
MCS News



MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER | SEPTEMBER 2019



Top of the Class

MCS is celebrating another year of outstanding exam results at both A Level and GCSE.

Our Upper Sixth pupils enjoyed great success on A Level results day, with over 96% of all results graded A*-B, over 82% of grades at A*-A and just

under 44% at A*. We are delighted to report that subjects such as Music, English and Modern Foreign Languages are flourishing at MCS despite a marked decline in pupils studying these subjects nationally.

18 pupils achieved four or more A*s.

Particular congratulations to pupils Jamie, Henry and Ben who attained 5 A*s each and will take up places at Cambridge in September.

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MCS News

Helen Pike
Master



Term Dates

Thu 5 September	Michaelmas Term Begins
Sun 19 October	Half Term Begins
Sun 3 November	Half Term Ends
Thu 12 December	Michaelmas Term Ends
Mon 6 January	Hilary Term Begins
Wed 1 April	Hilary Term Ends

Dates for the Diary

Thu 12 September	Junior School Pupil Welcome Service
Thu 12 September	Senior School New Pupil Services
Mon 18 November	Sixth Form Options Evening
Mon 9 December	Junior School Carol Service 4.00pm
Wed 11 December	Senior School Carol Services, 5.30 and 7.30pm
Fri 19 June – Sun 5 July 2020	Oxford Festival of the Arts

Upcoming Open Events

Sat 14 September (9.30am -12 noon)	WHOLE SCHOOL OPEN MORNING
Tue 24 September (5.30pm – 7pm)	SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING
Tue 8 October (5.30pm – 7pm)	SENIOR SCHOOL OPEN EVENING (11+ and 13+)
Fri 11 October (9.30am – 11am)	JUNIOR SCHOOL OPEN MORNING
Fri 8 November (9.30am – 11am)	JUNIOR SCHOOL OPEN MORNING

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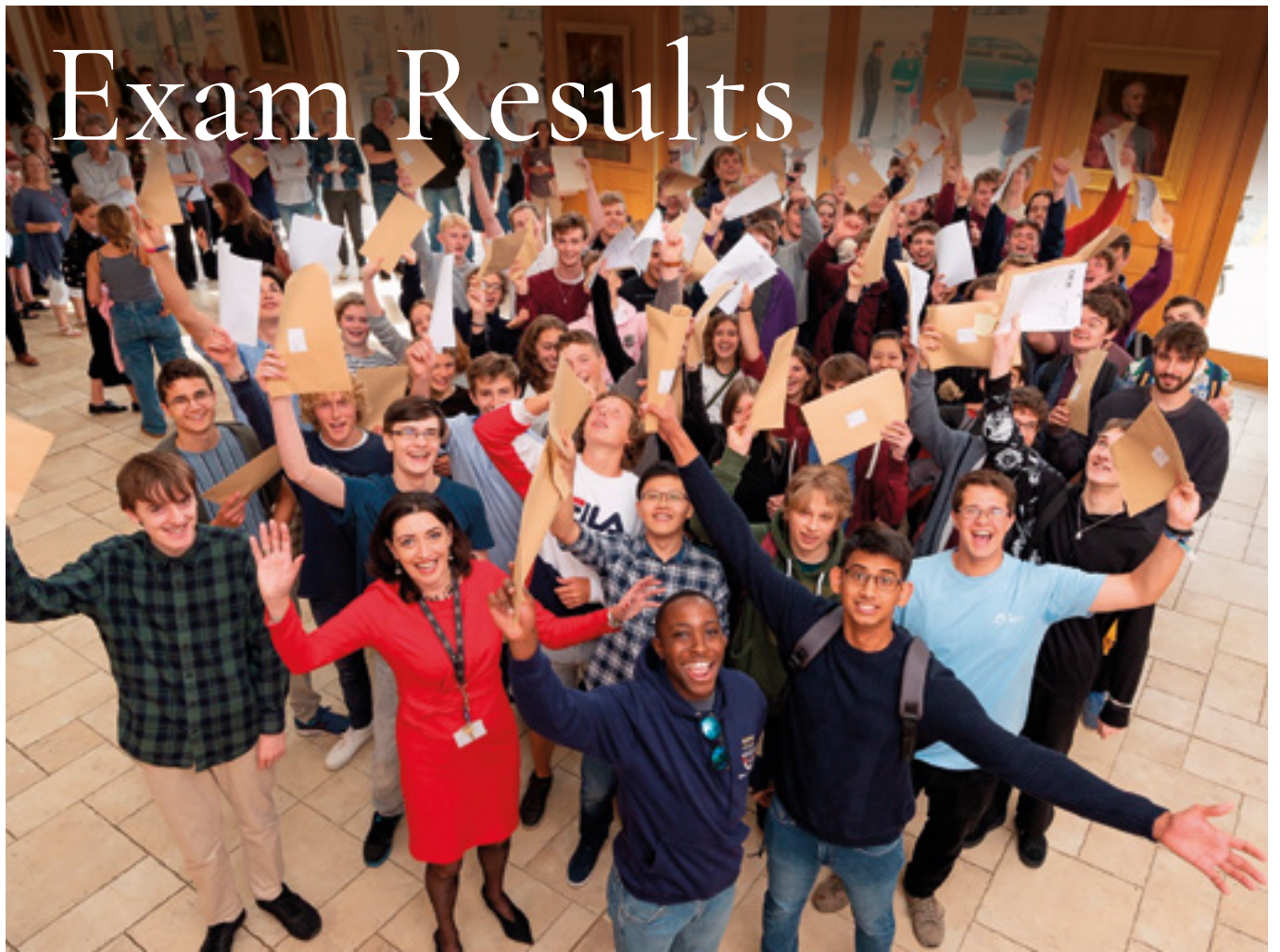
Welcome...

