

INSIDE



Prior Park
Gibraltar

PRIOR

ISSUE 19



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the 19th edition of *Inside Prior!*

This term has seen a whirl wind of activity involving lots of student performances in a plethora of ways. We kicked off the term with an absolutely fabulous performance from the cast and supporting crew of *Grease*. All of our students have been studying and performing in exams whether it be in lesson assessments or their GCSE's and A levels. With that in mind, we chose to focus this magazine on the importance of checking in with ourselves and having a healthy mental and physical health – particularly with the busy term we have had. We are very proud and extremely lucky to have such an amazing school community here full of performers whether it be in academia, sport or the arts. You will see contributions from a range of our students in the following pages which show the truly wonderful cohort of students that we have.

Thank you to the teachers and the students who have contributed articles.

CONTENTS

4 HEAD'S FOREWORD

KEEPING ON TOP OF OUR MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH

5 WHY GET INVOLVED IN SPORT?

6 THE IMPORTANCE OF FINDING A HOBBY

FRIDAY MORNING MOVERS

7 FINDING TIME FOR YOU

8 HOW THE PERFORMING ARTS CAN SUPPORT OUR WELLBEING - GREASE!

10 SOUND MIND

AFTERNOON OF SPORT

12 SPORTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

15 WHAT ARE THE KEY TAKEAWAYS WHEN IT COMES TO LOOKING AFTER OURSELVES

HOW DO WE GROW FROM OUR EXPERIENCES?

16 GROWTH DOESN'T ASK FOR PERMISSION

17 REFLECTION ON YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

HOW DOES DRAMA SUPPORT PERSONAL GROWTH?

19 HOW HAS THIS SCHOOL HELPED ME GROW?

20 HISTORY TRIP: WHAT EXPERIENCE DID WE GAIN BY LOOKING TOWARDS OUR PAST?

22 THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH BRONZE QUALIFYING EXHIBITION

24 YEAR 9 CULTURAL TRIP TO MÁLAGA

25 ALGECIRAS TRIP: EXCHANGE WITH YEAR 8

26 IAAC ASTRONOMY & ASTROPHYSICS COMPETITION

27 GUESS THE TEACHER

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

28 HOW DOES EACH HOUSE SUPPORT THE WIDER COMMUNITY?

31 PRIOR PARK MISSION DAY 2026

34 WHY MISSION DAY MATTERS

35 STUDENT OF THE MONTH

HEAD'S FOREWORD

By Mr Martyn

As I sit down to write this foreword, I find myself returning to a metaphor that I often share with our newest Year 7 pupils.

I ask them to imagine Prior Park School not simply as a collection of classrooms, corridors and timetables, but as a thriving garden. A place full of life, growth and possibility. In any healthy garden, no two plants are the same. Each grows at its own pace, faces different challenges and flourishes in different ways. Schools, I have come to believe, are much the same.

One of the great privileges of working in education is witnessing the remarkable journey young people undertake during their time with us. Growth rarely happens in a straight line. It comes through experiences: success and disappointment, friendship and disagreement, confidence and uncertainty. The strongest roots are often developed during difficult seasons. As adults, we know this to be true in our own lives, and it is equally true for the young people entrusted to our care. Every challenge faced, every lesson learned, and every opportunity embraced contribute to the person they are becoming.

Of course, no plant grows alone. A flourishing garden depends upon the wider ecosystem around it. It requires gardeners who nurture, guide and encourage. It needs sunlight, water and the right conditions to thrive. In our school community, those gardeners are our teachers, support staff, parents and families. Together, we provide the care, encouragement and opportunities that help each young person discover their strengths and fulfil their potential.

This edition of Inside Prior also celebrates the importance of caring for one another. The most vibrant communities are those in which people look beyond themselves. Whether through acts of kindness, service, friendship or leadership, our students continually remind us that generosity has the power to strengthen the whole community. Just as every part of a garden contributes to its health and beauty, every member of our school has something valuable to offer.

Finally, healthy growth requires healthy foundations. We cannot expect young people to flourish academically, socially or spiritually without also caring for their physical and mental well-being. Plants need nourishment, rest and the right environment to grow. People do too. Across these pages, you will see many examples of how we seek to support the well-being of our students, helping them develop the habits, resilience and self-awareness that will serve them throughout their lives.

As you read this edition, I hope you enjoy the many stories of growth, service and wellbeing that reflect life at Prior Park. More than anything, I hope they remind us that education is not simply about examination results or qualifications. It is about helping young people grow into the very best versions of themselves.

Thank you for being part of this remarkable community. Together, we continue to nurture a community where every individual is known, valued and given the opportunity to flourish.

Each and every one of us will have explored many different avenues so far in life to find some joy. The evidence out there suggests that there is a strong link between a simple smile and our serotonin levels.

What kind of a scientist would I be if I didn't include a little bit of geeky science wherever I can!? Serotonin is often referred to as a natural antidepressant. It is a neurotransmitter which is

linked to reduced stress levels and enhances our mood. The simple process of our facial muscles contracting is enough for our brain to produce this stress busting chemical. What is even better is that smiles are contagious! The simple act of offering a smile to others can really uplift our day. So why not read about some of the many ways in which our students and staff are hunting for a smile below!



WHY GET INVOLVED IN SPORT?

By Miriam

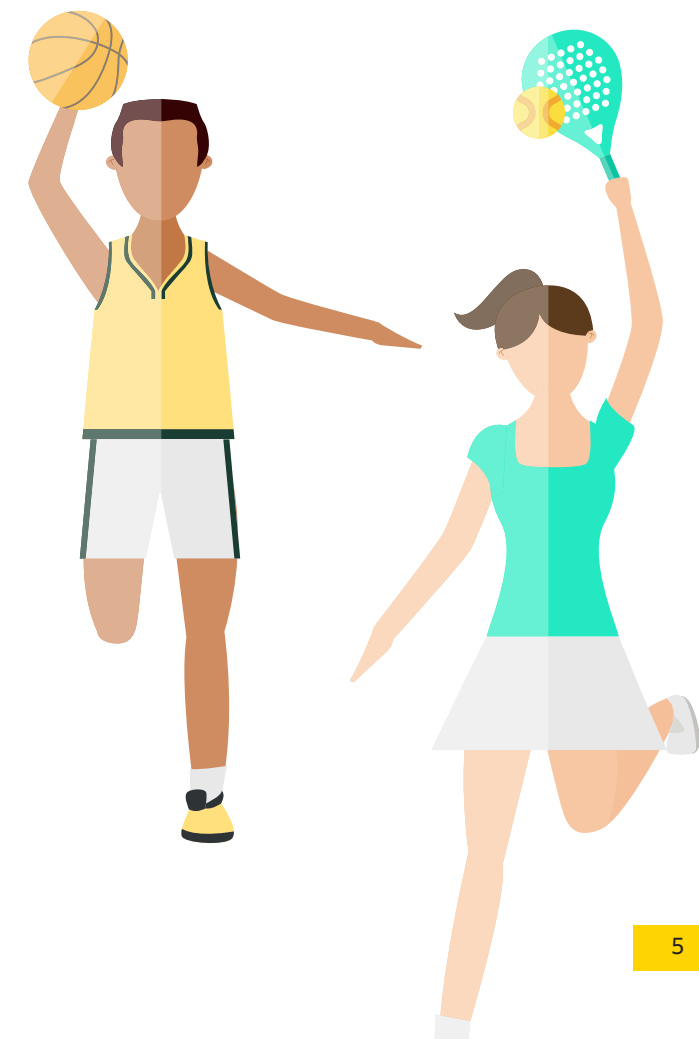
The question about why we should play sports is close to my heart. While I see many people taking up gym memberships and logging their running times on Strava, playing sports is an entirely different pastime. Of course, the fitness benefits are the same, and I won't waste time trying to convince you of how important it is to keep fit for health reasons. We all appreciate the importance of strength and mobility, as well as optimum cardiac function. We should all strive to keep active and maintain at least a basic level of fitness, whether it be through keep-fit classes or jogging. However, playing a sport means so much more.

