

Friends Newsletter 2014/5

An eventful year

"It is always a pleasure to review the school's achievements over the previous year. A year is always a long time in a school, and I hope you will enjoy this celebration of the vibrancy and energy that characterises The Camden School for Girls.

Many of the articles are from the school's weekly newsletter. You will hear the many voices of the school in this publication, capturing something of the personality of our student body. Many items were written by students themselves."

**Elizabeth Kitcatt,
Headteacher, Camden School for Girls**

August brought with another **excellent set of exam results**. At A Level, CSG has bucked national trends and again improved with our best results for many years.

Camden School for Girls Sixth Form is listed as the 29th most successful state sixth form in the Daily Telegraph top 400 maintained sixth forms list.

Particular success should be noted in Art, where 95% Camden students achieved A*-B (while nationally the figure was 56.7%), English where 95% of our students achieved an A*-B grade (nationally the figure was 47.9%), Geography, where 100% of Camden students achieved A*-B grade (as opposed to the national figure of 56.8%), and History, where 91% of our students received an A*-B (nationally only 56.3% did so).

Camden students also did exceedingly well at GCSE against national outcomes. In English and Mathematics our students achieved 83 and 85% A*-C respectively. In Core Science (Core) 75% of students received an A*-C, and in Additional, 92%. Both figures are much higher than National ones (59% and 66% respectively). Students performed very well in all subject areas.

On Thursday 25 September, **The Channel Swim Laboratory** was officially opened by Lily, Millie, Minnie, Ella, Felicity and Madeleine, in the presence of Professor Dame Athene Donald, a Camden alumnae, who spoke warmly of her time in the school and remembered having lessons in the old labs some years after they were installed. These six extraordinary girls who called themselves *6girlsnobuoys* swam a relay from Dover to France in thirteen hours and six minutes on 1 September 2013. They raised £25,000 for the school, which has made the refurbishment of one of our old science laboratories possible.



Calypso (Year 13)



Maya (Year 9)

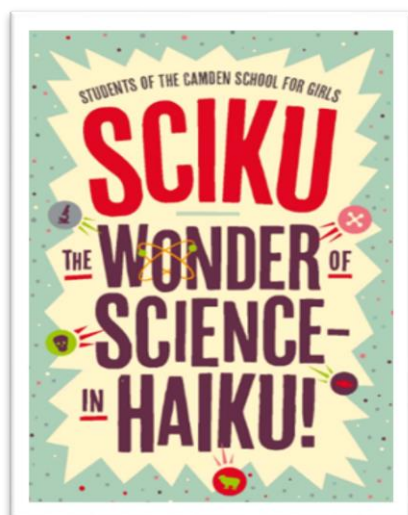


Kate (Year 12)

Once again CSG girls have been successful in the Borough Art competition.

The presentation was at the Wallace Collection with prizes awarded by the Deputy Mayor of Camden. All the work submitted will now be displayed in the Foyer of Charles Russell solicitors for the year.

Fundraising for Science



Throughout the past year our editorial team, made up of Year Nines and Year Tens, have slowly been piecing together a book. Our book is called **SciKu: The Wonder of Science in Haiku!** The name SciKu is a combination of the two words science and haiku. Haikus are Japanese poems that follow the syllabic pattern 5, 7, 5. SciKu is bursting with over 400 Haikus, all written by the students of Camden School for Girls, all of which are about the wonders of science. The book is unique as it combines the arts and science, things we usually perceive to be polar opposites. We produced this book to show everyone that science is a subject that can be fun as well as opening endless opportunities.

In our society, girls are usually steered away from pursuing careers in science as traditionally it has been assumed that sciences are male orientated subjects. Our school destroys this stereotype.

Aiyshah and Celia – Year 10 Students

Click [here](#) to order a copy, or visit Amazon.



Camden Youth Award

Bluebelle (Year 8), was presented with the Young Entrepreneur of the Year award at the Camden Youth Awards ceremony. Last year, Bluebelle set up her 'Words Not Wars' charity, which is a pen pal scheme linking students at CSG with refugees in Kenya.

National Music Award

Molly (Year 8) has been awarded a Robert Lewin Scholarship of £500. She was one of only 103 successful applicants - 300 applied. Hester Cockcroft, Director of Awards for Young Musicians, said - '...it's testament to her musical ability and the quality of her application that she has received this award'. Molly is an excellent musician who makes a wonderful contribution to the musical life of the school, and we are very proud of her success. Well done Molly!

