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WALKING WITH PURPOSE: Students raised money for causes at home and abroad.

Help for refugees too

Refugees settling in Cambridge will benefit from Comberton's annual Walk for the World.

The long-running whole-school walk in a circular three-mile route from the college through Toft and across the fields and golf course back to Comberton previously raised funds for partner schools in Africa and South America. The college has decided to give some of the money, raised through a non-uniform day which co-incides with the walk, to the Cambridge Refugee Settlement Campaign (CRSC).

Comberton already has refugees from conflicts across the world among its students and has seen a recent influx of those fleeing the war in Ukraine. Money raised by CRSC is used for a number of projects, which benefit not only children but also their families, and include one-to-one help with homework for school-age children, activities and outings during school holidays as well as giving talks and presentations about refugee issues at local schools. The Walk for the World, which took place earlier this term, raised more than £3000 and involved around 2500 students and staff, also supported two orphanages linked with Comberton's partner schools in South Africa and Peru. Walk organiser Marielle Burgess said: "The Walk for the World will continue to support our long-standing partner school in Africa and the Casa Hogar orphanages in Peru as they strive to offer educational opportunities and pastoral care to young people in challenging circumstances.

"We have had a 14-year partnership with the Lord Byron school in Arequipa. During that time we have expanded our link to include work in a group of three orphanages (Casa Hogar) on specific projects that we help to fund.

"In 2019, when Year 10 and 11 students were there, they helped children with their chores in one orphanage, and supported a regular open morning for elderly homeless people from the local community in another.

"The Walk for the World money from previous years has enabled the orphanage to update essential safety equipment and replace faulty kitchen equipment.

"This year we aim to support the education of older children in the orphanages, enabling several of them to continue longer in education.

"Walk for the World money has also provided funds to support the Butterfly orphanage affiliated with our South Africa partner school, Edendale in Pretoria, with whom we have been linked for more than 25 years and have enjoyed many pre-Pandemic exchange visits in both directions."



College is highly rated

Comberton is one of the best state schools in East Anglia, according to the latest Sunday Times Parent Power rankings.

The college is ranked second behind Saffron Walden County High School in the annual analysis based on the percentage of exam entries gaining A*-B at A-Level (which is given double weighting) and the percentage of entries returning A* and A grades, and those graded 9, 8 and 7, at GCSE and iGCSE. Comberton come out 11th overall in East Anglia with the top nine all being grammar schools. We are also in the top 250 across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Principal Peter Law said: "We are delighted to see yet again that the Parent Power rankings this year show students at Comberton Sixth Form and Comberton Village College have achieved at a very high level. It is great to be able to celebrate these successes."

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A short life well lived

Teagan Rose Blake started Year 7 at CVC in September 2016.

Somehow, I got lucky enough to have her in my form.

Six years later, Teagan's life continues to have an impact on me and all of us who were fortunate enough to know her.

Teagan's life was too short but she got so much out of her 17 and half years.

Teagan loved lots of things — Marvel (the last time I saw her, she'd just finished watching the newest film), athletics (especially triple jump), Harry Potter (which she listened to on repeat), rugby (which she took up when she needed a new sport for GCSE PE), her pets (two cats and a dog), art (she used to sketch a balloon over and over, which she got as a tattoo — something on her bucket list), and her family. From the very beginning of Year 7 I got to know all about her mum and dad and three siblings who she talked about all the time and was so proud of. Teagan also loved history and decided to take GCSE; even when she was receiving treatment for her cancer in Year 11, she still managed a Grade 9 in her interim exam. Teagan finished Year 11 with top grades, despite receiving difficult, painful treatment for much of the year. But Teagan never made excuses, and she never gave up.

Teagan was academic, bright, funny, athletic, successful, kind, creative, perseverant — more things that can fit on to any list.

And although Teagan shares lots of characteristics with other intelligent, hard-working, determined children, Teagan was completely her own person.

Like her mum says, Teagan 'knew her own mind'. In a world where teenagers often feel the need to fit in, Teagan never really seemed to care about that; she always knew who she was, what she wanted, and how she would get it.

I don't think anyone could have convinced Teagan to do anything she didn't want to do, nor could anyone have ever stopped her from getting what she wanted.

Even her cancer didn't stop her; Teagan went back to athletics after her first round of treatment finished in Year 11, determined to qualify to nationals in triple jump, and very nearly got there. When, at the start of Year 12, Teagan was told her cancer had returned and was terminal, Teagan showed the same determination and perseverance that she'd shown at rugby, athletics, in mock exams — and she made a bucket list.

She didn't just cry, she didn't just get angry, she didn't give up — she took control of how she would live the rest of her life.

And, like she had for the first 16 years of it, she accomplished so much in her last 14 months — trips to Ireland to see her family and the sea, a trip to Harry Potter World, a day at the Commonwealth Games, an afternoon watching the Northampton Saints, weekends cheering on her siblings as they competed in athletics.

She watched tons of films, made art, spoke to her friends, hung out with her siblings. Even in the last weeks of her life, Teagan was still living it.

Teagan died in the early morning of Sunday 6 November. It feels like none of us will ever really recover — but I think we all know what Teagan, who never gave up, would want us to do.

On the 25th of November one of Teagan's very brave friends read a poem at her funeral with a line that said, 'you can remember her and only that she is gone, or you can cherish her memory and let it live on'.

All of us at CVC and CSF who were lucky enough to know Teagan have so many memories of her, and even though it is hard now, we will cherish them, and celebrate them, and talk about them so that she will forever live on.

PJ Burns

● During the last week of November, staff and some students contributed cakes for a bake sale to raise money in Teagan's memory. In total it raised more than £400, which will be donated in Teagan's name to Cancer Research UK.



TEAGAN BLAKE: Continues to have an impact on the lives of those who knew her.

Comberton roars back up to full throttle!

Did we really live through a pandemic over the last two years...?

Obviously the answer to that is 'Yes!', yet from the current vantage point it seems a lifetime ago, despite the fact that Covid has not yet passed by.

Operationally though, school is very much back to pre-pandemic levels and this term has seen a huge flurry of activities.

The length of this publication and the range of articles is a testament to how very busy staff and pupils have been this term.

Not to mention staff teaching excellent lessons and students working hard.

The autumn term is always the longest one and by Christmas it usually feels as though we are halfway through the school year already.

For the young people in Years 11 and 13 facing public exams, that is actually pretty much correct...

Peter Law, Principal



A 'LIFETIME AGO': The pandemic lockdown feels like a distant memory.

Scholarship booster

Former Comberton student Arthur Cooke has won a prestigious Arkwright Scholarship Award.

He applied for the engineering scholarship while in Year 11 and with guidance from Eleanor Norman, who co-ordinates Comberton's applications, and a mock interview with Principal Peter Law, he successfully came through a rigorous selection process.

Arkwright Scholarships are a nationally recognised award designed to help teenagers become future leaders in engineering, computing or technical design. Winners receive £600 as well as a mentor and access to a variety of exclusive events run by partner companies, universities and trade associations.

Arthur received his award at a ceremony at the Institution for Engineering and Technology in London earlier this term.

He explained the process that led him there.

"During Year 11 at CVC, I was encouraged to apply. I took an aptitude exam in school, then worked on developing an engineering project (a triangular clock with custom movement) before finally being invited to an interview.

"Now that I am an Arkwright Scholar I have been partnered with a sponsor from industry who will mentor me, provide support with practical projects, offer work experience and help me in researching routes into engineering in the future. I have also received £600 to fund equipment and enhance curriculum projects.

"I'm currently studying Maths, Further Maths, Physics and Biology A-Levels at Hills Road Sixth Form College. I'm really grateful to CVC for giving me the opportunity to pursue the Arkwright Award, in particular to Mrs Norman, who coordinates entrants from CVC, and to Mr Law for his mock interview.

"I would encourage anyone who is considering a career in engineering to apply for an Arkwright Scholarship — it's a worthwhile and inspiring programme."



AWARD: A prestigious scholarship for a former Comberton student.

Young chefs show off culinary skills

Two Year 11 students represented Comberton in the national Springboard Future Chef culinary competition at Cambridge Regional College. Daisy (11V) and Theo (11M) were up against two budding chefs from St Bede's School in Cambridge for a place in the regional round of the competition early next year.

The competitors were all given just an hour to prepare and cook a main dish of their choice for two people, with just one place available at the regional final in February.

Daisy made a chicken roulade served with baby

carrots, a sweet potato puree and her own gravy, whilst Theo prepared a mushroom and asparagus risotto with a homemade garlic bread — both demonstrating all the skills they had learned on their Hospitality & Catering course. The chef judges observed, critiqued, and tasted each dish before announcing Daisy as the winner of local competition. She now goes to the next stage on 9th February 2023 at Peterborough College.

Theo picked up some excellent feedback and admiration from the chef judges at the college,

which is testament to his dedication to cooking and his studies at CVC.

Teacher Johnny Berwick said: "Thank you to Future Chef and Cambridge Regional College for hosting and running an exciting opportunity to showcase the skills my students have.

"The chance to demonstrate this in front of professional chefs and gain feedback is invaluable to motivate them, I am proud to celebrate their success."



WINNER: The top chef on the day earned a place in the regional round.



FOCUS: On producing a delicious plate of food in just an hour.



PLATED: Daisy (top) and Theo's finished dishes.



LEAVERS' EVENT 1963: A long way from the Proms of today!



SCHOOL TRIP: Heading to an island off Wales.

Sign of the times!

Much has changed since Comberton Village College first opened its doors to 240 pupils in 1960 — and some things haven't changed at all.

Comberton is still a thriving school at the heart of its community and the principles of Henry Morris, who established the Cambridgeshire Village Colleges model, still underpin all that we do.

We are now around eight-times the size and with hundreds more staff and a range of buildings added to the original footprint, but we still aim to offer the best possible educational experience to all our students and that includes trips and visits as well as celebratory events.

Our history remains an important part of who we are and we were, therefore, delighted to find, while clearing out some old files, pictures of some of our original pupils, including a first staff photo and a less formal view of the teachers taken immediately afterwards.

The other two are from a school trip to Ramsey Island, a nature reserve off the Pembrokeshire coast of South Wales, and a leavers' event in 1963.

If you have any stories and photos of Comberton's early days you would like to share or recognise members of your family from these snaps, please contact the News@Com editor, Judy Czylok, on jczylok@catrust.co.uk



FIRST STAFF PHOTOS: Formal — and less so. A staff photo today would include more than 400 teaching and non-teaching staff!



'2022 exam was easier than in past'



NEVER TOO OLD: Derek Skipper has just received his GCSE Certificate.

