



January to March  
2021

# The Cotswold School Easter



# 'Welcome' from Mr Morgan



## A lively and productive school

Life at school looks almost normal as we head into the Easter break (certain Covid restrictions aside). We have come a long way since the lockdown and home-learning months of January and February.

Now, I am delighted that our school is full again and learning is lively and productive.

Despite the disruptions to school life, we have much to celebrate and appreciate. I hope you'll enjoy reading about the students who have won prizes for their sporting efforts, creative writing and projects about sustainability; and who are taking steps towards adventure, such as in our Duke of Edinburgh's Award groups.

The altruism of many students – taking action for those who have suffered or who are alone – is admirable. See Jess's story on page 5.

Staff have embraced the Easter Marathon Challenge, to support their own wellbeing and raise awareness (and money) for student mental health. Many will be running or walking 26.2 miles over the Easter fortnight! Read more on page 11.

Thank you for your messages of support, for your contributions to our community and for supporting your children to do their best with us at school.

Best wishes for a peaceful – and hopeful – Easter.

Will Morgan  
Principal



# Latest school news...



Check out the news stories on our website  
<https://cotswold.gloucs.sch.uk/latest-news/>



Our Easter  
Marathon  
Challenge



The Cotswold  
School  
community  
supports our  
NHS



How a  
Cotswold  
student  
became a  
Covid  
researcher



Get involved  
in British  
Science Week



Keep on  
running (and  
walking)



Playing the  
Game of The  
Cotswold  
School



Try  
something  
new



'Thank you' to  
our whole  
school  
community

# Covid-testing **superstars**

## Over 75 parents and friends helped us roll out three days of in-school testing for Covid-19

On the first day back after lockdown, not only did we run a full timetable of lessons and a full menu of lunches, we also swab-tested 1,000 students in the sports hall.

On each of the three in-school testing days, we were grateful for the calm and organised support of trained volunteers from our parent and carer community. Their help meant that we tested class groups in well under 10 minutes per class and a year-group per hour. Our aim was to test with minimal disruption to learning, a feat we achieved thanks to brilliant teamwork!

### **What our volunteers said about the event – and what our community said about the volunteers**

“The preparation and organisation was excellent, which made it all very straightforward. The children were also a real testament to the school. All were respectful, polite and listened to instructions from staff and volunteers. I was really impressed.”

“It was really well organised and the kids were brilliant.”

“Amazing job everyone! So much hard work has gone into this and we are so grateful for all you are doing for our children.”

“Thank you to everyone who gave up their time to do this so that our children can get back to school!”



# Our memorial to Grace and Elaine Reason

Donations from school families reached over £1,900. Now work is underway to create a place to remember two lives lost

In November 2020, members of our school community donated money for a bench in memory of Grace Reason, who died with her mother, Elaine, in a road accident. The idea to create a memorial came from Jess in Year 11, who worked with Mr Jones, Head of Year 11 and other staff.

Thanks to the generosity of parents and carers, we have purchased two beautiful engraved wooden benches and are in the process of creating a landscaped area for them. We are donating £500 from the total raised to the rescue service, Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.

Jess said,

"I wanted to make sure that Grace would always be remembered at The Cotswold School in years to come. I want people to remember her wonderful spirit and her kindness. Thank you to everyone in our school community who gave money, so that we can create a peaceful area, with engraved benches, in her memory. We promised Grace's family that we would also donate to their charity of choice, so £500 goes to Midlands Air Ambulance to support the vital work they do."



# Rotary competition winners

## Young Writers

The theme 'My Happiest Day' produced some excellent work from students in Years 7 and 8

The judges from North Cotswolds Rotary were impressed with the overall standard of the entries, many of which showed plenty of imagination and conveyed feeling and a sense of emotion.

They said, "We commend all who took part and wish them success with their writing in these difficult times. You show so much promise for the future - well done!" Here are the judges' further comments:



**Winner:** Lauren (Y8), with a very well written piece about the death of her dog and the search to find a suitable replacement. Lauren's writing certainly brought out the joy she felt at the end of a successful search, and the judges could really feel the emotion in this story. She gives the impression of writing effortlessly. Very well done!



