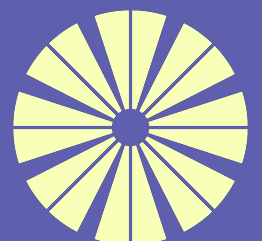


Meopham Monthly



**Meopham School Student Magazine
Issue 26: DECEMBER**



Welcome

Welcome to the December issue of Meopham Monthly. This issue has some festive features including short stories, Year 7 songs vote, Yuletide recipes, seasonal facts and Christmas pets!

If you would like to submit a short story, article, poem, photo or anything else for our future issues, please contact the team at MSS-magazine@swale.at or come along on a Thursday lunchtime in to EN4 any time from 12.25-1.20pm.

We hope you enjoy this issue!

Issue 25 Editor: Poppy Palmer

NEWS

Recent football fixtures

- 24/10/24: The Year 9 boys won 4-0 against St John's [Home]
 - Goal scorers: Jenson O, Charlie A, Harry C and Leo A
- 8/11/24: The Year 7 girls won 5-0 against St Augustine's [Home]
- 25/11/24: The Year 9 girls won 6-5 against Dartford Technology School
 - Goal scorers: Mia C and Talia E x 5
- **Well done to everyone who played in these matches. Thank you for representing our school!**

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With thanks to everyone who contributed this month:

Kaya Akyuz (Yr9)	Kira Loveday (Yr13)
Nshira Ansah (Yr 9)	Lucy Newton (Yr8)
Deji Ariyibi (Yr7)	Poppy Palmer (Yr13)
Ethan Bill (Yr7)	Sia Palmer (Yr8)
Mia Colledge (Yr9)	Ms Rajkumar
Dolly Darby (Yr9)	Amelia Rogers (Yr9)
Dilpreet Dhesi (Yr9)	Archie Scanlan (Yr9)
Isla Eloie (Yr7)	Rory Sels (Yr7)
Ethan Fawn (Yr9)	Freddie Sherlock (Yr8)
Lola Gardner (Yr9)	Mr Soskind
Charlotte Gorton (Yr9)	Kyran Standen (Yr9)
Theo Haydon (Yr10)	Molly Turner (Yr7)
Jack Hollis (Yr9)	Ms Vincent
Maciej Jablonowski (Yr7)	Mr Whittle
Ms Kesby	Mrs Williamson



Holidays in December

By: Rory Sels (Year 7), Deji Ariyibi (Year 7) & Freddie Sherlock (Year 8)



When you hear December you may think of Christmas, however there are many other unfamiliar holidays like **Kwanzaa**. It's an annual celebration of African-American culture from the 26th of December to the 1st of January culminating in a communal feast called Thanksgiving, celebrating our differences and what were thankful for. **The principles of Kwanzaa are: Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), Kuumba (creativity) and Imani (faith).**

Hanukkah starts on December 25th and ends on January 2nd. It is a Jewish celebration, revolving around the kindling of a nine-branched menorah, known in Hebrew as the hanukiah. On each of the holiday's eight nights, another candle is added to the menorah after sundown; the ninth candle, called the shamash ("helper"), is used to light the others.

Peace at Christmas

By: Jack Hollis (Year 9)

This Christmas will mark 110 years since the Christmas Day truce of 1914, when over a thousand allied and axis soldiers put down their weapons and refused to continue fighting. These men, different only by origin, made peace with each other by playing football, sharing cigarettes and telling stories from home.

This rare act of moral compass and defiance serves as a beacon for what humanity is capable of. Despite the hate and desired destruction they had for each other, they understood that at the end of the day they were all just humans fighting for a cause long forgotten.

As you enter the Christmas season I beg that you bear this in mind: regardless of all the hate you might have for somebody, they are, like everyone else, just human and we really don't know what others are going through during the Christmas season. Keep an open mind and remember the words of Sir Isaac Newton: "we build too many walls and not enough bridges"...



A Christmas Horror

**By: Lucy Newton (Year 8) &
Kyran Standen (Year 9)**

Twas the night before Christmas, not a sound could be heard. While children slept soundly asleep, a monster lurked in the darkness, hungry for screams and blood.

This creature was filled with hatred and evil. Its eyes red as blood and teeth sharp as knives. The monster hid beneath the crystal white snow and waited for his next victim.

All of a sudden, a man with brown hair and hazel eyes walked out of his house. Immediately the monster rose from the snow like an undead zombie to claim his meal. The creature began to pounce on the weak human, licking his lips with delight.