Black History Month

Our aim for this year's Black History Month was to reorganise our celebrations and make them more relevant to young people. Our focus was to re-engage a younger generation in black history and inform them about the more contemporary subjects that are closer to home.

The Head Girl Team and School Council had organised a jam packed week full of important and interesting activities to re-energise our celebrations and acknowledgement of Black History.

In total we raised over £260 for Sickle Cell Anaemia.



An Inspiring Founder's Day Commemoration – 2 April 2015

An alumni has described Founder's Day as the quintessential Camden experience, and 2 April was no exception. Over 700 students, parents, teachers, staff and alumni gathered to celebrate the School's founding and its continuing ethos. Posies, the commemoration and the school prayer recalled the school's proud history while speeches by Head Girls' Maia (Year 10) and Rachael (Year 13), and Head Boy George (Year 13), reflected Frances Mary Buss's strength in the face of adversity and our students' willingness to "take problems head on" and "change the world." Apparently, even Harry Potter aspires to be a Camden Girl!

Would you like to attend Founders Day next year? Email friends@camdengirls.camden.sch.uk with your details and connection to the school.



"I LOVED Founders' Day – so much singing and the choir practice was fabulous... lovely, just absolutely lovely x"

Tenia Finlayson, via Facebook



Chamber Music Concert

On 2nd December, the Music Performance Space was filled to capacity as parents and friends of our sixth form musicians gathered to listen to the Chamber Music Concert. The programme was varied and included a wide range of instrumental and voice pieces. We heard a beautiful rendition of Dido's Lament by Purcell from Emma, sections of Mozart's String Quartet No 2 K 155

from the Camden School for Girls String Quartet as well as extracts from Bizet's Carmen from the Brass Group and pieces by Davis and Rollins from the Jazz Band.

Find Me

We enjoyed a wonderful production of 'Find Me' by Olwen Wymark. The play re-tells the true story of Verity Taylor, who was charged by police with damaging a chair by fire in the mental hospital where she was a patient. Later she was committed to Broadmoor and in 1977, when the play was written with the help of her parents, she was in Rampton Prison. The play reflects the difficulties faced by children and families in finding appropriate treatment for mental health problems.

The acting was very strong, and the complex staging and use of multiple actors made the experience truly memorable. Many thanks, as always, to Saffron Myers for her inspirational direction, to Glenn Tillin as Technical Manager and to Karen Gledhill, Joe Grossi and Hester Welch for their work on the production team

School Developments

The school community has been working hard in recent years to improve our learning facilities. As I write this, the old furniture in the school's science laboratories is going up for auction after fifty years of service. By September we will have modern, welcoming labs in which future generations of scientists will be inspired and enthused. We are also hoping the roof repairs will be complete by then, and the scaffolding will have been removed. The articles below also reflect the school's increasing effectiveness in providing an outstanding education for all students, including those who experience serious disadvantage.

Building work begins

The Sandall Road entrance will begin to look very different from February 2015 as scaffolding will be erected for work on the roof of the main school building. During the next year, construction will be undertaken to complete our science laboratories' refurbishment, entry hall and dining hall renovation and the expansion of the Sixth Form block. The work has been carefully scheduled to minimize any disruption to classes and school activities and we are looking forward to the benefits of our revitalised facilities. This has been made possible thanks to the Local Authority, which has provided a grant for the capital improvements and long-overdue repairs.

Camden School for Girls identified as a school which 'achieves excellence especially for disadvantaged pupils'

The school has received recognition for its outstanding work with disadvantaged pupils. The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, has written to us to invite us to join his Gold Club of 'exceptional London schools'

CSG in the Top 100 non-selective State Funded Schools in England again

Camden School for Girls is, once again, listed as being in the top 100 non-selective state schools in England for its GCSE performance in 2014. In his letter, Nick Gibb, Minister of State for School Reform praises the staff, governors and pupils for all their hard work in achieving excellent results in the English Baccalaureate subjects. Camden School for Girls was also praised by David Laws in 2013 for being in the top 100 non-selective state schools in England for outstanding achievement in relation to the percentage of students achieving five A* - C grades including Mathematics and English.