I have made countless friends through netball training and tennis coaching, not to mention padel mix-ins in Gibraltar and Spain. It's wonderful to be able to travel to a foreign country and immediately enter a social group with like-minded sports enthusiasts. Further, belonging to teams, whether it be football teams or basketball teams, forges strong bonds and helps us to learn to work with others in pursuit of a common goal. Additionally, whether we play for fun or are fiendishly competitive, focus and determination are sharpened by our sporting endeavours.

All in all, I urge everyone to take up a sport. I simply don't believe we are made up of the sporty or the non-sporty. There are sports out there for everyone to enjoy, from quidditch to toe wrestling. We don't have to be Olympic medallists. We just have to get out there, meet people, and have fun.

'Sports do not build character. They reveal it'.

(Heywood Broun, American newspaper columnist and sportswriter, 1811-1939)



THE IMPORTANCE OF FINDING A HOBBY

By Penny

Hobbies are super important for keeping your mind feeling good. When you're stressed or just feeling board, doing something you actually enjoy can be like a mini vacation for your brain. It gives you a break from all the usual pressures, like schoolwork or whatever else is going on, and lets you focus on something fun. Plus, when you get better at a hobby, it gives you a real confidence boost. And sometimes, you even meet other people who are into the same stuff, which is awesome for feeling connected. There are tons of hobbies out there, so you can find something that sticks with you. If you're creative, maybe try drawing, painting, or even writing stories. Music is another big one learning an instrument, singing, or even just making playlists

can be really therapeutic. If you're more into being active, things like dancing, hiking, or joining a sports team are great ways to get your energy out and feel good. Even quieter hobbies, like reading, gardening, or building, can be super relaxing and rewarding. For me I like to do art because it helps me clear my mind and it helps me focus on something else rather than the problem that is so raped around my head, I also like to read as it helps me escape the reality of actually having to do something and it makes my brain more imaginative, the last one I do is to listen to music as it lowers my anxiety and stress from school work. The main thing is to pick something that you genuinely find interesting and fun, something that makes you forget about your worries for a while.

FRIDAY MORNING MOVERS

By Mr Harris

"Research confirms that Friday is generally the least productive workday, with productivity plummeting by 20–35% compared to early-week levels."

A&M School of Public Health (Texas, USA)

To try and combat this and give our learners a boost on a Friday morning, Mr Harris and Miss Davies tutor class organised a series of outdoor activities to make the most of the Fresh Air, Sunshine and to get a bit of Exercise.

We listened to music, did some light exercise, generated smiles and played fun games. Learners took part in activities ran by tutees including Keepie Uppies with Eyal, Beat the Goalkeeper with Nico, Netball Free Throws with Marie and Cornhole with Kai.

Students reported that this was a very positive way to start the day and helped them overcome the Friday morning slump we can all feel at the end of a busy week.



FINDING TIME FOR YOU

By Ms Porro, Assistant Head (Welfare)

We often talk about how important discipline and routine is when we are looking to succeed. Around exam seasons, students are told to buckle in, keep their heads down and keep on track for the final stretch. But how do we find a balance for it all?

Finding time for yourself in these really busy periods is one of the most common pieces of advice given to help manage stress. If you organise your time wisely you can find time for it all. So, what do you do for you?

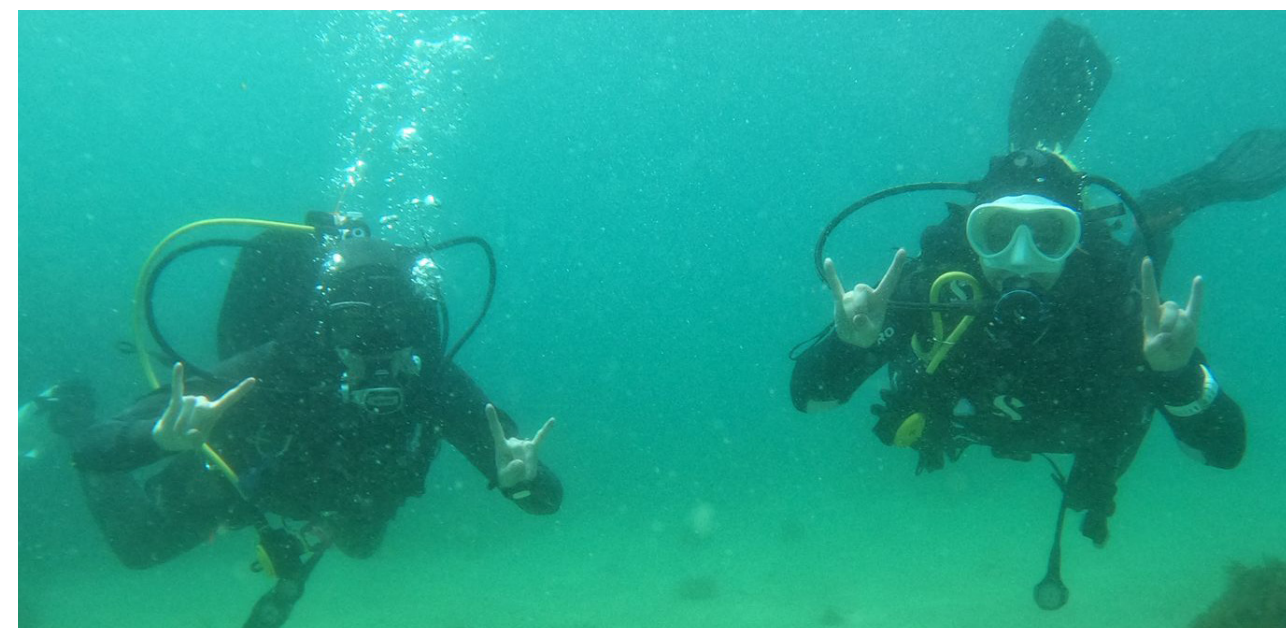
For me, this involves spending time outside, and sometimes even under water.

