadham I have had a LOT of cool moments but my fav is the best one. I have had a lot of amazing experiences and this decision was hard to make but my FAVOURITE would have to be...PRIDE DAY!!!!

I loved pride day because me and my friends all had fun messing around and having a blast. Me and one of my closest friends got a tattoo sticker and a glitter tattoos on our face right under our eyes. I loved the cakes and sweets and every thing was amazing and I loved it. We did miss out on splashing a teacher though which was sad but it was still a fabulous day regardless. I loved the day so much and cant wait to do it again next year. I love doing fun stuff like that.

**By Isabel Clark**



My favourite day at school was when it snowed and we got extra break. It was in November, which is near my birthday. I was with my friend, Elsie and we bought pinnies. We were sat in the canteen when we looked out the window and saw it was snowing. We quickly ate our food and ran out the back of the canteen onto the field, it looked like something from a Christmas movie. With my friends we collected up the snow to make a snowman. An older year threw snow at my face and it really hurt. Then the bell rang and we went to the hub to see if we should listen to the bell but Miss told us we had extra break time so I persevered through the pain and played in the snow. Another bell finally rang and we went back to tutor to wait for school to be dismissed early. While we waited we were allowed to go on our phones and eat our lunch. I went on snapchat and used funny filters. Then we got to go home early. What a day!

**By Sophie Gaines**

We went to Yeovil College for an experience day. Tim and Steve did the best job for bricklaying! They said to do it in steps. I learnt you have to spread out the trend so you can put the brick there and make it level. If you do it a lot you have to check it with a spirit level. The teachers were very impressed with our work and they let us take pictures of the wall we made.

**By Riley Webb**

My favourite thing was when we started to do rounders and cricket in PE it was really fun even though I could not hit the ball all the time. I liked it because you could do all sorts of stuff in one sport for example you could either be a back stop, a fielder, or a batter. When you were a fielder you could also be at a stump getting ready to stump people out. My favourite thing to do in rounders was fielding because I liked catching the ball and stumping people out.

Some days all the different groups played together like one group was fielding and the other was batting it was fun playing with different people. It was quite easy to set the playing area up because all you had to do was put some polls in a cercal and the rest was already on the field.

**By Queenie Quince**

I went in the class where we met a teacher called Wayne, who would be teaching us about plumbing. We all stood in front of a the table and he showed us parts to put the pipes together. We split into groups making the design he had for us. When we finished we went outside with our pipe designs. We joined the pipe projects together and then put a hose on it.

All the other parts leaked except mine so I was the best at plumbing. We went back inside and cut the copper pipes up. When we had finished we packed up and washed our hands. Then we got a present from the lecturer which was a pen and it was time for buses back to school!

**By Mackenzie Ball**



The Entitled Sons came in January. They are a rock band made up of a group of brothers and their dad. They got there at 8 o'clock and got ready to perform at 10. They were there until 3 :00 they were also talking about mental health.

They sang four songs, they let everyone ask questions and signed loads of stuff. It was our favourite event of the year because we liked the music and thought the band were cool.



**By Lily Hallett and Alec Proctor**



My favourite thing has to be the SNOW DAY. Basically, it was Thursday 21 of November and it had been snowing in a calm flurry all morning. As we were heading to school on the bus that morning I remember looking outside thinking about how dark but snowy it looked, it was so cool.

As we got to school, we were welcomed by the teachers wrapped up warm in woolly scarfs and bobble hats they warned us about the cold and about the icy pavements. It was like walking in a winter wonder land it hadn't snowed enough for the snow to set yet, but it was beginning to pile up it looked magical. By the time it was time for first lesson it had started to set and there was enough to build a reasonable sized snowman. The whole of lesson 1 and 2 I hardly focussed I just kept looking out the window at the snowy blizzard.

When it was break, we weren't allowed out because the teacher said it was too dangerous and icy it wasn't fair. After what seemed like forever period 3 and 4 were finally finished and we were allowed out to lunch it was amazing, but it was shortly lasted because my bestie hit me in the FACE with a snow ball and before you know it chaos broke out it was cold but I guess I forgot because I was having too much fun. We ended up going home early because it got dangerously cold and it dangerously icy.

**By Abigail Key**

My favourite thing so far at Wadham in year 7 has been doing rounders in PE. This is because in my PE group I'm with most of my friends and it's really fun. I also love doing cricket in PE and the after school clubs as well. Some of the clubs that I have taken part in are netball, cross country and cricket.

I don't like doing dance in PE but I do like doing all the other activities. Tennis is another one of my favourites because I enjoy playing with my friends. Some skills that I learned during PE is how to work as a team, and that when you get involved you're more likely to have fun. One piece of advice I could give to next years Y7s is to always try things even if it's not your favourite because you might actually really like it. If you don't try you will miss out on opportunities.

**By Elsie White**

My favourite thing at Wadham this year was on the school trip to Cheddar Gorge we had to get into groups to go look around one of the caves. My group leader was Mr Quick and we had to go in a cave with this projection thing on the wall that gave us information. But our group kept missing it and Mr Quick was rushing us so we ended up running through the cave to meet the last one that said bye.

**By Daisy Green**



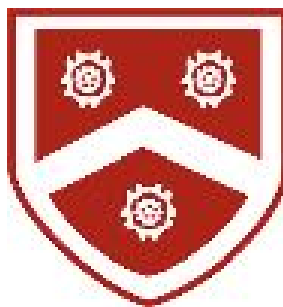
# FAREWELL AND GOOD LUCK!

Wadham School says goodbye to Year 11

**By Peter Hopwood**

On Friday we welcomed Year 11 and their families for a Farewell celebration. The sun shone for photos on the field in their finery before an assembly of memories, speeches and awards.

Thank you Wadham Leavers of 2025, good luck out there!



SO LONG,  
FAREWELL,  
**AUF**  
WIEDERSEHEN  
GOODBYE!

# What's worth a read?

Hulk Teach - By Jeffrey Brown

## Review by Harry Willmott

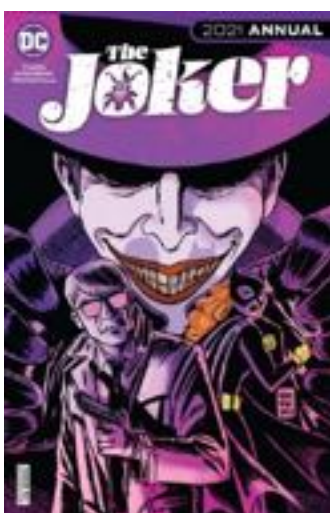
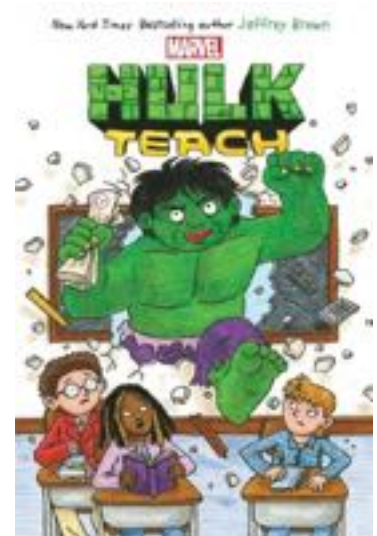
The comic starts off with Uanu and Edmu the Watcherheads, figures who observe everything in one universe. They start by introducing us to Dr Bruce Banner and his lab assistant Betty Ross.