Wolfson Foundation awards the Camden School for Girls £25,000 for Science Labs

I am thrilled to announce that the school's funding bid to the Wolfson Foundation has been successful, and we have been granted £25 000 towards the refurbishment of our science laboratories. This extremely generous award has been made by the Trustees of the Wolfson Foundation, who are committed to 'supporting the teaching of A levels and GCSEs at high-achieving state-funded schools and sixth-form colleges through the funding of capital projects'. I am sure you will join me in celebrating the great improvements to the science teaching and learning environment that this kind gift will provide. Thanks go as well to all parents, students and friends of the school, not least our Channel swimmers, who have already donated towards the laboratory refurbishment. This combined effort will transform our science teaching spaces from September 2015.

Speakers & Visitors

The school invites many speakers from a range of backgrounds in to meet our students. This year we have welcomed a particularly varied selection of guests as we covered all the different political parties in the approach to the general election. Students respond with great enthusiasm to writers, academics, politicians and people who have extraordinary life experiences to recount. The selection of articles below covers just a few of the guests we have welcomed into the school this year and provides an insight into students' perspectives on the issues raised in the talks. It will not surprise you to learn that Camden Girls and boys were fascinated by this year's general election and sent their own decisive message to politicians in Westminster, with a labour victory in the CSG Mock Elections.

On November 27, economist and environmental **activist Dave Hill** came in to give a masterclass: Global Energy Futures and the Internet. He spoke about the current energy crisis and how carbon emissions, although at their highest, do not stop our demand for energy perpetually increasing. Currently we produce energy with an incredible amount of waste; Mr Hill proposes we transfer our energy by connecting appliances to the internet in order to effectively use the energy where it is actually needed as most of the energy we currently generate is wasted.

Gemma (Year 13)

We were delighted to have **Theatre Director Lyndsey Turner** who recently won an Olivier award for 'Best Director 2014' for her play 'Chimerica', speak at the Sixth Form Assembly on Thursday 4th September. Lyndsey was an inspiring speaker; she spoke to us about the thrill of creativity. She used the analogy of a 'room' to describe the inspirational pull of being amongst people who create and imagine. She said that Camden School for Girls is renowned for the 'intellectual curiosity' of its students and that being in the assembly with us was like being in one of those exciting rooms!

Freya (Year 10)

Owen Jones – Political Journalist speaks in Sixth Form assembly



Never before have the Sixth Form students left an assembly filled with so much anger and yet so much hope. Owen Jones, voted 7th most influential left-winger by the well-known Marxist polemic The Telegraph last year and the writer of the acclaimed Chavs and The Establishment, ignited Camden with his passionate oratory. 'One day we will look back in horror and disbelief at a time when you could go out and work all day and still not earn enough to live.'

He powerfully communicated the message that British society 'socialises the risks and privatises the profits'. No longer should we be duped into blaming our neighbours for the selfish actions of those at the top. It is the bankers, provided with the most generous no-strings-attached benefit package in history after the crisis they created in 2008, who should take responsibility for the state of society, not the Polish cleaner, the Lithuanian fruit-picker or the Nigerian nurse. He reminded us of the vital lessons of history, emphasising that Britain is a country built on people power, where change only occurs when it is demanded by the struggle of movements like the Tolpuddle Martyrs, the Chartists and the Suffragettes. The suffragettes were demonised and force-fed in prison during their lifetimes, but today they have a very important status as worthy and indomitable campaigners. He told us, we must look past the politics of envy, avoid being seduced by that rare breed of privately-educated white

male politician such as the individual who runs UKIP, and build a society in the interests of the people who keep it ticking. It was a truly memorable and inspirational assembly.

George (Year 13)

Natalie Bennett – Leader of the Green Party

On Monday 12 January, in Assembly, CSG Green club arranged for Natalie Bennett, Leader of the Green Party running for the Parliamentary seat of Holborn and St Pancras gave a talk to the Sixth Form.

After giving a brief background to her own career and studies in agricultural science, she began talking to us about her ideologies and policies. Bennett put forward the idea that the status quo in economic, social and environmental terms is totally unsustainable, proposing a rethink of all our systems, from housing to energy to public transport.