Derek Skipper, who, at 92, became the oldest person in Britain to sit a GCSE when he took maths at Comberton last summer, reckons he and the other candidates got off lightly. Although he gained a Level 5 — the highest available on the Foundation Paper he took thanks to a collaboration between The Cam Academy Trust's Adult Education programme and Cambridgeshire Skills — he now believes it was pretty easy.

Having recently come across his wife Nancy's GCSE exam papers from 1950 (she is four years younger than him), he feels the maths from 72 years ago is a tougher proposition.

"The maths papers are much harder than I attempted in June," he said. "No easy starter questions!"

The Trust Adult Education programme offers a range of weekly course and one-day workshops at Comberton, Cambourne and Melbourn village colleges.

You can find information on what's available for the spring term here: <https://www.combertonadulted.org/>



MATHS IN 1950: An exam paper from 72 years ago.



HANDS-ON SCIENCE: For Year 8 with the CHaOS team.

School is in CHaOS!

On Friday 2nd December, Cambridge Hands-On Science (aka CHaOS) came in to school as part of their winter roadshow.

Throughout the day they worked with all Year 8 students, demonstrating principles such as air streams and crystal structure, as well as introducing them to different areas of STEM which are only touched on in the curriculum, such as geology.

In addition to working with our Year 8 students, there was also an opportunity for Year 6 students from four local primary schools to come and see the roadshow, assisted by our STEM leaders. This provided a fantastic opportunity for them to engage with a range of scientific concepts in a hands-on manner, which would not be possible in the primary school context.

The STEM leaders also acted as fantastic ambassadors for the school, engaging well with both the volunteers from CHaOS as well as the primary school pupils. One of them even ended up giving a presentation about an engineering project

they had done, as the primary school teacher had been so impressed by it. All the students engaged really well with the visitors and participated enthusiastically, leading to an enjoyable time for all.

Below is a summary by Csanad (11E), one of our STEM leaders: "Our time with CHaOS was very enjoyable.

"We met many bright minds, and it was a nice atmosphere to be in and help out. "CHaOS used the time well to explain many important effects that the pupils will learn about in the future. These spanned from green energy all the way to pulleys and gravity.

"It seemed that the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activities, and the experience was a useful taste of life at CVC.

"We hope to continue cooperation with these primary school and help their pupils become happy members in the CVC community and to have a great time at our college."

Care is a top priority

Once again, this term has been a very busy and hectic one after the long summer break but many exciting things have also occurred.

Firstly, the school council is back and running in person — during Monday lunchtimes in Lab3. The school council team have been working hard to find ways in which the school ethos: Caring, Confident, and Capable can be promoted further.

A new caring calendar was introduced as a result, which includes acts of kindness that can be done every day; shown every tutor time and during assemblies, to remind students how to incorporate caring acts in their day-to-day activities.

There has also been talk of an all-years cake sale, which could happen next term, to introduce greater connections between year groups, which was one of our main goals as head prefects.

After a long term, something to be enjoyed was the school Christmas concert on Tuesday 13th

December in the Performance Hall. It included a variety of Christmas songs sung by Comberton students.

Next term our aims are to further promote the school ethos by creating more connections between year groups, as well as working with the equality and diversity group to create a culture day to promote the wide variety of cultures at Comberton.

Additionally, we aim to further improve student voice by encouraging more students to join the school council (which is something that has already been established this term through a wider range of year groups joining school council) as well



HARD AT WORK: The Head Prefect Team have introduced several new initiatives this term.

as working further with the wellbeing prefects to improve support available in school around mental health.

Head Prefect Team

Bags of Christmas cheer for food bank

A vanload of Christmas goodies has been donated to the Cambridge Foodbank thanks to the generosity of the Comberton community.

In the main school, students worked in tutor groups to organise collecting everything on a pre-determined 'wanted' list sent out by The Trussell Trust, who organise the Foodbank and the seasonal collections.

Each tutor group was asked to assemble two bags containing items like Christmas biscuits, selection boxes, adult chocolates, cheesy crackers and Pringles — as well as more basic items like shower gel and shampoo — to help local families struggling in the current cost of living crisis. Together with donations of individual items from members of Comberton Sixth Form (see Page 14) and staff, the delighted Trussell Trust volunteers were able to drive away with a van full of enough goodies for almost 100 'hampers'.

Scott Aitken, who organises the annual collection, said: "With even more families finding things tough this year, we are pleased to have been able to help make Christmas just a little better for them."



WORKING TOGETHER: Collection of hamper goodies in the main school were co-ordinated by prefects and, with items donated from the sixth form, filled a van to go to Cambridge food bank run by The Trussell Trust.

Author's inspiration

The award-winning novelist Christopher Edge was warmly welcomed to give talks to Year 7 in the library this term, supporting Comberton's work towards 'Closing the Literacy Gap'.

Christopher was a brilliant speaker, talking about what inspires him to write, how he goes about it, and encouraging pupils to help solve puzzles inspired by his latest book — *The Escape Room*.

It was wonderful to see him engage such a large audience, more so as every pupil had had the opportunity to read one of his books already.

Our Year 7 students were each given a copy of one of his brilliant titles as part of their transition to Comberton last July.

It has been widely shown that having access to books at home has a great impact on pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and life outcomes, yet the National Literacy Trust report that in 2021 nearly 6% of children did not own a book of their own.

Christopher said he was extremely proud to be associated with our initiative. We have certainly seen great interest in his books and many others in the library as Year 7 have found their way to us this term!



CAPTIVE AUDIENCE: Year 7s with Christopher Edge.

Books make fantastic gifts . . .



DONATIONS: Items that have been given to the library.

The School Library keeps an Amazon wishlist throughout the year, and we add titles requested by students and teachers on a rolling basis, as well as titles recommended by library, education and literature professionals. We use this list to inform our book purchasing at various stages of the year, but as budgets have been tightened in recent times we have been very grateful for donations from those families in a position to do so. It has enabled us to retain some of our other services such as our online subscriptions, magazines and eBooks. The School Library and Resource Centre is here for all CVC students, whatever their age or interests, and we hope that everyone can find something to interest, inspire, comfort or inform them.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the library can do so at: https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/XOLFV9X7FHE?ref=wl_share

(Please include a gift note so that we can thank you on a bookplate inside the front cover!)

Students' quest to express themselves

Three months ago, the quest was set. The quest to express ourselves. The quest that will take days. The quest to write and compose our own autobiography.

My first action was to ask my mum for the tools and strategy for completing the quest. After I had gathered everything, I set to work. My tools were laid out in front of me: show box, glue, brown wrapping paper, scissors and my right-hand man, the black Sharpie. Hours of dedication; all the cutting, measuring, gluing, drawing. My wooden chest of memories was complete.

But alas, it was missing the most important part: the memories and information. So yet again, I set to

work. Hours of dedication, all the typing, thinking, printing, tea staining. My scrolls were complete. Equipped with a string and label carefully I set them on the bed of scrunched, thin paper brought to life with the colourful,

shiny, purply-pink fabric.

Many others were set the quest. We all showed and shared a bit of what we had done. It was amazing seeing all the ideas and thought people had put into it. There was one by Ruby. She really made it 'burst'. There were doors that opened, revealing the memories and information. Honeycomb was taped to the outside and bees buzzed on top. It was obvious the effort and time put into completing this Creative Quest.

Rachel (8C)



ALL ABOUT ME: Students worked to bring their stories to life.

World Cup is more than football

The school library has marked the World Cup by putting their football books on display.

Addressing the controversy around the event, they have included some facts and figures about Qatar and material to support students who may be affected by the issues that have been brought into the spotlight by the staging of the competition in that country.



A WORLD OF ISSUES: The World Cup is causing controversy.

Child-on-child abuse study

Comberton is a Rights Respecting School and has used this framework to respond to and tackle child-on-child abuse. Jennie Girling, safeguarding and support manager, and Marielle Burgess, Rights Respecting Schools lead, describe the progress they have made

As duty bearers for children's rights, we have a responsibility to create a safe learning environment where child-on-child abuse is not acceptable.

This is how we are achieving it with children's rights at the top of our minds.

As the Everyone's Invited scandal and the subsequent Ofsted review (2021) revealed, child-on-child abuse and the culture of sexualised behaviour and misogyny is very much present in schools across the UK.

Soon after the scandal, we realised that, despite our best efforts and being a UNICEF UK Gold Rights Respecting School, our school was not an exception. Being a Rights Respecting School gives us a useful framework and language to have difficult conversations with pupils and staff and link them to children's rights.

As a Rights Respecting School, we know that children have the right to be educated in a safe environment where they feel treated equally and with dignity.

On top of that, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child directly protects them from abuse and sexual exploitation. We have a duty to ensure their rights are being met at all times.

To begin our work to tackle child-on-child abuse in our school, we conducted a survey among staff, pupils, parents and carers to identify what this problem looked like at Comberton Village College. We knew we had to get this right.

We needed to hear from the young people who are on the receiving end of this, and to create a safe space for them to speak freely about what they experience at our school.

Out of 1,500 pupils, more than half responded and a small number of pupils said they had experienced

child-on-child abuse while at school.

We knew that was just the tip of the iceberg as not everyone at that stage would feel comfortable sharing.

Several brave pupils also spoke in focus groups about their experience and contributed with anonymised real-life scenarios which were later used in staff training.

We also conducted a staff survey, which clearly showed we did not all have the confidence to call out behaviour like this, feeling humiliated ourselves when hearing some of the language, or being worried about getting things wrong.

This work gave us a good base to know what the situation looked like at Comberton.

We then delivered staff training based on information that the young people had provided.

As the pupils' survey revealed that most incidents were happening in corridors, all our staff who come into contact with pupils, including teaching assistants, catering team and the wider site team completed training on safer corridors.

Within this we did some scenario work where we asked colleagues to identify what was bullying, sexual harassment or 'just banter' to get us to start talking, listening and thinking.

Going through these very real scenarios helped everyone realise that when it comes to child-on-child abuse, nothing is ever 'banter'.

Empowered by their knowledge of rights, students have been passionately involved in this work, helping to analyse the results of the survey, and setting up a pupil-led steering group to determine how to talk to students and staff about child-on-child abuse.

In addition to supporting with staff training, the pupil-led group also worked to educate their peers and they are currently helping with designing our own

school posters on child-on-child abuse.

Since then, we have had assemblies on the topic while linking to children's rights, we've developed a child-on-child abuse policy and, since July, we have been logging child-on-child abuse offences, just like we would for any other type of poor behaviour, to help us continue to monitor the situation.

Pupils have started to report child-on-child abuse and we have seen more than 100 reports of sexualised language, behaviour and unwanted touching logged on the school system.

But we don't just leave it there. The most important part is the follow up work, educating our young people to understand why such behaviour is not acceptable.

We have trained our staff to be able to help pupils understand the effect of their actions, what they could have done differently and, importantly, what is triggering their behaviour.