**Second:** Reuben (Y8), with a fantasy story about meeting a dragon while searching for his lost dog in a cave. This was an imaginative piece of writing and the judges were keen to find out what happened. It is not easy to write convincingly about a complete fantasy. A good effort, well done!

**Equal Third:** Ewan (Y8), with a description of a visit to a theme park in Florida, and his first ride on the biggest slide. Generally well written, successfully conveying his excitement, and he made good use of direct speech.

Jessica (Y8), with a description of her struggles preparing for GCSE's during the pandemic and lockdown. A very convincing piece of writing, with feeling that was conveyed to the readers. Jessica's writing also shows promise for the future.



**Highly commended:** Florence Anthony; Isabella Guest; Freddie Haines-Shaw

## Rotary Young Environmentalists

Ambitious and thoughtful ideas from many students, who want to make the world a more sustainable place.

**Winner:** Cerian (Y7: 'Climate Change and Coral Reefs')

"The winner by a clear margin! Cerian did an outstanding piece of work. His entry was beautifully presented, clearly written and expressed, and obviously well researched.

"If there had been a national competition this year, this entry would have been in contention to win at national level. Excellent work!"



**Runner-up:** Caitlin (Y9): 'Animal Habitats and Climate Change'

The judges said: "Caitlin's entry was very wide-ranging and ambitious in scope, with good use of illustrations to add impact to the writing. Overall, an ambitious and imaginatively presented piece of work."



**Highly Commended:** Gilly (Y7) (*left*) 'Beef and its Effects'.  
Emily and Bella (Y8) (*right*) 'Coral Bleaching'

# New school buildings and facilities

Since the summer of 2020, work has been progressing to construct a new 10-classroom building – part of £5.8million investment in our school from Gloucestershire County Council. The new facilities come into use in the autumn and winter of 2021/22.

The structure is up on our new English classroom block. Click below for a video of the story so far!



Our existing gym, with tiered seating, will become our bespoke performance and assembly space

Addition of two refurbished rooms as modern science labs, ready for use in September 2021

A new canopy – funded largely from donations from local business and school families – is now providing shelter during lunchtimes

A gym extension to the sports hall, with changing rooms, is taking shape.



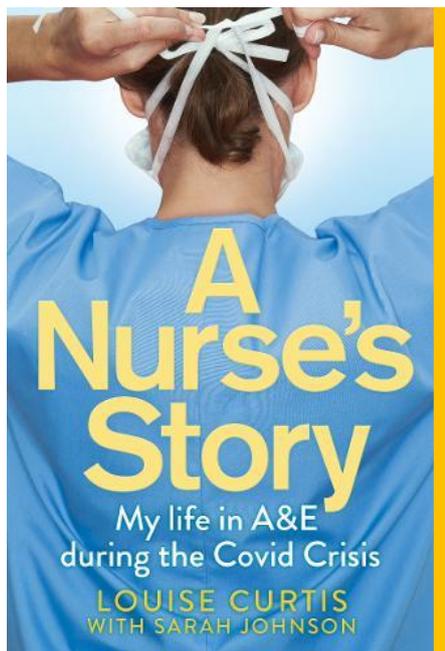
Easter 2021

# World Book Day 2021

We asked for recommendations and here are two of the best!

WORLD  
**BOOK  
DAY**

4 MARCH 2021



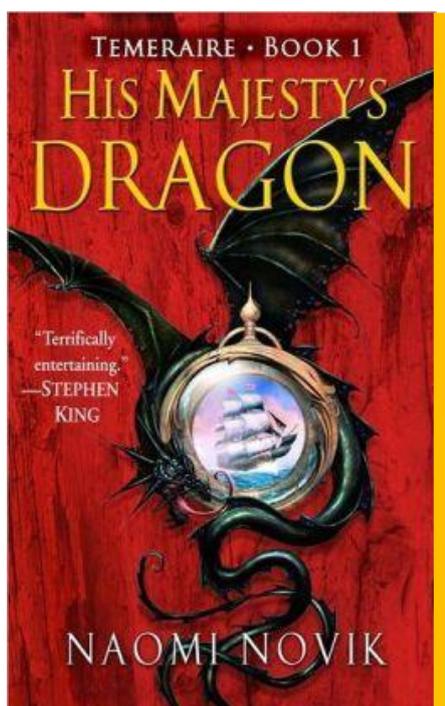
**A Nurse's Story**  
by Louise Curtis

Review by Chloe Skidmore  
(Year 11)

This is an inspiring book about Covid-19 and also the personal experience of a nurse on the Covid-19 wards with patients in critical care.