In her eyes, our society fails to make the 'greener' option available or easy; she recounted an anecdote about an old woman who was unable to recycle her newspapers due to the distance of the bins and her own physical frailty. Bennett told us that she often goes to meet the constituents of her borough to hear stories like this, which sums up the community-based attitude of the Green Party.

Finally, Natalie came on to the topic of education, when she mentioned that she wanted to get rid of university tuition fees and abolish OFSTED she was met with a loud cheer and a round of applause from the sixth form. Tuition fees were put in place after the last election and 75% of those who take out a loan to cover student debts are not able to pay it back.

Natalie Bennett was an incredibly informative and engaging speaker. What I felt the most important piece of advice that she imparted was, simply to vote for what we believe in at the next election. If we do not vote, we will not be counted, to paraphrase her words: "Politics at any level is something that you do, not something that is done to you".

Maia (Year 12)

Members of all the major political parties spoke at the school in the run up to the general election.



Keerti Purmessur, a representative from **WAR CHILD** charity, visited the school to talk about the effects of war on children. Keerti explained the less obvious effects that war can have on children.

War Child is the only agency that specialises in child protection in conflict-affected countries. Other charities run child protection projects as part of their emergency or humanitarian work but War Child make this their sole focus.

Although War Child may arrive in a country during a conflict, they remain on the ground for years after, filling the gap between humanitarian aid ending and long term development work starting. This vacuum can last for years, long after the media and other humanitarian aid agencies have moved on to the next crisis.

During her speech, Keerti emphasised some of the areas that they focus on: street children, former child soldiers, families forced to flee their homes, or girls who've experienced, or are at risk of, sexual violence.

Children from these areas often slip through the net of the authorities and other charities. War Child provides them and their families with life-changing intensive and individually tailored support - rather than a 'one-size-fits-all' solution.

Main School Head Girl Team





Holocaust Survivors – Year 9 visit (March 2015)

Holocaust survivors Bob and Ann Kirk came to talk to the year 9 about their experiences as Jewish children in Nazi Germany and their escape on the Kinder-transport. Year 9 then went to the Jewish Museum to learn more about the Holocaust and Jewish belief on a joint History and Theology Holocaust day.

Bob was taken care of by several families, at different times, once he arrived in England, via the Kindertransport. Bob could not write letters to his mother and father, as they were taken to camp; where they possibly had died. Ann Kirk believed that she was lucky to live the life she lived during the Holocaust. Ann also wrote to her parents as Bob had, however it was likely that her mother and father had died at the camp they were sent to.

Bob and Ann had also told us how they are still traumatised today by the loss of their mothers and fathers, and believe that speaking or trying to learn German will constantly remind them of their tragic past in Germany, and the persecution of Jews under Hitler-Nazi law. It is clear that they feel relieved and lucky to have had the chance to start life again in London.

Sophie, 9T

Adam Rutherford – Everything You Know About Genetics is Wrong

The Sixth Form had the pleasure of hearing a talk from the acclaimed geneticist and broadcaster Adam Rutherford. Rutherford is passionate about bringing science to the people; he hosts the BBC Radio 4 show *Inside Science*, makes documentaries about genetics and the origins of life and is an advocate for the teaching of evolution, as opposed to creationism, as part of the school science curriculum.

Using a worryingly looped family tree, Rutherford illustrated the importance of genetics by demonstrating the abrupt end to the Hapsburg dynasty's position as Europe's most powerful family with the birth of Charles II ('the bewitched') in 1700, who was severely disabled as a result of generations of interbreeding (the Hapsburgs wanted to keep power 'in the family'). From this fascinating start, Rutherford launched into a whistle-stop tour of genetics, including its use as a powerful historical tool (the genome sequence of the little finger of a Neanderthal woman suggests a long history of interbreeding between at least 4 species of early humans) and the monumental feat that is the Human Genome Project (to which Rutherford contributed).

The definite conclusion of the talk was that genetics rarely provides a definite conclusion, and Rutherford communicated both the excitement and the complexity of the discipline. Consequently, we learned that when the Daily Mail announces that there's a gene that makes you cheat on your partner, 'scared out of your mind' or get addicted to cocaine, we should take this with a huge pinch of salt!

George (Year 13)



Alumni News

It is always a real pleasure to hear news of ex-students. I hope that reading this short list might prompt more alumnae (and alumni) to contact us with news of their lives after Camden. Let us know what you have been up to by emailing friends@camdengirls.camden.sch.uk or visiting our [Facebook page](#).