A few years ago, I really got into my gardening. The excitement of bringing home a new plant, finding the right spot for it and watching it grow, or in my case, die a slow, painful death. Okay so, you make your second trip to the garden centre, round 2 with what you were told was not a beginner's plant, and you know what? I really should have listened to those much wiser than myself. Over time, and yes, more money than I care to admit, I have a nice, modest collection of plants that I actually manage to keep alive. On my most stressful days there is nothing I find more peace in than spending time pruning, watering, repotting and getting excited at the tiniest evidence of new growth I can find. A little

perseverance, and reflection on practise, can take you a long way.

As for underwater? I spent last winter getting myself acquainted with the world under the surface of the sea. I had been wanting to try scuba diving for the longest time, and together with some friends (your resident Chemistry, Maths and Computer Science teachers) I went about getting my PADI qualifications. I originally set out just to complete my basic training, but having fallen in love with the sport, I went on to complete my advanced training too, because who doesn't want to dive up to 30m below the surface of the sea? Scuba diving is intense and technical requiring that you maintain both your focus and physical fitness. One of my most memorable experiences with diving came last summer where I was able to complete some dives in Honduras. The local diving scene in Gibraltar is pretty exciting as there are loads of wrecks out in the bay we get to explore, but there was something about getting up close and personal with a Lemon Shark that just made the dive in Honduras all that much sweeter.

Whether its outside, in the gym, or under the water as in my case, find something that brings you joy. I have found my own little fountain of serotonin, have you?





HOW THE PERFORMING ARTS CAN SUPPORT OUR WELLBEING- GREASE! By Marie H

On Wednesday 22nd April and Thursday 23rd April I had the amazing opportunity of performing the musical Grease alongside over 30 other students. The auditions took place at the end of September and involved reading a script extract, singing a song and performing a short choreography. Rehearsals began in October and we rehearsed two to three times a week. Although the cast was made up of over 30 students there were a lot more people involved in making this show possible. The backstage crew moved the set and props on the nights. Various teachers and the Growing Artists Program helped to bring the musical to life by building parts of the set. The Hair and Make-Up team transformed the cast into their characters. The technicians created the atmosphere and Ms Albarn, Mr Harris and Mr Cruz supported us every step of the way.

Being involved in this musical was an incredible experience and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I formed friendships with members of the cast along the journey. I also learnt a lot about performing and became a more confident actress. The memories which I made on stage and in rehearsals are ones which I will treasure for the rest of my life. I am immensely grateful that opportunities like this are offered at Prior Park.



SOUND MIND BY MILLIE E AND NORA K

Music is incredibly important to wellbeing. It creates a positive impact to a person's mental health. Music can provide escape from a long day, or keep you motivated to push through tasks.

Music has become a safe environment that allows you to fully absorb yourself in it, and to escape from reality whether it's just listening to it or actively playing.

Because music is so beneficial to people, we are very lucky to have access to musical outlets and opportunities in our school (such as School of Rock, The WAS and being able to go down to GAMPA weekly, etc.).

Throughout the year, we have both attended School of Rock weekly for the full 2 hours. This has helped us grow as not only musicians but also as individuals.

The club has allowed us to become a part of a large community of fellow students who share the same passions as us. This has helped us become more familiar with peers outside of our year group, while normally we would stick to people we already know.



AFTERNOON OF SPORT

By Miriam

On Tuesday the 12th of May, all four rival Houses trekked down to the Victoria Stadium with the excitement high and tension palpable in the air. All morning, in corridors and classrooms, both teachers and students argued about the outcome of the afternoon- poking fun and making jokes- Prior Park had become a competitive place.

In the first half of the afternoon, Years 9, 10, and 12, competed in netball, cricket and table tennis and the KS3 students played football, rounders and padel tennis, with every student hoping to collect points for their House. After a quick break and pep talks from our form tutors and Heads of Houses, the groups switched and the last stretch of the day was spent running around and winning matches, trying our best to bring up our House's scores.

After the games ended, the school gathered again and the winners were announced with the cheers getting quieter as each House was put out of the running:

In 4th place: Elliott House

In 3rd place: Elizabeth House

In 2nd place: Wellington House

In 1st place: Rooke House

The green area of the stands burst into applause as the Sports Captains took their photo with the trophy and all the other students promised themselves that Rooke won't do it again.



SPORTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Co-written by Mrs Rotimi and Richard Roberts

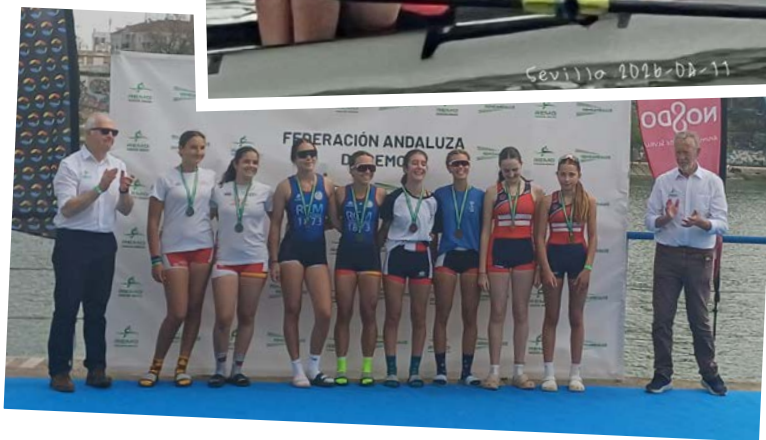
It is truly something to see such a large number of our students achieving sporting greatness inside and outside of school. Below are a few examples of recent sporting accomplishments from our students. O'Shea who tragically died in an accident last year. He contributed massively to the local triathlon scene and represented Gibraltar in the Commonwealth Games and Island Games several times. In the words of the gibraltartriathlon.com Olivia has 'shown the qualities Sam stood for: determination, progress, dedication, sportsmanship and joy in the sport'. Congratulations for to Olivia on this amazing achievement!

Rowing - Copa de Andalucia de Remo

Sophia and her partner Lily raced 1k and were first in their heat and second overall, with a time of 4 minutes 22 seconds.

Guilia also raced. She rowed 1k with her partner, Maria and achieved 3rd place overall.

It was lovely to see them all in action. We also saw Isabella Parise Martinelli and Sofia Charrington racing too, ex-students of Prior, who looked well and happy.



Olivia and Sophie Roberts Patterson: Andalusian Duathlon Championship Legends!

