

Maidenhill Newsletter

SPRING 2026 EDITION



BE KIND, ASPIRE, PERSEVERE, ACHIEVE



Headteacher's Update



This term at Maidenhill has, amongst other things, been about listening. We place great value on the voices of both our students and our parents and carers, and it has been particularly pleasing to see this reflected so strongly in recent weeks. Our School Council recently presented a thoughtful and well-constructed case to the Leadership Team requesting that blazers should be optional to wear and/or carry during Term 6. The students were exceptional in the way they articulated their

views, demonstrating maturity, respect and a clear understanding of the wider school context. Following careful consideration, we approved this request. Equally, the recent parent questionnaire showed very positive feedback, particularly around the school's supportive ethos, strong relationships and the extent to which families feel listened to. Mr Rome will respond more fully to the survey findings next term, and we will continue to reflect carefully on this feedback as we look to improve further. I wish you all a peaceful and restful Easter break and look forward to your return on Monday 13th April.



Andy Hunter
Headteacher

Every Day's a School Day



Maidenhill School was delighted to host the annual GITEP Trainee Teacher Conference this year. We welcomed over 70 trainee teachers who visited Maidenhill to gain valuable insight into successful interview techniques and to hear first-hand experiences from our Early Career Teachers.

The day left trainees feeling well informed, confident, and ready to apply for future teaching posts.

We are proud of our strong partnership with GITEP and the role we play in supporting the next generation of teachers.

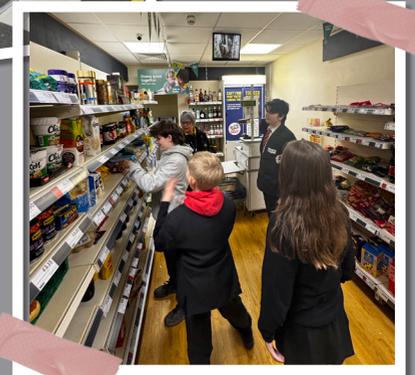
Mr J Sansom



Selected students visited SkillZONE, Gloucester, an interactive life skills village for people of all ages, on Monday, 19th January. This was a fantastic opportunity for students to participate in immersive experiences that provide valuable, hands-on insights into a wide range of safety scenarios, allowing them to build essential skills that can be applied in everyday life.

We were amazed by the enormous facilities and knowledgeable staff and a great day was had by all.

Miss I. Clarke





Jour d'Armistice

At the start of November, all Year 9 students took part in a creative and meaningful project to mark Remembrance Day through the French curriculum. Students researched the topic both in lessons and through homework before writing their own Remembrance Day poems in French.

Working in pairs, they then designed and presented their poems, combining language skills with creativity. As part of the project, students competed for Amazon vouchers, and the standard of work produced was exceptional throughout.

The finalists were judged by Mr Hunter and Miss Eager, so a big thank you to them both for giving up their time to support this project.

Miss S. Laight



I want to be a ...

Year 7 students took part in a very inspiring and engaging careers event on Thursday, 5th February. The event was supported by a selection of varied businesses and colleges.

There was a real buzz among the Year 7s while they gained an insight into possible future career pathways and aspirations.

We would like to thank Nimble E-learning, PQA Academy, Stroud College, Calcot Manor, Gloucester Services, Stroud District Council, Ecotricity, Hartpury College, Chrysalis Research, Gloucestershire Police and Capsule Insurance Services for their support in making this event possible.



Mr S. Clements





The Competition is Hotting up

Year 9 students have been preparing for the annual FameLab Academy competition as part of their science curriculum. The competition requires participants to explain a scientific concept in just three minutes using only props, focusing on content, clarity, and charisma.

During their science lessons, students had to present their chosen concept to their class, with the teacher selecting overall 'class winners'.

The resultant ten semi-finalists presented their talks to the entire year group and a panel of judges including Mr Hunter and Mr Nash, on Wednesday, 11th February. They all performed superbly to such a large audience, but the judges had the unenviable task of picking a winner.

