

Pitsford Post

Autumn Term 2022 Review



- Meet the mummies
- Bonfire night spectacular!
- Building robots
- Morroccan adventure
- Inspirational artwork
- Academic, dramatic, musical & sporting success







From The Head

What a time it has been! I write to you midinspection (so you will get a sense of how long is the printing and turn around for this august publication) and I can summarise a term very well spent. There have been a lot of trips and residentials for almost every year, some on site, some off site, some in Morocco. We have had so much rugby and netball that our buses have never been in school. We have had the superb Open Doors and Pitsford Play Toddler Group initiatives.



The drama and music departments are building up for Christmas and, beyond that, to the whole school musical which involves a dapper chap with a coat that dreams (or something like that). On top of this, we have been teaching and learning as well, and there are examinations either side of the New Year.

We have a new Head of Juniors imminently arriving, and we have been busily working away on some exciting changes! For a small school, a very great deal has been crammed in and I must applaud the children and staff whose enthusiasms have made all of this real. And now, as we always seem to, we approach the climax of the term and year with Christmas. This is always very busy and exhausting physically and emotionally. Typing in mid-November, I see the intensity increase. But that is what makes Christmas in schools so magical and I am minded of former colleagues of mine who, when they retired, from their lives of constant fun and laughter, they would throw me a crumb that they do miss Christmas in the classroom. And, for Pitsford only, we have the Run as well! Much to be happy for and much for which to look forward. And, before we know it, we will be in the midst of <gulp!> 2023.

Happy New Year when it comes and enjoy this term's Pitsford Post!

With best wishes,

Dr. Walker







• Gabriel, Year 9.



· Isaac, Year 9.



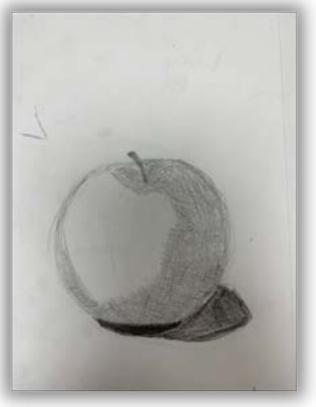
· Kieran, Year 10.



• Eleanor, Year 7.



Noor, Year 9.



Andrii, Year 7.

Whilst the hardworking Year 11s and 13s have been creating (top secret!) pieces for their coursework, the Year 7s, 8s and 9s have been learning lots of new techniques. Our Year 7 group have been developing their pencil drawing skills, starting with studies of teapots and apples. The Year 8s have been studying their own faces, creating beautiful self-portraits!

The printmakers in Year 9 and 12 have been exploring new processes such as polyprinting, monotype, lino, etching and paper lithography. Year 10 have also been learning skills in painting, and practicing new techniques influenced by contemporary artists.





Junior School

Meet the Mummies!

In October, J5 class headed up the Nile (AKA the M1) and stopped off at the New Walk Museum, Leicester, to learn all about Ancient Egyptians and their beliefs about the after-life.

Our guide, Gary, helped us understand about the daily lives of ordinary Egyptians and taught us about some of the more unusual practices, such as mummification and the 'weighing of the heart' ceremony. It was amazing to see real mummies and Ancient Egyptian artefacts up close. We had several challenges to complete, including placing the organs of the body in the correct Canopic Jar and using ancient tools to grind seeds and start a fire.

It was a fantastic visit and inspired us to learn more about this civilisation. Back in school, we held our own Egyptian theme day and completed STEM challenges linked to the topic. We have mummified some tomatoes and must now wait patiently to observe the results!











J5 enjoyed Ancient Egypt day at School and really looked the part!

Celebrating Halloween

In the run up to Halloween, Mrs Bridges created a pumpkin patch for the Early Years students to carve and decorate. They also really enjoyed making some chocolate sparklers (that didn't last long before being eaten!)











Junior School awarded prestigious Primary Science Quality Mark (PSQM)

The Junior School was delighted to achieve the prestigious Primary Science Quality Mark (PSQM) in September. The PSQM is awarded to schools who demonstrate their commitment to excellence in science teaching and learning. Schools achieve the PSQM through a rigorous year-long process.

