

Wargrave House News

Michaelmas Term Review



What's inside?

- Academic leaderboard and 'Half Term Hero'
- Continued Interhouse Sporting Success
- Creatives and the Arts
- Boarders' Olympics and other social events

*Key dates for Lent Term 2025: Please note that the whole house is expected to stay in for those events marked with a **

Sunday 5th January

Term begins for all boarders. House open from 9am for all those returning from long haul flights. 6pm arrival for all else. Whole house to return by 9pm.

Monday 6 January

New Term begins for all
HM Assembly, All Saints Church

Wk1-2

Y11 mocks (off timetable 6-16th Jan) Current plan is return to lessons 16 Jan, S5

Thursday 23 January

Extended exeat (note dates – Thursday - Sunday) starts for all except Y11, 14:15

Y11 Parents meetings 14.45-18.00

Wk 4

Second round of careers interviews Y11

Saturday 1 February - * Wargrave House Dinner shared with School House

Friday 14 February Half term begins 14.15, Y10
Parents Evening 14.45-18.00

Half term ends Sunday 23 Feb, all pupils back by 9pm, please

Monday February 24- Friday 28 Feb

A level mocks (Y13) off timetable

Friday 7 March

Futures Evening Y11 & 12 compulsory. Y13 highly recommended.

Saturday 8 March – Sunday 9 March Wargrave House Rowathon in aid of Eastbourne RNLI

11 March Giving Day

Friday 29 March

HM Assembly 08.35-09.30

Whole School Service 13.45-14.35

Lent Term ends 15.00

Academic

Always the marathon term, not only in length, but in the amount of course content covered, the boys have done well to grind through the past sixteen weeks with the usual industry and purpose. Gearing up for formal assessment has been the theme for Y11 and Y13 in particular. With both year groups having their sights set firmly on their mock exams which fall on 6th-16th January (Y11) and 24th-29th February (Y13). I have spoken to both year groups and they should have revision plans drafted up for the Christmas holidays and beyond. U6th boys have focused unwaveringly on UCAS applications this term and thankfully, all have met the deadline, hence they are seeing some motivational offers start to wing their way to them, which is excellent to hear. A few key messages that **Miss Gordon (Head of Futures) asked me to pass on below:**

Y13 Parents

UCAS application forms have been of excellent quality. Once they have been sent, universities will reply via UCAS Track. Universities have until 16 May to respond. It's a long game. **Please tell the boys not to rush into a decision just yet. No firm choices should be made until after February mocks and they can see the lie of the land.** There is lots of revision support available in Unifrog to support mock revision plans over Christmas and into next term.

Y12 Parents

Regular exploration is the best way for pupils to work out what the best next step for them is. Use Unifrog as a starting point. See Satchel One for more information or the Y12 Futures Team.

Parents in General:

"Helping the pupils understand more about the world of work is extremely important. I would like to ask for your help to do so. The annual **Futures Convention** for all pupils in Year 11 and Sixth Form is scheduled for Friday 7 March 2025 from 7pm to 9pm (with supper beforehand). If you can come along to talk about your career to date, I would be keen to hear from you. This is a very informal, fun evening. There is no need to represent the company you work for, have a flashy stand or presentation. Being present and willing to speak with small groups of pupils about the job you do, how you got into it and what skills you would encourage them to develop is hugely valuable and timely given Year 11 and Sixth Form pupils have some big decisions to make soon about the right next step for them. Do consider giving up a little of your time." **My email address is sjgordon@eastbourne-college.co.uk**



See a photo of last year's Future's Convention to the right:

At the time of writing lots of the U6th are sitting very pretty with some really generous and motivational offers, especially those that include adjusted offers to take into account the Extended Project Qualification. Now it is just about turning those challenge grades into a reality! For those boys who have contextualised EPQ offers, they need to book in their presentations and get their dissertations done and dusted in the Lent Term.

The term has seen plenty of academic trips including a very successful VI form Politics trip to Westminster, where Freddie Jones, Paddy Cooper, Theo Cruttenden, Rory Staunton, Sam Watson, Will Bligh, Harry Bishop and Joseph Philpott saw a range of speakers from across the political spectrum address topics such as the budget, VAT on school fees, Trump, and Populism.