Joselyn Hathway and Sophia Herbert were selected as runners up and Bea Empson the winner, with her talk on the topic of selective attention.

Bea will now represent Maidenhill in the inter-school FameLab Academy competition in March, supported by the other finalists.



Mr B. Norman

An Exact Science

In Biology year 10 students have been studying the effects of antibiotics and antimicrobials on bacterial growth.

They followed aseptic techniques to inoculate agar plates with the bacterial culture *Micrococcus Luteus*.

The students used paper discs soaked in the following antimicrobials in their experiments:



- Tea tree oil (ABH)
- Antiseptic (TCP)
- Antibacterial hand wash (ABH)
- Virkon disinfectant (V)
- Cavity protection toothpaste. (CPT)

They were also provided with discs of the penicillin antibiotic Amoxicillin (P)

The agar plates were then incubated, and the students produced some great results that showed clear zones surrounding the disc where the bacteria had been unable to grow.

Science Technicians



The Great Outdoors

The Outdoor Learning Institute is the professional body for organisations and individuals who use the outdoors to make a positive difference to others. Using the natural environment for planned, curriculum-linked education boosts mental health, physical health, and academic engagement. It enhances creativity, confidence, and environmental awareness through hands-on, experiential activities like forest school.

One of our Outdoor learning groups has now completed all their sessions. For their final session, they finished 'Redwood Winter Olympics', creating their own sport using the resources in nature as well as sports equipment, and held tournaments.

Miss I. Clarke



The Power of Sport

We are collecting old PE tops to donate to www.oscar-foundation.org.

OSCAR (The Organisation for Social Change, Awareness and Responsibility) enables underprivileged girls and boys living in the slums in India, to become role models within their communities, using football as a tool to help them stay in school and develop their potential.

For every t-shirt donated, Maidenhill students will receive a Be Kind Merit on Class Charts.

Mrs L. Etherington



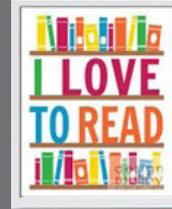


World Book Day



World Book Day was celebrated on Thursday, 5th March; discarding pressures and expectations around reading and giving students the right to choose which books and forms of reading they want to engage with.

Maidenhill students got into the spirit of the day and dressed as characters from their favourite books. The teachers embraced the chance to dress up too, as can be seen on the cover page!



Read Into It!

We are often told not to 'read too much into it', meaning to interpret something as having a hidden meaning. Despite this, the theme of The National Year of Reading 2026, is 'Read Into It', so let's throw caution to the wind and do just that! When you are 'into' something, you want to be doing it, thinking about it and finding out about it as much as you can. You cannot really be into something until you 'Read Into It'!

Students were shown The NYR 2026 promotional video in assemblies, which highlights the 'Go All In' campaign initiated by the National Literacy Trust and the Department for Education. It encourages people of all ages to connect reading with their passions—such as sports, cooking, or gaming—to tackle the decline in reading for pleasure.

The assemblies launched an online questionnaire from Mrs Escott-Allen to ask all students what they are into and what they want her to buy. She is especially interested to hear from students who currently do not find what they want in the library.

Responses from students, unsurprisingly, confirm a great interest in sport. This will need more investigation - which sports and sports personalities? etcetera. There is also keen enthusiasm for pets, music and musicians, wars and warfare, games, and gaming. Astronomy, politics, social issues, psychology, wild animals, vehicles, engineering, social history, dance, farming, painting, and drawing and geology, to name a few, proved to be firm favourites too!

Students do not seem particularly interested in accessing eBooks and audiobooks from the library, but sixteen percent would like magazines to be available.

Thirty percent of students are eager to see more manga, comic books, and graphic novels.

Next steps:

Mrs Escott-Allen will take the next few weeks to understand the results and work out a spending plan. As she explained to students, the money available will never be enough to cover the whole spectrum. Hard choices will have to be made. She hopes small groups of the students who are into the different subjects, will help her choose the books that students here will want to read.