Ellen Ellis (2006-13) has been awarded an Elton Exhibition at Balliol College, Oxford. This is in recognition of her excellent scholarship in English.

Marika Mckennell (2008-10) has graduated from Homerton College Cambridge with an excellent degree in Education. Her tutors describe her as an outstanding student.

Molly Flood (2010-12) has achieved a First in Part I of the Education Tripos at Newnham College, Cambridge. Congratulations!

Charlotte McLean (2005 - 2012) has achieved a First in her Classical Moderations Examination at Somerville College, Oxford, and has been awarded a Seymour Scholarship. She has also been awarded a Barraclough Scholarship in recognition of achieving a first class or distinction in her First Public Exams and for academic work of a consistently high standard in her studies at Oxford. This is wonderful news and an outstanding achievement, and we are very proud of Charlotte. We wish her every success as she continues her studies. Congratulations!

Keeping in touch

If you want to register your details with the school you can fill out the [online form](#) available by searching 'Camden School for Girls Friends and Alumni' and clicking on 'Send Us Your News'. We would love to hear from you and find out what you have been up to. There are a number of ways you can get more involved with the school if you would like to, from speaking at assemblies to volunteering to facilitate a work experience placement if needed.

We are delighted to have renewed contact with **Dame Julia**

Cleverdon, who attended Camden School for Girls in the 1960s. She speaks warmly of her time here and we are very pleased that she wishes to maintain her ties with her old school. I am also very grateful to Cathy Drysdale, who produces Radio Four's Desert Island Discs, for sending us this link to her programme featuring Dame Julia. It makes for very inspiring listening! <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04y9nl6>

Timothy Carey (CSG Sixth Former 1991-3) returns to the Singapore Lyric Opera to conduct Lehar's *The Merry Widow*. One of the last conducting students of the late professor, Ilya Musin, he will also direct Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto from the keyboard with Cheltenham Chamber Orchestra (The same concerto he played at the Royal Festival Hall with CSG orchestra conducted by John Catlow in 1993).

News from our Facebook Page. We now have over 600 alumnae who are using the school's Facebook page, and it is proving to be a good way to link up with old classmates and teachers. A number of old photographs have been posted and some more will be put up later on in the year, along with updates on the school's recent activity.

"That school made me into the woman I am today and I'm grateful for that and what the school has achieved, shaping some amazing women through education."

Olivia Hurworth, via facebook

"I remember doing Ancient Greek with Ms Handley in her lunch hour – that was dedication to the classics on her and our parts. Wonderful classes!"

Sarah Papineau, via Facebook

I was at the school when uniforms were worn (mid 1950s – oh so long ago!)... Fair enough we all looked the same but no problems wondering what to wear each day! I have very special memories of that school.

Jane Wyness, via Facebook

*We are sad to inform you that the school has been notified of the passing of **Ms Jeanne Strickland**, who was a longstanding English Teacher and Deputy Head during the 1980s. Ms Strickland was a passionate supporter of the school and she will be sadly missed. Our thoughts are with her family at this difficult time.*

Camden Students Support Good Causes



As we all know, October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. As Camden girls and proud feminists, this month is very important to us. Pink Day, our annual celebration to raise money for Breast Cancer awareness and breast cancer sufferers was bigger than it has ever been. With Main School, Sixth Form and staff participation, we got involved to raise as much money as we possibly could for a cause dear to us all, evidenced by the “crazy” costumes of the Head Girl Team. Every student was dressed in bright pink to show their support for the cause. The Pink Police, organised by the Head Girl Team, went the extra mile to raise money. Pink Day would not have been complete without the highly anticipated break time Conga and lunchtime Catwalk where students and teachers alike displayed their fantastic Carnival themed costumes.

Pink Day is always a fun day and it gives students a chance to be creative with their fundraising. In total, we raised £2,400 and we would like to thank everyone for their generous donation in support of Breast Cancer Awareness.

Oluwaseun (Year 11)

On Friday 13 February, the Head Girl team organised the first talent show of 2015. It was an incredibly successful event, raising £140 for the Charity Lively Minds (which improve the quality of life for deprived children in parts of rural Ghana and Uganda.) There were ten fantastic acts including: a French song (sung by Madeleine in year 7), a musical performance created from classroom equipment such as bins, tables, books and a keyboard (year 8), and an enormous variety of singing acts. Our winner was Evangeline (year 7). She performed a solo dance to a very enthusiastic audience.