Praise marks League Table 2024/5 as it stands *			
Leading three pupils for the house yearly competition.			
Year	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
9	Archie Stack (26)	Hugh Zhao (26)	Nic Maloney (22)
10	Will Mclean (27)	Zac Bonehill (26)	Ollie Davidson (24)
11	Marcus Ho (31) No sanction points all term	Jack Evans (30)	Harrison Nye (16)
12	Ian Tam (35) No sanction points all term	Will Plimsoll (11)	Finn Bulkeley (9)
13	Derren Lai (33) No sanction points all term	Ed Nolan (16)	Calvin Chen (13)

* 1 point for a piece of praise, two points for a show hsm

In the **Schools Challenge** general knowledge quiz, we congratulate Ian Tam, for his contribution to the senior team who have proceeded to the next round having beaten King's Canterbury by 80 points. In the **Model United Nations**, well done to Sam Watson for competing in the Oxford competition in November. They did not have the easiest of countries to represent! In geography, sixth form pupils across the school have attended lectures at Brighton University as well as conducting individual investigations into a wide variety of physical systems and landscapes across London and the South East.

Rory Staunton, Ed Nolan, Harvey Nolan, Harrison Nye, Joseph Philpott and Sam Watson also had the privilege of attending the History and Politics Trip to Washington DC and surrounding area over October half term. See photo of them at one of the memorials below.



Having run this trip before myself, I know how varied and fantastic it is, and what a time for them to have gone state-side.



Finally, well done to Ian Tam for being announced an honorary music scholar at the beginning of term assembly. This is in recognition of both his excellent GCSE results (across the board) and his fantastic contributions to the school music department.

Sporting Success

Rugby term always brings with it a great buzz. Mercifully, injuries have been *fairly light* this season, and it took me some thinking for who to award the 'Mr Bump' prize to at the end of term House Book ceremony. I'd like to reiterate my thanks to all of you for your support and engagement with the Return 2 Play system that is now in full swing. It plays an important role in keeping the boys safe and healthy, although I know it is at times very frustrating for them when they are signed off physical activity for many days at a time.

It has been wonderful to see so many Wargravians starting consistently for the 1st XV, namely Freddie Jones (captain), Ed Nolan, Will Coleman, Theo Cruttenden, Elliot Freeborough, Will Plimsoll and Finn Bulkeley. Congratulations also to Freddie, Ed, Will and Theo on receiving their rugby colours throughout the course of the term. A new tradition that Mr Torri has begun for the squad, meaning that they don't have to wait until the end of term assembly to receive their tie and stag to be sewn proudly onto their jerseys.

As Freddie read at the end of term assembly 'Over 200 boys have competed in the 70 fixtures played this term with half the games won.....Not only have the 1st XV won 8 from 12 this term, but they also finished second in the Churcher's tournament and went on to win a very competitive Eltham tournament by fine margins and without conceding a try.'

Without a doubt their victory in the Eltham Rugby Festival just before half term has been a real highlight for the team. I wasn't there, but Mr Roberts gave me a very enthused, blow-by-blow account of the games. See photos of the Wargravians from the winning team below, alongside other sporting endeavours.









Elsewhere, Tim Dodard and Harvey Nolan remain consistent key players for the U16A team. Will McLean, Ollie Davidson, Zac Bonehill and Wilbur Lewis all playing for the U15A team. Archie Stack and Dylan Gutman have put in some very gutsy performances for the U14A team too.

Jack Evans has contributed to the 1st XI football team throughout the term, who have progressed through to round 4 in the national plate.

Calvin Chen remains the school's badminton captain with the team having a successful season thus far, recently beating Sevenoaks.



Interhouse sport

The highly competitive interhouse sports have punctuated the term nicely. The boys were a little surprised to hear at the final assembly of term, that at most recent count we are currently sitting in 5th place out of 6 boys houses. This just goes to show that the key to success is about participation and throwing as many people into events as possible. Whilst we are very proud to once again be the victors of interhouse rugby, for a second year in a row, other events such as the Aquathlon, Steeplechase and house swimming can accrue vital points by getting as many bodies over the line as possible, not just relying on a talented few.

A decidedly greyer and wetter interhouse rugby competition was a real highlight of the term, but there have been a myriad of other events taking place – I am amazed at how Mr Harrison manages to squeeze them all in. Next term sees squash, hockey, water polo, to name but a few.

Well done to all those who challenged themselves to compete in the Aquathlon, an event that grows in size each year. It was especially heartening to see seven of the U6th choose to compete in this event together as their last opportunity to do so. A special congratulations to Harvey Nolan for achieving podium position for yet another year in the Steeplechase, coming 3rd in the intermediate boys category.

See some photos of the boys below sporting their house colours and doing Wargrave very proud.







Overall winners!









