Friday 31st January 2025

Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

There has been a buzz of excitement in school this week. As well as students competing for the school in netball, football and cross country, we have had our own internal competition as we waited to see who would win the 100,000th House Point of 2024-25. This year is only the second year in history that we have reached the 100,000 mark, and it has been achieved in just 5 months into the academic year.

This fantastic achievement is one which every single student can take credit for because every one of them has played their part. We have taken the opportunity to celebrate the award of the 100,000th House Point and were delighted to announce Penelope from Year 10 as our winner and present her with small prize and a certificate, a small recognition for her, and the schools, achievement.

It has been a while since Ofsted visited the school and we are expecting publication of their report soon. I look forward to being able to share this with you. The last 18 months represent an important stepping stone in the history of our school, and whilst there is lots more to do, this inspection has given us the chance to look back on the progress made so far and ensure our next steps are acutely focused on continuing to improve the life chances of all learners.
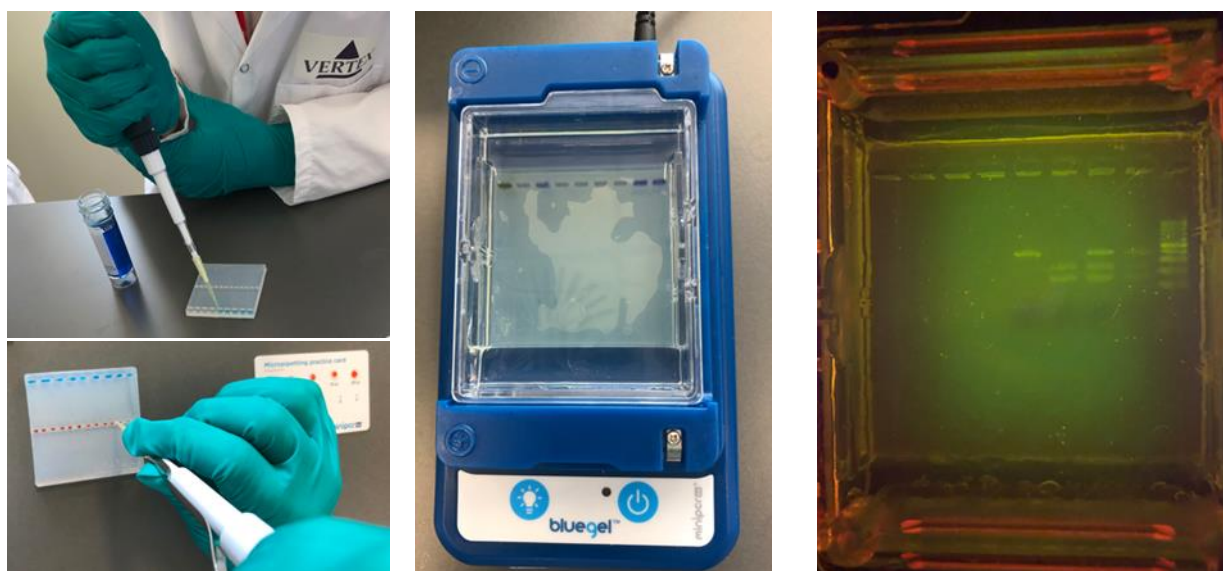
Have a good weekend.

Alastair West
Headteacher

School News

Vertex Pharmaceuticals Year 10 trip

Across January our year 10 students have been visiting Vertex Pharmaceuticals to learn about sickle cell anaemia. Their day started with discussions around different diseases the students had already learnt. They then were invited into the laboratory to see sickle red blood cells under the microscopes. The students were fascinated to see the difference between normal red blood cells, and red blood cells affected by sickle cell anaemia. The students were taught how to use Micro Pipettes by practicing using them on a guide. Once the students were confident in using the laboratory equipment, they learnt the stages involved in testing human DNA for the sickle cell gene using gel electrophoresis. The students set up their own gel electrophoresis and tested real DNA for sickle cell anaemia. They were able to see who out of the 4 family members had sickle cell anaemia and who were carriers or not affected.

The day was fascinating and very interesting for both students and teachers. We look forward to taking our year 9 students in the spring.

Careers Education

In line with our school values of opportunity, respect and determination we value the role of careers education in preparing our students for their future.

As part of our Careers Education curriculum, we are excited to be offering Year 8 students a 'Human Library' session on Tuesday 18th March 2025 to help to inspire them and show them a new variety of careers and pathways into different roles.

In order to offer this to our students we desperately need the help of volunteers to be the 'books' at our event. This means that you will speak with a group of students answering their questions as they try to guess your role and understand the reality of your job. If you could bring a prop to get the conversation started that is always fun. Refreshments will be available on the day. We will be inviting all year 8 students to take part over the course of two hours but appreciate whatever time you have available on the day.

If you are able to offer some support for this event, please may I ask you complete this form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdwXVj2_t6bvQcIlC0edTOgPWxYdIXk6S7dFRQOJLovaA0CJw/viewform?usp=sharing

Thank you for supporting our school and students.

Miss Gibson
Associate Assistant Head Personal Development

Important Dates:

Thursday 6th February – Year 9 Parents' Evening

Other important dates can be found on our website calendar:
https://www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk/events/calendar/

Term dates for the new academic year are on our website:
https://www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk/events/term-dates/