During this term we sent another pupil survey to see where we are at.

We might see the number of reports increase because we are raising awareness and normalising the conversation, where previously students may not have shared for fear of not being taken seriously enough.

A staff and parent one will go out in January. We know we have a long journey ahead of us.

We would recommend any school make similar efforts to call out any behaviour and at the same time educate young people on why they are being called out. But most importantly, listen, and take young people seriously.

It is about creating a safe environment in which children feel safe to report in a way that they are comfortable with and staff feel confident to respond appropriately.



'Matilda' cast reunited at West End show

On September 29th, members of the cast and crew of the college production of Matilda, visited the Cambridge Theatre in Covent Garden to see the West End show.

For some of the students, this was the first time they had been to a professional theatre, and the response was overwhelmingly positive, including being amazed by the impressive theatre space and the sheer scale of the production.

Not only that, but it was also the debut night for all the children in the West End cast, who were exceptionally well supported by the entire audience.

The pupils of CVC certainly played their part in celebrating the vibrant production and outstanding performances given throughout the show.

As they were clapping and singing along, our cast was taken back to the summer evenings in July, when they themselves had a smell of rebellion and were indeed revolting children.

A great reunion was had by all, which even included a performance on the streets outside the theatre by a number of them to the passing crowds...it was great fun!



DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE:
The cast of Comberton's production of 'Matilda' join the audience at the West End show.



LITERACY MATTERS: *It's important to support reading for pleasure.*



ATTENDANCE MATTERS: *Even with 90% attendance a child misses half a year over five years.*

Always aiming for better

At Comberton Village College, we constantly strive to improve our practice to make our provision even better for our students.

Like all schools, we have a school development plan, which is constructed through discussion with our staff and governors, and which forms the basis of our continuing professional development (CPD) throughout the year.

This year our overarching theme is 'coherent staff development and support'. We want to make sure that every single member of staff develops their practice in whichever way is most appropriate to their role and stage of their career.

Our main teaching focus is to help pupils (those in Years 7 to 11) and students (in KS5) know more and remember more.

With this in mind, we are using a package called 'WalkThrus' (The pedants among us do struggle with the spelling!), which enables teachers to pinpoint specific aspects of their craft which they want to improve. This is already having a major impact.

The integration of digital technology is the second strand to this — iPads are playing a vital role in enabling pupils to know and remember more of their learning. More on this below.

Another key priority for us is to develop the 'Whole Young Person'. The three words which embody our ethos — Caring, Confident and Capable — will not be new to many of you.

We develop these in our pupils through all aspects of our curriculum, most noticeably in our Personal Development Curriculum, which includes all PSHE lessons, assembly presentations, tutor group activities, our Comberton Extra programme and all other activities, trips and visits.

Our priority for this area is to ensure that our Personal Development Curriculum is coherently mapped and clear to all. All pupils will soon have access to their own Personal Development Notebook, in which they can view the many strands of the



curriculum and mark their progress on their Comberton Extra page. There are also links to the activity information on our website and how families can apply for financial support.

We want every young person in our care to develop to their full capability, whatever the barriers they may face to their learning. Developing our curriculum for those pupils with SEND and those pupils who do not have the same advantages as others is another key priority for us.

A huge amount of work continues to be carried out in the background to ensure that these pupils flourish, including a thriving staff working group, where excellent practice is discussed and disseminated.

Research shows that pupils with high levels of literacy make the best progress in school. The most effective thing that parents and carers can do to support their child is to ensure that they read widely for pleasure throughout their teenage years.

Raising literacy levels continues to be a key area of focus for us — we are using government 'Catch Up' funding to secure resources and training for staff in all areas to improve pupils' academic and subject specific vocabulary and raise general literacy levels.

Last but by no means least is our focus on raising attendance.

Although our overall attendance figures are high, there is always for improvement. Consider a pupil who has 90% attendance. 90% would probably seem a very high score in an assessment test, but 90% attendance over five years means that half a school year has been missed!

How could a pupil with this attendance record achieve as highly as others? Our new Attendance Officer, Mrs Solanki, is already doing a tremendous amount of work with individual families; thank you to all parents and carers for the work you do in ensuring that attendance at school is a priority in every household.

Regina Lawrence, Deputy Principal

Digital technology is making a difference

Since September 2022, all pupils in Years 7 to 10 have had access to a 1-2-1 device. These iPads have quickly become an integral part of learning. Pupils are regularly using GarageBand in Music, Seneca Learning in Science and Quizlet and Languageut to learn vocabulary in MFL.

The quick and easy way in which pupils are now accessing apps to help them means that teachers are able to use lesson time more effectively. For example, a plenary activity using Blooket is quick, fun and enables teachers to see at a glance how much of the lesson content has been understood.

The digital 'ShowMe' board takes seconds to set up rather than the previously time-consuming distribution of white boards.

The iPads are also a tremendously useful means of organising learning; the class notebook content library, which is used by many departments, is helping pupils learn to curate their own work so that they can learn more effectively.

This will stand our pupils in good stead for organising their learning at post-16 level and beyond, when they must become more independent.

Finally, we have recently carried out pupil, teacher and parent/carer surveys on Teaching and Learning and will use these to continue to develop our practice further.



INTEGRAL PART OF LEARNING: *Pupils in Years 7-10 have access to an iPad.*

Digging deeper into different subjects

On 17th and 18th October, all pupils in Years 7 to 11 had the chance to undertake some different kinds of learning activities.

These two Curriculum Immersion Days enable our pupils to be immersed into the curriculum in a different way, as the normal school timetable is collapsed.



LIFE LESSONS: Year 10's programme included learning about the dangers of substance abuse.

Trying new sports

As part of the curriculum immersion days, the PE department offered students a number of fun and exciting opportunities.

The sessions were specifically chosen to give students a taste of sports and activities they may not experienced before.

These taster sessions included a cycle try-out, Quidditch, night-line, fencing, gymnastics and street/jazz dance. Students seemed to thoroughly enjoy each of the activities.

Beth and Charvi had the following to say about their experience: "Our PE curriculum immersion day was amazing and so much fun!

"We started off the day doing lots of different activities such as: gymnastics, dance, fencing, Quidditch and many others.

"It was very enjoyable and everybody pitched in and had fun!!

"It was a very memorable experience. Everyone enjoyed themselves, including the teachers, and we all learnt something new.

"We also all found something that we couldn't do before and built up teamwork, confidence and creativity.

"We absolutely LOVED the day and we're excited to do many more exciting activities like it."



Solving a 'murder'!

Year 7 were called upon to help solve the 'murder' of Dr Smith, the Head of Science. They were presented with four suspects from within the department, each with a different motive. Their task was to consider various pieces of forensic evidence which had been collected from the crime scene to decide which teacher was guilty.

The analysis of this forensic evidence required the use of a wide variety of practical skills, including burning chemical samples and observing what colour they turned the flame, performing tests for protein on 'urine' samples from the suspects, analysing the pH of the mud found on the shoes of the suspects and performing chromatography on pens belonging to each suspect.

The students took up the challenge with great enthusiasm, employing the scientific skills they have developed at the start of this year, and delighted in making their accusations.



NEW SKILLS: In sports and scientific investigation for Year 7 students.

Regina Lawrence, Deputy Principal

A world of activities on offer

YEAR 8



CORRECT DRESS: For battling gladiators and in traditional Japan.

In the MFL department, Year 8 pupils were given the opportunity to participate in activities designed to extend beyond the normal school-based curriculum. We offered a choice of five activities — Japanese, Ancient Italy, Samba, Salsa and Capoeira. The activities were all very different, and some were possibly new to pupils. Each activity was designed to help pupils to learn about the cultural background of the country where the activity originated. Salsa and Capoeira were very energetic, fun, and led by great instructors. Samba was the loudest activity as, after exploring what the Carnival in Rio de Janeiro is, and making some Brazilian crowns, pupils were heard playing the drums! In Japanese pupils learnt how to write their names and how the Japanese alphabet works. The Ancient Italy activity was based on the history of ancient Rome and involved making gladiators biscuits.

Seaside learning

I really enjoyed the Walton trip. I enjoyed going to the beach and finding evidence of erosion and taking a look at the sea defences. I liked the pill boxes and going into one. I found it really interesting how some pill boxes were actually on land and

because of the erosion they fell into the sea. I also liked going to cafe as a little treat. Thank you for taking us to this trip. It was really educating and fun!

Seniye (8N)



FIELDWORK: For Year 8 students at Walton-on-the-Naze.

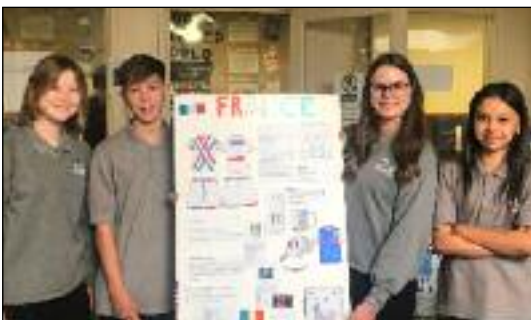
Kicking off with marketing . . .

For their English day, Year 9 students created a marketing campaign for a World Cup team. Working collaboratively in groups, each team worked tirelessly to design and carefully craft their coach's speech, kit designs, tactics, slogans and merchandise. Students learnt more about the upcoming World Cup and the historical significance of it as a sporting event.

We were hugely impressed by the energy, effort and dedication that went into crating such fantastic projects, but when the final whistle sounded, there could only be one winner (well, two — one from each day).

Special congratulations go to Japan and Argentina, who were the worthy victors!

YEAR 9



CUP FEVER: Marketing a World Cup team.



Maths in real life!

Each half of Year 9 spent a day learning about different areas of maths. Some groups spent the morning looking at the idea of a 'regular' 3D shape, which led to them finding out about the five platonic solids. Others were learning about maths in the real world such as how we can use probability to help us win certain card games, or breaking down a monthly salary into things like tax, rent, bills, food and transport to see how much they would have left. In the afternoon, most students were able to take part in a bridge-building project, where they were tasked with building the strongest bridge possible given a limited budget. Lots of groups considered different areas such as safety, how it would look and what shapes would make it the strongest to make some fantastic bridges.



3D MATHS: For some Year 9 pupils.

In search of perfect pic



CHOICE OF SUBJECT MATTER: For students' photos.



On the first day of their Photography GCSE mock exam, students went into Cambridge to complete a group photography assignment.

We took in a tour of the classic colleges and old streets of Cambridge, utilising these for backdrops, architecture shoots and street photography compositions.

We also took pupils to Fen Causeway to photograph the wildlife, including squirrels, cows, ducks and a cautiously friendly heron!

It was a lovely sunny day and pupils ended up with large numbers of excellent shots for their coursework.