September is the new January: the beginning of the school year is a joyful time, and this newsletter looks back as much as it looks forward. August brings its harvest of exam results, and we have garnered startlingly strong headlines once again. Over 96% of our A Levels were graded A*-B, with over 82% of these being an A* or an A. Over 93% of our GCSE results were also graded A* or A (or 9-7 in new money). Over forty of our leavers are heading to Oxford and Cambridge, and our Sixth Form has welcomed record numbers of new pupils. There is much to celebrate, and with this joy comes the resolve to make this academic year another remarkable and fulfilling one.

Thanks to the summer works carried out by the maintenance team, our grounds look spry-- as do our returning teachers, for now at least. By November these balmy days will be a distant memory; but the warm Bank Holiday weekend evoked memories of Trinity Term, the highlights of which are evoked for you here. Our Arts Festival, the culmination of perennial partnerships with dozens of schools and others, was our best ever in many ways. Our impact beyond our white bridges is so strong that we have devoted a separate publication to it, and I hope you will read this alongside this newsletter.

Our tennis players and cricketers had another distinguished season, and a number of boys continued to play at county and national level over the summer. July and August also saw a number of trips: our musicians toured in Italy, our Hockey players were in South Africa and our rowers trained in Nottingham, to name but a few. Much pre-season training augurs well for a fine term of fixtures.

Do take a look at our new website, and do by all means follow the School's Twitter account (as well as my personal one) if you would like to receive more news from MCS.



Exam Results

Our Fifth Form pupils achieved equally highly on GCSE results day, with over 82% at 9-8 (A*) grades and 93% at 9-7 (A*-A) grades. 35 boys achieved straight 9 and 8 (A*) grades, and over 10% of the year group achieved 10 or more 9 (A*+) grades.

Particularly strong results were seen in science subjects, with an average of 89% at 9-8 (A*) grades for Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths and Computer Science. In Classical and Modern Languages, 86% of results were graded 9-8 (A*).

Particular successes included Oyare who attained straight 9 (A*+) grades, having managed to fit studying around competing for England in the Triple Jump.

Above: Our Upper Sixth celebrate their outstanding A Level results.

Right: Jake (departing Upper Sixth) will start a Degree Apprenticeship at the Dyson Institute of Engineering and Technology with his A*A*A*A grades.

Below: Oyare (Fifth Form) was one of 10 boys to achieve straight 9 (A*+) grades at GCSE.



Arts Festival Flourishes

Now in its 11th year, Oxford Festival of the Arts got off to a fabulous start with a sell-out concert by Ronnie Scott's Big Band which had the festival marquee dancing the night away. Further highlights included Anton du Beke delighting a packed marquee with stories of his time on *Strictly*, Prue Leith, joined by the Orchestra of St John's, sharing her musical passions, and a spirited conversation between the Master, Helen Pike, and former politician Jeffrey Archer.