Bruce and Betty are nuclear scientists for the American army doing an investigation into gamma rays. General Ross walks in to tell Bruce that Major Talbot invited middle school kids to his lab. Major Ross doesn't like Bruce because he's in love with Betty, his daughter.

Talbot walks in with the class of middle school kids which immediately start to mess around with all of Bruce's equipment. One kid enters the gamma radiation room and Bruce tries to get her out, in turn accidentally locking himself inside the room.

One of the kids says he's waving ahead. Betty turns on the radiation without realizing that Bruce is inside. Then the door swung open, and Bruce walked out but not as before but now the incredible hulk. Hulk escaped the army lab and destroyed planes and tanks, then he had to fight the Avengers. Hulk gets beaten by the avengers but then out of nowhere the avengers invite him to join. Hulk battles and defeats lots of villains. Hulk accidentally throws a villain into the shield helicarrier damaging it. The other avengers and the city decide he needs to go on trial. His lawyer was Jen Walters / She-hulk. Banner doesn't get a prison sentence, but he gets community service and has to work at Lowell Middle School.

The comic is full of mischief and adventure and will appeal to the child in all of us.



Joker Annual 2021 - By Matthew Rosenberg and James Tynion

## Review by Max Wallbridge

The story line in THE JOKER ANNUAL 2021 is that the joker had broken into to a sweet factory, then he made piñatas and inside where people. The character the joker is a psychopathic, mass-murdering, schizophrenic clown with zero empathy. He embodies a chaotic and anarchic force, challenging societal norms and authority.

The joker is the main character in the comic there is a few others few out the comic, but they are not as important as the joker. In conclusion I would say it is worth reading in the pages you get there is loads of info so you will never get lost and the art is outstanding. Overall, it is worth the read.

Ridley Scott: A Retrospective by Ian Nathan  
(Thames & Hudson)

### Review by Thomas Baker

*Gladiator, Alien, Blade Runner, Prometheus, The Martian*, this book has it all, these extremely renowned films are just a small chunk of Ridley Scott's catalogue, and this book explores that, in incredible accuracy.

First off, the detail, it doesn't just talk about the movies or what happens in them, it talks about what inspired them and what Ridley himself was aiming to portray in each of them, the book itself shines a whole new light on Scott's work that I had never previously seen, and that on its own is seriously impressive. I also want to add, there is a freeing lack of bias in this book, whilst commenting on ideas and principles, it doesn't include

opinions injected into the explanations, it gives actual facts without sway, and it's pretty nice to have.

Secondly, the physical quality of this book is quite impressive; starting at the cover, it has a smooth, glossy, expensive-feeling texture to it, each page is filled with information and pictures, and the best part? The size and layout of each page. The font is related, fitting and readable, the images are exceptionally high definition and locations of them are clear and well thought out, I would count each page as art, the work put into the book itself is a great on its own, let alone the contents it actually holds.

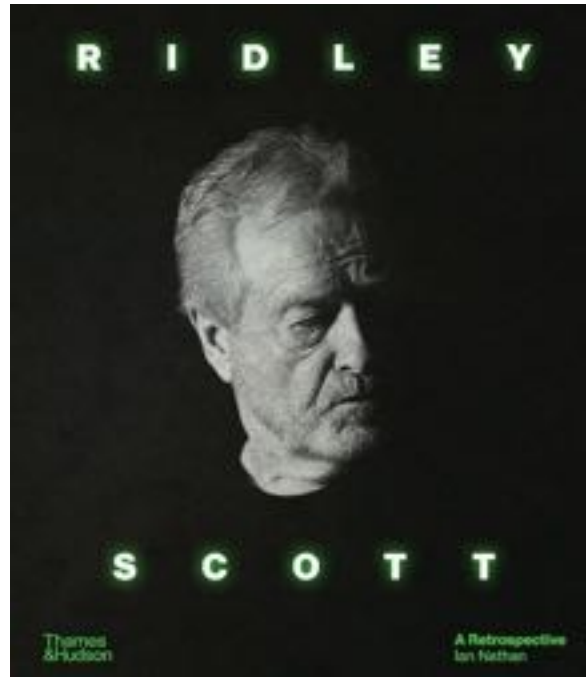
Now, the book has amazing information on Ridley himself, it talks about the director and producer's life and how was born on the 30th of November 1937 in the small British town of Durham (now Tyne and Wear).

The book dives into his entire career, from the beginning where he began fully with filmmaking around his early 20's, starting off by directing for TV shows like *Z-cars* for the BBC, however, it says issues with monetary payouts made Ridley decide to move on to other ventures. It also talks about his co-founded production company, "RSA" (Ridley Scott Associates) in 1967, and how it directed and wrote numerous commercials. It also talks about his successes, the first being upon the release of *The Duellists* in 1977, saying he won the "Best First Work Award" at Cannes.

But it doesn't stop there, though, according to the book he also directed Apple's iconic *1984* and Hovis' *Bike round Ads*, both of which were not only impressive, but were also good advertising. The book also talk about *Alien* in 1979, and as a result, the momentum snowballed into the legend we have today.

The book not only explores simply his movies, but the impact and aftermath of them, discussing their influence and what they led to. It has accurate and interesting information that really portrays the impression of Ridley.

Overall, this book is a must-buy, not only with its quotes, attention to detail and quality, but with its personality and tone, it is informational yet natural, and even if you aren't particularly interested in filmmaking specifically, it's still a great read, a solid 9.5/10, I highly recommend it.



## Girl Rebels: From Greta Thunberg to Malala, Five Inspirational Tales of Courage by (Titan Comics)

### Review by Sheza Sanoop

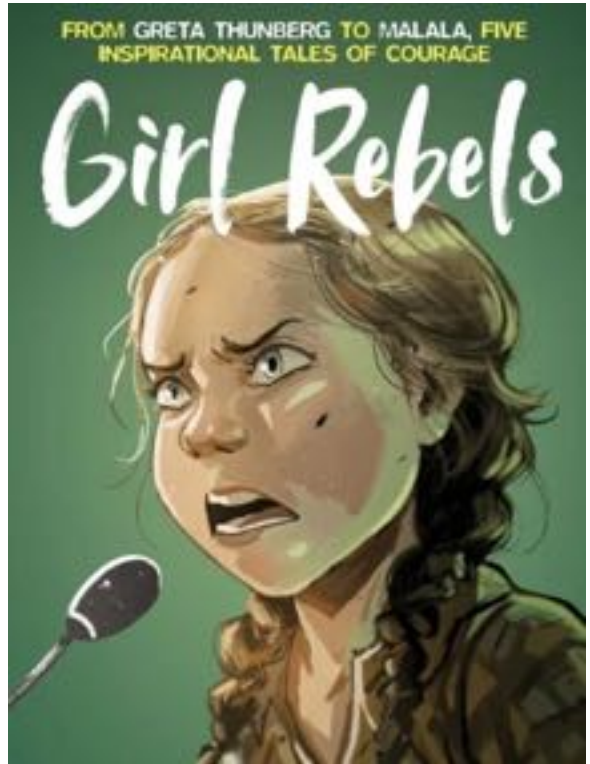
*Girl Rebels* is a book that's all about six young girls and six remarkable journeys. The book is a collaboration from artists Vittoria Macioci, Gije, Jocelyn Joret, Brett Parson and Rebecca Traunig and writers Fabien Morin, Laurent Hopman and Julian Derain.

