

# Senior School



## Welcome to our Termly Newsletter

It has been a very busy and exciting term in the Senior School, filled with academic, sporting, and musical excellence — a true testament to the diverse talents of our pupils both in and beyond the classroom. This term's newsletter is a celebration of our students' achievements: from *The Sound of Music* production and the Orquesta Sinfónica Iuventas, to excellence in science through our pupils' success in the Sixth Form Olympiads, and Runnymede being recognised as a winning Maths department in Madrid.

With many exciting trips taking place both within Spain and further afield — including Naples and Berlin — it has truly been a term of exploration and challenge. As we look ahead, many of our Year 11 and Year 13 pupils will now be focusing their time and efforts on preparing for their external examinations. We wish all our exam cohorts the very best during the revision and examination period. None of these successes would be possible without the incredible work of our dedicated teachers and staff, who continue to make Runnymede a fulfilling, enriching, and passionate learning environment. Their tireless commitment ensures our pupils are confident and well-prepared for future success.

One staff member, who has exemplified this dedication for the past 36 years, is Ms Barr — Head of the Junior School and currently Head of Pre-Prep — who will be retiring at the end of this term. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Ms Barr for her care, commitment, and outstanding contribution to Runnymede. Many of our Senior School pupils (and teachers!) have been shaped by her kindness and leadership. We wish Ms Barr all the very best in her retirement — she will be truly missed. I know our pupils, parents, and wider school community will join us in sending our love and warmest wishes to her.

**Ms Howe, Deputy Head**

# — The Sound of Music! —

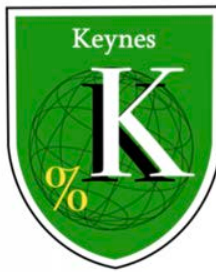
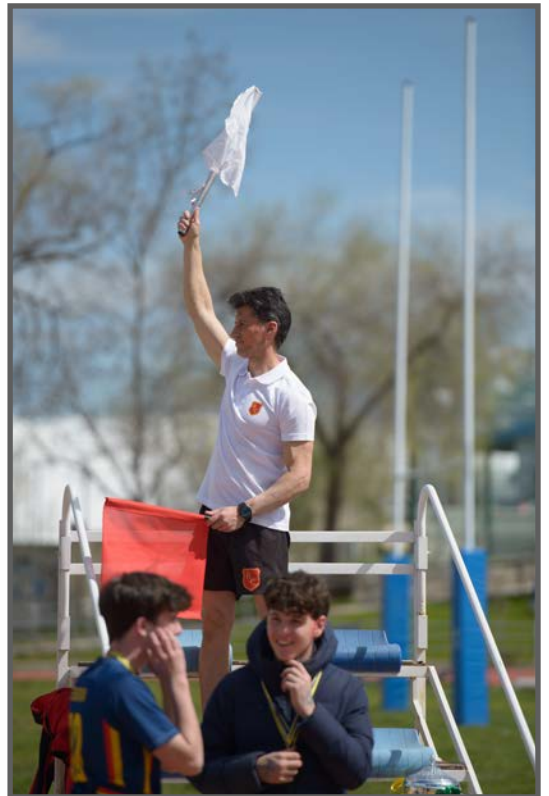
At the end of last half term we saw a fantastic display of musical and theatrical excellence, through our school production of the Sound of Music, with pupils from Prep and Senior, working together. The Julia Powell filled with spectators, with hundreds joining us to enjoy the show. We even saw some teachers joining the cast and the production team. Thank you to all of those involved, specifically to Ms Lambert and Mr Blake. We look forward to the Prep School performance coming soon!





# — Sports Day —

Sports Day was an exciting event, filled with fun and house spirit. We saw record breaking results in the long jump, incredibly fast sprinting times and some really strength in the tug of war! Thank you to the PE department for making it such an exciting day.





# Sports Day —





# Top Mathematicians in Madrid! —



It gives us great pleasure to announce the results of the XXIII Madrid Intercentros Mathematics competition held in February half term. This competition is open to all the schools in the Comunidad de Madrid and organised by the Sociedad Puig Adam at the Mathematics Faculty in the Complutense University. This is a competition which is held in Spanish, highlighting how adaptable our students truly are. This is only the 3rd time Runnymede College has taken part and while the last two times the school was placed in the top 10 of all the schools taking part, this year our 6 students have outperformed our previous performances. **We are delighted to say that Runnymede College came 1st out of all the schools in Madrid in this prestigious competition!** We are very pleased and proud of all of our students and what they have achieved.