'AAAAAAAHHHHH!' the man yelled....

He was never seen again.



The New Leader

Short story by: Isla Eloie (Year 7)

The moon, a glowing yellowy white, loomed in the night sky. It was like a celestial pearl and was surrounded by a silvery glow. To Noah, it was a symbol of good luck. Or it used to be before everything happened. Taking a drink from his flask, he looked around the survival camp. It was an abandoned hotel in the forest which was made into a comfortable shelter for survivors. A couple of years ago, he and his leader, Sarah, had also guided survivors to a hideout underneath a near-by school. Many years ago, zombies had broken out of a science lab and began to cause chaos. Noah was only 15 years of age when his parents were bitten. Alone and without any guidance, he decided to travel into a nearby forest. That same night, Sarah found him and welcomed him into her survival camp. She was standing nearby and was only a couple of years older than him. She was tan and brunette. Her eyes a dazzling blue, almost as bright as the moon. As soon as he took her hand, he knew he would never let go. Noah held his head high and let the blustery wind brush through his black hair. As soon as he was about to drift off, he heard a scream in the distance. It was a child.

Noah, a little bit panicked, jumped off his seat. He ran over to Sarah who seemed to have the same idea as him. After grabbing his sharp, tooth-shaped dagger, he and Sarah ran into the forest, running towards the frightened screams as if they were runners in an Olympic race, aiming for gold. They both snuck around the trees, looking for the child. After running along the muddy trail of grass, they spotted the vague silhouettes of zombies and a smaller figure. A young girl was standing in the middle of them. Alone and scared, with eyes overflowing with tears. "You run in to distract the zombies, and I'll get the girl to safety," Sarah whispered, "just don't get caught."

Noah ran in. Fearless, he impaled the zombies with his dagger and made room for Sarah to get in and save the girl. The growling zombies surrounded Noah and tried all they could to get to him. Everything was like a blur. Zombies fell to the ground but more kept coming, trying to avenge their fallen soldiers. Creeping along the shadows, they tried their hardest to scratch and bite but one by one, their weakened bodies fell to the ground like a pile of dominoes. Sarah had already got the girl behind a nearby cedar tree and was now battling with Noah, swinging her dagger mercilessly. He was about to turn and shout to Sarah that they should leave, but he heard a pained cry next to him. He shot around like a bullet and saw Sarah looking at him, her eyes watery and her face pale. She had been bitten.

The sharp pain flew through Sarah's body as if it were leaves in the wind. The strange growling noises came straight from the creature's throat, as if it was celebrating. She saw the eyes of disbelief from her mission partner staring at her. "NO!" Noah yelled following with the noise of a blade impaling a creature's chest. Sarah's sight became blurry as she heard his footsteps coming closer. Another impaled sound happened next to her ear as the zombie who had bitten her collapsed to the ground. She felt her body become weak, just like the zombies she fell to the floor.

continued...

Glancing eyes staring at nothing. A dull sound of a blade dropping and her mission partner leaning over her body. “No...” he whispered as a tear dropped on her hand. “I’m sorry.” Noah wept.

“No, I should be sorry,” was the coughy response of his leader, “You’re going to have to exile me now.” A smile of pride appeared on her pallid face, “I will choose you as the next leader, Noah.”

Noah took in this news and searched his pockets, where he whipped out a small towel to clean up her wound. “You’re not leaving me, I’m going to clean this up and you are going to be normal again. The wound isn’t that deep!” Noah let the towel rest on the now swollen wound, his hands now red of all the blood he had desperately tried to clean up. It felt like the days the two laid in the hall of the abandoned hotel. The rest of the group was around a mile away in the hideout under the old school. Sarah put her hand on the ground and unstably stood up, clutching her wound. Noah could notice that her hand was already starting to turn the pale green of a zombie. “You can go back and act like nothing happened, you’re strong you know?” Instead of her sapphire blue eyes, her eyes were dull and glassy. Noah found it hard to believe that after he left, he would never see Sarah again and would gain the responsibility of being the new leader of the survival camp.



Corner of Wonder

By: Jack Hollis (Year 9)

Quote of the Month:

“Carve your name on hearts not tombstones” - Shannon Adder

*How do you
want to be
described?*

**How might someone
describe you
today?**

*How might
someone describe
you in 100 years?*

**What will be
your legacy?**

**What can you do to
make people
describe you that
way?**

The Great Debate

By: Jack Hollis & Nshira Ansah (Year 9)

Should 16 year olds be able to vote?