Congratulations to Mrs Heard and the Junior School on this fantastic achievement. Being awarded the PSQM confirms the Junior School investment in Science teaching and helps raise student's aspirations along with helping to dispel the idea any students have that 'science isn't for me'.



Roman trip for J3 and J4

In October J3 and J4 travelled together to the Milton Keynes Discovery Centre, to take part in a Roman themed activity day, as part of their autumn term topic. The classes took part in 3 different workshops, which were full of activities designed to broaden and build upon their knowledge of the Roman Empire and understanding of the Roman way of life.

The day began with an archaeological dig, where the children got to use metal detectors to find Roman coins and other artefacts, which they then examined and dated. After that, they were given a crash course on Roman warfare and weapons by an experienced and suitably attired Roman general.

Finally, they were all treated to a traditional Roman banquet, learning about how the Romans enjoyed such delicacies as roasted flamingo and stuffed dormouse.

A wonderful and highly educational time was had by all.





J6 visit to the Black Country Living Museum

We were lucky to be blessed with a sunny, dry day for our visit to the newly-revamped Black Country Museum in Dudley. Jó visited the limestone mines, explored the houses and shops, and learnt more about coal mining in the area at the highly explosive, 'don't try this at home' Gas Show. Here are some of their thoughts...

"In the Chemist shop, because lots of people couldn't read, the chemist had bottles with orange and blue liquid in the window as their sign. In the General Store, if someone didn't pay back the money they owed the store would put a sign in the window and write the person's name on it. Until they paid back the money they would be shamed." **Hattie.**

"My favourite thing we did was to go to the gas show, where we learnt about gases in the mines." **Jake.**

"I learnt that down in the mine there are two deadly gases, carbon dioxide and methane, but we called them choke-damp and fire-damp.... By far my favourite thing was going on the canal through the tunnels because it was fun to go through tight compacted spaces in the dark". **George S.**

"I loved exploring the different tunnels and caverns and looking at fossils...". **Jessica.**

"In the gas show the man basically set his hand on fire. That was amazing!" **George W.**

"We have Fairy Liquid, but they had a soap bar called carbolic soap!" **Carys.**

"I learnt that they used to have concerts and parties in the big mine caves where they used to mine the limestone. My favourite thing was when Loui and I did the legging on the boat... but it was really hard and my hands were red at the end". Lyla.

"I learnt that children would set off explosives at the age of 9, which I find crazy!" **James.**









Senior School



Year 7 Camping in the grounds

In September our intrepid Year 7s and teachers slept out in our beautiful grounds for the annual Year 7 camp out. It was a chilly but fun night for all with pizza, hot chocolate, a night walk and star gazing.

Conkers trip for year 7

The day after their camp out and to use up the last vestiges of their energy, the Year 7s made their way to Conkers in Derbyshire. The students challenged themselves with various activities including a barefoot walk, an assault course and high ropes. It was an exciting and fun day for everyone.











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Lego Robotics Club

Lego Robotics Club is a fantastic opportunity for students to come and test their creativity and ingenuity to the limits.

Students get the chance to work with the latest Lego Spike Prime Robots, and learn how to build, modify and design software for these robots in order to enable them to solve real world engineering problems.

In addition to this, students who attend the club are enrolled to take part in a regional tournament, this is known as the EEP Robotics Challenge. Students in the club not only enjoy playing with the robots but also spend time preparing for various aspects of the tournament, such as building the fastest speed robot, and a second iteration of the robot that can help accomplish a set of search and rescue obstacles.

Students are also tested on their presentation skills solving a real-world challenge such as utilising the robot to solve an environmental problem, like for example cleaning ocean waste. Students are thoroughly enjoying this club, and are really excited for the actual tournament next year.

Lego Robotics Club is one of many extracurricular clubs open to Senior School students. The club runs on a Monday and is run by Mr Rizvi.



Fundraising day for NANNA Animal Rescue

A big thanks to Alfie C from Year 11 for another successful organising fundraising day for the NANNA Animal Rescue Charity at School. Alfie organised a really successful day last year and it was an even bigger event this year! The fundraising day held on 25th November included a mufti day, a drive through coffee morning, a donation station, sweet treats sale and a guess the cat name competition. Well done for raising over £300 for such a great cause Alfie and thank you for everybody's donations.