The team members were Zachary Cen and Luka Berrojalbiz in Year 8, Rafael Rubio and Zhijing Quin in Year 11 and Tingwei Zhu and Diego Hurtado in Year 12.

## Berlin and Naples 2025 —

Currently our many of our Year 10 students are exploring humanities outside the class room with a History trip to Berlin and a Geography trip to Naples, we can't wait to hear more about their experiences when they return.



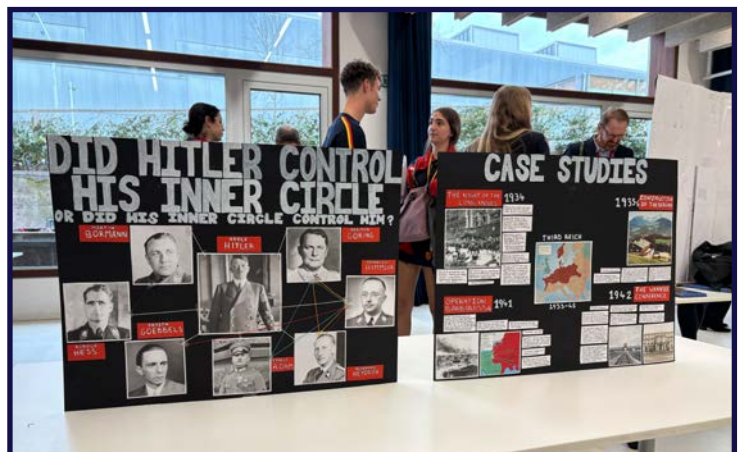
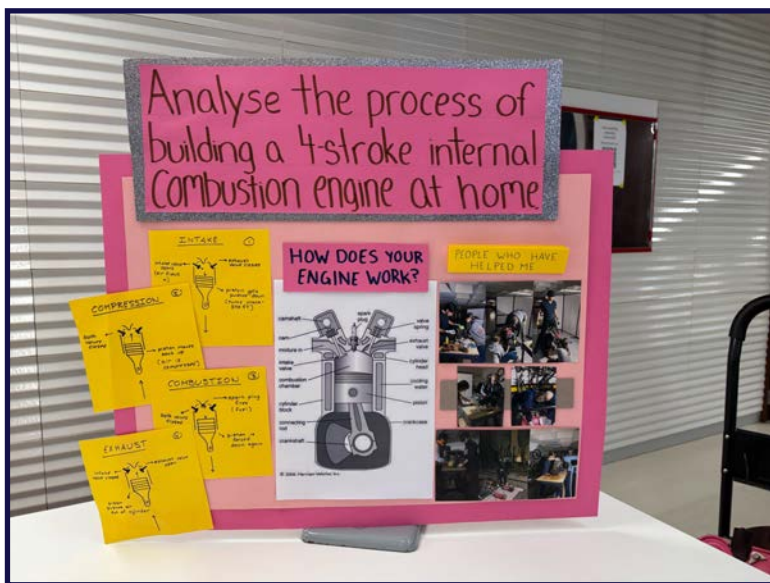
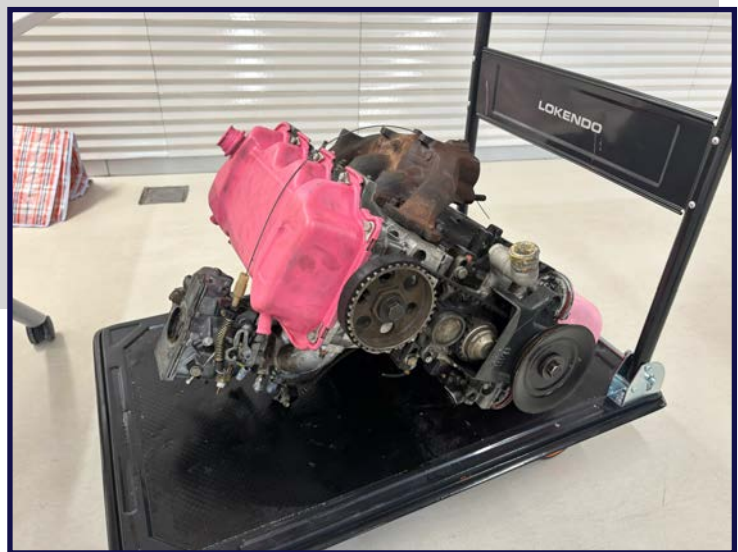


# — EPQ Fair —

On Thursday 13th March, 21 Year 12 students set up their stalls in the lunch hall to present the findings of their Extended Project Qualifications. These 120-hour projects covered topics as deep and diverse as building a four-stroke engine, deciding where in the Solar System humanity should aim to colonise, how Impressionism influenced later art movements, and is hosting a FIFA World Cup worth it.

