



GUILDFORD
HIGH SCHOOL

SENIOR SCHOOL

Winter Newsletter 2021



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WELCOME FROM THE HEADMISTRESS



Following last year's accolade in the Sunday Times, naming us the 'Southeast Independent Secondary School of the Decade', I am absolutely delighted that the Junior School has been named 'The Sunday Times Independent Preparatory School of the Decade'. Hurrah! The award gives us another reason to celebrate at the end of this year, and we are thrilled that all of the hard work by staff and pupils in our Junior School has been recognised in this way.

The Year 7 panto performance of Rapunzel was superb and provided a brilliant opportunity for our new pupils to bond with each other and with the Lower Sixth. Hetty Feather was an extraordinary and vibrant production; my congratulations to all who took part.

I have been overjoyed to see girls back out on the pitches, courts, cross country tracks and in the pool competing against other schools. You can read of the numerous successes that have come their way in this newsletter. Well done to all of you who have represented GHS in a sport.

It has been absolutely wonderful to see the return of our usual Christmas festivities. From the snowy welcome on the 1 December to the much-anticipated performance of 'The Snowman', Christmas has been in full swing for the past few weeks. The Carol Service in the Cathedral was utterly beautiful and a majestic end to the term.

I wish you all joy, peace and good health this Christmas.

Mrs Fiona Boulton



"The Junior School, which has about 280 girls and is part of the wider 4-18 girls' school, has been named The Sunday Times Prep School of the Decade not just for its continued excellence in teaching and learning, but also for developing these broader skills and experiences. It doesn't just come top of our table for results, having twice previously been prep school of the year in the past 20 years; it also offers experiences from Mandarin and yoga to extensive music and sports clubs, all packaged in a buzzy, small-school feel."

THE SUNDAY TIMES, PARENT POWER

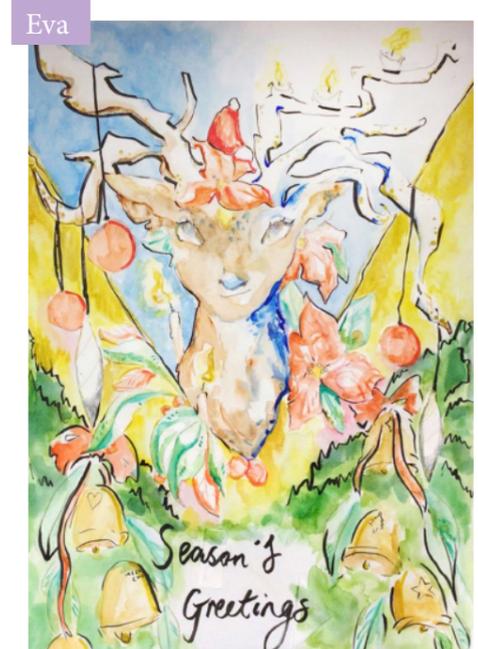


UNITED LEARNING CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION WINNER ANNOUNCED

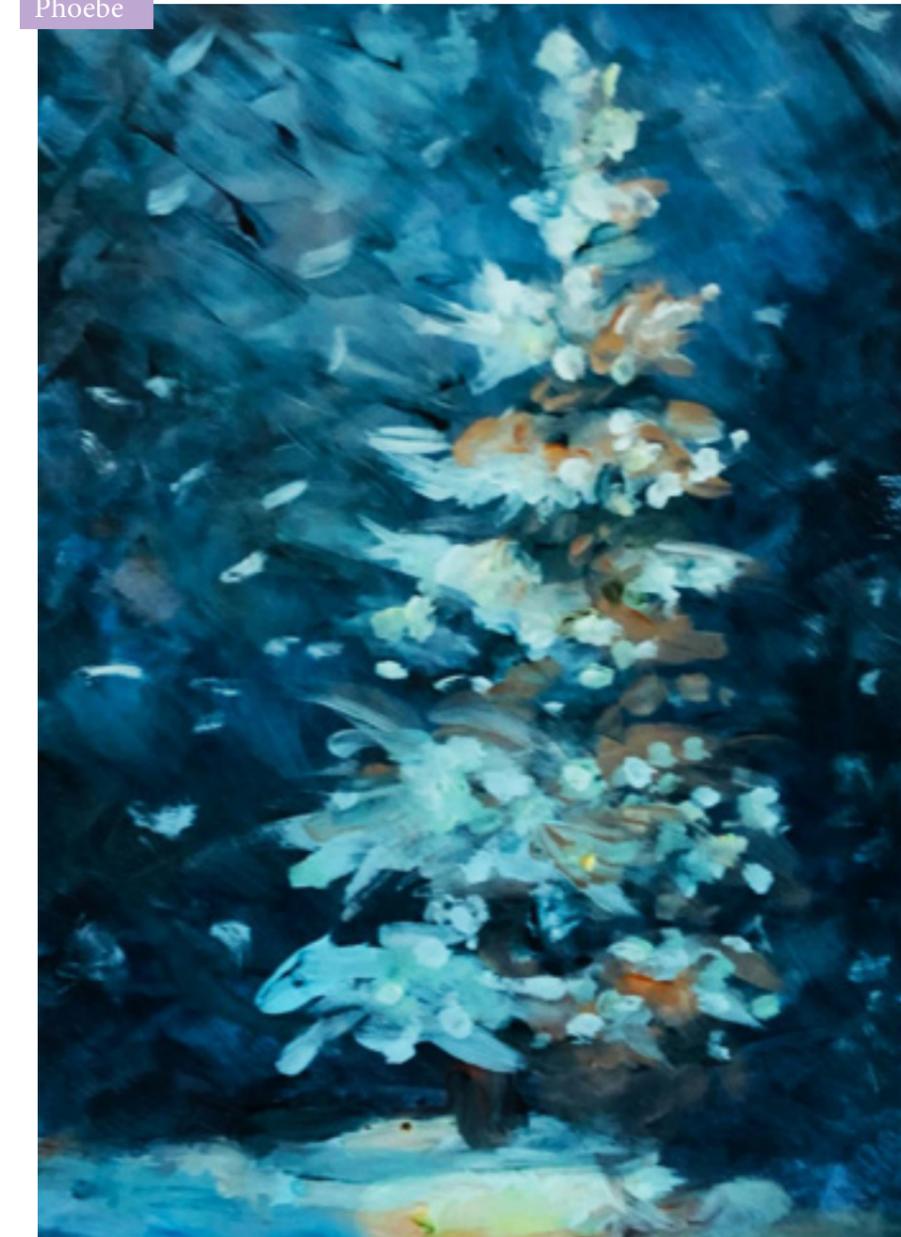
We are delighted to announce that Phoebe (Year 9) was chosen as a winner of this year's United Learning Christmas Card Competition. Many congratulations!