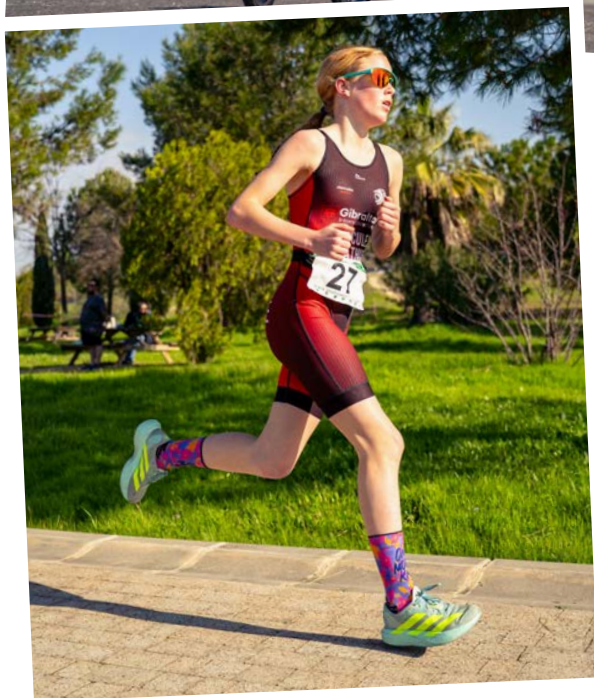
Competing in six out of eight races across Andalusia in Chiclana, Marbella, Huelva, Montilla, Sevilla and Granada, Olivia and Sophie delivered outstanding performances. They stormed to 1st and 2nd place in the Andalusian Cadete Duathlon Championships, claiming Campeonato and Sub Campeonato respectively.

Each race consisted of a 2km run, followed by a 6km cycle, and finishing with a 1km run. The sisters smashed each race they competed in. Their success is no accident, over the past year, they have shown incredible perseverance and dedication, training hard with the Gibraltar Junior Triathlon Team to achieve their goals. Their grit and determination have truly set them apart, and their passion for the sport is carrying them far.

Not to be outdone, their younger brother Ben has also enjoyed a fantastic year. Competing alongside his big sisters in various trail runs, Ben recently won a race in Sierra Carbonera and finished an impressive 9th overall in the Duathlon Championships.

A remarkable family achievement. Well done all!

Late last year, Olivia won the first **Sam O'Shea Gibraltar Junior Triathlon Award** for the most promising triathlete. For those of you who don't know, this award was created in the memory of Sam O'Shea who tragically died in an accident last year. He contributed massively to the local triathlon scene and represented Gibraltar in the Commonwealth Games and Island Games several times. In the words of the gibraltartriathlon.com Olivia has 'shown the qualities Sam stood for: determination, progress, dedication, sportsmanship and joy in the sport'. Congratulations for to Olivia on this amazing achievement!



More photos on next page...



WHAT ARE THE KEY TAKEAWAYS WHEN IT COMES TO LOOKING AFTER OURSELVES

BY MRS OXLEY, ASSISTANT HEAD (CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING)

How are we in June already? School life moves quickly, and sometimes, we forget to look after ourselves along the way. It's easy to think that improving our wellbeing requires big, dramatic changes; but the most powerful transformations come from small, consistent habits: simple choices we make each day that quietly shape our physical and mental health.

1. Learn: Read daily

Not just school texts, anything you enjoy. I've just started *The Psychology of Money* by Housel, and I try to alternate between fiction and non-fiction (my eldest daughter always has plenty of recommendations!)

Reading builds vocabulary, focus, and imagination. For me, it also provides a chance to unwind and think more deeply.

Why read? Regular reading supports academic performance and builds confidence in communication.

2. Unplug: Take time away from screens

Step away from screens, even for short periods. Try building a habit of going screen-free for an hour before bed. This feels increasingly vital as screen use continues to rise and the hours quickly add up.

I've heard that the new *Toy Story 5* is exploring how modern technology affects younger children, particularly its impact on creativity and play - an interesting reflection of the world we're living in.

Why unplug? Time away from screens helps reduce stress, improves sleep, and gives your brain the rest it needs.

3. Move: Get outside and increase steps

This doesn't have to mean a full workout - walking to

the shops, heading up the Rock to watch the sunset, or joining a sports team all count. We enjoy taking Meg, our labrador on extra long walks during the weekends... she loves Pinar Del Ray!

When I was at school, I was fairly sedentary. I didn't attend clubs or join teams, and PE lessons were my main source of exercise, I wasn't exposed to the same opportunities that my children have in Gibraltar.

Five years ago, I started Couch to 5K, and I discovered something I didn't expect: a real love for running, and a community that felt like 'my tribe.' Now my 6am runs genuinely boost my mood, give me more energy throughout the day, and improve my concentration. When I don't exercise, I feel the difference



4. Rest: Prioritise sleep

A consistent sleep routine, even something as simple as going to bed and waking up at similar times each day can make a real difference. Quality sleep supports learning; it helps with memory, concentration, & overall health. I know that after a poor night's sleep, everything feels that little bit harder, whereas being well-rested sets the tone for a more positive, productive day.

Why prioritise sleep? Good sleep is your body's way of rest & recharge.

It's not about doing everything perfectly. It's about making small, positive choices each day, choices that gradually build towards a healthier, happier, and more balanced life.

Wayne Gretzky once said “You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take”. Now, I am not an avid watcher of ice hockey, but this quote is something I came across a few years ago and has supported how I view personal growth.

I started at Prior Park in 2018 just as a teacher at the start of my career, and my challenges started straight away in defining a brand new curriculum for Computer Science and leading the way for the subject in our newly implemented Sixth Form. From then, I continued working hard and sought opportunities for growth within the school. Not long into my career at Prior, I was offered the job of Head of Digital Learning & Strategy, where I worked to set up a system of 1-2-1 laptops at the school, and I then had an opportunity to join the Senior Leadership Team as Assistant Head of Progress & Tracking. This leads me back to the quote I mentioned. However, despite that, it would be callous to ignore that opportunities inevitably involve the possibility of failure. I failed time and time again during my time at school, from inexperience to poor decision making. However, I never took those failings as a pitfall for me to dwell in, instead, I took it as an opportunity to develop and grow as a teacher, digital strategist, and data tracker. Each problem I encountered became a marker for what to do differently next time, and the experience I gained was invaluable and helped me cope with future problems that were not necessarily problems I had faced before. I became much stronger because of my failures and my experience grew exponentially by learning from them. We should all see experience as something to be cultivated, not acquired. Be grateful for the rocks life rolls in your path, for one day, you will see them as stepping stones.

By Chris McAuliffe, Assistant Head (Progress and Tracking)

GROWTH DOESN'T ASK FOR PERMISSION

BY JAMIE COMBER, *HEAD OF SIXTH FORM*

Reflecting on students’ formative journeys has taught me as much about my own growth as theirs.

Every September, a new cohort of students walks through our sixth form doors. Some are confident, some are terrified, most are somewhere in between. And every year, without fail, I watch something remarkable happen. By the time they leave, they are not the same people who arrived.

Two students can face the exact same challenge and come out in completely different places. The experience itself is never the deciding factor. What matters is how you process it. Early in this role, my instinct was to dwell on what I could have done differently. Over time I learned to ask a better question: what does this teach me for next time?