Year 10s heart dissection

Those with a delicate constitution should look away now!

As part of the Year 10 Biology GCSE course they delve into the reasons why we have 'systems' within the body, specifically the circulatory system (previously they've done the digestive and reproductive and will begin to move onto the nervous system). The Year 10s have the opportunity to explore the journey of a red blood cell and to help them understand this, they spend a really hands on lesson dissecting lamb hearts. They examined different chambers of the heart the specifically the ventricles, looking thickness, differences of the muscle and the arteries leading away from the heart. We like hands on learning where we can at Pitsford!



Teambuilding on the water for year 9

Thrapston Boat Station was the location for an excellent team building residential trip for Year 9. The programme included paddle sports, a raft building challenge and land based team building games. Everyone warmed up in the evening next to a roaring campfire. It was a wonderful trip for everyone involved.





Measuring inequalities for Geography

Year 11 Geographers spent some time visiting contrasting areas of Northampton for their investigations into inequalities. As part of the survey, the pupils examined environmental quality, property values and noise. Follow up work in class will be spent analysing census data.







Adventures in Morocco

29 pupils in Year 11 and the Sixth Form were bound for Morocco at the start of the October half term as Pitsford School organised its first overseas trip since the start of the Covid pandemic. Full of enthusiasm, the group arrived to a 35 degree heat in Marrakech. Following an initial taste of Moroccan cuisine, we were taken on a tour of the city. The tour included the souk with its myriad of street merchants selling all manner of goods and a traditional apothecary where shopkeepers demonstrated the healing properties of a variety of herbs and spices (including argan oil which turned out to be a panacea for everything from cold sores to arthritis).

Our hotel in Marrakech was the well-appointed Hotel Akabar where the swimming pool was an instant hit with the students. Our evening meal was cooked for us by a women's cooperative on the edge of the city. A buffet style meal featuring traditional Moroccan tagines was followed by a variety of exquisite pastries. The relaxed garden atmosphere provided a perfect setting to reflect on the adventures of the day.

We spent two days in Marrakech, taking in the Marjorelle Gardens with its collection of exotic cacti and succulents, water features and architecture. The gardens provided a short, but welcome respite from the noise and heat of the city. Whilst in Marrakech, we enjoyed an excursion into the High Atlas Mountains. A short trek into the hills above Imlil provided us with an opportunity to take in some much needed exercise in what appeared to be an endless round of lengthy breakfasts, lunches and dinners. The steep climb enabled those in the group having completed the Gold D of E programme to reminisce about their experiences in Snowdonia. Some sharp souvenir sellers tried to sell their wares to one or two of our number who delighted in haggling the price. Finally, a visit to Marrakech is not complete without savouring the sights and sounds of the many musicians, acrobats, snake charmers and other street entertainers in the main square which we did on our last evening, after a lovely meal in a city centre restaurant where the entertainment ranged from belly-dancers to fez-spinning drummers.

The second half of our tour was spent in the cooler and more laid back coastal resort of Essaouira. Famed as a filming location for Game of Thrones, the city possesses a fine sandy beach and numerous souks which the pupils were able to explore by themselves. The food in Essaouira was more of an adventure with some of the fish-based dishes not going down particularly well with some of us, particularly as some dissection was required beforehand. The visit to the harbour with its over-powering smell of fish and kamikaze sea gulls will also last long in the memories of many. A few of us enjoyed riding a camel on the beach, not the most comfortable 15 minutes admittedly with the constant threat of being catapulted across the sand. The beach provided a good opportunity to unwind, play a game of football with the locals or paddle in the sea.

The intention was to provide the students with a safe and exciting experience of a very different culture. For many it will have been their first visit to Africa. I am indebted to the help and support of three colleagues, Mrs Kirk, Mrs Lyon and Mrs Jacques, who ensured that the trip ran smoothly and whose main concern at all times was the well-being of the pupils. Now that we are most definitely in post-Covid times, I am sure it won't be long before the school sets its sights on new horizons with similar adventures in the offing for other year groups.