Rachael, (Year 11)

Would you like to visit the school? Go to our [website](#) to find details of forthcoming plays, fairs, and activities.

EVENTS RAISE MONEY FOR ICT & SCIENCE

CASCA Quiz Evening

The CASCA Quiz evening was a great success, providing an evening of entertainment, food, cocktails, competition and laughter. The school is raising money to improve its ICT equipment, and we were delighted to hear that a total of £1,400 was raised on the night.



Camden School for Girls Fun Run raises £12,500 for new computers

More than 150 parents, staff and schoolchildren from Camden School for Girls in Camden Town dashed around Regent's Park wearing fancy dress on Saturday.

Their efforts have so far raised roughly £12,500 to replace the Sandall Road school's outdated IT equipment and ageing interactive whiteboards.

Headteacher Elizabeth Kitcatt, who ran in the *Camden Girls On the Run* race, said: "The improvements to ICT that we can make with the money raised will really make a difference to the day-to-day experience of

students and staff in school - all day and every day – so it was definitely worth it.

"I'll never forget watching the students reaching the finishing line. It gave them a real sense of achievement."

The fastest runner in the junior category to complete the course in a lightning time of 20 minutes and 33 seconds was Ezra Banks-Baddiel, the 10-year-old brother of a CSFG pupil.

The time was just one minute slower than the fastest runner in the senior category. Ezra said: "I have been walking on air ever since. I loved the event, and feel so proud of myself."

Article taken from the Ham & High

Congratulations to Soren!

Soren (Year 7) was the top student fundraiser for our first-ever Fun Run. First among adult fundraisers was our own Headteacher, Elizabeth Kitcatt. Contributions continued to flow in after the event, and more than £14,000 has been raised for new interactive classroom technology. Thank you to the dedicated parents who organised the event, the runners and everyone who contributed.

Successful science furniture auction raises £7,500

Following the successful campaign to refurbish the school's science laboratories, the school recently held an auction of all the vintage furniture and equipment from the old labs. Lots included beautiful teak workbenches, old Twyford butlers' sinks, chests of drawers, cupboards and cabinets.

The school raised over £7,500 during the event and many of the lots sold quickly. Several former students attended the auction and took home a genuine souvenir from their time at school.

THANK YOU!

In 2014-15, generous support from our families and alumni enable us to continue to provide the excellent education our students deserve and

- Renovate three more science labs this summer
- Improve our ICT infrastructure
- Meet our obligations for vital improvements to our buildings

CASCA EVENTS BENEFIT STUDENTS

Our wonderful Community Association hosts fun events throughout the year – Jumble Sales, Book Fairs, Quiz Night, Summer Extravaganza and our first ever Fun Run. Proceeds from the events raised over £20,000 in 2014 to help complete our new science labs. All proceeds in 2015 will support new interactive classroom technology. CASCA is for all members of the school community. If you'd like to know how to become involved, contact CASCA@camdengirls.camden.sch.uk.

YOUR GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

This year we received the sad news that our state funding has been cut yet again, and is likely to continue to decrease in the coming years. Despite prudent cost-cutting, the current levels of funding simply don't stretch to cover the facilities and resources we feel are necessary for an outstanding education.

You can help by filling out the attached contribution form, or [click here to contribute online](#).

We rely on private funds to improve our classrooms, labs and facilities, to produce our theatrical productions and speakers' series, and to support school trips. Your gift will ensure that all students, regardless of ability to pay, continue to have the depth and breadth of experience that makes a Camden education unique.

If there is a special area you would like to support or if you would like to fundraise for us, please contact our school fundraiser, Mary Crowley at fundraising@camdengirls.camden.sch.uk.

"I hope you have enjoyed reading these accounts of events in 2014 – 2015. They provide just a glimpse of the rich life of this school, but I think they give a sense of our students' enthusiasm for ideas, their ambition and their interest in the world around them. It has been a difficult year as funding cuts bite ever deeper in to the fabric of the school, but this review demonstrates the strength of the school and its determination to maintain educational excellence in even the most challenging circumstances."