In this article we will argue both sides and at the end you can decide which side you agree with...

For - Sixteen year olds should be able to vote. At 16 you can: join the army, have children, drink alcohol (within parameters) and start working - so it seems only rational that you should also be deemed responsible enough to vote.

A lot of issues affect 16 and 17 year olds, such as the cost of living (the price of living essentials) university and college funding and employment. They should be able to choose the representatives in parliament so that their voices are listened to when important decisions are being made. 16 year olds are at the point in their lives where they are old and intellectual enough to start making important decisions, such as electing MPs and a Prime Minister.

Against - Sixteen year olds should not be able to vote. At 16, most people don't pay tax and therefore don't need to worry about what the government is spending their money on. Adults on the other hand, pay tax and are able to vote because it is *their money* that is being spent and affected by MP's and the government.

Another reason that 16 year olds shouldn't vote is because young people lack critical thinking skills and would be less able to choose somebody to best represent them in parliament. At the end of the day, 16 year olds are children and are less informed to make impactful decisions that affect everyone, such as selecting MPs and a Prime Minister.

What Does Sport Mean?

By: Kyran Standen (Year 9)
& Theo Haydon (Year 10)

Sport is an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against one another for entertainment and enjoyment. There are many sports that you can take part in.

Team sports locally include football, hockey, cricket, netball or rugby. Individual sports include tennis, table tennis, badminton and karate.

Sport helps people feel connected to others and relaxed. It releases good hormones called endorphins. Sport and activity enable people to have fun, make friends, be healthy and build stronger community connections.

Why don't you look out for your local clubs who are always looking for new members? You never know you may find something you like doing.



Why is sport important for us?

At school we have to do PE lessons. This is an important part of school as it gives us life skills of teamwork, communication and resilience. It also gives us the opportunity to be away from sitting in a classroom. We can improve our mental health by participation, whether physically being active or helping on the sidelines. Sport is for everyone.



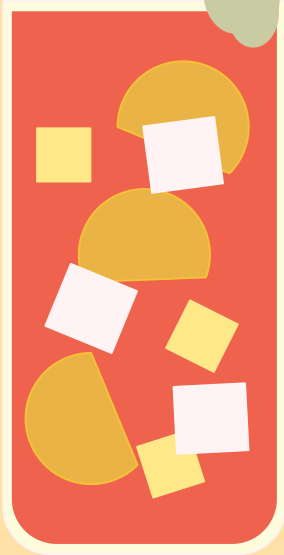
Year 8 PE lessons



Yuletide Sips & Treats

By: Poppy Palmer (Year 13)

Crangria



Ingredients

- 500ml cranberry juice
- 250ml pineapple juice
- 100g chopped pineapple
- 1 apple -cored & chopped
- 1 orange -sliced
- Handful of mint leaves

Instructions

1. Pour cranberry juice & pineapple juice into a large pitcher with ice.
2. Tip in chopped pineapple, apple and orange slice, and stir well before serving.
3. (Optional), garnish with extra mint leaves.

Hot chocolate mug cake



Ingredients

- 30g butter
- 3tbsp milk
- 1 medium egg
- 2 tbsp light brown soft sugar
- Few drops of vanilla extract
- 4 tbsp plain flour
- 1 ½ tbsp cocoa powder
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 square of dark or milk chocolate & shavings
- Whipped cream
- Mini marshmallows

Instructions

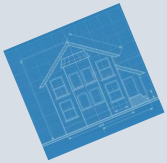
1. Put butter in a large heatproof mug & melt in the microwave for 30 seconds. Add the milk, egg, sugar and vanilla, and mix well.
2. Stir in flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and a pinch of salt, until smooth. Then push down a square of dark/milk chocolate into the centre.
3. Cook in the microwave for 1 ½ -2 mins, or until risen and firm to the touch.
4. Top with whipped cream, chocolate shavings and marshmallows.