To the average person who has no association with this kind of work I think it is an eye-opener, to see what a shift can entail for a nurse. The story is certainly interesting although there were a few parts I inwardly shuddered at.

Some of the tales of the story are amazing. To think what people can come through, how far medicine and medical intervention can go and whether it should be done.



**His Majesty's Dragon** by Naomi Novik

Review by Maxim Bryars (Year 7)

Before Christmas, I started reading this book from the library, as I had just finished a previous series. Once I had picked it up I couldn't put it down again! It was so interesting and informative yet also thrilling.

Set in the Napoleonic wars, it is based in an alternative reality where dragons are present and used on the front lines in the air. It starts when naval Captain William Laurence takes a ship which holds a precious dragon egg and is about how it plays an important role in the war. It is written in such a way that makes you feel like that is what is happening in the present and just the first page alone makes you crave for more.

I would recommend this book to young adults and anyone who likes Napoleon, adventures, and especially dragons! Even if those genres aren't quite your type, it would be worth trying anyway. The best read I've had for years!

Mr Hamilton from our English department said:

**"Well done to Maxim and Chloe for their great reviews of books that had given them joy, thought and delight so others could be inspired to read them too. Thank you to all who took part, including parents! There were many fantastic recommendations to choose from; all will hopefully give people greater choice and opportunity to read!"**

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# Cotswold sport

We kept an eye on our wellbeing through exercise and sport challenges during lockdown.

## House Olympics

During lockdown the PE department set weekly activities and challenges for our students with the aim of keeping them fit, active and healthy.

These included a weekly fitness game, such as Fit Monopoly, Snakes and Ladders and The Game of the Cotswold School. Did you try them? They included lots of familiar faces instructing the students to complete fitness tasks as they made their way through the challenges.

There were exercise video options and relaxing yoga or meditation videos along with a fitness challenge for those keen to compete.

These activities culminated in a House Olympics competition just after February half term. The students were given four tasks to time, count and measure, including 100m sprint, a balance crow pose, welly-wanging and a bottle flip competition.

The PE team were thrilled to see some great individual results from some wonderful entries. Some of the lockdown stars are pictured. Congratulations to Apollo!



## Overall winners of the House Olympics



**1st**



**2nd**



**3rd**



**4th**

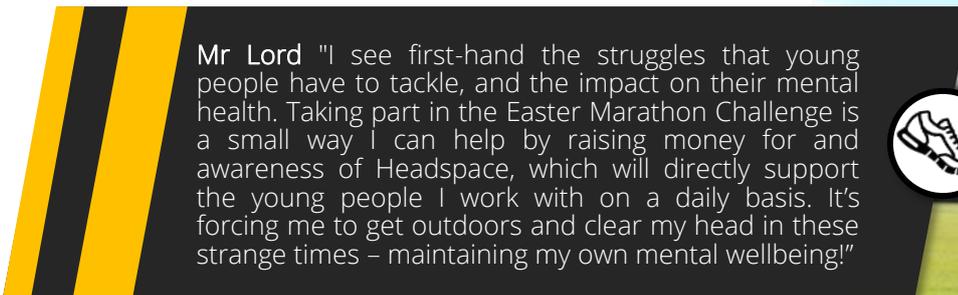
# Our Easter Marathon Challenge

Many members of staff are training to run or walk a marathon over the Easter holidays, to support their wellbeing. We're also raising money to help with the positive mental health of our students. This includes supporting the work that local charity Headspace undertakes to help young people at The Cotswold School and across the community.