This book is about six young girls that change the world at a young age. It's all about Malala Yousafzai who risked her own life to stand up to Taliban oppression, Greta Thunberg who battles to protect the planet when experiencing childhood challenges, Yusra maedini the Syrian swimming champion who braved the sea to save refugees, Emma (x) Gonzalez who survived the parkland high school shooting and fights for gun control and Melati and Isabel Wijsen, schoolgirls at the war with pollution in Indonesia.

I don't like how that Malala is treated very differently because she is a girl and people think that women is less than men. For Greta I don't like how that she is bullied by the people in her classroom because she doesn't know how to behave with other people outside of her family. I like how that all the story's speaks directly to girls rather than at them and I love how inspirational it is.

I would rate this book 4 out of 5 stars because I love how inspirational these girls story's are and how the book empathizes their courage and determination in the face of adversity, inspiring readers to become activists and advocates for change themselves.

I would definitely recommend this book if you are into history and if you like reading about life changing people.





### Judge Dredd: The Complete Case Files 13 (Rebellion Comics)

#### Review by Richard Burgas

When Mr Hopwood bounced into my office and loudly exclaimed “I’ve got something for you,” my attention was immediately drawn to a glossy book, nearly an inch thick, with a stark green and black cover giving way to a familiar legend from the comic world – Judge Dredd.

“What the drook?” I thought, struggling to keep a blank expression (like our eponymous hero) as he explained that the Quill had been given a range of books to review and would I like to relieve my childhood by going over “Judge Dredd, The Complete Case Files 13”? Within a few pages, I was sucked back in to the anarchic rough and tumble that is Mega-City One, and working through the case files evoked a great nostalgia for when (as a much younger A-Level student and undergraduate) comic books, LP records (already consigned to the past by then!!) and a love of cheesy 80’s movies (Mannequin will always be in my top 3!) were my cultural diet.

I’m grateful to Mr Hopwood for the chance to relive an aspect of my youth, and really pleased to see that unlike some things, Dredd hasn’t diminished with age and has stood the test of time well. So, what about the Files then?

Judge Dredd: The Complete Case Files 13 marks a significant milestone in the long-running series, offering a compelling mix of satire, action, and introspection that fans have come to expect. This volume compiles stories from 2000 AD Progs 619 to 661, originally published between 1989 and 1990. The collection showcases the talents of writers John Wagner and Alan Grant, delivering a blend of standalone tales and narrative arcs that delve into the complexities of Mega-City One. Notably, the story *A Letter to Judge Dredd* stands out for its introspective take on Dredd's role within the justice system, prompting him to question the very foundations of the society he upholds. This piece is particularly impactful, as it challenges Dredd's unwavering belief in the system, offering readers a rare glimpse into his internal conflicts.

A significant highlight of this volume is its transition to full-colour artwork, a first for the series at this time. This shift enhances the visual storytelling, bringing a new vibrancy to the dystopian world of Mega-City One. While the artwork varies in quality, the introduction of colour adds depth and dynamism to the narratives, as well as creating a clear benchmark fans of the series would come to expect when the character went on to appear on the big screen. Stallone does him more justice, in my opinion!

Judge Dredd: The Complete Case Files 13 is a noteworthy instalment that balances thought-provoking narratives with the series' trademark satirical edge. The introduction of full-colour art marks a new chapter in the visual presentation of the series, enhancing the reader's immersion into the world of Mega-City One. Whether you're a long-time fan or new to graphic novels, this volume offers a compelling glimpse into the complexities of Judge Dredd's universe.



Kill Blue: Volume 1 (Viz Media)**Review by Elliot Foster**

Tadatashi Fujimaki, known for his work on *Kuroko's Basketball*, takes a sharp detour from the sports genre to delve into a thrilling mix of crime, comedy, and body-swap absurdity in his latest manga, *Kill Blue*. The first volume introduces readers to an eccentric but engaging story filled with fast-paced action, unexpected humour, and an unusual premise that makes it stand out among other shōnen titles.

The story follows Juzo Ogami, a stoic and skilled hitman in his thirties who works for the syndicate “Banba.” Cold, methodical, and efficient, Ogami is the archetype of a classic assassin—until his life takes a bizarre turn. During a mission to eliminate a rogue scientist, Ogami is exposed to a strange chemical compound that suddenly de-ages him into a 12-year-old boy. Trapped in a child's body but retaining his adult mind and skills, Ogami is forced to enroll in middle school to lay low, taking on the alias of “Juzo Kirisaki.” From here, the manga pivots into an intriguing blend of action and school life, with Ogami navigating the perils of adolescence while trying to figure out how to reverse his condition.

Volume 1 excels at worldbuilding and pacing. Fujimaki does a commendable job introducing a protagonist who feels both familiar and fresh. Ogami's internal monologues are laced with dry wit and bemused cynicism, especially as he grapples with classroom politics, physical limitations, and the emotional turbulence of puberty—an experience he thought he had left far behind. These comedic elements are seamlessly interwoven with more serious moments of action and suspense, creating a dynamic reading experience that rarely slows down.

The art style complements the story's dual nature. Fujimaki's detailed character designs and action panels are clean and fluid, bringing intensity to the fight sequences. At the same time, the comedic facial expressions and exaggerated reactions bring a lightheartedness that balances the darker undertones of assassination and moral ambiguity.

Where *Kill Blue* truly shines is in its tonal balance. It's easy for a story with such an absurd premise to become either too ridiculous or overly grim, but Fujimaki threads the needle well. The manga plays with the idea of redemption and second chances subtly—Ogami, now living among middle schoolers, begins to reflect on the life he led and the possibilities he may have ignored. While the theme is only teased in this volume, it lays the groundwork for meaningful character development down the line.

That said, Volume 1 does carry some rough edges. The supporting characters, including Ogami's classmates and fellow assassins, are still somewhat underdeveloped. While they serve their roles in the plot, their personalities haven't yet fully distinguished themselves. Future volumes will need to flesh them out to keep the narrative rich and engaging.

Overall, *Kill Blue* Volume 1 is an impressive start to a unique and entertaining series. With a compelling protagonist, sharp humor, and solid action sequences, it's a title that promises both laughs and intrigue. Fans of unconventional shōnen stories, such as *Sakamoto Days*, should definitely give this one a shot.