As always, MCS pupils were heavily involved with art exhibitions, concerts and three impressive pieces of drama: *The Recruiting Officer*

on the banks of the Cherwell, Aristophanes' *The Frogs*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The Oxford Playhouse.

The festival celebrated three 5-star reviews this year; for an outstanding performance of *Mistero Buffo* at Pegasus Theatre, the world premiere of the operatic monodrama *Frida* on School Field and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Playhouse. artsfestivaloxford.org

Save the date!

Oxford Festival of the Arts
19 JUNE - 5 JULY 2020



Heads of School Announced

MCS announced its new Senior Prefects and Heads of School team for 2019/20. Congratulations to James and Saffron, who will become the new Head Boy and Head Girl, and to the Senior Prefect team: Kate, Hal, Theo, Jonny, Libby and David.



Artistic Flair

The Summer Exhibition saw an outstanding range of artwork on show, with everything from complex installations, delicate paintings and intricate sculptures on show. Congratulations to Laurie (Fifth Form), who was delighted to have his Welsh landscape inspired oil series shortlisted for the Royal Academy Online Exhibition.



All that Jazz!



Once again, MCS welcomed young people from the Parasol Project to the school's ever-popular Parasol Jazz night, swiftly followed by a 1970s-themed Jazz and Blues which saw Director of Music Jon Cullen don some very creative fancy dress! Oxford Festival of the Arts kept MCS musicians busy, with a performance from Jazz Band at the Festival launch, a magnificent String Stravaganza Concert, and a performance of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* at the University Church.

Trinity saw a record-breaking 100 music exams taken by pupils. Congratulations to the following pupils who all attained Grade 8 distinctions: Benji, flute; Olly, violin; Clara, trombone; Roshan, piano and Max, violin and special mention to Zane who gained a place in the National Children's Orchestra as well as a Distinction for Grade 8 piano.

A 5-star summer for Drama

Student production *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was awarded five stars by the Oxford Mail who called the performance "utterly beautiful" and "a theatrical triumph." Co-ordinated by resident producer Katie Walsh, the cast was led by Lower Sixth actors Ilona, Aisling, Will and Christian as the four confused lovers, while younger pupils Sam and Michael wowed as Puck and Bottom respectively. This year's Field Play at the Arts Festival was 18th-century romp, *The Recruiting Officer*. The departing Upper Sixth gave memorable

performances, with James, Daniel, Charlotte, Giorgia, Ben, Yiannis, Tom and Sasha in lead roles. Also as part of the Arts Festival, Upper Sixth pupils Orlando and Nik produced and directed their own adaptation of Aristophanes' *The Frogs*.

Earlier in the term, Director in Residence Samson Hawkins oversaw The Lower School Theatre Academy's production of *The Hobbit* – a boisterous and imaginative performance starring a cast of Second and Third Form actors.



Magical May Morning



Once again, record crowds turned out for the 'dawn chorus' of the Hymnus Eucharisticus and other madrigals from atop Magdalen College Tower on May Morning. This year, their performance ended with a moving rendition of *Over the Rainbow*, a number from the Junior School's production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Oxford's May Morning tradition dates back to the early 16th century. Magdalen College Choir, which includes 16 MCS boys, traditionally sings from the tower at 6am on the 1st May to herald the rising sun and the coming of Spring.

Sport at Magdalen



In June, MCS hosted the Gary Kirsten Foundation cricketers from Khayelitsha, the first township side ever to leave South Africa. A brilliant game ended in last ball tie in a great experience for both sides.

Special commendation to Henry (Third Form) who was crowned Irish Real Tennis Open Champion 2019, despite being the competition's youngest participant.

In July, the hockey team visited Cape Town, for a 2-week tour including 7 matches.

Junior School Celebrates Jubilee Year



Pupils started Trinity Term having returned from The Junior School's first ever ski trip. 51 boys hit the slopes, battling challenging weather conditions, but a great time was had by all on and off the piste. Term began with another successful House Music, watched by an unprecedented number of parents, and the ever-popular J1 Family Sleepover which saw boys and their families set up camp in the Sports Hall. Grandparents were welcomed again for Tours and Teas, before the summer musical, *The Wizard of Oz*, burst onto the Big School stage.