Service

Brooke Haycock (Y12) has very kindly volunteered to be the house charity representative this year and has been involved in various committee meetings to assist with school-wide charity initiatives such as the Poppy Appeal, donations to the food bank and the Christmas hampers. Thank you again for your kind donations to these appeals. The house charity has got off to a healthy start, with a whopping current total of £1100 raised for the Eastbourne RNLI station. It seems very apt to be raising money for this excellent cause in their 200th year of service. As ever, we are always looking to beat what we raised last year, and given that 2023-2024 topped £15000, we still have some way to go to reach our target. We remain ambitious! Thank you ever so much though for all you have done to get this off the ground. I am always very humbled by the generosity of the Wargrave community. It has been a successful term for DofE and this term William Plimsoll earned his Silver DofE Award. At the ever-moving Remembrance Sunday parade it was good to see lots of Y10s on parade. I was also very proud to see Senior NCO Ian Tam raising the standard in representation of the RAF cohort.



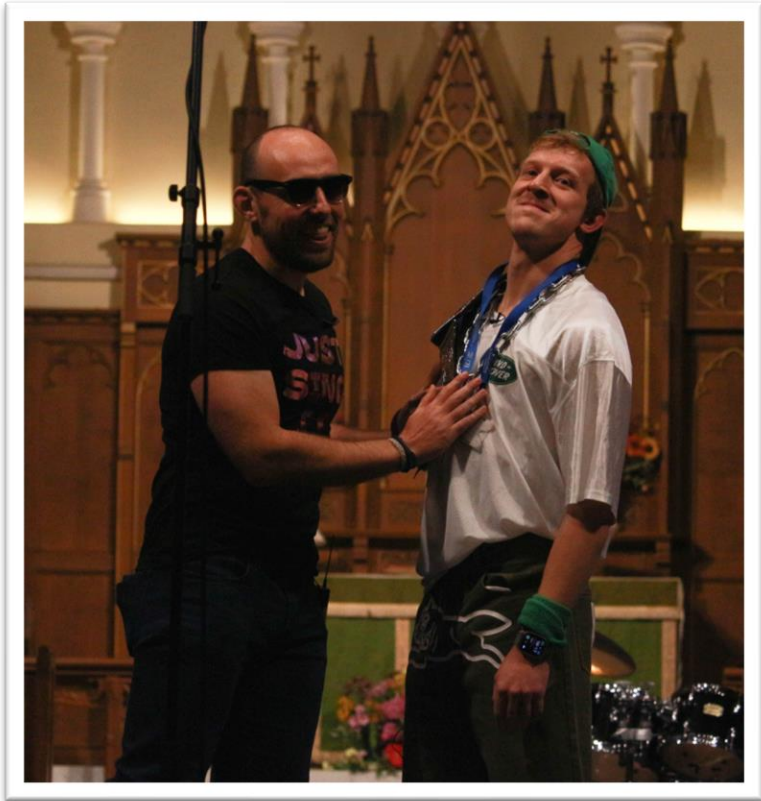
Creatives and the arts

The creative element of the year was marked as always by the hotly anticipated interhouse singing competition. The boys' event was won by Craig House, the girls' by Watt House, who were also overall winners. I was very impressed by the boys' efforts this year and did feel that we probably needed to place a bit higher. My thanks as ever to Mr Laverack who came in to roll call many times to make us tuneful. He was initially a bit cynical about the U6th's choice of *Linger* by The Cranberries, worrying that it was perhaps a bit 'folksy' for a male voice with lots of long melodic phrases, but the energy and enthusiasm shown by the U6th contingent in particular made it a really fantastic piece on the night. Special mention must also go to Paddy Cooper for a very charismatic performance as the house conductor, putting plenty of members of staff in the audience into fits of giggles with his pointing and wiggling, and showing the rest of the school that we don't take ourselves too seriously as a house. A very enjoyable event all round. Next term we need to get a smaller cohort ready for the a Capella competition.

Thanks must also go to Mr Roberts who compered the event (once again!) with Mr Smit. He promises that he's going to hang his mic and sunglasses up some time soon!

Elsewhere, there have been fantastic informal concerts in the Birley Centre. It was great to see Ian Tam topping off the term's Live Lounge with the finale songs. Christoph Freytag, Eason Wang and Hugh Zhao have both also performed alongside Ian in the school orchestra at the Remembrance Day Concert and other events.





House Concert



One of the yearly focuses for any boarding house is the week of House Concert. We were once again first out of the stops, and the boys certainly did not disappoint. I am biased, of course, but word on the street is that with over two thirds of other house concerts completed, ours still holds the title as the funniest and most entertaining of 2024-2025. My thanks as always to Miss Garrett and Mr Roberts for the many hours of filming, rehearsing, organising and cajoling that they put in in the busy first few weeks of term to ensure that the event was a great success.