Written by Mr Lewis, Head of Geography





Individual Success



Annabelle B performs at the Royal Albert Hall

Annabelle B from Year 12 is a Soprano with the Northampton Youth Choir. The choir performed at this year's Music for Youth Proms at the Royal Albert Hall which took place in November. In the Summer the choir performed at The National Youth Festival in Birmingham's Symphony Hall and it was from this performance that they were selected to sing at the Proms. The choir performed two pieces:- Northern Lights and The Isle is Full of Noises.

Congratulations to Annabelle and the Northampton Youth Choir on this amazing achievement.



Ollie P becomes Northamptonshire County Golf Club Junior Captain

In September Ollie P from Year 10 was nominated as the 2023 Northamptonshire County Golf Club Junior Captain. Congratulations to Ollie on this huge achievement. Ollie had a great golf season. Now playing off 5 he goes from strength to strength, having represented the Northamptonshire County U 14s as Captain and with the U16s & U18s as their youngest player, as well as competing in County match play and Open tournaments. Having won the U14 County Championships he qualified for the Midlands Champion of Champions and also came 3rd place in the NGL U18 County Gross Order of Merit.

The A-A Brothers compete in the UK IKR National Karting Championships

Nathan A-A from Year 10 and Jotham A-A from Year 7 have been kart racing since they were very young, taking part in many different championships. This is the first year that the brothers have taken part in the UK Independent Kart Racing National Championships which comprised a total of 15 races throughout the year. Technical issues with Nathan's engine unfortunately stopped him racing at the final. Jotham, the youngest in the championship, finished 5th out of a strong grid of 22 seasoned racers.



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Eleanor T takes part in the UKA Premier Dance Competition at Blackpool Winter Gardens

Eleanor T from Year 7 took part in the UKA Premier Dance competition at Blackpool Winter Gardens in October. She danced a waltz in the ballroom competition and jive in the Latin. She had some tough heats and unfortunately didn't get a recall for the semi-finals. Dancing in the Winter Garden has inspired Eleanor to keep practising and enter more regional competitions to get experience ahead of Blackpool next year. Well done Eleanor.



Ruby W from Year 9 has recently had two leading roles in Legally Blonde Jr at The Castle Theatre, Wellingborough. This Christmas Ruby will be performing in the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' pantomime at the Lighthouse Theatre, Kettering.

Isaac W wins the Alan Glass Trophy

Isaac W from Year 10 has enjoyed his season of golf this year. He has chosen golf as one of his three sports for his P.E GCSE. During the Summer he played in the Foxes Junior Pathway Tour 2022 which involved playing a selection of different courses around Leicestershire County.

At his home club of Kibworth, Isaac was thrilled to win the Alan Glass Trophy with a score of 41 points. Congratulations Isaac!

Giuseppe M wins first adult Major of the year

Giuseppe M from Year 9 won the first Major of the year at Overstone Golf Club. Giuseppe was the youngest ever member to become a Major winner in this adult competition. Congratulations to Giuseppe!









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Biology A Level Field Trip to Flatford Mill

In November all A level Biology students had the opportunity to visit Flatford Mills in Colchester and had 2 wonderful tutors to guide them over the course of the 3 days. We carried out multiple experiments in both a salt marsh and a woodland including sampling and collecting various data that we then analysed.

The accommodation was on site, which allowed us a beautiful view of the surrounding woods, and the delicious food was something we all looked forward to (shout-out to Matt!).

This was a truly valuable experience that gave us access to skills and knowledge that will stay with all of us going into the future.







Joel H completes Great North Run in less than two hours

Well done to Sixth Former Joel H who completed his first half marathon at the Great North Run in Newcastle in less than two hours. Joel ran for a charity called WellChild for children with serious illnesses and has raised around £500. Well done Joel!



School Newsbeat!

Woodland Trust tree planting

At the start of November, the Junior School Eco Team, aided by some willing J6 helpers, took on a mammoth task; helping Mr. Bull to plant hundreds of trees to create a new Pitsford woodland. These trees were donated to the school to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and the life of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

The children worked together to plant the saplings, carefully spaced out, and made sure that they were supported. Once the hard work was done, there was the added bonus of a chance to sit in Mr. Bull's tractor!