The most resilient young people I have worked with are those who hit real setbacks and found a way

through anyway. Not because they were exceptional to begin with, but because navigating difficulty taught them something about their own capacity that success never could. Watching them earn that quiet confidence, year after year, has reminded me not to shy away from difficulty.

What I did not anticipate is how much the students would teach me in return. Their questions have challenged assumptions I did not know I held. Their honesty has reminded me that asking for help is a strength, not a weakness. Growth is rarely dramatic in the moment. It is slow and uneven and often barely visible until tested. Flipping one question has really helped me. Instead of why is this happening to me, I ask what is this teaching me. That is where growth begins. I know it is where mine has.

REFLECTION ON YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

By Miriam

On the week beginning the 9th of March, all Year Ten students, including myself, were given the opportunity to spend the week in a workplace of our choice in the hopes that it would guide us towards the field that we want to dedicate ourselves to in the future. As I come from a family of teachers, I chose to use the opportunity to experience a week in Bishop Fitzgerald Upper Primary School. Over the course of five days, I observed lessons in different year groups, helped put up displays, and my favourite part of the week, worked with the children in the LSF department. The experience was greatly valuable to me as I not only found a profession that I would love to work in in the future but forged lasting relationships with the children. I am very grateful for the experience and would recommend it to any student who is unsure of where to go for their week of work experience.

By Marie

I had the opportunity of spending my week of work experience at the GibVet Clinic. Over the course of the week, we were able to observe various surgeries such as castrations, spays and tumour removals. We were also able to watch X-rays and CT-scans. We also helped the vets do urine tests and were allowed to inject a cat. This experience helped me to develop various skills, for example, communication with others. Work experience taught me that I would like a career which involves practical work.

HOW DOES DRAMA SUPPORT PERSONAL GROWTH?

BY MISS ALBORN, *TEACHER OF DRAMA AND PERFORMANCE DIRECTOR*

When I joined Prior Park School in 2023, I was excited by the potential of Drama within the curriculum and co-curricular life of the school. Three years on, it has been a privilege to watch the subject grow in popularity and to witness first-hand the profound impact it has on our students.

Drama is often associated with performance, and of course the excitement of opening night, the applause and the memories created through productions are important. However, the true value of Drama extends far beyond the stage.

In every lesson, students are encouraged to step into someone else’s shoes. They explore characters, situations and viewpoints that may be very different from their own experiences. In doing so, they develop empathy, emotional intelligence and a greater understanding of the world around them. At a time when society increasingly values compassion, communication and cultural awareness, these qualities have never been more important.

Drama also provides a unique environment in which students learn to work together. Rehearsals demand trust, collaboration and mutual respect. Whether

Continued on next page...

students are performing, directing, designing or supporting a production behind the scenes, they become part of a team working towards a shared goal. The sense of belonging that emerges through this process is remarkable. In the productions we have staged at Prior Park, the camaraderie, support and genuine friendships that develop are among the most rewarding outcomes. There is something powerful about seeing students from different year groups and backgrounds united by a common creative purpose - the growth is often transformational.

Alongside these social and emotional benefits, Drama develops a range of highly transferable skills. Students learn to communicate with confidence, think creatively, solve problems under pressure and adapt when things do not go according to plan. They learn resilience, leadership and the importance of taking risks in a supportive environment. These are not simply skills for the theatre; they are skills for life.

At a time when so much of young people's interaction takes place through screens, Drama offers something increasingly valuable: genuine human connection. In a digital world that can sometimes erode face-to-face communication skills, Drama requires students

to engage directly with one another. They must listen actively, read body language, respond in the moment and work collaboratively in shared physical spaces.

Research supports what Drama teachers witness every day. The OECD has highlighted the important role that arts education can play in developing creativity, collaboration, communication and social skills. These are precisely the attributes that employers and universities increasingly identify as essential for success in the twenty-first century. Drama provides students with regular opportunities to practise and refine these skills in meaningful and memorable ways.

The success of our productions is certainly something to celebrate. Yet the greatest achievement is the community that is built along the way: one founded on trust, creativity, courage and a shared sense of belonging. That is the enduring power of Drama, and it is why its place within the curriculum remains so important at Prior Park School.



HOW HAS THIS SCHOOL HELPED ME GROW?

BY GEMA

Making the most of all the opportunities offered in school can be challenging, but the outcome always proves them worth it. As someone who has been involved in a multitude of extracurriculars across the school community, each of these experiences has shaped me and helped me grow, all in different ways, to make me the student, and person, that I am today.

I started taking part in the school productions in 2022, with Oliver! Jr, and since then, I have been involved in the productions every year, and every year I learn new things. Not only have I improved my acting and singing, but I have also discovered a passion for theatre and become more confident overall.

By working with a cast of so many different people, you take inspiration from everyone and create truly meaningful friendships. The latest, show, Grease, has been the one where I have so clearly seen everyone's growth from start to finish, a journey I would not trade for anything, and a show I would do a hundred times over.

This year, I have become a much more confident actor, but the area I have grown most in has been in communicating with others, whether to help them with something or trying to get to know them better, I have become much more comfortable in talking to others and have made some incredible friends this year.

I also joined School of Rock that same year, and to see how much it has grown since the first meeting makes me so proud to see. Being part of this club has taught me so much about music and performing, even introducing me to some of my favourite songs.

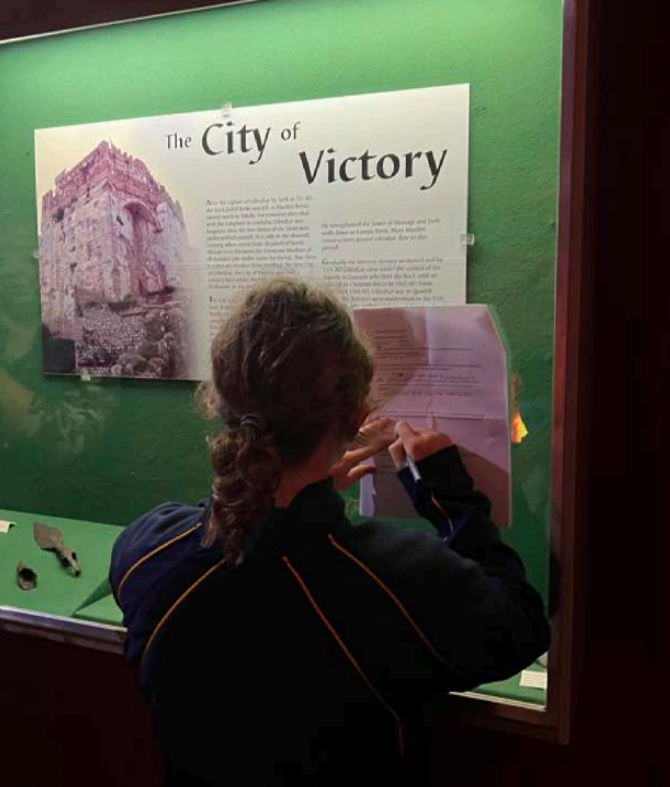
I remember performing for the first time with School of Rock at the Winter Arts Showcase in 2022, feeling like a real band performing together. These opportunities have given me so much more confidence on stage, which I have been able to apply across a range of different skills like interviews and other high-pressure scenarios.