Paddy Cooper, Theo Cruttenden and Ed Nolan should be congratulated for compèring the night's proceedings. They

made for a very entertaining trio, and hit just the right note with the inclusion of plenty of dad jokes. Once again, Mr Roberts outdid himself with the Y9 sketch of 'Wargrave after lights out', and the Y12 dance was hilarious as ever – well done to Elliot freeborough for leading from the front here. Who knew there were so many snake hips in Year 12?!

The unsung heroes of any house concert are always the video editors, who spend many hours filming, rendering and editing – this year that difficult task fell to Marcus Ho (Y11) and Will Coleman (Y13).

My final thanks go to the live performers namely, Derren Lai, Christoph Freytag and to the house band who did a great rendition of Oasis, proving that the 90s are indeed back! Mr Laverack did a brilliant job as ever of getting the boys ready for their house song, a good 5 weeks earlier than needed for interhouse singing, and also for his work in organising and galvanising the Wargrave House Band, who are now keen to play at other events in the calendar.







Following their success in the house concert, the youngest boys in the house also had the opportunity to tread the boards with Year 9 drama. Each house performed The Brothers Grimm's *Hansel and Gretel*. Although not mentioned specifically by the judges, I thought Hugh Zhao made a particularly creepy and charismatic evil witch, with great intonation and characterisation. My thanks go to Will Plimsoll, Elliot Freeborough and Joseph Philpott for the many stints they put in in the common room rehearsing and directing the boys as part of their service to the community option this term.



House Social Events

The first week of term saw a rotation of year group BBQs across the houses to get the pupils talking and connecting after the summer. It also provides an important welcome for those many members new to the community. We hosted Year 13 who were excellent company and the boys were very good hosts to the visiting houses.

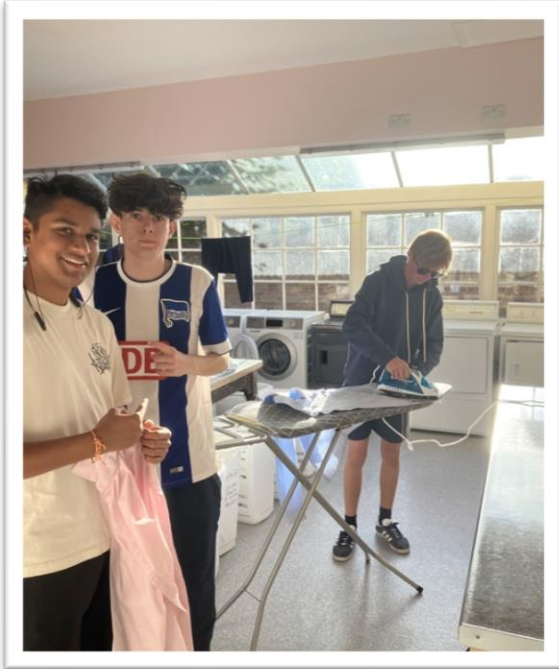


The first weekend of term also called for the second Boarders' Olympics event, which now seems set to become a staple in the boarding community's social calendar. We set up and ran the event, and my huge thanks goes once again to Mr Roberts for his overall organisation and the boundless energy that he brings to proceedings. This year we adapted some of the stages to include, 'Extreme Volleyball', 'Supersoak Obstacle Course Extravaganza', 'Ball and Spoon', 'Three-Legged Races' and 'Tug of War'. It was outstanding, as ever and kicked off the weekend programme with a bang. Other weekends have featured, Bewl Water, Paddleboarding at Buzz, shopping trips to Brighton, cinema nights, cross house BBQs, boarders' 5 a-side football, and many others.





The Lower Sixth's social calendar got off to a formal start with the Year 12 Welcome Dinner in September. This is an important occasion since over one third of this particular year group are new to the school, as is very much the case in Wargrave Year 12 too with 6 new boys swelling their ranks. With much smaller class sizes in sixth form, there is the chance that, if they don't seek to look outwards that bit more, the boys may come into contact with only a relatively small pool of people. See photo below of the boys in all their finery. I'm sure there will be a few parents out there who are also delighted to see that the boys introduced themselves to something else new that evening – an ironing board! How refreshing! The opening of the summer term will give the whole house the opportunity to get decked out in their dinner jackets for the bi-annual Boarders' Ball.