Let's hope the public bus is still operating next year for this trip to run again!



THIS 'MOCK' COUNTS: The first Year 11 major GCSE Art coursework outcome, held over 10 hours (two days) in exam conditions is worth 25% of the Artists' Study coursework project.



TEACHING ASSISTANTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Could you make a difference to our students with autism and/or additional needs in school?

We are actively seeking to recruit Teaching Assistants to work in our additional needs departments.

We would particularly like to hear from you if you are a parent, recently retired, a recent graduate or are looking to gain experience of working in an area that provides tailored support to students with an inclusive outlook.



We have vacancies in several additional needs departments at Comberton Village College, supporting students with a variety of needs, including Autism, learning difficulties, physical impairments, social or emotional needs.

Part-time positions available; term time only.

To apply or obtain further information, visit: <https://www.combertonvc.org/contact-us/current-vacancies>

Scholarship's a big deal

Teegan has just bagged herself a sports deal worth around \$1/4m — despite initially retiring as an elite gymnast.

The Year 13 student has just signed a contract for a full scholarship to Bowling Green State University (BGSU) in Ohio USA, where she will study Sports Science for four years alongside gymnastics training and competition.

The \$250,000 (approx.) deal, which will see all her tuition fees, accommodation, food, clothes and other expenses (except flights home) paid for, was resurrected in the summer after Teegan changed her mind about retirement. "I was so shocked they still wanted me," she said. "But I went out on my own in October and signed the contract in November. I start there in August.

"I will be training 8am-11am every day, also doing strength and conditioning work and competing during the season which runs from January to April. I just want to do the best I can for my college and the team."

The chance to go to America to study and train was a fading memory when Teegan decided to retire earlier this year following a six-month lay-off in 2021 with a shoulder injury and then a bout of Covid, which left her hospitalised.

"I needed a break," she said. "But then I realised I was missing it, got back in touch with the college and I was amazed they still wanted me. I won't be doing bars because that's what affects my shoulder the most, but I'll be competing in beam, vault and

floor. I'm really excited to be going so I just need to do what needs to be done to get there."



DONE DEAL: Putting a signature on a four-year university scholarship contract.

when she decided to retire.

Now it's all on again and Teegan just can't wait to start her next adventure.

Teegan, who is studying for a Level 3 BTEC in Sport, needs to pass all the elements of that course but is hoping to get Distinctions and Merits to set her up for the degree study.

Studying in America is the latest twist on a gymnastics pathway that started in the recreation classes at Huntingdon Gym Club when she was four years old.

And although she adored the sport, Teegan admitted: "I wasn't very good. I was competing from age nine to about 12 and I used to come last or 13th/14th out of 15!"

Things changed dramatically when she was in Year 7 at Cambourne Village College and unexpectedly won bronze in the vault at the English Championships and was shocked to find herself in the England squad.

Years of national squad recognition followed, including a silver medal at an Olympic Hopes competition in the Czech Republic.

In 2018 she switched to the South Essex club made famous by Olympic champion Max Whitlock, es — and managed to train through the Pandemic, only to pick up the shoulder injury as normality started to return.

She had secured her scholarship then let it go

Always happy to eat cake!

Thank you to our charities enrichment group who organised a bake sale, with donations being split between Cancer Research UK and the Addenbrooke's Hospital Charitable Trust. They raised £120 in just one break time (clearly our Year 12 and Year 13 students were delighted to participate).



CAKE RUSH: Brisk business at the bake sale.

Honing leadership skills



LEADERS IN TRAINING: Comberton sixth formers.

The Year 12 sports leadership programme is well under way after the success of its first year of running last year.

Our small group have done a brilliant job so far running PE lessons for two Year 4 classes at Queen Emma's Primary school in Cambridge. They have built up a relationship with the pupils and have helped develop their footwork and ball handling skills.

New machine is a boost for graphics

The Art Department has an important new piece of equipment. They were delighted to receive the kind donation of a screen printing table from Panel Graphics in Norwich <https://www.displaywindows.com/>

This screen table allows students to print graphic images, allowing our students to work at a larger scale on more ambitious projects, with multi layered colour registration.

This piece of equipment is very expensive, so the Art Department is very grateful to have this in place for the benefit of students.

This means a specialist and well-resourced printmaking department will be able to offer a wide range of different graphic printing processes to students, thus broadening their educational Art experience at the college.

It will enable A-level students to produce more exciting screen print outcomes as part of their course delivery.



TOP TABLE: A screen printing table has been donated to the Art Department.



SPEAKING OUT: *Comberton's team is introduced by Rotarian Richard Wells, the MC for the event, before debating their motion.*

Students make the case

Sixth formers from Comberton were back on the debating circuit this term, following a three-year break as a result of the pandemic.

The team of Ben (Chair), Lucy (Proposer) and Mark (Opposer) were participating in the local round of the Youth Speaks competition organised by the Rotary Club. The event took place in the impressive surroundings of the Fitzpatrick Hall at Queens' College, Cambridge, where teams were invited to present debates on a motion of their choice to an assembled group of judges, Rotarians and supporters.

The Comberton team elected to discuss the motion that drug use should be

treated as a mental health issue rather than a criminal one, and managed to find time in their busy Year 13 schedules to research and prepare the arguments on both sides.

Against stiff competition from sixth forms across Cambridge, the team gave a terrific account of themselves on the evening, delivering an accomplished set of speeches on the stage and drawing praise from judges and spectators alike. In the final reckoning, a tight competition was edged by The Perse School, but for our Comberton team this was an experience upon which they can justly reflect with great pride.

Digging deep to share Christmas treats

Once again our students, staff, parents and carers, along with other members of our community, have shown their support for the Trussell Trust and the Cambridge Christmas Hamper Appeal.

This initiative is school and sixth form-wide with students across Years 7 to Year 11 creating individual hampers, supported by the 'extras' donated by the sixth form, which effectively doubled the contributions from the college as a whole.

On behalf of the Trussell Trust, Mr Aitken, who has coordinated donations, and the CSF Student Council, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has kindly donated items to support those in the local community who need help this festive season.

Both my office and the sixth form administration office had huge boxes and many bags full of your kind donations (too many to be in one photograph!).

Your generosity and support for the local community is heart-warming, particularly at this challenging time for so many.

THANK YOU.

David Clarke, Deputy Principal and Head of Sixth Form



BAGS OF GOODIES: *For the Cambridge Christmas Hamper appeal.*

Reciprocal visit on staff wishlist!



FACT-FINDING MISSION: *Delegates from the Maldives with Principal Peter Law.*

In October, Comberton Sixth Form and Comberton Village College were pleased to welcome a delegation from the Republic of Maldives.

We were joined by staff from the Ministry of Education who were keen to find out about Physical Education across Years 7-13.

They also wanted to find out more about the Sixth Form curriculum and how we teach A-levels and BTECs. The delegation wanted to find out about how students travel, make curriculum choices and progress from the UK sixth form/college system.

While it might be strange to make a comparison between the Maldives and South Cambridgeshire, the need to travel to and from the Post-16 providers is a similarity that many don't consider.

One reason why they wanted to visit a successful school-based sixth form rather than a large college was to find out about how we plan our curriculum so that students have choice (bespoke timetabling etc) and the financial constraints and limits on such things.

As you can imagine, plenty of staff would be keen to arrange an exchange trip, but sadly this is unlikely!

Out in the field . . .

Geographers head for the South Coast

Year 13 geographers headed for Dorset between 28th September and 1st October.

This fieldwork forms a vital part of their A-level Geography course.

Based at the Leeson House study centre, students and staff worked hard over four days to introduce and practice fieldwork techniques before the students spent time in small groups to complete their

preferred investigations.

By going to Dorset, students can choose their specialism, opting for place studies in Boscombe or Corfe or the coast component, with investigations based on sand dune succession, coastal processes and coastal management.

The fieldwork is then 'written up' as the NEA, which is worth 20% of the overall geography A-level grade.

Our students were once again excellent ambassadors for CSF, with locals and visitors providing positive feedback.

Thank you to Leeson House for their venue, knowledgeable staff and great food.

With only one wet and windy day, we all had a great time.

Mr Clarke and the Geography Department



COAST OR CITY: Students could choose the focus for their fieldwork investigation that is worth 20% of the A-level.

Biologists go pond-dipping in the Fens

Year 12 A Level Biologists spent two days of a warm Futures Week last summer doing field work.

The first day was spent at Wicken Fen, the most biodiverse nature reserve in the UK, with the second spent doing more sampling and data analysis back at college.

One of the activities at Wicken Fen was Pond Dipping. We used nets and trays to scoop and identify the number of different insects, amphibians and aquatic life that were present in the pond — being careful not to prod our partners or others around with the long, wooden ends of our nets!

Doing this enabled us to calculate the species diversity index of two ponds while comparing their uses, situation and a series of abiotic factors.

Wicken Fen is known for its biodiversity and, as a result, is home to many endangered species, such as the Great Crested Newt. Therefore if we were to catch a newt tadpole when Pond Dipping, we had to ensure to return it to the water within five minutes — as there is no way to decipher between the endangered newt species and the more common newt species as tadpoles.

However, when newts get older, the different species are easily identifiable and whilst we were there a Great Crested Newt was caught and recorded, as is required for such a protected species.

The best part about Pond Dipping was being able to see such a variety and abundance of species living in harmony with one another, creating a vast and sustainable ecosystem.

Our other activity was measuring how the abundance of different plant species changed across a habitat.

Fortunately, cloud cover and light breeze made work on our belt transect a more pleasant experience than the forecast had suggested.

We enjoyed the sweet scent of water mint as we identified different plant species (while both counting and avoiding the nettles) within each.

Belt transects involve laying a tape measure along a habitat, then placing square frames called quadrats at regular intervals along the tape measure.

The different species inside the square quadrats are then

counted or the percentage cover can be estimated, which is the technique we used. This data shows patterns in the distribution of different types of plants in a habitat, which can be correlated with factors such as light intensity and distance from the natural ditch our transect started at. Kite diagrams can also be drawn to visually show the distribution of the different species along the transect, which we did later in the week.

Overall, the day was enjoyable and informative for all of us; a great contribution to our practical skills. Thanks to Chris and her team at Wicken Fen for such a great day!

Vidisha and Eleanor (13PG)



NET VALUE: Students investigate Wicken Fen's biodiversity.

Celebrating language!

The languages department held the annual International Talent Evening earlier this term.

During the evening, Year 7s performed the Spanish songs they learnt with their teachers as part of the Spanglovision competition.

The winners on the night were 7C ('Mi Encanto' from *Encanto*) and 7V ('Noches de Amor' from *Grease*), who performed brilliantly. Both were rewarded with a non-uniform day.