This year, I took on something completely new to me. Even though I have no experience in business, I formed a Young Enterprise group with my friends and took on the role of Operations Manager. Although it proved difficult to keep everyone motivated consistently, and ensuring productivity, we managed to keep our business running all school year. I have learnt so much about working as part of a team and knowing when and how to take initiative with different things.

This is only a fraction of the experiences I have been involved in, let alone what is on offer. All of these skills have become invaluable to me and are transferable across all kinds of things. Getting involved with opportunities such as volunteering moreover has made me into a well-rounded student.

I am incredibly grateful to be given all these opportunities, and I have grown so much from all these experiences throughout my time at school, and these will hopefully help me to be a great Head of School next year.





HISTORY TRIP: WHAT EXPERIENCE DID WE GAIN BY LOOKING TOWARDS OUR PAST?

BY TOM MACLEAN

During the educational history trip, we came across many different ancient artefacts, important people, prehistoric models and many other things. Firstly, we came across 2 Neanderthals. There were an adult and a child who were wearing no pieces of clothing. They looked different to regular humans we see nowadays having more of a monkey-based structure to their body and face. As we carried on, we found a room filled with ancient artefacts Neanderthals used to use like daggers and materials used for building. As we carried on, we went outside and found a bathing area that was dug up around the museum. It looked like it had different sections to it for different things. As we went back inside and moved on, we found a room filled with these baths built by Moroccans who came to Gibraltar and a video played explaining how it was all built. It was all quite dark and the material it was made from was brownish stone based. We then proceeded to see an incredible sculpture of Gibraltar hundreds of years ago showing all the features, buildings and how big it was during these times. Many key buildings and areas we see now were also built during this time. An example of this would be Victoria Stadium. Talking about inventions we discovered a room that had 2 key figures who made inventions each. They were Vardar and Calpeia. These 2 people created the Neathic vessel and the bronze age grave of gods. In addition to this in the final room we found out British strategies used to capture Gibraltar from Spain, and we saw cool guns and ships used during these times.

We went on this trip because we wanted to find out more about Gibraltar for our upcoming history project. In this project we pick a question about Gibraltar and go into depth to answer it. Overall, the trip was a very good experience and I would recommend visiting the museum to find out more about ancient Gibraltar.





THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH BRONZE QUALIFYING EXPEDITION

Maps, backpacks, teamwork... and the occasional wrong turn. This year's Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Qualifying Expedition had all the ingredients of a great adventure.

In May, nine Year 10 students set off in two teams to complete their Bronze Qualifying Expedition in the stunning surroundings of Jimena de la Frontera. Over two days and one night, they covered approximately 26 kilometres, carrying their equipment, navigating independently, and putting months of preparation into practice.

The weather was mostly on our side, although Sunday brought a little rain and, for one group, an additional challenge: finding the right route. As every experienced DofE participant knows, navigation does not always go exactly to plan.

One student summed it up perfectly:

"DofE was an incredible experience which I will remember for the rest of my life. The two days were

packed with valuable life lessons, such as the importance of teamwork and perseverance. It was great to spend time with peers in a different setting, and I formed strong bonds with people I might not otherwise have got to know so well."

While teamwork and perseverance were certainly important, one group also discovered the value of flexibility after taking a rather impressive detour. In their words:

"Walking three hours completely south of our actual route was definitely not the plan. While it felt like a disaster at the time, that massive detour ended up being the part of the expedition we're most grateful for and easily our funniest memory of the whole Duke of Edinburgh experience."

Fortunately, after some quick thinking, route adjustments, and plenty of determination, the team successfully found their way and completed the expedition on time. In many ways, that unexpected challenge became the perfect

example of what DofE is all about. It is not about everything going perfectly; it is about learning how to respond when it does not. Beyond the kilometres walked and the tents pitched, the expedition gave students the opportunity to develop confidence, resilience, and independence. Spending time outdoors, away from screens and everyday routines, is not only great for physical health but also provides a valuable boost to mental wellbeing. The combination of exercise, teamwork, problem-solving, and time spent in nature creates an experience that challenges students while helping them grow.

By the end of the expedition, every participant had achieved something they could be genuinely proud of. Completing a Bronze Qualifying Expedition is no small feat, and the sense of accomplishment that comes from reaching the finish line after two days of walking, navigating, and overcoming obstacles is immense. Experiences like these remind us that some of the most valuable lessons are learned beyond the classroom, and that personal growth often begins where our comfort zone ends.



YEAR 9 CULTURAL TRIP TO MÁLAGA

BY ROMI AND EMMANUELLE

Going on our school trip to the city of Málaga in Spain was honestly a great experience. It was so much fun because we got to see a new city, explore cool places, and spend tons of time hanging out with friends away from normal classroom lessons.

One of the coolest places we visited was the Car and Fashion Museum. I didn't think a museum about old cars would be that exciting, but it was actually brilliant. The building used to be an old factory, and inside there were rows and rows of super expensive vintage cars like Ferraris, Jaguars, and Aston Martins. They were all shiny and looked brand new. Right next to the cars, they had fancy old dresses from famous designers. My friends and I spent ages taking photos and picking out which multi-million-pound car we would buy if we were rich.

Another highlight was the city treasure hunt. The teachers split us up into teams and gave us a list of clues to solve around Málaga. We had to race through the streets trying to find historic landmarks, like the massive Málaga Cathedral and an ancient Roman theatre. It got really competitive, and my team got lost a few times because our map-reading skills were terrible. But we laughed so much, and running around the sunny city with my friends was way better than sitting at a desk doing schoolwork.

Even though the sightseeing was great, the absolute best part of the whole trip was just spending time with my friends. I got to talk to people in my year that I don't normally hang out with at school, and we made so many inside jokes that we are still laughing about now.

In conclusion, our year trip to Málaga was a trip that was educational as well as fun. It taught me a lot about Spanish culture, but it also brought our whole year closer.



ALGECIRAS TRIP: EXCHANGE WITH YEAR 8

Recently, our Year 8 students took part in a wonderful exchange visit with Colegio Salesianos, a Catholic school with whom we share many similar values and ethos centred around respect, community, kindness and service to others. The experience was incredibly enriching for all involved and strengthened the growing partnership between both schools.

The students received a warm welcome in the chapel, where staff and pupils reflected together on the importance of sharing, respect and community values. Throughout the morning, our students participated in a variety of engaging workshops including History, Science, Art, Music and ICT, allowing them to experience life in a Spanish school first-hand while developing their language and cultural understanding.

One of the highlights of the day was lunchtime, where parents from the Salesianos community had lovingly prepared a wide variety of homemade Spanish dishes for everyone to enjoy. This gesture perfectly reflected the welcoming spirit and strong sense of community within the school and gave our students a truly authentic cultural experience.