Bridge Builders

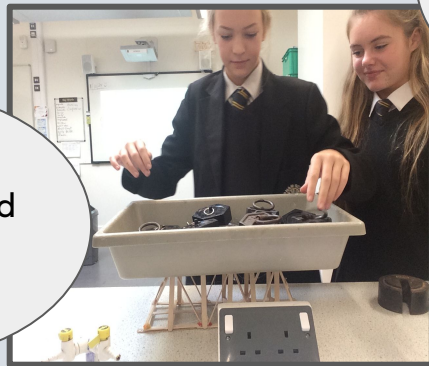
By: Archie Scanlan & Jack Hollis (Year 9)

Engineering can be a complex world with lots of responsibility resting on the shoulders of those who design and create structures that are used by thousands of people a day.

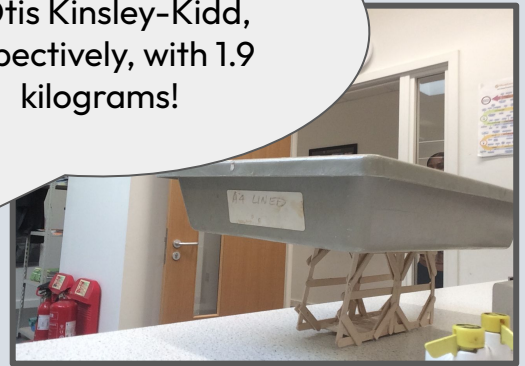
To give students an opportunity to experience what architecture and engineering is all about, several Year 9 classes were pitted against each other in a competition to see who could create the strongest lolly stick bridge. Students were given 50 lolly sticks and a hot glue gun along with thirty minutes of preparation time. Take a look at how they got on...



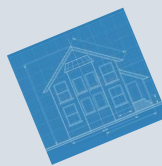
9y1 Winners:
Georgia Wood
& Evie
Goldfarb!



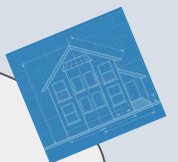
9x1 Winners: Lily Deal
& Otis Kinsley-Kidd,
respectively, with 1.9
kilograms!



9X3 Winners:
Archie Scanlan and
Kyran Standen!



Mr Soskind (9y1 & 9x3):
“It was great to see students so
engaged in their learning, also
their excitement about how to
apply science in the real world”



Monthly Masterpiece

Yee Soo-Kyung

By:
**Poppy
Palmer**

Yee Soo-Kyung is a contemporary South Korean artist whose work masterfully bridges the gap between tradition and innovation. Her ceramics offer a profound commentary on beauty, imperfection and cycles of life.

This artist is best known for her *Translated Vase* series, a body of work that reimagines the potential of broken ceramics. Using shards from discarded traditional Korean pottery, Yee assembles them into new, sculptural forms. The fragments are joined together with epoxy and finished with gold leaf, reminiscent of kintsugi a Japanese art of repairing pottery. Each sculpture is a metaphor for resilience, suggesting even in fragmentation, there is an opportunity for rebirth and transformation.

The luminous gold seams contrast with the earthy tones of the ceramics, evoking a sense of duality between the old and new, fragility and strength.

Yee's work is deeply rooted in physiological concepts like wabi-sabi, the appreciation of imperfections, and impermanence. The Korean cultural ethos of jeong - a deep emotional connection to objects and their histories - is also embodied in her pieces.

The shards she uses in her sculptures are often rejected by traditional potters as failed works, but she reclaims them, giving these "flawed" pieces a second life. Her approach also reflects the interplay between craftsmanship and conceptual art. By elevating materials that are traditionally overlooked, she questions societal definitions of perfection and worth.



Birthstones

By Sia Palmer (Yr 8)

What are they?

Birthstones are crystals based on your birth month, there are crystals for every month.

December's birthstones are Turquoise, Tanzanite, Zircon and Blue Topaz.

Turquoise

Known as the "sky stone" it has been admired by the Himalayans for centuries believing it came from the heavens.



Tanzanite

It is a very rare gem, found in East Africa and was first found in 1967, when it has just been mined. It has a red casing around it showing a little purple gem.



Zircon

Comes in a variety of colours: blue, green and red. These colours are caused by traces of rare, radioactive elements in varying stages of radioactive breakdown.



Turquoise

The properties of this crystal are supposed to help with communication and intuition.

Tanzanite

The healing properties of this crystal are said to potentially help heal mental illnesses.

Zircon

The properties of this crystal are said to promote balance between a person's physical, emotional and spiritual selves.

Book Review

'Cookie' by Jacqueline Wilson

☆☆☆☆☆

By: Molly Turner (Yr7)

Hi, my name is Molly and a few weeks ago I read an amazing book! It was called Cookie and it's by Jacqueline Wilson.