Crew Supper Club

Now in its fourth year, Wargrave Supper club has seen all 'crews' come round for dinner with myself and Mrs Spiers this term. Once again the boys were sparkling and excellent company. What is particularly nice to see is that the boys now recognise their 'crew' a bit more readily around house, and it is good to see that as the boys progress to the top echelons of the group they really take charge of conversation and bring the younger members under their wing, which is just the intention. As ever, by the end of December, Mrs Spiers and I don't want to eat lasagne and chocolate brownie for a good long while! This year we also mixed things up with that 90s classic – mint chocolate Vienetta, which 90% of the boys had never sampled. What a rite of passage! See photos of the various crews below, with a furry interloper in many of them. No dogs were fed lasagne!







Michaelmas Term culminated with the annual house Christmas Party. A great occasion where we enjoy a delicious hog roast, exchange Secret Santa gifts and play the hotly anticipated house pool competition final. Congratulations go to Dan Hammond and Mr Wells who were the winners in a tensely fought battle for the Cup and Plate titles respectively. Their names will be inscribed on the board. The night is rounded off with a few comedy prizes from myself as well as the signing of the 'House Book' by those who have been highly commended for their achievements in the term. A thoroughly enjoyable evening all round, showing the fun and camaraderie of Wargrave at its best.



Final thought for the term

It has taken me longer than usual to get down to my newsletter, and whilst I don't always relish the prospect of another few hours sat at the computer in the office, once I get going I always enjoy the process. This is most importantly because I never cease to be amazed by how much we manage to squeeze in, and how many and varied the chaps' successes are in this longest and most attritional of terms.

Now, it is certainly not my intention to make this last portion of the newsletter a self-indulgent or political space, but I know that the current government's legislation to introduce VAT on school fees from 1st January 2025 does weigh heavily on plenty of peoples' minds; understandably so. I know that the Headmaster and Chief Operating Officer have both written at length about this topic in previous communications, so I won't linger on specifics here. However, I do think it worth mentioning that in and amongst the myriad of fun, visible, 'showy', laudatory events outlined in the photos of the boys' many fantastic achievements that are splashed over the pages above, there is also an enormous undercurrent of selflessness and service to others that is not done in showman fashion, nor for applause and credit. The school runs plenty of outreach programmes within the wider Eastbourne community including, but not limited to: work with the physically and mentally handicapped at local hospices, tutoring for pupils less fortunate than themselves from local comprehensive schools, 'Wednesday Club' which provides company and entertainment for members of Eastbourne's elderly. The list goes on. As 2025 dawns we are about to step into the Lenten months, which is traditionally, (and rightly) Wargrave House's most charitable of terms where we recognise how fortunate we truly are and do our best to pull the stops out and raise as much money as we possibly can for small, worthy, local causes. Given this season is upon us I was minded to add up how much Wargrave House has raised in the last ten years alone. It sits at a whopping: **£43,933.60** and that comes from the *boys'* blood, sweat and tears, and *your* boundless and continued generosity which always amazes me.

Eastbourne College is founded on a philanthropic tradition that goes back over a century and half. Next term the Old Eastbournian Society's Development Director will be launching 'Giving Day' which will fall on 11th March and the entire community will pause normal proceedings to raise money for the Blue Sky Bursary Appeal so as to provide fully-funded places for future generations of Eastbournians from less fortunate backgrounds. More to come in future communications.

As I wrote above, I do not want this space to become a politicised or moany one, but I think it is a shame that all of those qualities and contributions to the betterment of the town, each other, and the community which make this wonderful school the fantastic, diverse institution it is today have gone somewhat overlooked, attacked even, in recent months.

Navel-gazing over!

I am grateful as ever to the hard work of my tutor team, and in particular the four staff who are resident and see and share in all the ups and downs that a long term provides. Paula, Miss Garrett, Mr Roberts and Mrs Spiers really have propped us all up as the term has crept its way to its end. Mr Wells has been a welcome addition to the duty team also.

My tradition of closing the newsletter with one of Brooke Haycock's seasonal photos overleaf. As you will be aware from my emails this term, we have decided to expand our charitable efforts by producing a Wargrave wildlife calendar full of his photos. Thank you to all those who have purchased it, with 100% of the profits going to the RNLI Eastbourne. I can still do one final print run, so if you would like a copy, then please do get in touch or donate on the Wargrave House 2024-2025 JustGiving Page.

Both Jenni and I were once again very humbled by your incredible generosity with Christmas gifts. We are in the process of writing thank you letters, but I wanted to place a very heartfelt note of gratitude here. We wish you all a most joyous and relaxing end to 2024 with your sons and all those you hold dear. I very much hope that it is a happy and prosperous New Year for you all.

Tim

WARGRAVE HOUSE
CALENDAR 2025-2026



Brooke Haycock (Y12)