The evening also showcased the range of languages that are spoken at CVC — there were poems read in Ukrainian and Spanish, among others, and the language teachers read a poem showcasing 10 different languages!

The smooth running of the evening was helped by the International Leaders, who assisted with handing out programmes, seating the Year 7 participants and taking photographs of the event.

It was also much enjoyed by the participants. Rhyleigh-Rose (7C) said: "The Spanglovision contest was a thrilling experience for teachers and pupils alike.

"Congratulations to forms 7C and 7V, the winners of the contest.

Each form put a lot of effort into their performance but, somehow, 7C and 7V managed to scrape a win.

"Not only were the students performing, but teachers from the languages department took part as well with multilingual poems and performances of their own.

"It was probably the most exciting night for most of Year 7 since they started at Comberton Village College. Special thanks to everyone who came to support and



DIFFERENT TONGUES: Comberton staff read a poem showcasing 10 languages.

perform."

Hiram (7C) added: "It was the first ever performance we showed our parents."

This event is a wonderful way to celebrate the internationalism of our school and is a great opportunity to promote the Rights of the Child (Article 30 — every child has the right to learn and use the customs, language and religion used in their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the country they live in).

Students immersed in Parisian life

At the end of half-term, 36 pupils in Years 10 to 13 and four members of staff went on a trip to Paris.

They spoke lots of French, enjoyed meals in a range of Parisian restaurants and saw lots of the main sites of Paris. Highlights included seeing the Notre Dame in its current state being rebuilt after the fire, a night time visit to Sacre Coeur, shopping on the Champs-Elysées and a boat trip on the Seine.

Students and staff alike had a very busy few days but enjoyed being immersed in French culture and using the French they have learned in their lessons.



ICONIC PARIS: The Comberton party visited several of Paris' most famous sights including the Notre Dame and the Eiffel Tower.



Learning to lead . . .

The Language Leader Training Day was held in the Murray Edwards College in Cambridge. In addition to CVC pupils, there were also pupils from Cambourne Village College and other schools.

When we first sat down in the lecture hall, the lady who was holding the lecture explained to us what we would be learning that day. We started by talking about what would make a good language

leader and how to communicate with the students. After that we had a break with squash and some biscuits. When we came back, we talked about presentation skills, for example speaking confidently and working together with your pair, as well as about how you should present the learning material to pupils. We had a break for lunch and then came back together to talk about any ideas we had for the lessons.

Svetlana (90)



PLANNING PHASE: Leaders work on lessons.



OUT AND ABOUT: At Wartburg castle (left) and down the salt mine in Merkers.

Fantastic exchange visit

The German exchange took place from the 7th-14th December, and was a thrilling experience for all.

We were welcomed warmly on the first day by our 'Gastfamilien', (host families) where we settled into life of a German family.

We spent one day at our host school, where we made many new friends and took part in lessons. After school had finished (at 12.55!), we walked with our exchange partners into the town of Bad Hersfeld, and had a tour, and visited the Christmas market.

Our first day trip was to Weimar. Here we toured a museum and another Christmas market. Many enjoyed the German food, bought souvenirs, and enjoyed ice-skating (some for the first time).

On the Saturday we visited the historically rich Wartburg castle. Here, we visited yet another Christmas market, situated within the historic courtyard, as well as

getting a tour of the castle. We learned of the development of the castle over the years and of Martin Luther's stay there.

On the Sunday, we had the day to spend with our host families, who had planned a variety of wintery experiences, including trips to Kassel and Frankfurt.

On the Monday we had a project day at the school, spending time together with our exchange partners. We made Plätzchen (German Christmas biscuits).

On the Tuesday we spent our final day visiting an active salt mine in a town called Merkers. We learned about the workings of the mine (and were impressed by the skills of our interpreter, aka Herr Waive). Finally, at the end of this day there was a farewell party from all of the hosts which was very pleasant.

The German exchange was very enjoyable with many of us forming strong friendships with our exchange partners and others. We are looking forward to March when the German exchange students come and stay with us.

Up close to 'Nazi Rule'

In the very early morning hours of December 1st, 50 Year 11 GCSE History students and five staff set off for Munich, with the aim having an up-close look at their 'Living Under Nazi Rule' topic.

Munich was the 'capital of the movement' during the Nazi era, and students started with a walking tour of the city's main sites, before being allowed to explore the Christmas markets.

Saturday was dedicated to understanding more about the Nazis rise to power, with students following the route of the 1923 Munich Putsch.

The final day in Munich at the Dachau Memorial Site, on the grounds of the former Dachau concentration camp. Our final stop was Nuremberg, a beautiful city almost entirely rebuilt to capture its medieval history after it was nearly destroyed during

WWII. Students visited Nuremberg's Documentation Centre, on the edges of the infamous rally grounds, and then had the opportunity to literally walk in the footsteps of history, going outside to explore some of the remains of the rally grounds, including the site where the 1930s Nazi propaganda film *Triumph of the Will* was filmed.

After time in the famous Christmas market, there was a visit to the Palace of Justice, the site of the Nuremberg Trials, where top Nazi generals were put on trial after the end of the Second World War. Overall, the students represented themselves, their teachers, and CVC excellently.

They asked insightful questions, engaged with hugely difficult topics, and managed early wake-ups with no complaining.



BREATHING SPACE: A quick sit down at the university during a full-on trip to Germany.

Carols to aid Ukraine

Comberton Young Voices, CVC's choir for Years 7-9, were invited to perform at the Rotary Carol Concert at Great St. Mary's Church, Cambridge, at the beginning of December. Swapping their school closure day for a day of rehearsals and performing, students joined several other schools for this event, which helped to raise money to send two ambulances to



GOOD VOICE: Comberton pupils joined other schools' students to benefit Ukraine.

Ukraine. The choir were in good voice despite the frosty weather and the audience particularly warmed to their

performance of 'Be-bopping Santa Claus' by Kirby Shaw. Concert highlights are on Cambridge 105 radio on Christmas Day.

Seasonal sound

The biggest concert of the year, the CVC Christmas Concert, brought much needed festive cheer on the 13th December. Year 7 performers got into the Christmas spirit with performances of 'Rockin' Around the Xmas Tree' and 'I Wish it could be Christmas Every Day', while Soul Band encouraged us to 'Feel Good' and 'Move on Up!' Orchestra entertained with the Hallelujah Chorus and we were also treated to some festive readings as the stage was rearranged from time to time. Thanks to all the staff who helped to make this event a success. Department ensembles are open to all. Our latest programme is available on the school website.

All that jazz!

Following their well-received outing at the Music for Youth festival last year, the CVC Big Band went on to perform as part of the Cambridge Jazz Festival in November. Under the new leadership of bandleader Jake Hatter, they performed three tracks — 'The Chicken' by Pee Wee Ellis, 'Sway' by Demetrio / Ruiz and 'Friend Like Me' by Menkin.

In the afternoon students were treated to an improvising workshop with Martin Hathaway, Head of Jazz at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. This is a growing ensemble who mean business!

Bricks fall into place

Comberton's project to create eco-bricks from waste plastic bottles has entered a new phase.

Although the school's Eco Group had created a bench from the home-made bricks before the Covid pandemic, the issue had always been how to connect them together.

Now they have teamed up with the DB Group and moved to using cement blocks with the eco bricks as their core.

Eco bricks are plastic bottles filled with non-recyclable plastics to make them strong enough to build with.

Cement usually has a huge carbon footprint, which would negate the recycling aim of the project.

But the DB Group, based locally at Bourn, produces a low carbon alternative and have been giving Comberton Cemfree without charge.

Cemfree is 'an ultra-low carbon alternative to traditional cement that can save up to 80% in embodied CO2 compared to a conventional mix.'

It has been described as a 'totally cement-free alternative to conventional concrete and a ground-breaking milestone in low-carbon concrete technology.'

Comberton's plan is now to use their new eco bricks to create a raised bed to grow herbs for the Food Technology Department.

Patrick Gordon, who oversees Comberton's eco work, said: "We are delighted to have found a way to connect the eco bricks using a low-carbon cement alternative.

"We intend to first use the new blocks for a raised bed herb garden."

Aaron Lucid, DB Group's Business Development and Specification Manager, said: "It's been a pleasure to be able to support CVC and see them focus on innovative products within their education.

"By supplying Cemfree materials, we hope we have helped in educating the next generation about sustainable and innovative products available and see this influence the future of the construction industry and further."



EN-CORE: Eco bricks return with a new look to help connect them to each other.

Another new way to reduce waste



COMPOST BIN: Students have used pallets to create a place to decompose fruit and vegetable waste.

Comberton's Eco Group have launched a new project to cut down on waste.

They have built a compost bin near the outdoor classroom behind The Cabin and have just started filling it with fruit and vegetable waste from the two Food Technology classrooms. Food caddies have been added to the classrooms with a wheelie bin to empty the contents into. The wheelie bin is then be taken to the compost by Eco Group members on a weekly basis.

Harrison (8) explained: "In the long term, we would like this to be for the

whole school, including the Buttery and the Dining Room. For now, we are trialling this in the Food Tech classrooms.

"For this to be a sustainable project, it needs to be easy for all of the food tech staff and students to work with. "At this stage we only want to collect raw fruit and vegetables, no dairy / meat etc.

"Eggshells are fine, but we want to avoid rats, so don't want to include anything that might attract them.

"Paper, paper napkins and cardboard could also be put in this bin."

Spreading the word in the community

From 10-4 on September 17th, the Group attended the Hardwick Eco Event and created our own stall with a game and a quiz.

These were a 'banana lover' quiz and guessing how many pieces of plastic are in an eco brick.

The winner and runner-up of these won a money plant to take home and nurture (these were kindly donated by a former CVC student). Also, we took our eco bench, which has been part of our school since 2018.

This allowed attendees to sit down and have a feel for how comfortable the bench is.

The bench was made of eco bricks, which are plastic bottles stuffed with non-recyclable plastics, such as chocolate wrappers, so that they become strong enough to use as

building blocks.

We also had two of our eco club members give talks on various environmental topics: Emily (11M) did a talk on fast fashion and Freya (9N) spoke about the school's Ground Source Heat Pump project. Both of them were amazing at speaking confidently in front of an audience of adults they had never met before and who had some challenging questions to ask. At the fair there was a range of eco-friendly stalls, for example: bags, socks, candle making and paper making (which was a firm favourite among the children attending). Hardwick Eco Event will run again next year and so do go and enjoy a day out with friends and family.

Lily (11R)



ALL SET UP: The Eco team's stall at the Hardwick Eco Event.

Cakes raise cash

The Eco Group held a bake sale outside the Sixth Form Core to coincide with Children in Need week.

Vegan, vegetarian and 'free-from' options were available, along with the usual array of sweet treats, including brownies, banana bread, biscuits, cookies, cakes and cupcakes.