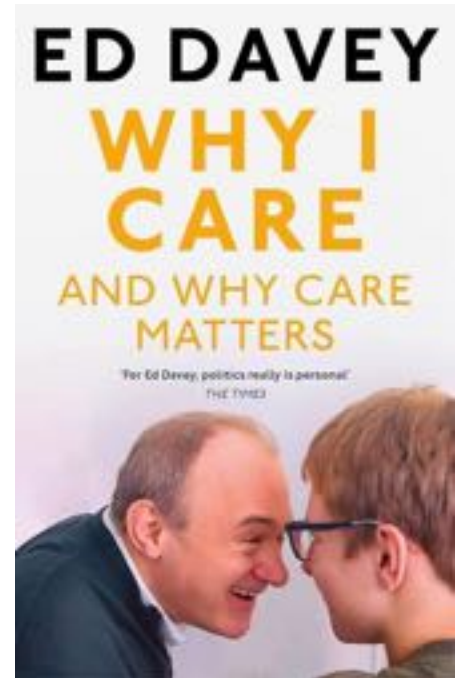
Why I care...and why care matters—by Ed Davey (Harper Collins)

**Review by MJ Jones**

Why you should care about 'Why I care'? The leader of the Liberal Democrats is often known for his "out of this world" stunts to get media attention but this book grounds him right back on earth. Reading all 326 pages in only three or four days, Davey takes us on a journey from his early years with him losing his mum to cancer, his journey with his autistic son's misdiagnosis and care with his wife battling MS to other people's experiences with being a carer, young and old. He concludes his book with why it matters to care and how Labour's disability cuts will negatively impact not only those who receive PIP but their family and friends.

Although in large part remaining apolitical, there are still hints of political opinion from the EU to Davey's opinion on environmental conservation. But for a political biography it doesn't seem that political in the most part. Which is surprising. Even Davey said at the beginning of Chapter Four "I didn't want this entire book to be about me". Maybe a sign of his Liberal ideals and attempting to build a consensus of care and need for privacy autonomy and support.

Although despite its many upsides, the chapters can feel like spiralling down into a rabbit hole of nice subjects and aspects of Davey's life. In conclusion, I heavily rate this book. It blends personal experience with determination and strength to succeed and carry on. I would completely recommend this book to anyone. It's less about biased political nature and more about the positives and negatives about care in this country and what we can all do together to help empower the movement.



The Things We Leave Behind By Clare Furniss (Simon & Schuster)

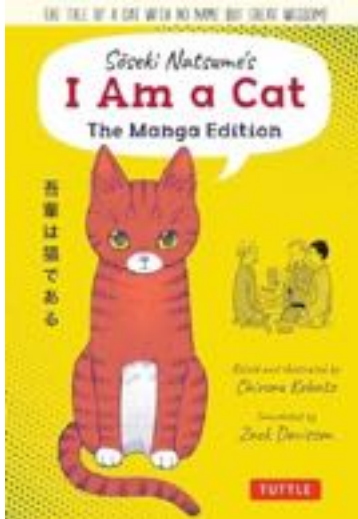
**Review by Any White**

This story follows Clem who flees London after riots and civil unrest with her half-sister, Billie. They travel to Scotland, but their journey is long and riddled with misfortune as they try and start their new lives.

I understand why this novel was shortlisted for the Carnegies as it covers many relevant topics such as Scottish independence, the dangers of an authoritarian regime, loss and healing. This is a powerful book because of the message of hope towards the end Clem comes to terms with both the political world and personal losses she is facing. Despite living in a dystopian world, Clem does not have a dystopian viewpoint and she believes that both she and the world can heal. This book also recognises the fact that dystopian events can happen to people in Britain in modern times and how close we can be to treating people poorly.

Overall I liked this book and found it to be emotional, moving and relevant.





I Am a Cat—by Soseki Natsume (Tuttle Publishing)

### Review by Clare Guthrie

I was not familiar with Japanese manga (cartoon) books and have never been a fan of the large eyed Anime cartoon videos that are now so popular. But maybe that is a failing of my own and I should have been more open minded.

On first glance, I could not make much sense of the dialogue in the Manga Edition of 'I Am a Cat'. It did help when I learned to read the book from the back, the pages from right to left and then the columns downwards but still, I just didn't 'get it' and I did not find the visual clues that I anticipated would help me.

I decided to look deeper and found that the original book is considered to be a classic, a literary masterpiece in Japan, a 'must-read' for Japanese school children. The author is known as 'Soseki' (a rarity, as people are known by their second names in Japan) and his first name is so famous that it appears on Japanese bank notes. With this in mind I thought I should give 'I Am a Cat', Manga edition a further look.

The original book was written about 1900 and is a satire, highlighting the foolishness of upper-middle-class society in Tokyo at the time. None of the characters are heroic, or even nice, and even the cat speaks in an archaic and pompous dialect as he makes wry, scathing comments and asides about the people around him. In no way is it kindly and is often crude.

The illustrations of the cat are charming and beautifully drawn. Other aspects of the drawings are simple but effective. I found the text in the bubbles and between the drawings confusing and very difficult to follow.

I am sure that any ardent fan and follower of the original book, one who appreciates its nuances and had prior knowledge of the text and sequence of events, would find the Manga Edition a wonderful visual enhancement to the text version.

### Ruri Dragon by Masaaki Shindo (Viz Media)



### Review by Olivia Moncur

Ruri Dragon is a three-volume manga written by Masaaki Shindo.

Just after starting high school Ruri gets hit with the biggest reveal of her life, she's a dragon! Well, a half dragon. After her first dragon traits start popping her mother reveals that she inherited her draconic traits from her father, who, yes, is an actual dragon. As if dealing with curious classmates isn't enough, now Ruri must deal with being able to breath fire and create strong electrostatic charges during class!

My favourite part in this book would be when her grandma complimented her horns and didn't even bat an eyelid that her only granddaughter was turning into fire breathing dragon. She even gave her some advice on how to skewer her classmates with them, which was hilarious in my opinion. I would defiantly recommend this book for anyone who wants a light-hearted and comedic read.



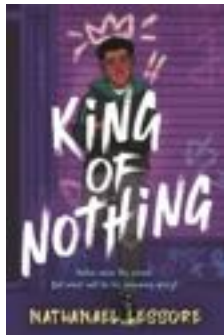
The Clockwork Conspiracy by Sam Sedgman (Bloomsbury)**Review by Sarah Baker**

The first in a new series of 'Isaac Turner Investigates...' books by British author Sam Sedgman, *The Clockwork Conspiracy* (2024) is a quick paced, action-packed, race against the clock adventure! Isaac and his fearlessly determined friend, Hattie, embark on a quest to uncover the truth behind his dad's mysterious disappearance within Big Ben's clock tower, while trying to evade several villains who are determined to stand in the way.

A lot of factual detail has gone into this book, especially the behind-the-scenes workings of parliament and other famous London landmarks, which are major backdrops for the storyline.

This book is suitable for readers of all ages, with a particular appeal to mystery lovers and fans of historical fiction. However, in view of the ages of the main characters in the story, I would recommend this book for young teens. There's nothing offensive in the narrative, but there are some instances of mild violence and threat which younger readers could find upsetting. Each short, detailed chapter is imaginatively time-themed to sixty minutes before midnight, counting down as the mystery unfolds.

The storyline keeps readers engaged with unexpected twists and this all links nicely to the clockwork conspiracy, but... Can Isaac solve the mystery of what happened to his dad?? There are no spoilers here, you'll have to read it for yourself! Overall a 8/10 from me.