In the afternoon, students enjoyed a range of sports activities and games such as ping pong, table football and football, where our boys certainly showed their competitive spirit! More importantly, it was wonderful to see friendships grow naturally throughout the day, with students forming fantastic bonds with their Spanish partners through shared activities, teamwork and conversation.

Overall, our students carried "The Prior Way" with pride throughout the visit. Their conduct, attitude and enthusiasm were exemplary, and we were extremely proud of how they represented the school. This exchange has not only created meaningful memories and friendships, but also laid the foundations for a partnership that we hope will continue to flourish and grow through many future exchanges and collaborative opportunities together.





IAAC ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS COMPETITION

This week saw 7 members of the Astro Talk club attempt the second round of the International Astronomy and Astrophysics Competition. The students were pitting their knowledge of the Universe against tens of thousands of students from all over the world. There was a real-world research paper to dissect along with highly mathematical A level and Degree level questions on Astrophysics.

They had had little time to prepare and had attended several after school sessions on Gravity, Stellar Luminosity, Distance Measurements amongst others to get ready. The results are released June 15th but whatever the outcome I am immensely proud of all 8 students who entered the competition as it was tough even in the first round. This is what one of the students Matthew Menez thought of it...

Hard work, grit, and determination. These are the qualities required for a career in the sciences. We in Astrotalk have spent roughly 2 weeks preparing for the International Astronomy and Astrophysics Competition, with fabulous prizes and the competitors to match them. My fellow participants and I have gleamed quite a large amount of knowledge in these past 2 weeks, and we have Mr Matthews to thank for it. Without him offering his time in order to train us, we would not have had a clue what to do. The results are not yet in as of writing, but I hope that as many of us pass as possible!

If you are interested in taking part next year please see Mr Matthews.



Guess the Teacher

Guess the teacher from these incredibly cute baby photos!



Answers: 1. A Figueras 2. C Harris 3. D Rozario 4. I Ribbon 5. J Craven 6. J Cruz 7. L Matthews 8. L Gillespie 9. C Bacarisa 10. S Alborn

At Prior Park, we are grateful for the many opportunities that arise within our community. Despite being relatively small, Gibraltar is home to 377 registered charities, highlighting how deeply supporting others is embedded in Gibraltarian culture.

We are proud to reflect this same commitment by selecting a charity each year for fundraising. This year, students have chosen Animals in Need. In addition, each house collaborates closely with other charities and development projects, giving students the chance not only to raise money but also to actively contribute to supporting those in need.

Below, you will find more information about these initiatives.

HOW DOES EACH HOUSE SUPPORT THE WIDER COMMUNITY?

Elliott House



At our school, caring for the community is more than just an idea—it is something we actively live out through meaningful partnerships and shared experiences – after all action speaks louder than words, and this is something I am incredibly proud to say Elliott House are great at doing. One of the most impactful ways we have embraced this value is through our collaboration with the Nautilus Project. Together, we have taken part in a series of environmental initiatives, with a particular focus on protecting our local coastline and managed to collect 180kg with our last beach clean up at Eastern Beach.

Most recently, students and staff came together for a clean-up around the rocks beside the Ocean Village harbour, as well as the surrounding Ocean Village area. This location is especially important, as litter left on the ground can quickly be carried into the sea, posing a serious threat to marine life. With this in mind, Elliott House, alongside some Nautilus Project volunteers, worked with determination to collect and remove waste before it could reach the water, helping to safeguard Gibraltar's rich and biodiverse marine environment. It was not so easy in the heat, but we persevered together.

Continued on next page...

The sense of unity it created was a highlight for me especially - students and staff worked side by side, sharing responsibility, encouraging one another, and contributing towards a common goal. There was a real sense of purpose in the air, as everyone understood that their efforts—no matter how small—were contributing to something bigger than themselves.

Activities like these, help to build strong bonds within our school community. By stepping outside the classroom and working together in a real-world context, we develop teamwork, empathy, and a shared sense of pride in what we can achieve collectively. Whether it was spotting hidden litter among the rocks, coordinating efforts in different areas, or simply supporting each other throughout the task (and reminding people to take a water

break!), every moment reinforced the importance of cooperation with the task at hand – as our colloquial motto goes:

"We may not lift trophies, but we do lift Spirits!"

Through our ongoing work with the Nautilus Project, Elliott House continues to demonstrate that caring for the community means taking action. It means protecting the environment we all share, strengthening our relationships with one another, and recognising that positive change is possible when we work together.

Mr. J Cruz

Elizabeth House



Elizabeth is supporting The Growing Artists Programme in Gibraltar, based at Irish Town, which is a non-profit initiative fostering local talent through weekly workshops, community art projects, and mentorship. It provides hands-on creative education for ages 1+ to adult, focusing on techniques like still life painting. They have an inclusive approach, aiming to keep workshops low-cost or free, providing access to creative opportunities for children from

diverse backgrounds. They are supporting Elizabeth House's long-term project of creating a mural on the school site. This summer term, Elizabeth will support Growing Artists through a fundraising Summer Fete, which will take place on Tuesday, 16th June, 1300-1530 at the Growing Artists premises in Irish Town – please come along and bring your friends and family for a fun afternoon.

Rooke House

Our charity work this term has been focused on help the Cancer Relief Charity as well as continuing to develop our house spirit and togetherness. This has taken the form of in school activities aimed at promoting awareness around the Cancer Relief charity through the production of posters to advertise their services. During these activities, students of all age groups have collaborated to produce useable materials, further developing the already strong bond between students in our house.

On Mission Day, 15 of our students had the opportunity to visit the centre itself and see first-hand what goes on there. The students helped with the serving of food, the planting of seeds in the garden and general tidying of the centre. In addition to this, many of the students got the chance to

talk to the residents and answer questions that they had about what school was like these days, as well as asking them questions about their experiences in return. This is an experience that even more of our students will receive when we return to the centre on the 16th of June.

Another focus of Mission Day was volunteering. As part of volunteers week, we saw ourselves how vital the efforts of volunteers are to places like Cancer Relief and how many of our essential support services would not run without them. In addition to being able to talk to the volunteers at the shelter, our students delivered a short presentation on the importance of volunteering, reading out quotes from the rest of the house that had been gathered during our charity days.

Wellington House



Building connections beyond the classroom with Wellington!

At Wellington, our charity days are more than just an opportunity to give back, they are a powerful reminder of the importance of human connection. Through our regular visits to local elderly residents, students step away from devices and screens and rediscover the value of meaningful, face to face communication. These visits provide a unique

environment where students can focus on the core elements of communication: listening, empathy, and presence. In a world often dominated by technology, our students are brought back to the simplicity of "raw" conversation. They quickly learn that something as small as a chat or a shared board game can make someone feel truly seen, heard, and valued.

Continued on next page...

PRIOR PARK MISSION DAY 2026

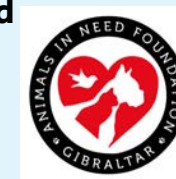
By Thomas M and Eitan G

Prior Park Steps Up in Aid of Animals in Need

How?

