



HITCHIN BOYS' SCHOOL

An Academy Trust

EVENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2023-2024

The Prospectus gives you a description of the school in broad terms, but this document gives you a further insight into what we feel we achieved last year, and some examples of the events which took place: events and achievements which demonstrate the ethos of Hitchin Boys' School in practice.

Exam results: We are incredibly proud of the students and their achievements in their public exams. At GCSE, almost 90% of students achieved grade 4 or higher in English and Maths (considered to be a 'pass') and almost a third of all grades were grade 7-9 (equivalent of the old grade A/A*). These are well ahead of national figures, and we estimate that our Value Added figure, as published by the Fisher Family Trust, is +0.64 (this suggests that students at HBS achieve on average two thirds of a grade higher than their peers in other schools nationally, and will be amongst the leading boys state schools once national figures are released).

At A-level 88% of pupils were accepted at their first or reserve choice university, including two students who are off to Oxbridge.

Full information on results and destinations can be found on our website
https://www.hbs.herts.sch.uk/about_us/exam_results

Music: With well over 250 boys learning and performing music on an extra-curricular basis this is a vital element in the life of the school.

Four major concerts took place – one in each of the three terms - showcasing some outstanding talent and entertaining audiences with music of a quality one might pay to hear. Our fourth concert last year was new for 2024 and was a recital evening for soloists allowing them to showcase their talent. The Carol Services were excellent as always, with a mixture of the familiar and the less well-known in both the Monday evening and Tuesday school services held in St Mary's Church. Music is also a strong element of the House competition, with performances in the atrium on each of the House days and the music competition showcasing the high standards of musicianship across genres from Jazz and Rock to Classical and Blues. One of many highlights this year was the Junior Choir's rendition of 'I'm Still Standing' by Elton John that saw many Year 7s shine on stage. An additional highlight was the revival of our Barbershop Group, led by Mr Woods.

At the end of June, Founders' Day at St Mary's Church was attended by all of years 11 and 13 from the Boys' and the Girls' school. As always, the music at the service in St Mary's was outstanding and a real credit to the students involved.

School Play: This year's school production was "Lucky Stiff", where the comedy was hammed up by an engaging and enthusiastic cast. The staff team always choose a production which will allow as many boys as possible to participate, while offering the chance for some star performers to shine. As ever the boys performed to a very high standard with over 100 students involved in acting, the music, stagehands and managing the audio and lighting. The production aims for 'West End' standards and was a great success. The next production will be 'Spamalot', which is already shaping up to be hilarious. Performances will take place in February 2025 and tickets will be on sale in January.

Head Teacher: Mr T E Bennett

**Ofsted
Outstanding
2021/2022**

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Every year we enter the English Speaking Union's Performing Shakespeare competition. This year saw two performers from KeyStage 3 reach the regional final of this prestigious competition.

Sport: We are incredibly proud of our sports provision, and aim to support pupils under two strands, Participation and Performance. Our Performance Groups aim to represent the school or county at county, national or international level. We have had over 600 students represent the school in some form last year, from Saturday rugby, hockey and cricket fixtures through to weekday fixtures in these sports as well as individual racquet sports or track and field. The day that the Under 15 rugby team triumphed in the National Vase competition at Twickenham stadium will live long in the memory, with over 1,000 students making the journey to support the team and a large accompanying group of parents and students back at school watching the live stream. This is the first time that we have won a national competition in rugby and defeated the finest independent schools along the way. The legacy of this result has quickly been seen as the Years 10s reached the last 8 of the National Vase this year, narrowly being beaten by Durham School.

Hockey continues to see annual success as our Year 7s, Year 11s and Senior sides all finished County Cup Champions. Our Year 8s were 3rd in the County Cup with Year 10s finishing runners up in the tier two competition. Our strong performances at County level meant we also qualified for regional competitions with Year 11s finishing 4th and seniors and Year 7s coming 5th in the Eastern regional finals.

We are now into the third year of HBS entering teams into competitive fixtures into either the District league, County Cup or the National Cup in football. The introduction of football has been well received by students, without detriment to our traditional sports.

In the summer sports, our Athletics continues to be a strong area of school sport. This summer we qualified for the National Athletics Finals and for the first time had two age groups represented with the Juniors (Years 7 & 8) and Intermediates (Years 9 and 10) coming 9th and 10th respectively. Several year groups also became district and county champions as they did in 2023. Cricket continues to see significant success in 2024 with the Year 8s finishing runners up in the County Cup and Year 10s and 7s both winning their District League.

The breadth of sports on offer is remarkable, with further success in cricket, badminton, tennis and basketball. It is a testament to the dedication of our PE staff that training sessions and fixtures run every lunchtime, each weekday after school and a number of Saturday mornings.

House Events: Throughout the year the boys are in competition with each other for house points, which are rewards for good attitude, commitment, effort and contribution to the school. In addition to all the sports you can think of the House competitions provide a chance for many boys to represent Mattocke, Pierson, Skynner or Radcliffe, in many non-sporting events such as the General knowledge quiz, Scrabble, Chess, Debating, Graphic Design, Music, History and this year for the first time Poetry. Some of our House Events go back to the 1920s and 1930s with the trophies being much converted by all who take part. The competition culminates on the last day of term when the winning house is revealed in a colourful display of (biodegradable!) confetti. At this point the House Captain takes possession of the much-prized Times Shield, with this year's winners being Pierson!

Trips: It would be difficult to provide an exhaustive list of the trips offered to the boys because there are so many. Most are curriculum-related and are local or national such as theatre, museum, art gallery, places of worship and coastal locations plus the annual Year 7 team building experience.

Notable residential trips that took place this year were the Geography trip to Costa Rica, recommencement of the MFL exchange visits to Germany, the History Department taking the year 11's to Berlin and of course the regular expedition to Malaysia over the summer, with over 50 boys undertaking a series of challenges during the month-long expedition. UK-based field work in Geography and Biology continued to run successfully.

In the year ahead, we have planned trips to Austria for the annual school ski trip, a long haul trip to Houston and the Kennedy Space during Easter, a History trip to the WW1 trenches and battlefields and a resumption of the MFL trip to France. Staff give up their holiday time to support these life-changing experiences for our students and regularly come up with innovative ideas for new trips and experiences.

The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme continues to grow with significant numbers of Year 10 students undertaking the bronze award, developing their skills in route-finding, camping and volunteering. Furthermore, a group of sixth formers completed the gold award that is a test of endurance over an extended period. For this year this scheme is being expanded to offer the Bronze award to Year 9's as well as 10's allowing, in two years time, the silver award to be undertaken in Year 10

It is this determination to give students the best possible experience both in and outside the classroom which characterises Hitchin Boys' School and I hope this has given you just a flavour of the variety, breadth and success of what we offer.

September 2024