The SAP Club students from the Senior School also assisted with planting the woodland. They planted over 30 saplings before the light failed under the guidance of Mr Bull. Mr Bull taught them the right way to orientate the saplings towards the light and protect them from the roe deer that roam the grounds.















Emma Bull graduates foundation degree for learning and teaching

Congratulations to Emma Bull (Higher Level Teaching Assistant at the Junior School) for recently graduating her foundation degree for learning and teaching. This has enabled her to qualify for her BALT degree (Bachelor arts degree) in learning and teaching which she will hopefully achieve next year. Ultimately it will lead to Emma doing her QTS qualification (qualified teacher status).



Concerts in School

Our first lunchtime concert in September at Pitsford Hall featured Ryan S on Piano, Zawati H on Violin and Vanessa K on Piano. It was a lovely performance.







The second lunchtime concert in October featured the cast of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' performing the opening number! It was a great performance and whetted everyone's appetite for the big show in February.



Rehearsals are well underway for the school musical 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat'. The cast of 30, including students from J4 to Y13, are working hard and it is sounding great already. The behind-the-scenes team are creating some wonderful props and scenery. If any parent would like to be involved, please do get in touch! In addition we are looking for a coloured coat!! Performances are 9th and 10th February 2023. Tickets on sale very soon.







Proud to be a Music Mark School

We are delighted to have been invited to be a Music Mark school! The Music Mark school programme celebrates schools who are committed to providing a high quality music education. We place great value on music and it's wonderful to be recognised for this!

Exam Success for Pitsford Pupils

·William H: Grade 4 Piano
·Jessica C: Grade 1 Singing
·Lottie W-I: Grade 2 Singing
·Calypso S: Grade 5 Singing
·George H: Grade 5 Trombone

·Eva-Grace P: Grade 4 Singing for Musical Theatre

·Charlie W: Grade 4 Electric Guitar

Well done to all!

NMPAT County Groups

Musicians who are playing in the NMPAT County groups this year are:

·Anabelle B - County Youth Choir

·George H - Jazz 2 and County Training Wind Orchestra

·William H - County Junior Orchestra

The **School Christmas concert**, featuring music from soloists and groups, will be held in The Chapel, at 7pm on Tuesday 13th December. More details will be sent out nearer to the date.

A Level Musicians

In the Summer, Annabelle sang with NMPAT County Youth Choir on their Tour to Spain. She is also performing with NMPAT County Youth Choir in November - Music for Youth Prom at the Royal Albert Hall. (More information about this in the Senior School Individual Successes!)

Ella spent a week in the summer at Territorial Music School – singing and performing with the Choir.





Senior School Netball

Netball this term has been in full flow with all of the Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and vast majority of Year 11, 12 and 13 girls taking to the court both during lessons, extra-curricular time and representing the school in competitive fixtures. A number of the senior players have also been provided with an opportunity to coach and umpire the younger age groups. Whoever thought that giving the Year 10/11s a whistle was a good idea?!

The County tournaments have taken place with a few age groups with our teams narrowly missing out on progressing to the next round hosted by Oundle school. This term has also seen a number of individuals join local netball teams giving them more opportunity to get their netball 'fix' over the weekends. Congratulations to Georgie, Olivia and Serenity who have once again been selected for the County squads for their respective age group.

There have been a number of new faces who have joined us in the different year groups with many having not played netball or represented their previous schools. With hard work these players have become an integral part of each team and have started to understand the different positions that can be played on the court gaining confidence to just have a go! This has been a shock to the system for some but it is evident that the skills that they are all starting to develop will continue to enhance team work both on and off the court.

The remainder of the term will see all teams on the netball court participating in at least one fixture a week and for some teams more! All players look forward to a home fixture and the lure of 'fancy' cakes.







Senior School Rugby

These last few weeks of rugby hectic, have been with Tournaments and Cup matches as our term of Rugby begins to curtail. The Year 7's have shown much promise and been pushed hard facing A team opposition of Schools such as Oundle and Oakham. They had a good win away to Bishop Stopford but were outmatched by Moulton School at home. They have Akeley and Beachborough left to play to finish a great start on a high.