In July, the Junior School celebrated its 25 Year Jubilee with a party in the marquee and an afternoon of Rounders for boys and their families on School Field. While younger choristers had been educated for centuries, the advent of the 'Junior Section' in 1993 saw School House repurposed to accommodate just two classes of 37 pupils. Today, 141 pupils call the Junior School home.



Your starter for 10

In April, Julius, Matthew, Fin and Arthur took part in the National Finals of the Schools Challenge Quiz Team at Warwick School. After sailing into the semi-finals, the team finished as National Runners-Up.

MCS Connections

125th Anniversary of School House

The Boarding House was the first MCS building in Cowley Place, which eventually gave way to the site we see today. The move was prompted by concern about conditions in the old boarding house on the High Street, following an outbreak of scarlet fever in the early 1890s. The popular local architect

Sir Arthur Blomfield designed School House, building the new accommodation on the site of 'The Willows' and its surrounding cottages. Magdalen College obtained a lease from Christ Church for the island to serve as School Field for activities, connected by the now iconic white bridges.

The building was completed in 1894, featuring accommodation for boarding pupils and The Master's family. The last Master to live in School House was Tim Hands, leaving 20 years after the last boarders. The building served as a military hospital during WW1 until the Army Medical Authorities could prepare a larger one. As the

boarding house for over 100 years, boys progressed from 'Baby Dorm' to Top, Middle and Bottom 'End' where they studied and relaxed. The beginning of 1992 saw the refurbishment of the top floor of School House for the boarders, which created the teaching spaces for fledgling Junior School pupils below.



Connecting to Our History



The MCS Archive provides a link to the past as well as being an important repository for the information assets of the modern school. In this edition of the Newsletter, Dr David Bebbington shares his favourite pieces from the archive.

“The MCS archive contains a treasure trove of items that allow a glimpse of the schools’ past, encourage you to discover more about the characters that inhabited the school in days gone by and who helped shape the school we see today. I am particularly in awe of the sporting medals won by Noel Chavasse together with and his Glengarry hat from the Great War. The panoramic picture of the Cadet Corps in 1928, with its fascinating backdrop of familiar buildings and the size of the corps with its military band is also very special, but my favourite items within the archive have to be the sequence of black and white sports team photos from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. These fantastically clear photos exude each boys character and give a time-lapse style glimpse as individual boys grow and mature through their school years”.

From the Waynflete Office

As we welcome new pupils and parents to the school, we also welcome around 450 people who join the network of Old Waynfletes and Friends. That's 150+ leavers and the parents. Our role in the Waynflete Office is to keep in touch with Old Waynfletes and their parents. That means that we look out for ways to support the school's current priorities and our pupils' education, and create opportunities for all the MCS community.

But this is not just an internally facing task. MCS aims to equip pupils to make a positive and lasting contribution to their communities, both now and in the future. The school is fortunate in the strength and depth of its partnerships within the city, university, education and many sectors of public and corporate expertise. Through our networks we can work with others. Sometimes that's initiating a discussion, connecting the dots perhaps, which lead to something that's bigger than the sum of the parts. The biosciences course is a great example of that.

Of course we have the task of finding financial support to make things happen, whether that's in the classroom or about the people. The school itself is stronger if it reflects the excellence and diversity of Oxford and the surrounding areas, so bursaries are a continuous and ongoing priority for us in our fundraising agenda.

Do get in touch to find out more.

SUSIE BAKER

Director of the Waynflete Office

Back on Board



Alex Smith (OW 1970) returned to MCS in July to donate photos, play programmes and copies of the Lily to the school archive. He also donated a tie and programmes from his rowing days. Alex, who has been based in the US for a number of years, latterly as CEO of Pier 1 Imports, met the Master during the MCS New York events earlier in 2019. On his return to school, he toured the Boarding House and the stage of Big School, where he'd performed on many occasions. Among the archive papers was a memorandum on the duties of house prefects, which emphasised being a good example and exercising a firm but kind authority. Alex and his wife Anne plan to support bursaries at MCS in the coming years.

London Breakfast

'The Business of Sport' will be debated at the next MCS London networking breakfast, chaired by OW Jim Rosenthal, one of the best known presenters of television sport in Britain.

Whether you're sporty yourself or simply interested in the sporting world, it's sure to be fascinating. Speakers include Ed Cornfield (leadership psychologist, performance coach and former professional extreme white-water kayaker) and OW Dan Harris (Director, Zonetwelve Development Solutions and former professional rugby player).