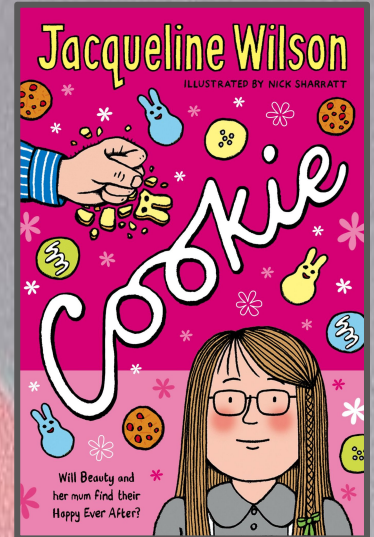
I liked it because it had exciting action and lots of intriguing twists. I highly recommend it!

It is about a girl called Beauty. She gets picked on a lot, she HATES her name and she feels ugly. She has a TV show that she loves; she pretends to speak to it, as she doesn't have any friends to talk to. She and her mum are under SUPER strict rules set by the MEANEST dad ever! It's a bit like an adventure for her and her mum, Dilly. Their dad can get very angry and he made a HUGE mistake, which caused a LOT of problems. Beauty is really lonely and has a lot of worries.

Personally, my favourite character is a girl called Rhona. I like her because she is thoughtful and kind. Every time I read a chapter I would get sucked into it and even if you screamed in my ear, I probably wouldn't move (please don't test!)

If you find this book in a library give it a go!

Thank you so much for reading!



Merry Christmas!

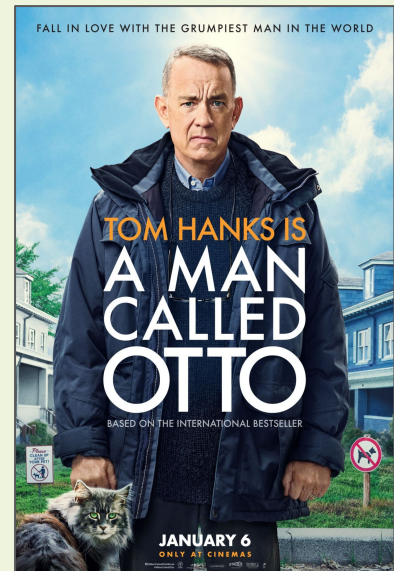
Film Reviews

By: Lola Gardner (Year 9)

A Man Called Otto

The man named Otto is a movie unsurprisingly about a man named Otto. Although it isn't a new film, as it came out January 2023, I believe it is still a great movie.

Otto lives in a small neighbourhood and likes to stick to his routines. Unfortunately he recently lost his wife and wanted to join her in the afterlife, however a certain family changed that. This movie shows how kindness can change your life.



Paddington in Peru

Paddington in Peru is a new movie, only available in cinemas. It is the 3rd movie of this series. Paddington and his adopted family, the Browns, decide to visit his Aunt Lucy, but circumstances lead them to misadventures in the Amazon rainforest and mountains of Peru.



Wicked

This movie is the remake of the very popular musical. It is about 2 girls: one spoilt, all about pink and makeup, praised by her parents; the other ignored by her parents, bullied in school and raised by her grandmother. They both get sent to a boarding school and their lives change forever.