The King of Nothing—by Nathanael Lessore (Bonnier Books)**Review by Daisy Wells**

*The King of Nothing* is a book that focuses on Anton, a boy who has a bad reputation and Matthew, a loner who gets bullied daily by Anton's group of friends. This novel is about peer pressure on younger people and how easy it is to be manipulated by the people around us, portrayed through Anton's friends Kehinde, Marcus and Caleb. Due to the way he wants to fit in with his friends Anton gets very bad grades which leads to his mum forcing him to join a camp for his wi-fi back. At the camp Anton finds Matthew, the weirdest kid in his class who his friends always pick on and refuses Matthew's attempts at becoming friends with Anton. The two get lost on a camping trip and a bee stings Matthew, leading to an allergic reaction which Matthew helps him get through. Anton now has to repay Matthew for saving his life while still keeping up his popular reputation and his appearance in front of his friends.

I think that *King of nothing* was shortlisted for the Carnegies as its written in a way that teenagers can understand, using slang words that we use today. It also represents the importance of standing up for what is the right thing to do and showing independence, not just saying and doing what your group of friends are to fit in with them. The book also makes it so you want to keep reading and find out what happens between Matthew and Anton like if they will get found out by anybody.

I personally like this book as it has realistic characters that are a different generation to the author yet are still portrayed realistically and don't use words that characters that are that age wouldn't use. Another thing about the characters is that they all offer Anton different views yet the same outcome is that its his decision on what his future is like and that its not set in stone. Lastly, I think this book is pretty funny sometimes and it has a relatable plot related to school and peoples homelives.



The reappearance of Rachel Price – Holly Jackson

(Harper Collins)

**Review by Lily Obern**

The reappearance of Rachel Price is a thriller book written by the author Holly Jackson who also wrote the a good girls guide to murder series. The book keeps you interested because you never know what is going to happen next, if you want a stand alone thriller book to read this would be perfect. If you like any of Holly Jackson's other books I'm sure you would love this also. This book really gets you wanting to know what is going to happen and it's really easy to get into and won't get boring as soon as you start reading. The way that the author writes is really easy to understand and the chapters aren't too long which is a good thing.

The character Rachel Price goes missing, her daughter Bel was the last person to see her, but she was just a baby she did not remember it at all, all her life she lived in the shadow of her mum's disappearance 16 years ago. Bel adventures into the past when her mum's case gets dragged up from the past and her family agrees to be in a true crime documentary about her mum's disappearance. Bel, so excited for the documentary to end and for life to go back to normal will never be normal again when Rachel Price reappears and everything changes. Secrets exposed, lies, and a very good plot twist.

This is one of my favourite books of all time, I couldn't stop reading and I didn't want to put my book down. It had me thinking about it all day when I wasn't reading because I was trying to figure out what would happen next. Every time someone asks me for a book recommendation I recommend this or any of Holly Jackson's other books. I think that everyone should read at least one of Holly Jackson's books in their life time they are so good and are the books that made me realise I enjoy reading. I would rate this book 5/5 it is so well thought out and interesting.

Astro Royale Volume 1 – Ken Wakui (Viz Media)**Review by AJ Cox**

Astro Royale, Vol. 1 is the explosive first volume of Ken Wakui's supernatural gangland saga—a wild ride that blends yakuza drama with cosmic chaos.

Hibaru Yotsurugi, the only biological son of the late Kongo Yotsurugi, finds himself at the heart of a succession battle within the Yotsurugi family in Asakusa. His adopted siblings are vying for control, turning the family into a battleground of ambition and betrayal. Just as tensions reach a boiling point, a meteorite crashes into Tokyo, awakening mysterious powers known as "Astros" in people across Japan—including Hibaru himself.

With his newfound abilities, Hibaru must navigate a city fractured into rival factions, each led by individuals wielding their own Astro powers. The lines between family and foe blur as Hibaru confronts his siblings, who have their own plans for the Yotsurugi legacy.



# MOVIE REVIEWS

## STILL CRAZY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

### 28 Years Later

By Jonathan Margetts

With a young baby to look after, its fair to say that for me, free time comes at a premium. So when I do get time to visit the cinema, the only real hope I have is that the movie was worth giving up my limited free time to watch. And so, on rare Friday night, I left my wife at home to enjoy endless episodes of *RuPaul's Drag Race* and *Sim 3* live streams and ventured to the cinema in the hopes that one of my all-time favourite movie franchises was still relevant over a decade after its last release.

And for the first hour or so, Danny Boyle's *28 Years Later* is an absolute rip-roaring apocalyptic horror movie. It is some of the best cinema I have seen in many years. It seems to be a triumphant return to the anarchic mayhem of the original, filled with blood and horror and infected humans causing havoc in a ravaged Britain. But then, somewhere along the line, Danny Boyle falls foul of his most dated and unnecessary party trick- the third act plot twist. In this effort, it doesn't just undermine the story- it transforms a tense survival horror into a movie character piece which just feels disjointed and messy.

Set-surprise, surprise-28 Years after the initial outbreak of the fictional Rage Virus, the movie makes use of its brilliant rural setting to show us Spike, who lives on the real life Holy Island Causeway. He lives with his father, played by the always reliable Aaron Taylor-Johnson and his mother, portrayed by a powerhouse performance from the Queen of Powerhouse performances Jodie Comer.

Having been born after the quarantine, he knows nothing of world before, which makes for interesting interactions later in the movie between himself and a character from the outside world. Because that's the beauty of this isolated apocalypse- the rest of the world has ticked on whilst Britain has become a zombie (they're not strictly zombies, but allow it) ridden wasteland.

There are new infected, too- the fat, putrid Slow-Lows and the steroid-induced Alphas. They





add a new element to the story, but it doesn't tie up with the original mythology and lore from the first movie. Boyle is the progenitor, of course, so he can do whatever he likes with his own creation. And ultimately, those elements do up the ante in the earlier parts of the movie and make for one heck of a chase scene at the end of the movie's first act.

Danny Boyle, as always, is a deft hand when it comes to generating memorable scenes. When the infected attack, there is a real sense of urgency and desperation to the scenes. One

memorable moment involving a horde of infected storming an abandoned house that our characters are holed up in is so breathlessly edited that it leaves the viewers exhausted themselves by its conclusion. In his time, Boyle has brought us many classic moments of British cinema- *28 Weeks Later*, of course, but also *Trainspotting*. In this reviewer's opinion, *Sunshine* was one of his most accomplished movies even if it isn't seen by many as his standout moment. He seems to fall foul of his own eagerness to always keep the audience guessing. On this occasion, just giving us a tight and effective story would've been preferable.

Somewhere along the line, though, the movie falls apart. When Spike returns back to the island after his first coming-of-age hunting journey to the mainland, the movie takes a strange twist. With his mother seriously unwell, and Spike disillusioned by his father's way, he returns to the mainland with her in a bid to find a mysterious doctor who may be able to help her. That doctor is played by none other than Ralph Fiennes, who is also great value for money here, but it is also at this point that the movie transforms from brilliantly crafted horror into something oddly different. And the movies sequel-bait ending, which harkens back to an earlier scene, seems like a five minute segment taken from a completely different movie. It features ninja flips and a *Mad Max* vibe that seems completely at odds with what we've come to know by this point.



With the fourth movie due next year, and with a different director attached, it is difficult to know what will happen to the franchise going forward. If you watch the first hour of this movie and switch it off, you'd be forgiven for thinking that *28 Years Later* is an award-winning horror from one of British cinema's greats. Anything after that, and you're left scratching your head. The original is still the best,

with *28 Weeks Later* a close second. Whilst this long-awaited three-quel isn't offensively bad, it just feels a little bit unwanted and very confused indeed.