The audience of over 100 Year 11 students and parents were treated to the incredibly professional displays the EPQ students had put together and gained a real admiration for the expertise on show, as well as enjoying the occasional edible bribe. Feedback from parents was glowing and included comments such as "she's inspired me to learn more about this topic" and "simply masterful".

Congratulations to all the EPQ students and good luck with the final steps of their projects. Students will receive their grades on A-level results day in August.





# VI Form Chemistry Olimpiad —



Well done to our amazing chemists in Year 12 and Yaxuan Zhang in Year 13, who took part in the Royal Society of Chemistry's 57th annual Chemistry Olympiad this January. In this international competition aimed at Year 13 Chemistry students, we are delighted to have so many certificate winners here at Runnymede.

**Silver medals:** Yaxaun Zhang, Cayetana Rica, Diego Hurtado, Nicolás Izukiza, Sofia Buck Aquerreta, Tingwei Zhu

**Bronze medals:** Elena Calatayud Fernández, Manuela Zulueta, Valentina Hervías, Blanca de Heredia

Thank you to Mr Lyons and Ms Grimes for their support in preparation for this competition.

## — Orquesta Sinfónica Iuventas —

Orquesta Sinfónica Iuventas returned to Runnymede College for a second year on Saturday, 29th March. In this concert, which included a string orchestra of professionals, young musicians and many pupils from Runnymede, the audience was treated to a performance of classical repertory, film scores and rock anthems. Álvaro in Year 8 was this year's soloist, performing Popper's Concert Polonaise for cello. Lucía, Alex and Ricardo, three talented young drummers, joined the orchestra on stage for an energetic finale to the concert, from which a donation will be made to Fundación



# Bebras Competition —

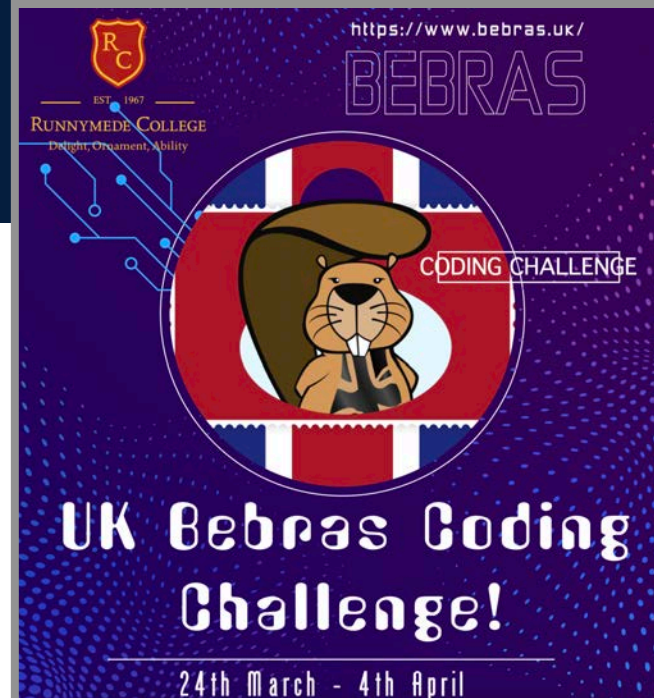
This past week, students across Runnymede have taken part in the **UK Bebras Computing Challenge**, a national competition designed to stretch minds and sharpen problem-solving skills through coding-based logic puzzles.

Running from **24th March to 4th April**, the challenge has seen students aged 11 to 16 put their thinking caps on during a 45-minute timed session, working through interactive tasks that test their logical reasoning, pattern recognition, and algorithmic thinking.

While many students described the experience as “challenging to say the least,” the overall mood has been one of excitement and satisfaction. The puzzles may have been tricky, but they were also rewarding—sparking laughter, healthy competition, and plenty of “aha!” moments.

Mr Bell, who co-organised the challenge with Ms Atkinson at Runnymede, commented, “It’s always great to see students fully engaged in activities that push them to think differently. Bebras gives them a taste of what real-world computational thinking feels like—and they have fun doing it.”