If you would like to donate to support our students' mental health, please use our [Paypal donate button!](#)



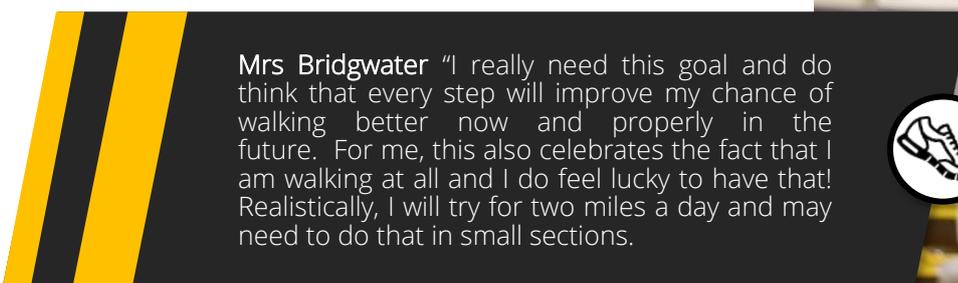
**Mrs Mustoe** "When I heard about the challenge I thought, I'm going to do this! Now, I'm really looking forward to achieving something that in all honesty, had we not had this pandemic I wouldn't have even given a thought to."



**Mr Lord** "I see first-hand the struggles that young people have to tackle, and the impact on their mental health. Taking part in the Easter Marathon Challenge is a small way I can help by raising money for and awareness of Headspace, which will directly support the young people I work with on a daily basis. It's forcing me to get outdoors and clear my head in these strange times - maintaining my own mental wellbeing!"



**Mr Stewart-Hodges** "My goals are simply to get fitter and healthier and increase my personal bests at 5km, 10km and half marathons. I know that fresh air and movement are good for my mental and physical wellbeing."



**Mrs Bridgwater** "I really need this goal and do think that every step will improve my chance of walking better now and properly in the future. For me, this also celebrates the fact that I am walking at all and I do feel lucky to have that! Realistically, I will try for two miles a day and may need to do that in small sections."

# The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

## Our DofE adventurers have found a way to keep going despite Covid restrictions

Mr Ockleston, our DofE coordinator, outlines where we're at with our DofE activities.

"Since Christmas, five of our students have completed their awards by adding more evidence of their activities. Very well done Tom, Izzy, Milly, Henry and Sophia – you have shown resilience and organisation to finalise your evidence.

"During the Easter fortnight, over 110 students from three year groups will undertake expeditions. For almost 90 students in Year 10, this will be their final expedition for the Bronze award.

"Around the school there has been lots of activity over lockdown: The DofE cupboard has been organised and kits are almost ready for the in-house expeditions next year.

"Some students were able to improve their map skills during the first months of this year. A special thank you to Lauren and Leah (Year 11) for organising treasure hunts."

The Year 8 'Into DofE' club has started again, with the help of Miss Weston, to make sure all students have the chance to gain the skills needed for their DofE experience next year.



THE DUKE  
OF EDINBURGH'S  
AWARD



Easter 2021

# Thank you to our Head Students

Elections will soon be held for the four Head Student roles. Good luck to the Year 12 students who apply.

**Outgoing Head Girl, Bethan Powell, reflects on a unique year and explains what the role has meant to her.**

How would you sum up the year?

Not quite the Head Girl experience I was expecting if I am perfectly honest, but one I will never forget. It has been a testing year in many ways.

What were your aspirations for your role as Head Girl?

Believing that September 2020 was the start of the new 'normal', I had every intent to make my mark and strive to implement the plans that I had explained during the election process. However, it became quite clear to me early on that there was going to be nothing 'normal' about school life and there were going to be many 'lows' and enduring restrictions ahead.

How were your responsibilities affected by the pandemic?

All the annual events and external engagements simply couldn't happen; Speech Day, sporting events all cancelled. A particular low point for me was not laying the wreath on behalf of the school at the Bourton Remembrance Parade. It was a duty I had been looking forward to – like many others that simply couldn't happen.

What have you enjoyed?

One of the 'highs' was the production of the school promotional video. Being invited to speak openly about a place that has been so good to me over my time here provided a significant lift to my spirits at the time. I am crossing my fingers that the Year 13 Leavers' Dinner will go ahead, which would be a lovely closure to our time at The Cotswold School.

Have you felt supported in your role?

The Headteacher, senior leadership team and staff have all been extremely supportive to my peers and me during these difficult times. They have certainly always been there for me as the Head Girl and Year 13 pupil, offering advice and help whenever I have reached out to them. Please accept my sincere thanks for all you have done for me this year and in the past.