- Worth a watch if you're a movie completionist, but the average person can turn off after an hour and get what they need from this.





## Farming simulator 25

**By Henry Merritt**

Farming simulator by GIANTS software is available on Steam all consoles and epic games launcher and the game is calm farming game it has a wide variety of machinery and equipment which can help you through your farming journey. As for the maps there is 3 in the base game, But you can add more through modding and what they are is different areas to farm, you can also add different vehicles which can enhance your gaming experience. You can do all types of farming from forestry to raising cattle. This game ticks all the boxes of farming.

One thing I like about the game is how good the graphics are, The game is the only farming game. I would recommend this game to people that like farming. I would give it a 4 because of the graphics.



## BMX streets

**By Jacob Prouse**

BMX streets is an open world BMX Game. In this game you can do a wide variety of tricks and getting parts for your bike as you progress through the game doing different challenges like time trails trick challenges and many more!

As for the reviews 76% of over 2,500 reviews are positive for the 24% that is negative is due to the small bugs and glitches that can make this game less immersive. I believe the community cannot complain over these small issues because the game is on a pre alpha state meaning the game has not properly released yet.

The developing team, Mash games are working extra to enhance this game and fix the small problems in game. Now for my favourite part, the modding and its community the mods make this game ten times better; they cover everything maps, parts, characters and shaders (shaders make the graphics much better) people who love BMX riding can't wait for this game to fully release BMX streets is one of the most anticipated games to come out soon. BMX streets have released its 2.0 and its available on steam (PC) as for Xbox or PlayStation this game is thought to come out when its fully released the date for this is unknown. My personal review for this game is a 4.7 out of 5 it's a great game and I'm excited for updates that are coming soon.



# IT'S SHOWTIME

## Matilda the Musical—Warehouse Theatre

During July 2025, the Warehouse Theatre played host to Ilminster Youth Theatres performance of *Matilda the Musical*. Two Wadham students played a key part in this with Madeleine Hallett taking the title role of 'Matilda' with Phoebe Swain in chief support as 'Miss Honey'. Here both girls reflect on their experiences from the show.

## *Matilda Jr 2025*

By Madeleine Hallett

This year in July I was involved in a show known as *Matilda Jr* at the Warehouse Theatre in Ilminster. This performance was very enjoyable to take part in as I had the main role of Matilda.

In 2023 I decided to join a local drama group having started developing an interest in theatre. Since then I have fallen in love with the stage and know this is my home. My first ever performance with this group was *frozen Jr*, where I played the part of 'little Anna' opposite my best friend who had the role of 'little Elsa'. For both of us this was our first show, so we were very nervous to audition. However the butterflies soon left and we both smashed it. I was so happy for the both of us!

The next year we both showed up once again because we loved the last show so much! This next year the show was announced as *Beauty and the Beast!* Personally, I didn't quite enjoy the film, but the show was completely different. This time I auditioned for a less main role, I was desperate to be



'Belle', but the number of other kids that were a couple years older than me I knew they would get it because I wasn't confident enough, so I ended up with the role of 'silly girl no.2'. As it was my 2<sup>nd</sup> show it wasn't as bad as I thought.

A new year and a new show. Once again with my best friend by my side we found out the show was *Matilda Jr*. By now I was one of the oldest people in the group because others had left. The moment I told my family they were all pleading for me to audition for Matilda, so I practiced and practiced putting in the time with my singing teacher. Then came the day of auditions and everyone in the room was watching me. I felt confident, and I gave it my best. It was shocking to be the only one who didn't need the



script for the dialog because I'd listened to my director who'd said to practice at home, so I did so. The songs I had to sing were half of *Quiet* the whole of *Naughty* and a short dialog with an auditioning 'Miss Honey'. Once again me and my best friend had gone for a duo kind of role 'Miss Honey' and 'Matilda'. A few weeks later my director had casted everyone saying people's roles as the register went down finally came my name and she said, 'would you like to be one of our Matilda's?' I immediately said, 'yes would love to!' since two of us were amazing at the auditions she had to double cast. Then my best friends turn leading her the role she had dreamed of.

And so the great day arrived. I was terrified but I had to show the audience that I could do this.

Leading to final night. All my family watching me. I knew I did good because I was told that by every member of my family.

This was certainly a great experience.

### By Phoebe Swain

In July, I was in a performance of the musical *Matilda Jr.* This is a story about a girl, Matilda Wormwood, feeling trapped with her unkind parents, she then goes to a school and meets the Trunchbull.

Miss Trunchbull is not someone you would want to mess with. But then she meets Miss Honey, a kind teacher who helps her through her school journey. The story ends with Miss Trunchbull fleeing and Miss Honey adopting Matilda.

This performance was so fun and honestly quite exhausting. I played the role of Miss Honey, and my best friend played Matilda. This role was quite challenging for me as I had just taken part in the annual pantomime as Silly Sally, an interactive and

Miss Honey is much different Honey being sensitive, soft and theatre group at the 2023, my first ever *Frozen Jr.* where I played the best friend took the role of on to do *Beauty and the Beast Jr.* where I was a silly girl, the ones who fawn over Gaston.

Again, my best friend was a silly girl with me. The audition process was less nerve racking then it was the first time we auditioned together. Our director and musical director are both lovely so that helped.

And then I went on to do *Matilda Jr.* where I was Miss Honey! I thoroughly enjoyed all of these performances and will go on to the next show at the warehouse theatre in Ilminster.



fun character.

to Silly Sally, with Miss kind. I joined the musical warehouse theatre in performance being role of young Elsa. My Young Anna. I then went

# STICK THIS IN YOUR EARHOLES

*Doolittle & Bossanova* – Pixies (4AD Records)

Reviewed by Summer Greenhill

Pixies are an American alternative rock band formed in 1986 with their most popular song “where is my mind”.

## DOOLITTLE

Their 2nd studio album *Doolittle* is by far their most famous album with popular songs *here comes your man* and *debaser*.

Released in 1989 the album consists of a range of fun and freaky songs throughout making the album interesting to listen to.

Pixies 4th song *I bleed* has lyrics like “it shakes my teeth and all the while as the vampires feed, I bleed” an the 1st song *debaser* with lyrics like “slicing up eyeballs” which gives the album a gruesome tone however Pixies directly contrast this with songs like “La La love you” which have more light-hearted lyrics.

## BOSSANOVA

*Bossanova* is Pixies third studio album released in the year 1990. Like their previous album they talk about many important subjects such as class struggles, dying of stars and suffering in general.

In the song *Ana* the lyrics in anagram form spell out the word “suffering” disguising a song about struggling into a calm surfer like melody instead. Many of their songs are written in poem forms like *Ana* and *Hang wire* being a haiku with lyrics like “your heads a hammer”.

Just like their other albums pixies split up more serious topics with nonsensical songs like *Dig for fire* and also the last song of the album *Havalina* being a love song.

Overall, I think Pixies have a wide range of different and meaningful songs and I would get into more of their music in the future.



Huffer – The Breeders (4AD Records)

Reviewed by Daisy Wells

The alternative rock band the Breeders have produced my favourite album out of the ones that I have reviewed so far. This album was produced in 2002 yet still has a relevant style such as their song 'forced to drive' which sounds similar to something that could've been made by Lana Del Rey or Mitski, having the same bittersweet tone that some of their songs have that are designed to make us feel something.