What else? In the meantime, students are actively reading the nominations for the Excelsior Comic Book Awards - to help decide which book will be crowned 'Comic Book of the Year', nationally. We are also getting involved in the Historical Association's Young Quill's Award for historical fiction. Hopefully there will be more over the year.

Mrs C. Escott-Allen



Introducing our library assistants: Scarlet Owen and Makayla Westlake



A Chance to Dance

Never miss a chance to dance!

Year 9 students were given the opportunity to experience some taster sessions in a selection of subject options before making their final GCSE subject choices. With their interest in the performing arts piqued, Year 9s took to the dance studio for their GCSE Dance taster session.

The group was challenged to pick up street/hip-hop choreography in a short space of time; even learning how to fish roll! The talent and commitment on show was extremely impressive – those who took part should be proud of themselves.

Miss I. Jones

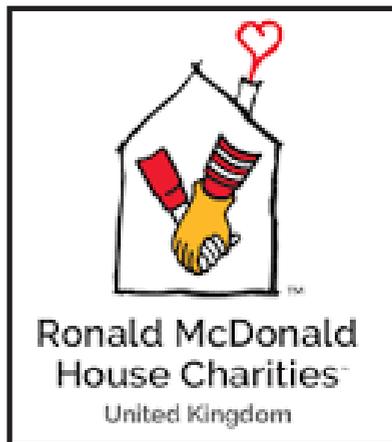


Go be Kind

On Thursday 12th February 2026, the Student Leadership Team hosted a non-uniform day in aid of Ronald McDonald House, a charity that supports critically ill children and their families by providing free accommodation near specialist children's hospitals.

It was fantastic to see so many staff and students take part in the day and learn more about what the charity does. Thank you to everyone who took part and helped to raise £532.29! Keep an eye out for the next event which The Student Leadership Team are organising.

Mr H. Scott



Stone Cold Beauty

Our Year 7 Historians have been learning about how the Norman Conquest profoundly changed the physical landscape of England. The most visible changes included the construction of over 500 castles!

For their homework, our Year 7s researched different castles before building some excellent model castles and labelling their key features.

We, alongside Mr Rome, had the very difficult job of trying to decide which castles were the top ones. After lots of discussion, the winning castles were selected.

A huge well done to Florence Bracey, Bonnie Addis and Libby Lanyi, whose castles were chosen as the winners for their excellent detail and labelling of key features!

All the model castles were excellent, and it was great to see Year 7 apply their historical knowledge and crafting skills.

Mrs M. Tardivel, Mr C. Porter and Mr H. Scott





Keys are the key

In year 7, students are set the task of designing and manufacturing a decorative key rack inspired by the theme of nature. These student outcomes demonstrate excellent quality of manufacture and meet the needs of their chosen target market. The products shown in this news article illustrate complicated sawing, shaping and wood finishing techniques. Well done to the Year 7 students for their efforts by designing and manufacturing an excellent product.

Mr M. Sadler



Knitters that Natter



Every Thursday lunchtime, a group of Year 7 students get together for Knit and Natter Club. This is where students can come to make new friends and learn new skills like crochet and knitting.

Whether you are a complete beginner or if you are advanced, everyone is welcome.

Joni King (7BN)



Eat, Sleep, Football, Repeat

Year 7 girls' football team delivered an outstanding performance at the district tournament held at Rednock School. The team secured impressive victories against Stroud High School, Farmor's School and the host school, Rednock School, as well as earning a well-deserved draw against Thomas Keble School.

The girls narrowly missed out on a place in the county finals following a tense and closely fought penalty shootout, with the final score ending Maidenhill 2 - Kingshill 3.

The school is incredibly proud of the team's performance, their exemplary conduct throughout the tournament, and their continued dedication and commitment to training.

Mr J. Soper

Meanwhile, the under 14 girls football team has been attending training every week and they have played extremely well as a team in their school fixtures.