Year 8 have been much improved this season building most importantly a good team spirit. A resounding win at the beginning of the season and an admirable draw have been followed by some fixtures in which we placed 2nd but the team is heading the right way and the boys seem to be enjoying their fixtures.



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Year 9 had the toughest of starts to a strong Akeley Wood side, but then comfortably dispatched Peterborough High at home. They performed tremendously at the Northamptonshire County 10s, winning 2, drawing 1 and losing 2, which meant they placed well. Unfortunately, with a depleted squad they crashed out of the County Cup with a lacklustre first half display, but are gradually gaining a realisation of their own ability which is bringing improved performances.

Year 10 needed a bit of 'encouragement' to get their game going, they had been victim to some cancellations and the Queens funeral meant they unfortunately lost some fixtures. A poor start away to Bishop Stopford then began to be rectified at home to Bedford Greenacre. They strung together some outstanding performances at the ISA Midlands 10s, comprising of some tough games against Worksop College, Princethorpe College, Quinton House School, and Bedstone College. After coming third in their group we saw them fly through their semi-final and into the plate final – a valiant effort saw them edged out to a team beaten earlier in the day with a last minute score.

Year 11 were unbeaten until late in the Term after dispatching Bedford School D xv and Akeley Wood at home in two excellent close fought games. Unfortunately, Wollaston in the County Cup was too tough an outing for the talented age group, as the smaller pitch favoured Wollaston who despite a close half time score pulled away in the second half.

There's still a tournament down at Abingdon Prep School and another 8 fixtures to go as we head into Christmas with lots still to play for with all the sides.

Pitsford v Quinton House Rugby Match for the U9 team

In September, Pitsford Juniors U9 rugby team took on local rivals Quinton House. Playing on the 1st XV pitch at home, Pitsford made a strong start, putting together some lovely passing play and setting up Orlando S for a fantastic opening try to put Pitsford ahead. Quinton came back confidently, and managed to slip past to score an equaliser. Undeterred, Pitsford managed to play some excellent rugby, with quick runs and superb passes being made by Seb W and Hugo S to selflessly set up the fleet footed Harry C for a brace of tries in his debut game for the blues. However, another try from Quinton indicated the makings of a close game. The visitors made several substitutions and managed to take the lead, but further tries from Jeremiah S and Hemming V put Pitsford level again. In the second half, Oslo G-B really found his stride for Pitsford, speeding past the entire Quinton pack to score two tries of outstanding quality. On what was becoming a 'smash and grab' game, Pitsford's defensive line couldn't quite hold Quinton to a draw, narrowly losing 9 tries to 7. Excellent game all round though.



Old Pitsfordians

Where are they now?

Lilly Hagenberg

Here's a small update from a former Pitsfordian, who left the school and the country the morning after a lovely final Sixth Form dinner in July 2019.

"I went on to study Politics, Psychology, Law and Economics at the University of Amsterdam – studying abroad is an experience I recommend to any sixth former looking for an adventure! Last month, I returned to the UK to work as a paralegal in an immigration law firm in London. Aside from an enthusiastic interest in world affairs, I carry from Pitsford beautiful memories – debates in the chapel, saxophone quartets and jazz band, a very political prank day and Mr Harrison's most creative history assignments which included making propaganda videos. School musicals were the best part, and here's a shoutout to Mrs Gant, Mrs Care and Mrs Newton for making rehearsals so hilarious and performances so successful!



Remembrance Day

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning. We will remember them.

Excerpt from 'For the Fallen' Poem by Robert Laurence Binyon











Thank you very much to our outgoing Head of PTA Zoe Tuffen–Roberts and Jude Wilton. We really appreciate your huge support of the School and thank you for all your efforts with fundraising and some really spectacular events. A special thank you to Zoe Tuffen–Roberts too for arranging the delivery of our spectacular Christmas trees for Pitsford Hall and the Junior School. Thanks so much!

As Zoe and Jude are no longer on the PTA committee we shall be relaunching a new Friends of Pitsford School group with new members. Please do see below for how to register your interest and get involved.



Pitsford Hall Pitsford Northamptonshire NN6 9AX

T: +44 (0)1604 880306
E: officeepitsfordschool.com