What's your advice to the school as you step down?

I wish the new Head Girl, Head Boy and deputies all the very best in their roles and also wish the current pupil body good luck for the future. I have been extremely fortunate to have experienced all that The Cotswold School can offer. My parting advice to you is simply make the most of every day – and everything – on offer while you are a student in this great school.

[Click here to watch our school videos](#)



## Alumni stories

### Success for two former students, Charlotte and Bethany, working in scientific research and gender studies

Charlotte Rich was a pupil at The Cotswold School (2004-2011) and is now a Covid researcher at the University of Oxford.

She is working on a project to investigate all the different types of cells in the immune system to work out how they behave in Covid. By looking at the differences between patients with mild Covid and severe Covid we can better understand what causes the difference. This in turn can help other researchers develop better treatments for severe Covid. She said,

"This success was almost unimaginable for me when I was at school, so it goes to show that you can't predict the future, and you should always aim high!"

Charlotte's full news article is on our website. [Click here to read.](#)



Bethany Gum (2005-2012) is currently enrolled on the Gender Studies MA course at Utrecht University in the Netherlands and has just published her first book, *Suzie the Eight-Legged Painter*.

She graduated from Cardiff University in 2015 and worked as a trainee accountant (which, she says, she secretly enjoyed!) before completing a certificate to teach English as a second language.

Beth lived and worked in Vietnam for some years, predominantly teaching pre-school children. She says, "My time as an educator inspired me to write Suzie, which teaches children about wider issues of social inequality and the importance of being kind, inclusive and non-judgmental."

Find out more about Beth and her new book <https://bethgum.com/>



# PTA News

**"Thank you to everyone who has supported our fundraising events. It has been a difficult year, but you have raised over £10,000 so far!"**

Anita Torris, Chair of the PTA

## What you have given



The Christmas Wreath event raised an amazing £4,677

Quiz Night, kindly powered by Cotswolds Radio, raised £766

The Christmas Raffle raised an additional £3,957

In February we launched our new fundraiser - A Virtual Balloon Race - which brought in £1,133

Your shopping via easyfundraising and Amazon Smile raised £146

## What your support has achieved



Despite Covid-19 it has been a very successful year so far, raising £10,679 to support our students!

The new canopy – providing a sheltered outdoor dining space – is now installed and looking smart!

Support for nurture clubs and extended support for some of the most vulnerable students in our school.

## What you can do to help



Register via amazon smile and easyfundraising.com when you are shopping online

Come along to our next zoom meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm – email [pta@thecotswoldschool.co.uk](mailto:pta@thecotswoldschool.co.uk) to say hello!

Join in with our next quiz in July – Covid restrictions permitting!

The PTA is always looking for new parents to join the team. Get in touch by emailing [pta@thecotswoldschool.co.uk](mailto:pta@thecotswoldschool.co.uk)

Save the date for our next meeting on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May, 7pm



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# Governors' update

During this latest lockdown, governors have continued to meet and to monitor these four key areas to ensure that home learning was as safe and as productive as possible:

**Safeguarding** – are all pupils safe, especially those who are more vulnerable than others, and are the new methods for learning/teaching online compatible with normal safeguarding expectations?

**Health and safety** – are measures in place to protect the health and safety of those staff and children in school? Examples of this might be deep cleaning or enforcement of the social distancing rules.

**Headteacher and staff wellbeing** – is the leadership ensuring that staff have adapted successfully to the new way of working from home and is the support in place for anyone who needs it?

**Teaching and learning** – is the work being set appropriate in quality and quantity and does it take into account the varying needs of pupils at home?

In addition, and in no particular order, they have considered reports on E-safety, Safeguarding, Learning Support, data from mock exam results, capital spending, support for local charity Headspace and performance management amongst others. The mid-year review of the School Development Plan also happened as planned. Discussions have continued on Zoom just as they would have done in person.

Thank you to the Board of Governors for their support during this difficult time. On behalf of the Board I send everyone all good wishes for the Easter break.