A total of £120 was donated to the new Cambridge Children's Hospital, specifically supporting teenagers with cancer.



VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE: Some of the elements of the new multi-million pound Ground Source Heat Pump system.

Global issues force delay

I am pleased to report that much work has been completed in preparing the site for the switch over from heating oil as the predominant supply for heating energy, to ground sourced heat energy.

Currently the new heat loop is operating on a temporary boiler and we await the significant switch over to the new energy supply. Unfortunately, it would appear that despite the best efforts of the delivery team, we have been set back by global supply challenges. Initially this was in the form of pipework, and more recently, the electrical components required to power the pumps.

We were expecting the system to be delivered this month, however we now anticipate a February switch over. While this is frustrating

for everyone involved, the project is very much in the final stages and being slowly commissioned, where possible.

It would appear that the project was not the only one to be hamstrung by supply issues, as the electric vehicle charging points also suffered several weeks of delays — for similar component part, supply issues.

We are expecting that the 10 new chargers will be up and running by the end of December 2022, to enable this part of our project to be completed.

The academic year of 2022/23 remains a very big year for CVC's decarbonising mission — fingers crossed for early spring!

Sean Sycamore, Deputy Principal



Mock COP shows why action so hard to get

Thirteen schools from across the region came together at Sawston Village College to take part in a mock COP27 style eco conference.

The eco teams from each school took part, including 12 students from CVC. There was a very interesting key note talk from Dr Simon Morley, of the British Antarctic Survey.

This then led into the main event, a mock COP. Each school represented an assigned country and had to make a speech requesting a certain amount of money from a total 'budget' of £1 billion to solve climate-related issues within their country.

These ranged from flooding defences to funding for solar panels, and every request was expressed articulately by each school.

Comberton represented Brazil, with Natasha (9V) delivering a speech focusing on the Amazon Rainforest and how we would use the £40 million requested to end deforestation and support those whose livelihoods depended on it with greener jobs.

After every school had spoken, we had 15 minutes to decide who our five votes would go to.

There was a lot of negotiation between different schools, with deals and snubs, before we had to settle down and vote.

Out of the 13 schools represented, and 12 possible votes, Comberton got a whopping 10 votes, the highest number of everyone by two!

It then went to the final round, where every school had to vote yes or no to the three highest-scoring schools hypothetically receiving the money they had asked for.

For any money to be given out, it had to be a unanimous vote in favour. Sadly, every school was blocked and no-one got any of the hypothetical money, but it was an incredibly interesting experience and taught everyone involved a huge amount about negotiation, politics and how hard it is to get things done on an international level.

The last workshop was for the schools to jointly decide on some shared projects. There were loads of great ideas and these were then voted on. It was an excellent conference, organised by the County Council and hopefully we can continue to work together as schools on such an important issue as this.

Freya (9N)



'BIDDING' FOR CASH: Comberton speak out to win hypothetical money at the mock COP27 schools' eco conference.

Planting plan

After the main event, a group of Comberton students listened to a talk on tree planting by Natural England and about the Babraham Forest Garden.

Forest gardens are areas of forest which are planted by humans to act like a normal forest.

They could contain lots of fruit and berries. The garden which was most recently started growing contained apples, nuts, berries and garlic.

The ground was designed to be covered in shrubs and bushes.

This area will take many years to grow full, but in the end will be an area for animals and people to use and enjoy.

Emma (8C)

Trust team with Apple

The Cam Academy Trust is pleased to announce that it has been recognised as an Apple Regional Training Centre for 2022–2023.

Being selected as an Apple Regional Training Centre highlights our commitment to facilitating training for teachers to develop skills and build confidence to use Apple technology in the classroom.

In 2019 the Trust embarked on a journey to use iPads to enhance teaching and learning in all our schools. Since then, three of our secondary schools are now using iPads in a 1:1 environment, and all primary schools are integrating the use of iPads into their curriculum. The use of iPads by pupils and staff has the potential to:

provide opportunities to enhance pupils' overall learning experience; give access to learning anywhere, anytime — both in classrooms and at home; narrow the digital divide between pupils; encourage pupils to become more independent in their learning; personalise learning to suit individual pupils, and provide opportunities to create and share work.

We believe that iPads empower us to work together to open new avenues to learning, so that our staff and students are flexible, creative, digitally literate and better prepared for the future.

Apple Regional Training Centres create a community to share best practice and support teaching staff to attain Apple Teacher status, a professional learning programme designed to support and celebrate educators. Teachers from across the Trust, region and local authority can attend courses to build knowledge and skills and earn badges to achieve Apple Teacher recognition.

Customised courses on offer this year through our centre will also include:

- iPad Top Tips: Teacher — learn how to use your iPad to enhance the



Regional Training Centre

classroom experience for yourself and your learners.

- iPad Top Tips: Learning Assistant — learn how to use an iPad to help support learners to use an iPad safely and sensibly in the classroom.

- Learning with iPad: Seesaw — An introduction to Seesaw as a digital portfolio that allows learners to create, collaborate, reflect, celebrate and share their learning with their peers, teachers and family members (if invited). Join us to learn:

- What Seesaw is and the key features
- How it can be used effectively in the classroom to support all learners
- How it can reduce teacher workload, save paper and create meaningful learning experiences for all

- Teaching with iPad: ARMAkr — A

fantastic virtual reality app that can transport your learners into the heart of a story. Join us to learn:

- What ARMAkr is and the key features
- How it can be used to bring a story to life, with examples from Year 6 learners
- Opportunity to create your own virtual reality scene to share back in your classroom

- Everyone can create: Garage Band

- Creating with iPad: Clips — Film making for EYFS & KS1. Explore:

- What clips is and the key features
- Expectations in content created in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 with examples from each year group
- Opportunity to create a film to share back in your classroom.



A TRUST INITIATIVE: Comberton's Ground Source Heat Pump.

Eco work is critical

Sustainability and climate change are important matters that all organisations must closely examine. The Cam Academy Trust is in the unique position of being able to have two broad impacts: as educators, we can ensure the next generation has the knowledge and skills necessary to make a positive impact in their adult lives; and, as estate managers, we can ensure our buildings are operated efficiently using green energy sources. As pandemic-related pressures begin to ease, now is the perfect time to make progress.

Jacob Powell is the link Trustee for climate change and sustainability. He looks at the Trust's vision and strategy and reviews its operational implementation.

He said: "My first step was to understand the work that is currently being done across the Trust. This has initially involved meeting with staff members at CVC, and it has been wonderful to hear about initiatives ranging from their fantastic Environmental and Sustainability Education curriculum to the recent Ground Source Heat Pump installation. I hope to engage with all schools across our Trust, to hear about their current work.

"A future aim is to create a Trust climate change and sustainability strategy. This is a high priority for the Trust Board, and we are pleased that Simon Holmes will be leading on this operationally.

"This will be a collaborative process, involving stakeholders from across all our schools — students, staff and community members. If you would be interested to talk about this matter, please do get in touch via jpowell@catrust.co.uk."

A model provision

A fundamental educational value across The Cam Academy Trust is comprehensive education. We hold firmly to the belief that education should be properly comprehensive: available to a very high quality for all pupils of all backgrounds, types and needs. This can be, and ideally is, provided in the same school setting. We work hard to ensure that this is a reality with all our schools, serving our communities and providing excellent education to all pupils.

It is within this crucial principle that our Cabin provision sits. It is perhaps one of the most powerful manifestations of the comprehensive principle in action. This provision provides strong support for pupils with high-functioning autism to be on roll at a mainstream school and to access the curriculum and education at that school. It started as a small-scale provision in an ageing portacabin at Comberton Village College. In its entirety, it now supports more than 100 pupils in four Trust Schools – Comberton, St Peter's School, Melbourn Village College and Gamlingay Village Primary.

Not only has provision spread across several Trust secondary schools, but it is also now firmly established at primary level. It enables very significant numbers of young people to access mainstream education when that might not otherwise be possible. As such, it has become an educational model of considerable national interest and importance. Very many of the pupils involved are able to progress to positive destinations in education and beyond following their time being part of our Cabins.

We are proud of this provision within our schools and continue to look at how we might develop it further still as well as protect it from the funding threats that present themselves moving forward.

Stephen Munday, CEO



PURPOSE-BUILT: The Cabin at Gamlingay has been completed.

For the latest job vacancies across the Trust go to www.catrust.co.uk



FEELING POSITIVE: Trainees (left to right) Rebecca Leatherland, Jacqui Woods, Hannah Cinque and Laura Milner have enjoyed their first term in Trust schools.

Teachers train in school

Four trainee teachers have just finished their first term learning on the job as part of The Cam Academy Trust's school-based CTSN SCITT programme.

The quartet, working in primary and secondary schools, are among a large number of new recruits to the profession taking the hands-on route to their chosen career.

CTSN SCITT is a school-based initial teacher training provider with more than 90 partnership schools in Cambridgeshire, West Suffolk, North Essex and West Norfolk and is currently recruiting trainee teachers for its programmes starting in September 2023.

It offers school-centred teacher training for both primary and secondary; full-time (one year) and part-time (two years); salaried and non-salaried courses to not only soon-to-be-graduates or recent graduates looking for their first meaningful career but also career changers of all ages seeking a new purposeful vocation. Rebecca Leatherland, a Design and Technology trainee at Comberton, said: "I chose this route as I wanted to be immersed in school life and I feel I have definitely benefited from that, especially being from a practical subject. I really feel part of the team.

"I have been so well supported since the start. My department at Comberton have been very welcoming and supportive and I have been treated as an equal."

English trainee Jacqui Woods, who is working at St Peter's School in Huntingdon, said: "I have found my first placement really enjoyable. It is a fantastic school, very nurturing. I really feel like I am making good progress.

"I chose the SCITT-based route as I wanted regular contact with school, and I have found this route has allowed me to make really meaningful connections with staff and my students."

Hannah Cinque is working at Jeavons Wood Primary School in Cambourne. She said: "I have really enjoyed training to teach with CTSN, the core training sessions are always engaging and informative and the staff have consistently been really supportive throughout the training. I have found my mentor to be encouraging and reassuring throughout my time at her school."

Gamlingay Village Primary is the base for Laura Milner, who said: "Being a CTSN trainee this term has been full on but very rewarding! The core training has been

fun and informative. Thank you to all the teachers and staff who have allowed me to observe their wonderful practice this term."

There is funding available to help with teacher training. Candidates can apply for a:

- tuition fee loan of up to £9,250 to cover your teacher training
- maintenance loan of up to £12,667 to help with living costs

You can still apply for a tuition fee and a maintenance loan if you already have a student loan, and regardless of whether you get a teaching bursary or scholarship, you will only have to make loan repayments once you're earning. You may also be eligible for a bursary or scholarship.