This event is on Wednesday 13 November 2019, from 8am to 10am at the Lansdowne Club, near Green Park tube. It is free and open to all members of the MCS community. Sign up will be via the MCS website.



2019/20 Save the Date!

London Networking Breakfast

WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2019

Veteran Old Waynfletes Lunch

SATURDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2019

Old Waynfletes Xmas drinks

SATURDAY 21 DECEMBER 2019

Cambridge drinks

THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2020

Bob Stanier Society

THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2020

New York reception

THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2020

Stanier Society

For those planning to leave a gift to MCS in their will, the Master hosts an annual event to say thank you – in advance – and welcomes them to join the Bob Stanier Society, named after a former Master of MCS. The Society now includes OWs, parents, past parents, staff and governors of MCS. The next event is on Thursday 26th March 2020 and will include the annual Sheldonian concert.



Community Engagement

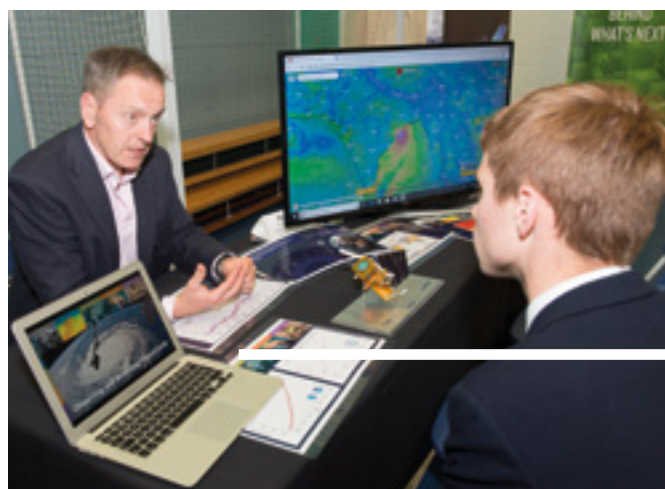
That's a rap!

MCS welcomed over 480 pupils from local primary schools to Oxford Festival of the Arts for a fun-filled morning of hip-hop poetry. Visiting pupils joined boys from the Junior School for a performance by award-winning hip-hop poet Karl Nova.



Careers Fair

Thanks to Parents Jenny Adams, Renee McCulloch and Annie Owen, this year's MCS Careers Fair saw a fantastic array of speakers, who encouraged pupils to think about career options. In the Exhibitors Hall, OWs and Parents made the evening event fun and engaging, with one even providing a simulator so pupils could practise keyhole surgery! MCS also welcomed pupils from Cheney, Oxford Spires Academy, St Gregory's and MCS Brackley as part of its partnerships programme with local schools.



Under the Microscope

Trinity term ended with a partnership between MCS and Oxford Brookes University on a new course to provide pupils interested in biosciences with vital lab experience. Pupils from eight local schools got stuck in analysing pathogens, learning about bioinformatics, gel electrophoresis, and the role of restriction enzymes. Scott Crawford, Deputy Head, said: "we were delighted to be able to work with Brookes to develop this course, which feels a real need for young bioscientists."



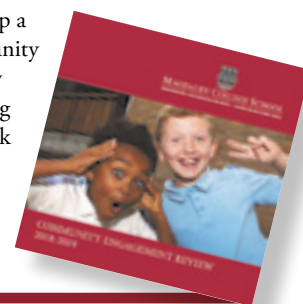
Our chosen charities

Trinity Term saw pupils complete fundraising activities for the school's elected charities, Thames Valley Air Ambulance Service and International Justice Mission. Activities included a successful charity social, with several teachers enduring a sponging along the way, and in total pupils raised over £8,895. The final figure raised for our elected charities last academic year was £15,591. Well done to all involved, and thank you for your support.



Hot off the Press!

Make sure to pick up a copy of the Community Engagement Review 2018/2019, detailing our partnership work in the local community.



Start small, grow great

Old Waynflete John Caird spoke to pupils about a new charitable partnership with the Friends of Mustardseed Foundation in Uganda. Mustardseed's mission is to provide an education for young children in Sentema, Uganda. John said of the project: "Fostering a creative relationship between one of the oldest schools in England and one of the newest in Uganda will offer both student communities wonderful opportunities to learn about each other's cultures."