Mrs D. Hamby

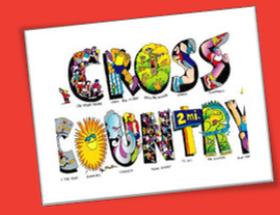


She is Unstoppable!

The South-West Schools Cross Country Championships took place on Saturday, 7th February in a very soggy Exeter! Joselyn Hathway (9HB), battled through deep mud and navigated some extremely difficult conditions as she triumphed by a landslide to win the South-West Schools Championships.

Her outstanding performance means she has qualified for the National Championships, which will take place in Liverpool on Saturday 14th March. We wish her all the very best!

Mr J. Soper





Brinkworth Bags Four

The Year 7 boys' football team put on a masterclass at Gloucester Academy, delivering a stunning 8-0 victory in a truly dominant display. Brinkworth stole the headlines with an incredible four-goal haul, including an audacious overhead kick that capped off a remarkable individual performance. The team kept the ball moving on the floor, playing with relentless tempo and front-foot attacking intent, creating wave after wave of chances and overwhelming the opposition from start to finish. It was a performance full of confidence, quality and teamwork - Glory, Glory, Maidenhill!



V is for Victory ...



The Year 8 boys' football team produced arguably their best performance in a Maidenhill football shirt last term with a lethal display of attacking football.

Maidenhill came out of the blocks with real intensity and were rewarded with an early lead. Jenkinson glided past two defenders before squaring to Tritton, who struck a superb first-time volley to put the visitors ahead.

Maidenhill continued to control the game and towards the end of the first half, Webster played an immaculately weighted through ball into space. Tritton timed his run perfectly and drove the ball forward at speed before finishing confidently past the Gloucester goalkeeper to double the lead.

In the second half, to their credit, Gloucester rallied and caught Maidenhill on the counterattack to claw themselves back into the game. With their tails up, the hosts pushed to level in added time. However, Howe regained possession in a critical area and found Tritton once again. The in-form marksman made no mistake, beating his opposite number before sending the Gloucester goalkeeper the wrong way to cap off an excellent hat-trick and ensure victory for the team. Tritton scores goals!

Maiden 11's March on

From the beginning of the match, both teams defended with discipline and probed in the final third to secure the breakthrough. It was as even a half of football as anyone could hope to watch, and it felt like it would take something special to break the deadlock....

In the closing moments of the first half, that moment of magic arrived. A wicked delivery into the box by Bown was met by attacking midfielder, Drake, who stopped the ball dead with an outrageous first touch before unleashing a thunderbolt into the top corner. 1-0 Maidenhill.

The second half began much like the first, with the game ebbing and flowing from end to end. Archway looked to build momentum, but the Maidenhill backline proved unbreakable. Austin, Smart and Vines were excellent at snuffing out Archway counterattacks and when Archway did find a way through, the ever-reliable Brodie delivered between the sticks when called upon.

As the fixture entered the final 15 minutes, the home side began to assert control. Wave after wave of Maidenhill pressure rolled forward, and a second goal felt inevitable. With just eight minutes remaining, it arrived. From a corner, Smith rose highest at the back post, nodding home to seal a second successive league win, and a result that inches Maidenhill one step closer to a semi-final berth.



From the Brink to Bedlam



The Year 9 football team hosted Archway School in a local derby that will be remembered for years to come! The first half was tightly contested, with neither side able to gain the upper hand. Both defensive lines worked tirelessly out of possession, repeatedly snuffing out danger, and much of the game unfolded in midfield in what quickly became a battle of attrition.

With 15 minutes remaining in the second half, the derby ignited. Bown unleashed a thunderous shot past the visiting goalkeeper to give Maidenhill the lead. Archway responded with flair, moving the ball stylishly before a precise finish at the back post beat an outstretched Russell.

The climax was still to come - with less than a minute on the clock, Brinkworth broke free from his marker and delivered a low, powerful cross into the box. The ball seemed to evade everyone - until Churcher, quickest at the back post, drove it home and sent the Maidenhill faithful into raptures!