As part of this charitable event, our goal was to walk from Casemates Square to Europa Point and then return to Casemates, raising money for Animals in Need.

The day began at Casemates, where students were organised into their houses and tutor groups. After an inspiring speech from Mrs D., we set off on our journey to Europa Point. We walked along Main Street, passing John Mackintosh Hall and continuing towards Trafalgar Square. At this stage, the weather was pleasant, although the heat became more noticeable as the day progressed.



taking extra time to communicate clearly and kindly.

As the visits have continued, relationships have flourished. Students now look forward to seeing familiar faces, often checking in on their "favourites." During Easter, some even took the initiative to write personal cards for residents, thoughtful touches that meant a great deal. While these visits have a lasting impact on our students, perhaps the most telling sign of their success comes from the residents themselves. Time and again, they ask, "When are they coming back?" We believe this says it all!

It is particularly inspiring to see the care and empathy our Wellington students demonstrate. Small gestures make a big difference: crouching down to meet residents at eye level, offering to make tea (even if they are unsure how!), and



Continued on next page...

Continuing our route, we reached Rosia Road, where Mr Harris helped maintain a positive atmosphere with music from his speaker. We followed the road, navigating several turns and crossings, passing through the tunnel and descending the steps to Quarry. After enjoying the beautiful sea views, we climbed back up the steps, passed Naffi Pool, and continued along Keightley Way tunnel, before finally arriving at our destination, Europa Point.

What We Did at Europa Point

Upon arriving at Europa Point, we were welcomed by Mrs Oxley, who directed each house to its designated activity area. Our task was to create a painting that represented our house. Once we had completed our designs, we painted them using our house colours.

These paintings will be displayed around the school as a lasting reminder of the event and a contribution to the school environment. After finishing the activity, we had the opportunity to enjoy a snack and refuel before beginning the journey back.

What We Did After Returning to Casemates

After following the same route back to Casemates, everyone was understandably tired from the long walk. We then enjoyed lunch with our friends, giving us the chance to relax, recover, and share our experiences from the day.

Who Helped?

Throughout the event, the teachers played an important role in ensuring that the walk was both safe and enjoyable. Mr Martyn, the Head Teacher, led the walk, while Mrs Richman was responsible for first aid in case any accidents occurred. Fortunately, no incidents took place.

Teachers were positioned at crossings throughout the route to ensure students crossed safely and to provide encouragement along the way. For example, Ms Figueras and Mr Escibano greeted students and offered high-fives near the crossing by Trafalgar Sports Bar, while Ms Coen and Ms Wilkins welcomed and congratulated students upon reaching Europa Point.

The staff made a significant positive contribution to the day, helping to keep everyone safe while creating an encouraging and enjoyable atmosphere.

Overall

Mission Day 2026 was a rewarding experience for everyone involved. It gave us the opportunity to spend time with friends, stay active, and, most importantly, raise money for a worthwhile charitable cause. We are grateful that the school trusted us to demonstrate maturity and represent Prior Park School positively throughout Gibraltar.

The day was both enjoyable and meaningful, and it is an experience that many of us will remember for years to come.





WHY MISSION DAY MATTERS

BY MRS DEVINCENZI-CLEMENS, *DEPUTY HEAD*

Mission Day is an important part of our school community because it gives students the opportunity to put our values into action. By serving others, we learn that even small acts of kindness can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those around us.

This year's Mission Day started at Casemates with a sponsored walk to The Lighthouse and back; 8.8km in total.

Once at the Lighthouse, the students congregated in their houses and were given a 'tile'; their task was to paint the tile however best they thought would represent their house.

Meanwhile, a smaller group of students were at The Piazza selling raffle tickets and cakes kindly organised and donated by our ever-supportive parent group; Friends of Prior. Your help is hugely appreciated.

Alongside this, our 6th formers were busy at work at CEPESA garage getting their hands dirty by washing cars. Thank you to CEPESA for accommodating us and supporting the event and for those parents who managed to get their cars cleaner than they were previously.

During the afternoon, the four houses continued on their 'mission' to support their chosen charity, already mentioned.

In summary, a very special day spent with a lovely community.

STUDENT
OF THE MONTH

MAY

2026

HANNAH ELLIOTT

Hannah is a polite and hardworking student, but her qualities go far beyond the classroom. After surviving exam week, she took on her DoE Qualifying Journey where she tackled challenging weather, some questionable navigation choices, and more than a few kilometres on foot. Despite getting lost, battling the weather, and facing all the usual expedition challenges, she kept a positive attitude and helped keep team morale high. Throughout the journey, she showed resilience, grew in confidence, and proved that even a wrong turn can lead to valuable lessons. These are just some of the reasons why she is a deserving Student of the Month.

Mr Javier Escribano Duenas (Tutor)

Hannah gives 100% in every lesson and homework is never missed. She brings ideas to class discussion from things she has read outside of school. She is also very supportive of other learners in the classroom such as Arthur and Hugo.

Miss W Davies (Teacher of Business)

It is a genuine delight to teach Hannah. She approaches every GCSE PE lesson with enthusiasm and a positive attitude, embracing new challenges with determination and resilience. Hannah is diligent and consistently strives to improve her performance demonstrating a strong commitment to her learning. Her excellent work ethic, kindness and willingness to support others makes her a fantastic role model to her peers. Thank you Hannah for being you.

Mrs C Devincenzi-Clemens (Deputy Head, Operations & Pastoral)

Hannah, you are a cheerful and capable pupil, always ready to help out with enthusiasm. You have a great attitude to life in general, not just your studies, and as such, are a fantastic role model for our House. This is well-deserved, congratulations

Mrs M Easter (Head of Elizabeth House)

I have been delighted to witness Hannah's approach to her academics this year. Her hard work, determination and positive attitude have paid off, and she is now enjoying the fruits of her labour. The academic maturity she has shown is clearly visible and, importantly, it has had a positive influence on her friends and classmates too. However, my endorsement of Hannah's Student of the Month nomination cannot be attributed solely to academic success. As Headteacher of Prior Park, what I value most is what Hannah brings to our community through her friendships, kindness and wider connections across the school. I have seen first-hand what a good friend she is to others, how she advocates for her peers in lessons, and how she supports those around her during House events such as Day of Sport. Hannah possesses a rare and special quality: she consistently gives more to her community than she takes from it. I can also personally attest that every time we have one of our conversations in the courtyard, I walk away smiling and feeling better for it. Hannah, please do not change your approach. You are deeply valued by your community and Headteacher. We are fortunate to have you as part of Prior Park, and I am delighted to recognise you as Student of the Month.

Mr Martyn (Headteacher)



Prior Park Gibraltar

Sacred Heart Terrace, Old Town, Gibraltar

Tel: + 350 2006 2006

**Email: office.ppsg@priorparkschools.com
priorparkgibraltar.com**

11-18 Day Co-educational Catholic Senior School