These are tax-free amounts you receive to train in certain subjects. You do not have to pay a scholarship or bursary back. You can receive this as well as any tuition fee and maintenance loans. These are figures are for courses starting in the 2023-24 academic year.

Subject	Bursary	Scholarship
Biology	£20,000	
Chemistry	£27,000	£29,000
Computing	£27,000	£29,000
Design and technology	£20,000	
English	£15,000	
Geography	£25,000	
Languages	£25,000	£27,000*
Maths	£27,000	£29,000
Physics	£27,000	£29,000

*for French, German and Spanish only



LOOKING FORWARD: A group of Year 11 students visited Peterhouse with a focus on the future.

Chance to think ahead

During November, a group of 15 Year 11 pupils were able to take part in a day-long course at Peterhouse, which is our link Cambridge college, to encourage them to think about their next steps.

The brilliant Outreach officers there led them through a range of activities designed to help them to think deeply about which A-level subjects would suit them, and what those might lead on to post-18.

The most popular part of the day was the chance to meet some current students, who answered questions on a range of topics from which of the many clubs and societies on offer they are part of, to how their accommodation is, to tips for managing workload.

The pupils came away with a greater

sense of how thinking beyond the immediate pressures of Year 11 will help them to make the decisions that will set them on successful paths later.

We were really lucky to be able to host one of the Outreach officers at Comberton the following week, for a follow-up session that was open to a larger number of students and covered similar ideas.

We have a long-standing link with Peterhouse and over the years their staff and students have inspired and supported many of our Year 11, 12 and 13 students, providing valuable insights into successful routes through A-level and beyond, and applying for top universities.

Eleanor Norman,

Most Able and Talented Coordinator

Prestigious platinum!

Comberton Village College have received a prestigious School Games Platinum Award in recognition of their continuing commitment to the development of Physical Education, school sport and physical activity across their school and into the community.

CVC is the only secondary school among the seven SCSSP schools to gain the award. Partner primary Coton is also on the list alongside Great Abington, Harston and Newton, Histon and Impington Brook, Linton Heights and Swavesey primary schools.

All seven schools maintained consistently high standards with their school sport provision and all have held a Gold School Games Award for the previous five years.

The School Games Mark is a government-led award scheme launched in 2012, facilitated by the Youth Sport Trust, to reward and recognise schools' engagement in the School Games programme against a national benchmark and to celebrate keeping young people active.

A total of 30 South Cambs Schools secured a School Games Mark Award for 2021-22.

Partnership Manager, Claire McDonnell said, "We are extremely proud of all our award winners for the passion which they have shown towards the School Games and their dedication to providing opportunities for all young people to take part in physical activity and school sport.

"It's great to see local schools being recognised and rewarded for their hard work and commitment to provide the very best opportunities for their pupils and their efforts to engage those young people who haven't previously been active or represented the school.

"With over 4,000 young people competing in local inter-school competitions last year, we are extremely proud of our schools for their dedication to all aspects of school sport and we would like to thank all of the young volunteers, leaders and officials who made our events possible.



CELEBRATIONS: For Comberton and Coton.

"It is our Platinum award-winning schools though that are really leading the way."

Another of Comberton's partner primaries — neighbours Meridian — achieved a gold award for the first time.

Schools gaining that level of recognition demonstrate a whole school approach to PE and sport, they have the wholehearted support from their headteacher and provide opportunities for all pupils at all levels. As well as this they are a community hub for sport, encouraging involvement from parents and community groups.

Barton and Dry Drayton primary schools achieved silver awards.

Youngsters rise to the challenge

In partnership with Panathlon Challenge, South Cambs School Sports Partnership has this term hosted two sports competitions for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) at CVC.

Both events were supported by an excellent group of sports leaders from the college, who did an amazing job in organising and delivering all of the activities as well as encouraging the children as they took part in the different challenges.



Seven primary schools took part in the Panathlon Multi Skills event with teams of 6-8 children participating in a carousel of inclusive activities including boccia blast, new age kurling, basketball, parachute popcorn, precision beanbag and skittles.

At each activity children had the opportunity to gain points for their school.

Congratulations to Elsworth Primary School, who accumulated the highest score across the eight activities and were presented with the gold medals.

They now going forward to represent South Cambs at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough School Games Disability & Inclusion Festival in March.

Other primary schools taking part included Hardwick and Cambourne, who finished as runners-up, along with The Meadow, Histon and Impington Brook, Cottenham, Swavesey and Pendragon.

Following the primary event in the morning,

seven teams from six secondary schools — Linton, Melbourn, Granta, Gretton, Impington and Comberton — took part in a KS3 Panathlon Challenge Xtend competition.

Students again took part in teams of 6-8 and worked together to score points for their team in sports such as athletics, boccia, new age kurling and cricket.

Congratulations to the team from Gretton, who narrowly beat last year's winners Comberton, and now go forward to the county finals on 23rd March where they will represent South Cambs and take on the best teams from Huntingdonshire, Cambridge, East Cambs and Fenland & Peterborough.

Comberton-based Partnership manager, Claire McDonnell said: "It was great to host these events.

"Events like this are about developing new skills, forming new friendships, boosting confidence, and most importantly having fun and I definitely think all of that was evident."



HAVING A GO: Students from Comberton's yellow team (far left) and from Hardwick and Cambourne Primary School compete in their Panathlon events.



AND THEY'RE OFF: The start of a 'big schools' race at Wimpole (left) and a 'small schools' one at Milton.

Haslingfield take title

Haslingfield collected one of the trophies at the Small Schools Cross-Country Championships, while Bourn finished on the rostrum in both team competitions.

Three runners collecting medals in the Year 4 races was enough to give Haslingfield overall victory in the Year 3 and 4 team event, where the best three finishers from each school in each of the four races counted towards the title. Gregory finished second, ahead of Toby but behind Bourn's Albert in the Year 4 boys' race, while Rosa took bronze in the equivalent girls' event.

Albert's gold was the cornerstone of Bourn's bronze medal in the Year 3/4 team challenge, while silvers for Year 6 Ellie and Year 5 Thomas helped them to third in the Year 5/6 event as well as they finished behind neighbours Harston and Newton and Girton Glebe.

Coton's Emma was the other runner from a Comberton partner school to collect a

medal, taking bronze in the Year 6 girls' race.

Only schools with runners in all four races could enter the team competition but there were still some impressive results from those who ran as individuals,

particularly in the boys' Year 3 race where Jack (Dry Drayton) beat classmate Fergall with Toby (Barton) in third.

Histon and Impington Brook dominated the equivalent competition for 'big' schools, held at Wimpole Estate a couple of weeks later, as more than 900 runners gathered in the mist for eight boys' and girls' races in the same age groups.

But there were still a couple of individual silvers for Hardwick and Cambourne Primary School thanks to Daniel in his Year 6 race and Dexter in Year 4. Gamaligay finished best of the Comberton partner primary schools in the team event, taking ninth of 20 in the Year 5 and 6 event, with Meridian 12th.



LAST-MINUTE INSTRUCTIONS: For Comberton sports leaders at the finish line.

COMBERTON SPORTS & ARTS FITNESS CLASS TIMETABLE						
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
BODY BLAST 18:00 - 18:50 HANNAH	YOGALATES 17:40 - 18:40 SANDRA D	FITNESS PILATES	STUDIO CYCLING	STUDIO CYCLING	KETTLEBELLS	STEP
STUDIO CYCLING 19:00 - 19:45 SANDRA R	HIIT 18:00 - 18:45 JEN	17:40—18:40 SANDRA D	17:45 - 18:25 AYMEN	17:30 - 18.15 JEN	9:00-9:50 JEN	9:00 -10:00 AYMEN
DANCE AEROBICS 19:00—19:50 HANNAH	LBT 18:55-19:45 JEN	CIRCUITS 18:45- 19:45 RACHEL	HIIT 18:30 - 19:00 AYMEN		YOGALATES 10:00-11:00 KAI	YOGALATES 10:10-11:10 SANDRA D
CIRCUITS 19:55—20:40 HANNAH	STUDIO CYCLING 19:55—20:40 JEN		PUMP AND TONE 19:05—19:50 SANDRA R	FITNESS CLASSES FREE OF CHARGE FOR MEMBERS NON-MEMBERS WELCOME : £5 PER CLASS CONTACT CSA RECEPTION TO BOOK ON! TEL: 01223 264444 MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE FROM £30 A MONTH - WHICH INCLUDES: UNLIMITED USE OF FITNESS SUITE AND FREE WEIGHTS ROOM AND FREE BADMINTON COURT HIRE		

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NON-MEMBERS WELCOME TO TRY (ANY OF THE ABOVE)

ON A PAY & PLAY BASIS



CUP RUNS: The under-16 girls are into the fifth round, but the under-13s boys went out after a fifth round extra-time defeat.

Mixed fortunes in cup

Comberton's under-16 girls' football team have made a flying start in the Schools' Cup.

They are through to the fifth round of the English Schools FA's national competition and will play St Ivo at home in the first week of the spring term for a place in the last 16.

But there was heartbreak for Comberton's under-13 boys in their equivalent competition as they went out 2-1 at home to Alameda Middle School from Bedford after extra-time in last week's fifth round tie.

After a first-round bye, the girls found themselves facing last year's Suffolk Schools champions, Copleston High School.

Comberton's team of Year 10s and 11s started fast with quick passes in possession and relentless pressure when they didn't have the ball. Maddie put them ahead then added a second soon

after combining with Gwen and Izzy.

Aliyah and Olivia were determined in defence, which gave the midfield room to make forward passes and the results was a comprehensive 15-1 victory.

Comberton's third round oppositions had to concede as they couldn't field a team, resulting in a fourth-round match against Neale Wade Academy from March, who CVC beat last year.

However, both CVC centre-backs were unavailable meaning Hannah F and Chloe moved to unfamiliar positions. They and the rest of the defence forced the opposition to shoot from distance, although goalkeeper Liv still had to make some important saves.

With Abi and Jenna matching Neale Wade's strong midfield and winning plenty of possession to set off the attack, Comberton eased through 9-3 to set up

the clash with St Ivo.

The boys bounced back from trailing 2-1 to Netherhall in their second round game (having had a first round bye) with 10 minutes left but hit back to win 4-2 and set up a home clash with St Ivo. Again they went behind but goals from Rhys and Doruk (2) saw them to victory 3-1.

That set up a tricky tie at Jack Hunt in Peterborough where a last-gasp tackle by Nhial with the scores at 1-1 with 30 seconds left took the game to penalties. Alex saved two and Jack Hunt missed one and with Comberton also missing two it was left to Sam to send the home keeper the wrong way and earn a place in the fifth round, where the run sadly ended. A great goal from Harry N levelled things to force extra time, where Comberton agonisingly hit the bar before conceding with three minutes left.