The Bebras Challenge is a global initiative that promotes computer science in schools in a way that’s accessible and enjoyable. The tasks don’t require prior programming knowledge—just logic, determination, and a willingness to give it a go. Congratulations to all the students who took part, and a big thank you to Ms Atkinson and Mr Bell for championing such an enriching opportunity!



## — Year 9 MUN —

As part of our whole school project on becoming Global Citizens Year 9 have been completing a Model UN project. With this Year 9 were gaining knowledge of Global Issues; learning important research skills; exploring the different connections between countries and learning how international law and governance works. We started by being divided into different continents to assess the impact the UN has had on these individual countries. Mr McGowans form group was looking at South America; Ms Martin’s form were looking at Europe; Dr Munoz was looking at issues in Africa and Ms Ramsden was looking at Asia. Form groups were then divided into countries and small groups of three and given countries to give presentations in their tutor groups. We then had the Model UN in the hall debating such topics such as: “Should the UN focus on more Humanitarian or Global Issues?” And “Who is most deserving on UN aid?”. All the delegates were Presidential in their addresses and its clear we have some future foreign dignitaries amongst our Year 9s!

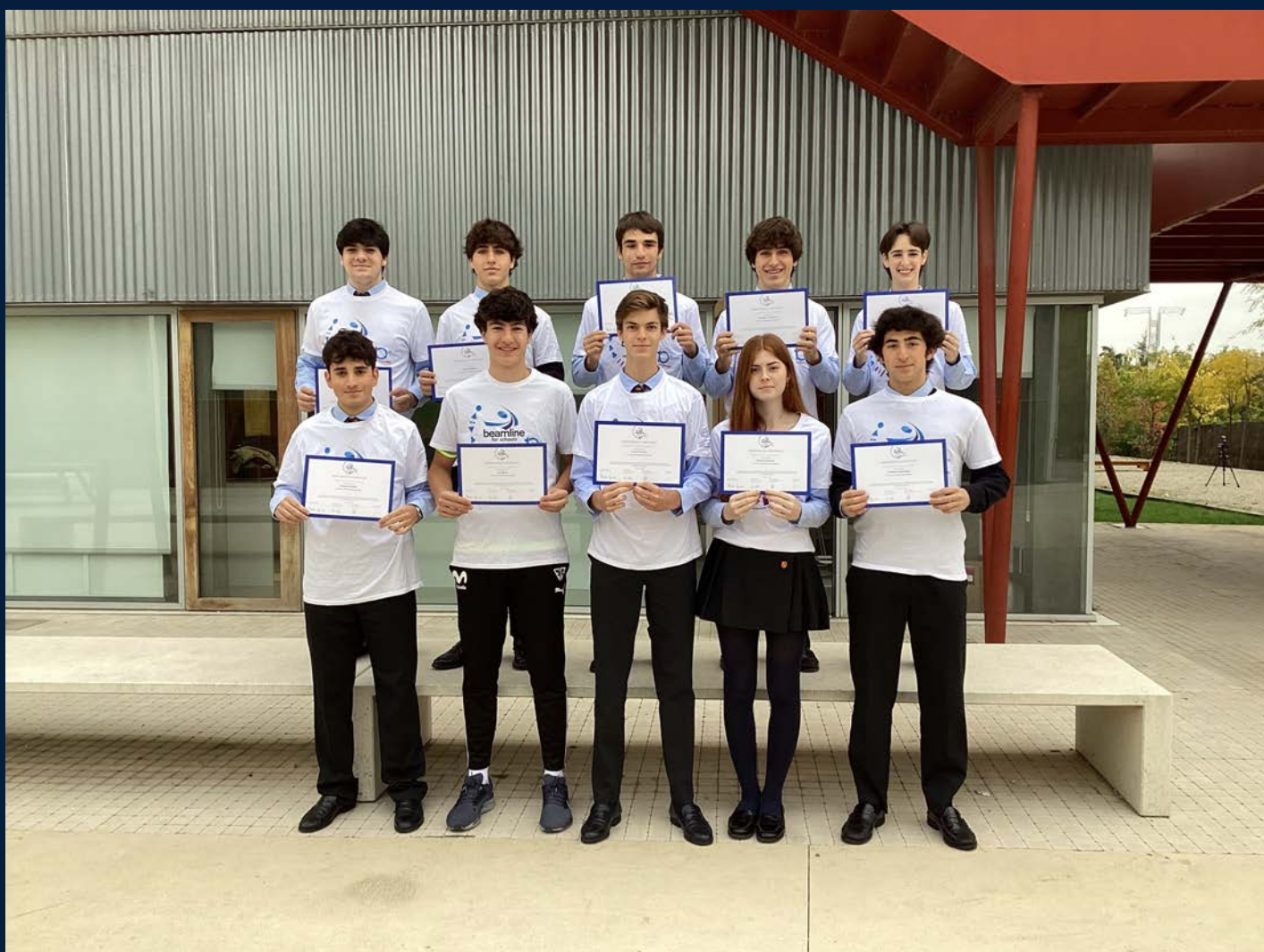




## — STEM Club and BLS4 competition —

Last academic year a team of one of our most talented and motivated Physics current Year 13 pupils took part in the CERN Beamline for Schools Competition (BL4S), a worldwide contest whereby pupils have to write a scientific proposal from scratch to be carried out at the well-known CERN or DESY particle accelerators (<https://beamlineforschools.cern/>). Our team worked extremely hard doing research on topics that extend well beyond the A level curriculum, having to teach themselves Special Relativity, the functioning of particle accelerators and different types of radiation such as synchrotron or Bremsstrahlung. Their proposal managed to secure a place amongst the 10% shortlisted ones, a phenomenal achievement and a first shortlist for Runnymede pupils. As a treat our students got special certificates, commemorating T-shirts and a do-it-yourself particle detector for the school. Our heartfelt congratulations go to this amazing team of brilliant scientists.

Once the competition was over, the same team founded and run the Runnymede STEM Club. This is the first time the STEM Club is organised and run by pupils with help from our fantastic team of Lab Technicians (Ms Shave and Ms Georgieva). The STEM Club is now quite a popular co-curricular choice for many science A level pupils and has its own website thanks to our Year 13 webmasters (B. De la Mora, S. Bareño and A. Del Pino). Soon Year 12s will take over and update content. All information about STEM Club and CERN competition can be found on <https://runnymedestem.com/>