Mr J. Soper



What's Cooking?



Years 7 and 8 completed their final cooking assessments in their Design and Nutrition rotation, while Year 10 students perfected their pie making skills in Food Preparation and Nutrition class.

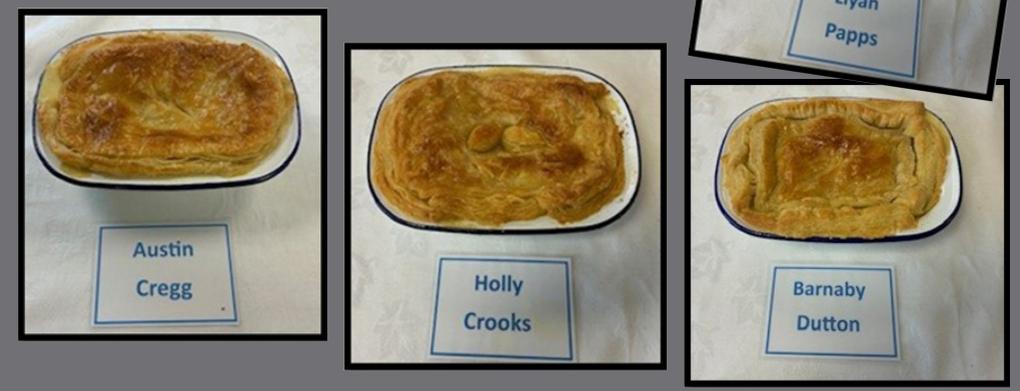
Year 7 students were tasked with planning, preparing and cooking a pasta salad according to the Eatwell guidelines.



Year 8 students had the fun task of designing and cooking a multicultural burger, inspired by a particular cuisine (who doesn't love a burger?)



British Cuisine was the theme of the Year 10 assessment. Students had to prepare and make a chicken and mushroom pie, demonstrating a variety of skills; portioning a chicken, making a roux-based sauce and making a rough puff pastry from scratch.





Maths Challenge

On Wednesday 28th January, 60 of our Year 10 and Year 11 students took part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge. Throughout the event, students demonstrated impressive problem-solving skills, focus, and enthusiasm.

The challenge required deep mathematical thinking and encouraged participants to approach problems like true mathematicians.

On to the Next

Eight students from Year 9 and Year 10 recently attended their graduation event after successfully completing the Scholars Programme.

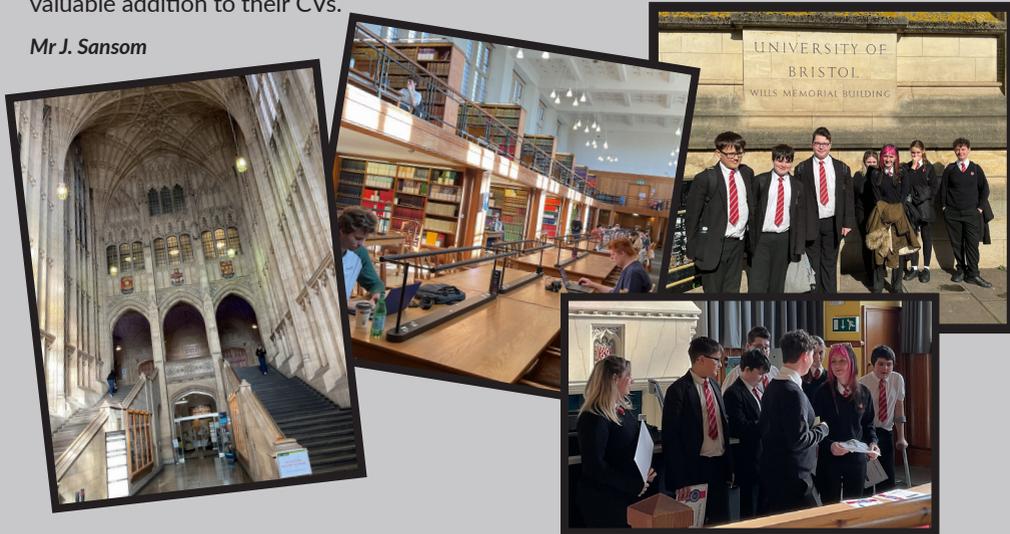
Over a 10-week period, students took part in a series of university-style tutorials led by a PhD tutor from Oxford University. Their course, "How Can We Feed the World? Genetic Tools and the Future of Food," explored key issues in food security, biotechnology and sustainability, with strong links to STEM subjects.