ON THE RUN: At the Cambridge and District Schools Cross-Country races.

Best feet forward as six race through

Six Comberton students will represent Cambridge and District at the County Schools Cross-Country Championships next term after qualifying in the local schools round at Netherhall earlier this month.

Amelie (7N) led the way with victory by a distance in the minor girls (Year 7) race on a tough course up Lime Kiln hill in Cambridge, while sixth former Emily (12RJ) was fourth in the seniors race for Years 12 and 13.

There were also top 16 finishes for Rose (10V), the only Comberton runner in the Intermediate girls (Years 10 and 11) race, Rocco, of 7M, (minor boys) and Intermediate boys (Years 8 and 9) Kalle (9R) and Alexander (9E), who

will now race against the best from Peterborough, Huntingdon and Fenland at St Neots' Priory Park on January 14th.

Jonah (7N), who just missed a place in the next round, said: "On arrival, we were immediately struck with the memory (or surprise) of this colossal hill which would significantly impact the run."

"The course looked complicated at first sight, but it was soon clear that there were two laps; a large and a medium lap (which was 300m shorter).

"To qualify you needed to finish in the first 16. All in all it was a very successful day and congratulations to everyone who took part."

Lessons to learn as girls go so close

After doing an outstanding job in the first round of the tournament last year, our under-14 and under-16 girls qualified for the county netball finals.

It was a tough day with a very high standard of competition across both age groups, with us facing the top schools across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It was great to see the girls coming together to play such a good level of netball (even if they did give up their Saturday to attend!)

A special mention must go to the under-14 team, who finished in third place — one spot off qualifying for regionals. There were lots of lessons to be learnt and we are excited to go again next year!



COUNTY FINALISTS: Comberton's under-14 and under-16 teams.

Leaders get stuck in

The Leadership Academy is back in full swing for 2022-23!

While other students enjoyed a rare Thursday staff training day off ahead of Comberton's Open Evening the same day, the Leadership Academy pupils were back in school to help run their first ever festival! The Outdoor and Adventurous Activities festival was designed to encourage pupils' leadership, teamwork and communication skills. Our Year 10 leaders had been trained the week before by Claire McDonnell, of South Cambs School Sports Partnership, and they were ready and raring to go!

The primary school pupils rotated around all different problem-solving activities and had a brilliant morning visiting Comberton on a particularly quiet day.

A big well done to Daisy, in particular, who was very kind and approachable.

SOLVING PROBLEMS: Leaders helped the primary pupils navigate different activities.



On Wednesday 16th November, Leadership Academy students had a busy day running two festivals in a day! These festivals (see Page 22) were particularly important as they designed for SEND pupils. There was a range of adapted sports that many sports leaders had not seen before. After receiving some training in the morning, the sports leaders were ready to run the first event for local primary school pupils.

With only a very short break to quickly eat and re-arrange the sports hall, the leaders were off again in the afternoon to deliver a similar festival to secondary school students. A special mention to Kai and Rosie, who did a brilliant job of speaking 1-2-1 to students who required more support. They were calm and kind in their approach and did a fantastic job of including everyone.



DEDICATION: Leaders gave up a day off school to help at a primary festival.



LEARNING CURVE: Leaders had to master adapted sports they had not seen before to help at the Panathlon.

TABLE MANNERS: Sports Leaders keep score at the primary netball tournament.



Bee-ing hands-on

It was all hands on deck to ensure the first Comberton round of the 'Bee Netball' primary school tournament ran like clockwork. With 12 teams attending on the day, it was essential for the leaders to be on top of all areas of officiating. Fortunately, our pupils had been practising and preparing for this event by learning how to umpire netball in PE lessons. Some pupils were also lucky enough to be given an expert umpiring session with the South Cambs SSP. All the hard work paid off as the Comberton students did a phenomenal job in controlling the games. They were clear and concise when umpiring, and they ensured that they used their whistle loudly enough! As always, a huge well done and thank you for your help in running this event. The next round of the primary school netball will take place in April.

'Party' warm-ups

Leadership Academy pupils made their way to Wimpole Estate for the highly-anticipated primary schools' cross country event.

With nearly 1000 pupils expected to arrive, the nerves were setting in for some! Comberton's Year 10 leaders had the high-profile job of warming up each group of youngsters before their race.

Not only did they ensure they were physically prepared, but they also brought the 'party' atmosphere with them, by dancing to music and getting the pupils to do some big cheers before their run!

A big well done, in particular, to Aliyah and Sally, who were two stand out leaders on the day.



LEADING LIGHTS: Sports Leaders at Wimpole.



SUPER SEVENS: Comberton won the under-16 county rugby 7s title.

Comberton are champs

Comberton are the Cambridgeshire rugby 7s champions.

The under-16 team scored an impressive 166 points and conceded just 14 as they convincingly won all six matches on their way to the title at Shelford Rugby Club's Davey Field.

Comberton's team comprised some familiar faces who have featured in school teams since Year 7, and they played intelligent and high tempo rugby throughout the tournament.

Wins over Bottisham (29-0), Stephen Perse (31-7),

The Perse (27-0) and St Bede's (26-0) put them top of their group and set up a semi-final against Soham. Notable carries and scores in the group games were made by Jack (11C), who found himself out on the wing on many occasions.

The semi-final proved to be a challenge against an organised and aggressive defensive effort from Soham, but Comberton overcame them 28-7 with some decisive and patient play to reach the final and another match against St Bede's.

St Bede's started off brightly with some strong

carries, but Comberton had saved some energy and power for the final game to win 25-0 and take the title.

Jack scored the most tries on the day when space somehow managed to appear before the 6ft+ second row and Alex picked up try of the day straight from a kick off, assisted by finesse off the boot of Donncha.

Squad: Alfie (11O), Jack (11C), Alex (11E), Josh (11I), Donncha (11R), Wilfred (11B), Ben (11O), Eddie (11I), Adam (11E), Kishen (11I), Luke (11M)



SOAKED BUT SMILING: Comberton's Year 8 team at their washed-out tournament.

Strong challenge foiled by rain — for now

Along with the Autumn Rugby International series, the autumn term also sees the start of the district rugby competitions at Shelford Rugby club. Heavy rain set the tone for what was going to be an entertaining day of Year 8 rugby — we envisaged lots of handling errors, big tackles and plenty of tries.

The CVC team started off fantastically well with an emphatic win over Impington VC. They were strong in the breakdown and worked the ball wide to exploit the space.

Then on to the second game against a very strong Bottisham team, potentially the two favourites for the tournament were meeting in the second round of the group stage.

Never before has a draw been so entertaining — there were turnovers in the

scrums and rucks, try-saving tackles at both ends and some really fast defensive lines.

It all ended in a scoreless draw and Comberton quietly left the field thinking there was a strong chance we could meet them again in the final. Unfortunately, Mother Nature had other ideas, and due to the heavy rainfall and the deterioration of the pitches, the tournament was called off.

Comberton left feeling very good about our performances and looking forward to the rescheduled event, date to be confirmed.

Our Year 9 team attended their tournament and performed well, it was small margins on the day that cost us progressing through to the finals but they played with great determination and were a credit to themselves and Comberton Village College.

Staff have pedal power!

Comberton PE staff have been raising funds to replace the department's aging mountain bikes.

They recently completed an 874-mile static bike challenge, riding the equivalent of Land's End to John O'Groats in just 10.5 hours. Mountain biking lessons have been a part of the PE curriculum for several years and the original bikes are now almost worn out and are falling into disrepair.

Determined to keep the activity as part of the PE offering, the nine-strong team decided on a sponsored challenge and have raised an incredible £4300 which will pay for a set of new bikes. They set off at 3pm on November 4th and, with plenty of highs and lows on the way — and lots of food consumed — they completed the journey from one end of the country to the other at 1.30am on Saturday morning.

PE teacher Toby Purton said: "Our social media was used to interact with students and parents/carers who could ask us questions and follow our journey throughout the evening.

"Eventually, after hours of cycling and lots of music, eating and a few rests, the team completed all 874 miles between them around 1:30am on the Saturday morning.

"We were absolutely blown away by the support we received on our Just Giving



WHEELY GOOD TEAM:
The CVC PE staff.

page from parents, staff, students, friends and family; it was absolutely incredible! "We would like to extend a huge 'thank you' to everyone who helped support us, we will now be able to use the money raised to purchase a brand new, class set of bikes."

Euro glory boosts girls' participation

The success of England's Lionesses in winning the European Championships in the summer has led to the most significant increase in attendance at girls' football club in Comberton's history.

All ages and abilities are welcome at the Tuesday afternoon (3.00-4.00pm) sessions and this term it has been the best attended of all the after-school

clubs.

Up to 50 students have been attending regularly and many have been representing Comberton in fixtures, even those with very little experience.

Sixteen beginners went to Melbourn for the #LetGirlsPlay tournament last month for a competitive yet friendly event in a supportive

atmosphere.

The under-12 team started their campaign with three games against local teams in the Cambridgeshire FA competition.

They faced tough opposition in their first match against Chesterton, though grew in confidence and experience throughout the game.

Their second game saw them host NCA where they showed brilliant support to the opposition and came away with a resounding win.

The final game in the league was against Impington. The opposition started strongly and took the win, though Comberton were coming back strongly in the second half, putting away three goals.

This has been a fantastic start for the team and they will continue in the competition after Christmas. They have also entered the Cup competition so plenty of games to come!

Teacher Harriet Shipley said: "The team have played brilliantly together, and it has been fantastic to have such a large squad of girls attending training. Well done to all involved!"

Meanwhile the under-16s are on a roll in a national cup competition and have reached the fifth round. This follows a run to the semi-finals at under-15s last year

● Under-16s on a Cup run — Page 25



FIRST COMPETITION: Team talk at a tournament for girls new to football.



TALKING TACTICS: With one of the girls' teams.

Smiles all round at Colour Run event

Pupils from Comberton joined more than 500 youngsters at Milton Country Park for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough School Games Colour Run.

After the pure enjoyment of last year's inaugural event, staff were delighted to take a new group of students to experience the non-traditional activity aimed at young people who do not typically have the opportunity to participate in sports or physical activities outside their school environment.

The 3km course was a mass of colour and participants had a great time.

There was also an 'event village', which

was a wonderful way to end the day with pupils having the opportunity to test their reactions and make smoothies by generating power on a 'smoothie bike'. The event, organised by Living Sport — a county-wide charity set up to improve the health, happiness and wellbeing of Cambs and Peterborough residents by supporting them to be active — had three intended outcomes.

These were to reintegrate peers and tackle social isolation, to support with primary to secondary transition and to provide a positive physical experience for those potentially less engaged students.



COVERED IN COLOUR: Comberton staff and students.