# — British Physics Olympiad Success —

In November 14 of our most enthusiastic Physics students, including 6 Year 12 pupils took part in Round 1 of the British Physics Olympiad, one of the most challenging and renowned Physics competitions in the world. Organised by the Physics department at Oxford University promotes the study of Physics while recognising excellence in young scientists (<https://www.bpho.org.uk/>).

This year has been so far the most successful one for our Runnymede pupils. Two of our Year 13 students (Alec and Zijie) achieved a Gold Award. There were three Silver Awards and a spate of Bronze I and II Awards. It is extremely remarkable that 2 of our Year 12 pupils managed to achieve a Bronze I and three others a Bronze II award, a major accomplishment for pupils that took the exam so early on in their A levels. We would like to congratulate all the participants for their enthusiasm and success. Many of them will move on to read Physics-related degrees at university, and the future bodes well for all of them. There will soon be further opportunities for Year 12 and Year 10 pupils to partake in Physics competitions which we are sure will be as successful as this one.



## — Micro and Nanoplastics

On Friday 7th, ahead of Women and Girls in Science week, all Year 12 science students attended a talk on micro and nanoplastics in food by PhD student Sandra Bargiela Cuevas (CIAL, CSIC). The talk was extremely engaging (and scary). We learnt how plastics are now everywhere, including all organs in our body and how every year the equivalent of a credit card is absorbed by our body by inhalation only. Our guest speaker stressed the importance to be conscientious and minimise plastic use in our daily life. We would like to thank Sandra for her time and phenomenal talk and our Year 12 pupils for their outstanding behaviour. They were extremely engaged and a few of them stayed after the talk to ask extra questions.





# Year 10 Congress Trip! —



Once again, Runnymede College is pleased to announce that our students had the opportunity to visit “El Congreso de los diputados”, the seat of national sovereignty in Spain and were able to access some of the most popular rooms of this historic building. From the “Passage of Floridablanca”, the “Gallery of the Agenda”, the “Hall of the Lost Steps”, through the “desks of the clock and the Constitution” and of course reaching the “hemicycle” where our politicians debate and legislate. The students were even able to meet with well-known personalities from the world of Spanish politics during the visit.

The Congress of Deputies itself provided us with a magnificent guide who took us through the entire tour, illustrating the history of each of the rooms. In addition, our students had the opportunity to ask questions to satiate their endlessly curious minds.



Have a Easter break, and good luck to all of those revising for their external examinations.



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