Fran Hudson, Clerk to Governors

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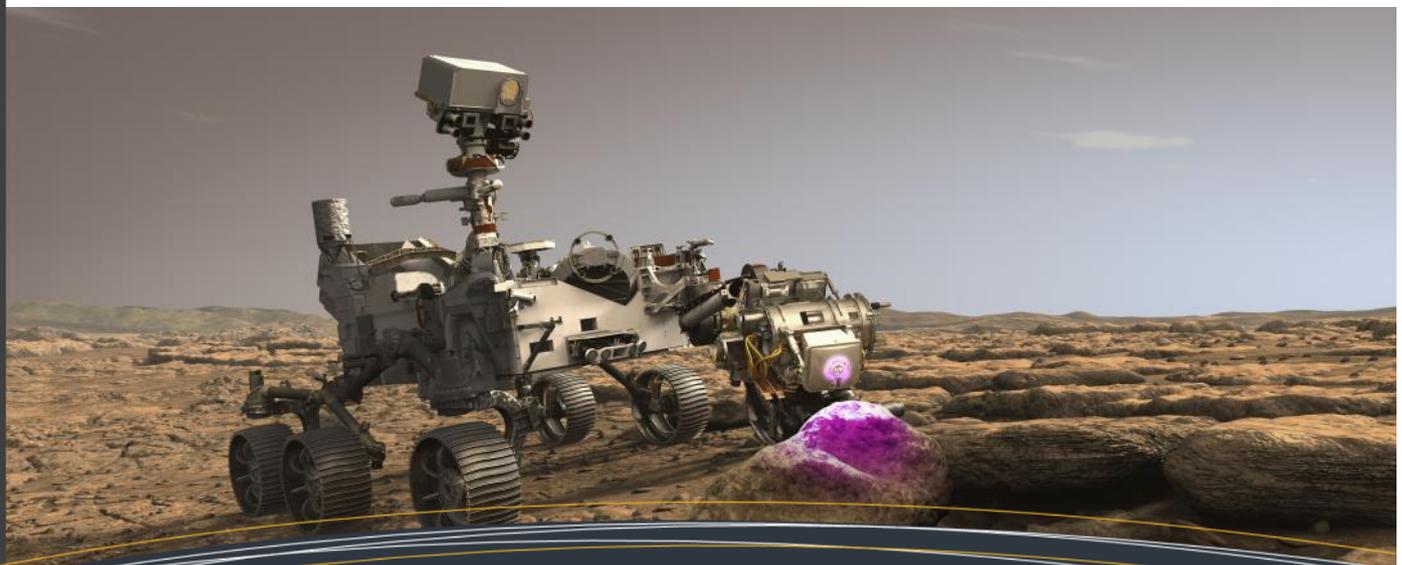
## Did you know?

The website where NASA is publishing all the Perseverance news is built on the Wagtail Content Management System. This is open source software built and maintained by Torchbox, where one of our governors, Dr Helen Warren, is Director of Engineering.

There's a blog about Torchbox's involvement here: <https://torchbox.com/blog/nasa-jpl-launches-on-wagtail/>.

Dr Warren said: "At Torchbox, we were incredibly happy to be involved in the build of the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory website ([jpl.nasa.gov](http://jpl.nasa.gov)) where news from the Mars Perseverance rover is published.

"We were embedded in their software development team to help them deliver the site in time for the arrival of Perseverance on Mars."



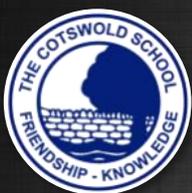
Easter 2021

# Easter cards

Students have been creating Easter cards for our community

Following the popular Christmas card initiative, coordinated in school by teaching assistant Miss Henley, pupils have been colouring Easter cards, which will be distributed to Bourton residents.





# Term dates and contacts

**FOLLOW US...**



**FACEBOOK**

**@TheCotswoldSchool**

**TWITTER**

**@Cotswold\_School**

**Term 5** 19th April - 28th May  
**Term 6** 7th June - 21st July



<https://cotswold.gloucs.sch.uk/calendar>



## Second-hand uniform shop

Please contact [cneale@thecotswoldschool.co.uk](mailto:cneale@thecotswoldschool.co.uk) to donate good quality outgrown uniform or to obtain items

## The Cotswold School

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