Popular Christmas Songs

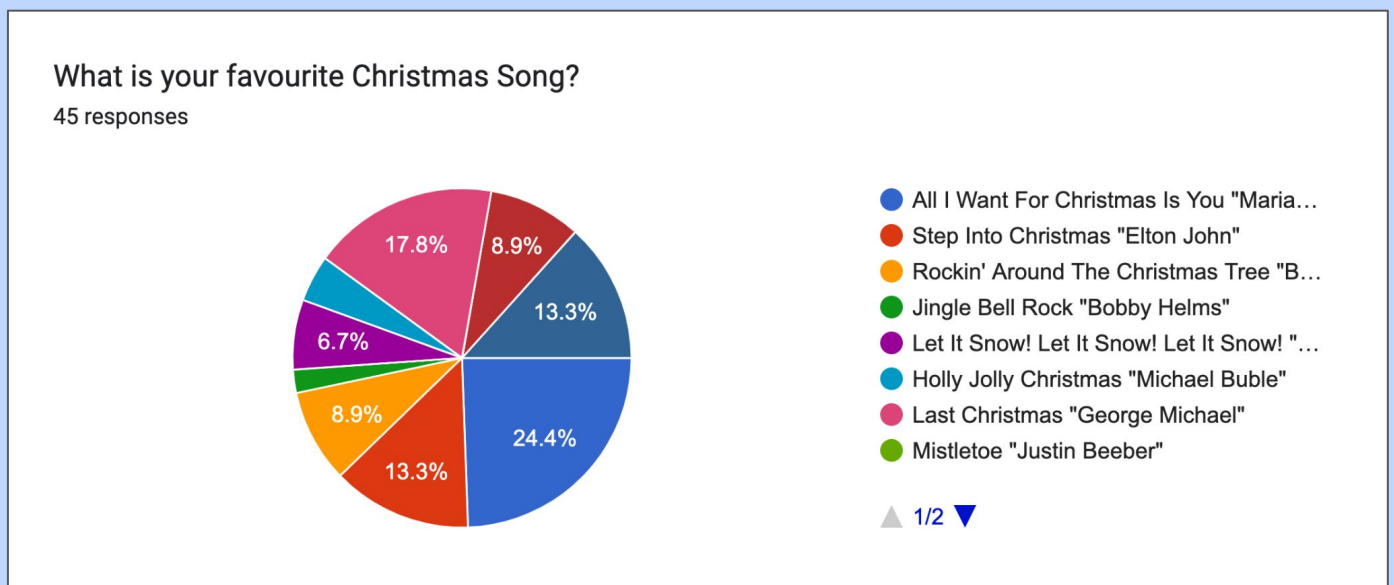
By: Archie Scanlan (Year 9)

Since the Christmas season is here, we compiled a list of some of the most popular songs and asked our Year 7s to vote for their favourite!

Below is the pie chart of the results, which includes the top 2: All I Want for Christmas is You by Mariah Carey and Last Christmas by George Michael.

Honourable mentions are Fairy Tale of New York and Jingle Bells, which weren't on our list but some people suggested!

Rory in Year 7 said: "My favorite Christmas song is Last Christmas because of the background music and lyrics."



A Christmas Miracle

Short Story by: Nshira Ansah (Year 9)