As part of the programme, students researched and wrote a university-level essay, receiving detailed written feedback to help them understand academic expectations and develop their analytical and writing skills.

To mark the completion of the course, students visited Bristol University alongside peers from schools across the country. They toured the campus and participated in academic workshops, gaining further insight into university study.

Throughout the programme and at the graduation event, our students were a credit to the school. Completing the Scholars Programme is a significant academic achievement and a valuable addition to their CVs.

Mr J. Sansom



Inspired by Art

Hannah Spring, class of '21, wanted to let us know what she's been up to in the art industry since leaving school!

"I now work for myself as a full-time portrait artist and send artwork all over the world. I work from a cosy studio I built in my back garden. When I am feeling a bit of art block or stuck with my work, I remind myself of Mrs Glover's words "your most recent work will always be your best". I've learnt a lot since leaving school and art college, but a lot of what I learnt in Art class still resonates with me. "



Anyone for (table) tennis?



Former Maidenhill student, Fred Zanker has grown into table tennis and developed his talent in competing and coaching over the last few years.

Fred recently won the Under 19 Gloucestershire County Schools championship and holds the title of county champion. He will now represent the county for that age group in the National Finals in April. He also won the Senior Singles Gloucestershire Closed Consolation title, competing against all age groups and the Stroud Junior League Tournament - all amazing achievements!

In addition to competing and winning trophies, Fred is also a Level 1 qualified table tennis coach and helps at many sessions around the Stroud area, coaching budding table tennis players. He also coaches at Maidenhill School on Tuesday evenings.

Well done Fred – impressive stuff!!

Mr S. CleMents





Winner, Winner

Daisy Barker (7TF) is our first in Year 7 with 500 reward points: "I am very pleased with this achievement and can't wait to reach 1000. My goal is to reach 1000 points and get the £50 Amazon voucher by the end of the year".

Positively You

Year 10 took part in a workshop called 'Speedy Study Skills' ran by Jay from Positively You.

Students (and their parents) were given the run-down on what works, and how to get going to ensure that preparations for their upcoming internal exams in April are as successful as possible.



Stress Busters

On Tuesday 27th January, in their assembly, Year 11 students attended a presentation by Young Minds Matter, Gloucestershire regarding exam study and how to manage any exam stress.

Young Minds Matter (YMM) is a safe and confidential mental health support service developed for children and young people up to 18 years of age in schools across Gloucestershire.

For some students, Young Minds Matter then ran a workshop to look in more detail at exam stress and ways to cope with revision and exams in this important GCSE year. The students found the assembly and workshop informative and welcomed YMM with respect and appreciation. All who took part are likely to have picked up some useful tips for the coming exams! *Mr J. Testar*

Uniforms

Second-hand uniforms are now available online via our website. We regularly have in-person sales, typically at the end of each term but our stock can be viewed at: <https://w.w.w.maidenhill.gloucs.sch.uk/second-hand-uniform>. Simply complete the form to reserve and pay for your uniform. More items are constantly added – it's a great way to recycle and reuse clothes that may otherwise go to landfills. All items are between £1 and £5.



Dates for your Diary

Start of Term 5	Monday, 13th April 2026
Y10 Internal Exams	Monday, 27th April to Monday, 18th May 2026
Summer Exams start	Friday, 1st May 2026
End of Term 5	Friday, 22nd May 2026