The album has only three songs; *Huffer*, *forced to drive* and *climbing the sun* which all sound different when compared to each other. *Forced to drive* is different to songs that are produced by those two as it occasionally switches back to a style of the other two songs (rock) while still remaining gentle. *Huffer* has brilliant instruments but the main vocals are strained and croaky but the backing vocals are much smoother. *Climbing the*



*sun* has a sharper style of guitar and very different vocals. At the introduction of the song there is some shouting in a different language (sounded like Japanese) and continues shouting in English. There are only a few lyrics in this song as its mostly an instrumental.

This band originated in the US during 1989 by Kim deal and Tanya Donnelly while they were also making music in two other bands; Pixies (1986 – now) and Throwing muses (1981 – now) until the Pixies broke up leaving the Breeders as their full focus. Almost all of the previous members were in a band before joining this one.

The band has a total of 6 past members including Britt Walford and one of the two who originally started the band, Tanya Donnelly. The Breeders broke up at the best moment in their career due to countless reasons such as the sisters Kim and Kelley deal misusing drugs and even getting arrested during 1995, betting scandals and much more.

The band decided to leave 4AD records after a long period of use (over twenty years) due to the fact they wanted more creative freedom and an argument between Kim and Kelley caused the decision to be final.

Other albums by the Breeders:

- Last splash
- Pod
- Safari
- Mountain battles
- Head to toe



*Better Dreaming* — Tune Yards (4AD Records)**Reviewed by Daisy Wells**

*Better Dreaming* by the band Tune Yards (actually spelt as tUnE yArDs) was released a few months ago on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025 with eleven songs that sound like the exact same thing. Every single song sounds pretty much the exact same with an indie/alternative genre. The songs have one main singer who makes their vocals unsettling in the intro of the song yet as it progresses their voice gets smoother and more natural. In some songs the voice is slowed down slightly and added over the original voice to make it sound as if there is more than one singer. The instruments match the tone of voice and the style of singing nicely and have catchy beats and I wish that they would make their instruments more audible because there isn't much opportunity to hear them because the singer takes up the duration of the songs.



My favourite songs from them are *Suspended* and *Better Dreaming* where their songs reach the best part around halfway through becoming much more lively and with much more powerful vocals and an uplifting feel. Tune Yards only has two main members, the vocalist Merill Garbus and the bassist Nate Brenner, both have been in the band since it started in 2009 but their music was only recognised in 2011, making the US charts with the album *Whokill*.

Tune Yards faced some controversy for cultural appropriation due to the African-themed style of music, using a southern black accent that obviously isn't theirs and complaining about the struggle of being a white artist trying to produce music from another culture and being white in America (I really don't get that). The reason that she does this is to 'examine her own whiteness in a society with racists' and to make her music appeal to people who aren't white.

*Better Dreaming* Tracklist:

1. Heartbreak
2. Swarm
3. Never Look Back
4. Suspended
5. Limelight
6. Get Through
7. Better Dreaming
8. How Big Is The Rainbow
9. See You There
10. Perpetual Motion
11. Sanctuary



Garlands – Cocteau Twins (4AD Records)**Reviewed by Daisy Wells**

*Garlands* is an album with a gothic rock genre produced by the band Cocteau twins. I usually think that gothic rock music sounds quite good but these ones were poor quality. Each song has lyrics that are hard to understand, even if in songs like *Shallow Then Halo* and *But I'm Not* start with a clearer voice it eventually transforms back into the usual unclear voice. The lyrics are also unclear as the singer actually switches between English, French, Gaelic but mostly makes up sentences with words that aren't real to add. The music is extremely repetitive but not in the sense of that's how the song is supposed to sound, it just sounds lazy.



The sounds are distorted and overpower the singers voice but it isn't really understandable anyway (it also randomly echoes) My favourite song by them is *The Hollow Men* as it sounds most different to their usual style of music within this album and you can almost make out the lyrics in it unlike the rest of the songs which is a shame because she has a nice voice. I also like the design of their album cover as it shows that their music is going to be a darker themed genre and express a gothic feel.

The band Cocteau Twins only made music from 1979-1996 due to arguments between members. A month after they broke up the Elizabeth Fraser (vocals) stated that she couldn't work with Robin Guthrie (guitarist) as they used to date yet once they split up, after 13 years, it caused tension, and that the band will never get back together.

All members of the band continued to produce music solo including six solo albums from the previous guitarist, one solo album from the bassists. They originated from Scotland and signed up with 4AD records in 1982 and then went on to release the album above (*Garlands*) and ended with the album *Milk and Kisses* in 1996 to symbolise Elizabeths friends sympathy towards her after her separation from her ex boyfriends. She said that 'I wish I could get the poison out of you. I wish I could just take it out of you and replace it with milk and kisses.' None of the members were in the studio at the same time to create this last album.

*Garland* Tracklist:

1. Blood bitch
2. Wax and wane
3. But I'm not
4. Blind dumb deaf
5. Shallow then halo
6. The hollow men
7. Garlands
8. Grail overfloweth



Untie My Tongue – Asha Banks(Wasserman Music)**Reviewed by Lily Obern**

Asha Banks is a female singer and actor. I found her out from the show *A Good Girls Guide to Murder* on BBC iPlayer and now Netflix. I watched this show because I had read the books, now from the show I have found a new favourite actor and one of my favourite artists.

Asha has done many successful things since playing in a good girls guide to murder, even before that she was in some shows in 2022-2023. She is now one of the main characters of a film called *My fault London* which was released in 2025.



She also has opened for Noah Kahan on his tour back in 2024, this year also opened for Noah at BST Hyde park! Better yet she has released two singles (*so green*, *feel the rush*) which ended up being part of her debut album *untie my tongue*.

Overall I think Asha is a great actor and a great artist and I love her so much, I definitely recommend listening to her album, and watching the shows she's in. Also you could follow her tik tok and see some awesome song covers she has done! Asha has recently also released that she is playing a London show that you could get tickets for, I'm pretty sure it's sold out now.

Untie My Tongue Track list:

- *So green*- first song she released, came out before the rest of the album. I think this song is very good, not my favourite of the album but it's the first song she released which made me listen to her. I rate this song a 7/10. I recommend.
- *Feel the rush*- such a good song, one of my favourites of the album. Its so great, the lyrics , the way she sings it , the beat/ background music is so nice and peaceful. This song would be one of the main songs I would recommend if I was talking about the album. I rate it 9/10.
- *Freeze* - the lyrics and the beat are so nice, I love this song a lot. It is very peaceful and she sounds amazing. 7.5/10
- *Closing time* - my all time favourite song of hers, its so so so great. Everything about it I love and the lyrics are so meaningful to me. You could interpret this song in so many different ways and it's very relatable. 10/10.
- *Silverlines* - perfect pace for a song, her voice sounds magical I love this song so much, the lyrics have so much meaning and the way she makes it sound is so good. 8/10
- *Shiver* - The atmosphere of this song live looks so fun, one of my top 3 songs, I would do anything to hear it live. Such a great song I recommend . 9.5/10

Overall this album is 10/10 and such a good album to listen to. Theres a song for every mood and so much different meanings for each songs.