[Ashley, a popular influencer, is living in another state in America. She buys a ticket back to California, her hometown, where she unexpectedly meets her high-school bully who just wants to give his kids a magical holiday...]

~~~

I step out of the airport, ecstatic that I had made it back to California. It's snowing, Christmas lights flickering, the streets are bustling with people chatting away happily, exchanging gifts, children having fun throwing snowballs or building snowmen. Everyone really is in that holiday spirit.

As I walk into my childhood home, I'm hit with a heavy sense of nostalgia. I turn to my dad, who's standing next to me: "It really looks the same, after fifteen years it still looks the same." I look around the place, remembering all those memories from years ago. On the mantelpiece, there's a picture of 10-year-old me, standing next to a boy. In this photo he looks no older than 11 years old, with his chestnut-brown skin and jet-black hair. I notice him immediately, as this boy went from being my best friend to my worst enemy.

My dad puts his arm around my shoulder. "Come on, Ash. I have a surprise for you." He leads me out and into the kitchen, where I find a hot chocolate kit. Seeing this gives me memories of how me and my father always made hot chocolate together during the winter

\*\*\*\*\*

After dinner, I decide to take a walk. It's dark, it's snowing, and the lights look mesmerising. I'm thinking about Christmas gifts when I bump into someone unexpectedly. "Oh, I'm so sorry." I apologise profusely, helping the guy pick up his presents. I notice that he looks really familiar, but I guess that he's just a lookalike of someone I used to know. The guy has chestnut brown skin, jet-black hair and black-brown eyes. Suddenly the photo of me from 15 years ago returns to my mind and I notice that this man looks a lot like the boy from the photo.

"Um, excuse me, but what's your name?" I ask, as he picks himself up and holds his presents in his hand.

"Uh... my name is Hayden." The guy answers. It clicks. Hayden, my high-school bully and worst enemy, is staring at me staring at him.

This is going to be a different kind of Christmas.

# PUZZLE TIME!

By: Mia Colledge & Charlotte Gorton (Year 9)

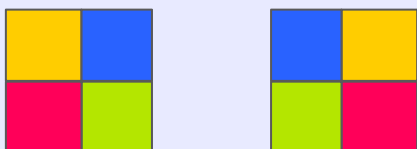
$$\begin{aligned} \triangle + \triangle + \triangle &= 60 \\ \triangle + \triangle + \square &= 50 \\ \square \times \oplus &= 30 \\ \square + \triangle \times \oplus &= ?? \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \diamond + \diamond + \diamond &= 72 \\ \diamond + \diamond - \bullet &= 40.5 \\ \diamond \div \text{trapezoid} &= 48 \\ \bullet - \text{trapezoid} \times \diamond &= ?? \end{aligned}$$

Can you solve these riddles?

1. I am an odd number, take away a letter, I become even. What am I?
2. What connects two people but only touches one?
3. I begin with 'e' and I only contain one letter. What am I?
4. What is there one of in every corner but two of in every room?
5. What can go through glass without breaking it?
6. You see a boat filled with people. It has not sunk, but when you look again, you don't see a single person on the boat. Why?

Last issue's answers: What square fits in the box ?



How many squares are there?

36

# GAME RECOMMENDATIONS

By Maciej  
Jablonowski (Year 7)

## PLANET COASTER 2

Planet Coaster 2 is a new game that came out on the 6th of November.

### What is it about?

It is about you being your own theme park owner! My favourite thing to do in Planet Coaster 2 is to make roller coasters.

### What is it on?

It is on Steam, Epic Games, Xbox series x and s and Playstation 5.



## RIDERS REPUBLIC

Riders Republic is a multi-sport game that you can play on PC, PS4, PS5, Xbox series x, Xbox one and stadia.

### What is it about?

It is about you trying to be a top: mountain biker, skier, snowboarder and many more! The most fun thing to do is to do competitions and challenges! These go from easy challenges to some extremely hard challenges or some world firsts.

# *A Refugee Poem*

**By: Amelia Rogers & Dilpreet Dhesi (Yr9)**

## Our Refugee Poem

Heroes,  
We are all  
At the end  
Rejects  
Not  
Allies.  
Different  
Not  
The same.  
Our fault,  
This isn't  
How we wanted to be:  
Saviours  
But we are  
Enemies  
We are not  
Friends.  
We should make them  
Leave this country  
We should not make them  
Welcome  
Wherever you go  
Just remember  
**REFUGEES**  
(Now read bottom to top)

## Our Inspiration: Refugees by Brian Bilston

They have no need of our help  
So do not tell me  
These haggard faces could belong to you or I  
Should life have dealt a different hand  
We need to see them for who they really are  
Chancers and scroungers  
Layabouts and loungers  
With bombs up their sleeves  
Cut-throats and thieves  
They are not  
Welcome here  
We should make them  
Go back to where they came from  
They cannot  
Share our food  
Share our homes  
Share our countries  
Instead let us  
Build a wall to keep them out  
It is not okay to say  
These are people just like us  
A place should only belong to those who are born there  
Do not be so stupid to think that  
The world can be looked at another way  
(Now read from bottom to top)

# Wellbeing Corner

By: Dolly Darby & Ethan Fawn (Year 9)

**BODY POSITIVITY**

YOU DEFINE BEAUTY YOURSELF; SOCIETY DOESN'T DEFINE YOUR BEAUTY




Don't body shame; it might have an effect of someone's mental health

LOVING YOUR SELF IS THE GREATEST RESOLUTION



## Men: Be Yourself

Remember, your strength is not just in your muscles but in your kindness, resilience, and compassion. Keep striving for your dreams and supporting those around you. You're making a positive impact just by being you. Keep shining bright!



## Children's Rights Day 10th December

By Kaya Akyuz (Year 9)

Children's Rights Day is a part of Human Rights day which is celebrated on the 10th of December. Every child's rights matter, no matter where you come from. There are 7 principles in the UK to make sure children know their rights and they are: dignity, participation, life, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability, best interests and independence.



# Christmas Pets!



**Brody - Ms Vincent**



**Toby & Bob - Maciej J**



**Louie - Rory S**



**Bear - Freddie S**



**Molly - Kyran S**



**Luna & Poppy - Ethan B**



**Mary Poppins, Twinkle  
and Thomas - Molly T**

If you would like to share a pet photo for a future issue, email it to [MSS-magazine@swale.at](mailto:MSS-magazine@swale.at), along with a note of your pet's name.

MEOPHAM SCHOOL PRESENTS  
**THE CHRISTMAS  
CRACKER**



**11th December 2024**  
**New School Hall**  
**Doors 6.45PM**  
**Tickets £5**