# What's worth a watch?

## Young Sheldon

By Poppy Hyslop

*Young Sheldon* is an American television sitcom by Chuck Lorre and Steven Malaro, and is a prequel to the hit series *The Big Bang Theory*.



Set in between 1989 and 1994, the show follows a young Sheldon Cooper, who at the early age of 9, has skipped four grades to start high school along with his less-intellectual older brother George. Running from November 2016 until May 2024 (at which point the character turns 14), *Young Sheldon* tells the tale of a child genius as he struggles to be understood by his family, classmates, and neighbours.

On his journey through life Sheldon is supported by his mother, who reminds him that his dad is the football coach and his brother is on the team, a twin sister who doesn't share his exceptional mind, but is brilliant at reading people and a crafty grandmother or 'Meemaw'.

*Young Sheldon* is worth watching because it is a heartfelt comedy that highlights the ups and downs of family life.

## Chernobyl

By Mason Williams

*Chernobyl* is a series based on the true, but also, unfortunate events of April 23rd 1986. It was on that day when a Soviet power plant in Pripyat, Ukraine, exploded.

What follows over the 5, 1 hour episodes, is an exploration of the accident and its aftermath as well as the impact it had on those tasked to deal with it. As I watched the show I often found myself asking what it must have felt like to be there, on what was ironically labelled 'dangerous ground'.

I would give this series a 5 star review and highly recommend it.

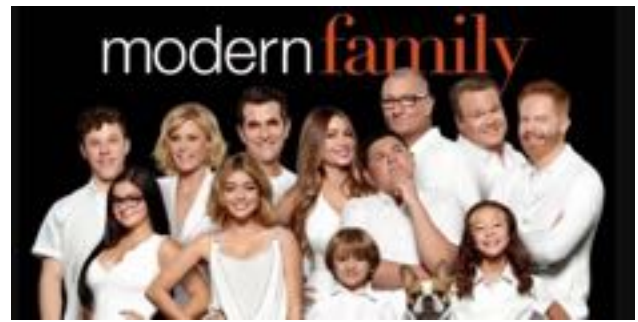


## Modern Family

By Ellie Hooker

Modern Family is an American television sitcom, created by Steven Levitan and Christopher Lloyd, and is a brilliant example of how a PG-rated show can be both hilarious and heartwarming. The show is

primarily a comedy that revolves around three families that are held together more by their virtue of acceptance and love than by the blood ties that connect them.



The cast of modern family is....

Julie Bowen ( Claire Dunphy)   Ty Burrell ( Phil Dunphy)   Nolan Gould ( Luke Dunphy)  
 Ariel Winter ( Alex Dunphy)   Sarah Hyland ( Haley Dunphy)   Ed O'Neil (Jay Pritchett)  
 Eric Stonesreet ( Cameron Tucker)   Jesse Tyler ( Mitchell Pritchett)  
 Sofia Vergara ( Gloria Delgado-Pritchett)   Rico Rodriguez ( Manny Delgado)  
 Aubrey Anderson-Emmons ( Lily Tucker- Pritchett)   Jeremy Maguire (Joe Pritchett).

Modern Family is worth watching because it is very funny and also it show you to accept everyone even people that believe in or do things that you don't like or believe in.

They accepted Cameron and Mitchell for being gay and also accepted Gloria for being foreign and having a different way to live life and different ways to Celebrate traditions. It's just a very lovable show.



## Getting into journalism

Have you thought about writing for a living, being a reporter, working on a newspaper or magazine?

Would you like to be the next host of 'Match of the Day', 'Newsnight' or 'The One Show'?

Journalism is the key to all of these.

If you want to get involved in the next edition of the Quill:

- Message Mr Hopwood on Teams
- Come and see Mr Hopwood in B23
- Email Mr Hopwood – [Phopwood@wadhamschool.co.uk](mailto:Phopwood@wadhamschool.co.uk)

# Doing Wadham Proud, Former students changing the world

Interview with former Wadham student, Major Katie Vannerley with the Royal Logistics Corp.

## 1. What years were you at Wadham?

I was at Wadham between 1995 and 1999

## 2. What memories do you have of Wadham?

I have very fond memories of being at Wadham. Cheesy bread, school plays, sunny days on the school field.

My year had some great sports women, we tried our hand at most things, but we had an excellent hockey team which meant we played some really great schools around the county and even became county champions. One of my favourite memories from my time there was becoming the Powell House captain.



## 3) Who was your tutor?

My tutor was Mrs Salter who was a language teacher.

## 4) What subjects did you enjoy the most at Wadham and why?

I enjoyed most subjects at Wadham, however Geography, PE and Theatre Studies were my favourite.

## 5) What did you decide to do post 16 and why?

Post 16, I decided to remain at Wadham and do my A Levels in Wadham Sixth form.



**6) What did you do after you left Wadham?**

After I left Sixth form I went and worked in Sales for a couple of years whilst completing my application to join the British Army.



**7) What job do you do now?**

I am an Officer in the British Army. I attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and commissioned into the Royal Logistic Corps. I have been in the Army for nearly 20 years. It has been a fantastic career and has allowed me to travel all over the world for both work and recreational reasons. Highlights have been my operational tour to Afghanistan and learning to sail in the Mediterranean.



**8) How has your time at Wadham helped you?**

Wadham provided me with a good environment to learn and develop my passions. The joining of other schools into Wadham allowed me to meet lots of new people and many of these have stayed friends for life. The school allowed my lots of opportunities for cultural visits, and travel and to play sport all over the county.

**9) How would you describe Wadham School in 5 words?**

Lots of very fond memories.





**...to everyone who has helped put this edition of *The Quill* together.**



**Thomas Baker  
Laura Andrews  
Beth Church  
Alan Greenough  
Andrei Radulescu  
Archie Blunn**

**Katelin White - Will McKelvey - Grace Lock - Evelyn Patten  
Sian Grey - Harry Willmott - Oscar Dart  
Josie Bulmer - Emily Wood - Harriet Johnson - Clare Guthrie  
Richard D'Rozario - Sienna Madgin - Poppy Best  
Casper Crouch - Lucy Pike - Bella Veres - Morris Andrews  
Mrs Vowles - Poppy Spurway - Amelie Richardson  
Isabel Clark - Sophie Gaines - Riley Webb - Mackenzie Ball  
Queenie Quince - Lily Hallet - Alex Proctor - Abigail Key  
Elsie White - Daisy Green - Max Wallbridge - Sheza Snoop  
Richard Burgas - Elliot Foster - MJ Jones - Amy White  
Clare Guthrie - Olivia Moncur - Sarah Baker - Daisy Wells  
Lily Obern - AJ Cox - Jonathan Margetts - Henry Merritt  
Jacob Prouse - Madeleine Hallett - Phoebe Swain  
Summer Greenhill - Daisy Wells - Poppy Hyslop  
Mason Williams - Ellie Hooker**

***The Quill* is a magazine for Wadham students and is open to anyone. We want writers, artists, reporters, photographers, reviewers, critics, etc from all across the school.**

**If you'd like to get involved in our next edition please speak to Mr Hopwood via teams, in B23 at break & lunchtime or via email at [Phopwood@wadhamschool.co.uk](mailto:Phopwood@wadhamschool.co.uk)**