Phoebe's design will be one of two that feature on United Learning's Christmas card for 2021. She will receive 10 prints of her own Christmas card design, as well as a £50 Amazon voucher.

Well done also to Isobel and Eva (also Year 9), whose entries were shortlisted. Thank you to all pupils from Years 7-9 who took part in the competition. They produced some fantastic entries which did not disappoint, and showed so many variations of a Christmas theme, rising to the challenge in true GHS spirit.



Phoebe



CAROL SERVICE

After an extraordinarily busy few months it was fitting to end the last full day of term in Guildford Cathedral for the Carol Service. It was especially poignant to be back in this beautiful space as a school community for the first time since 2019 with all five choirs, chamber orchestra and brass ensemble, and with a congregation of pupils and parents. After the chamber orchestra's exquisite performance of 'Andante Cantabile' by Tchaikovsky, the service began in the traditional way with a soloist singing the first verse of 'Once in Royal David's City' and, thereafter, the structure of the service followed the traditional pattern of readings and music. The readers delivered the spoken texts with great precision and clarity, allowing the narrative of the Christmas story to be retold; and the congregational carols were lifted by the superb brass ensemble, adding fanfares and descants to join with the organ and voices. The choirs' singing was sensational; it was a joy to hear each choir sing individually but, also, to hear the power of all 160 voices when they combined for two pieces with chamber orchestra and organ. The service ended with 'Adeste Fideles' and its resplendent choir/brass descant filling the vast space of the cathedral. Congratulations and sincere thanks to all musicians, readers, and those who helped to organise the service.

Mr Grayson Jones



CHORAL EVENSONG

Congratulations to all members of the Joint GHS and RGS Chamber Choir who sang extraordinarily well at Chichester Cathedral on 3 November. This was their first cathedral visit since March 2020, and it was a delight to hear the choir singing at Choral Evensong again. The lovely homogenous blend and expressive detail was noted by members of the congregation afterwards; this is particularly pleasing given that, when this choir reformed in September, only eleven members remained from pre-Covid days. Well done to all choristers.

Mr Grayson Jones



INFORMAL CONCERTS

Forty-five pupils from all year groups signed up to perform as a soloist, or within a small ensemble, at one of the two Informal Concerts this term. This was a hugely enjoyable evening thanks to the wide variety of styles and genres performed so wonderfully by players and singers from all year groups. For many, this was their first performance in front of a live audience. It was also interesting to note that, regardless of experience, many of the musicians admitted that they were surprised how nervous they felt about being in front of an audience again after twenty months of performing to relatives on Zoom or perfecting endless digital recordings at home. Congratulations to every musician - it was wonderful to hear live music played with such poise and expertise!

Mr Grayson Jones

THE SNOWMAN

We all know that Christmas at GHS is a special time, and what better way to start the celebrations than a magical lunchtime performance of 'The Snowman'. Pupils and members of staff from across the school filled the Main Hall and waited for the spectacle to begin. We were also delighted to welcome Junior pupils to join the fun.

With the film playing on the screens, the orchestra masterfully played the score dressed in an array of Christmas attire, Miss Whiteman narrated the story, and the iconic 'Walking in the Air' was sung by the Chamber Choir. A truly beautiful start to the Christmas season at GHS.



RAPUNZEL

Nothing says Christmas quite like a good pantomime, and our Year 7s did not disappoint with their production of Rapunzel in the last week of term. The Senior School watched, sung, and clapped along to one of the most looked forward to events of the year; an obvious highlight was the GHS 'Twelve Days of Christmas' sung by our faculty. With ample references to current pop culture, inside jokes and cameos from One Direction and the Spice Girls; the Main Hall was in erupts of laughter from start to finish! Congratulations to both the Year 7 cast and Sixth Form production team who put a tremendous amount of effort into putting the show together.





HETTY FEATHER

I knew that the first 'life after lockdown' Lower School Production had to be something magical and uplifting. Jacqueline Wilson's tale of foundling girl 'Hetty Feather' was the perfect choice; it is a story of hope and love in dark times. Emma Reeves' wonderful stage adaptation required the ensemble cast to tell the story with energy and invention. It was a fantastic opportunity to work collaboratively as two year groups and break free from our 'bubbles'. The cast of Year 8 and 9 pupils worked tirelessly throughout Michaelmas Term to bring the story alive, with some vital support from Mrs Wilkinson's highly skilled Prop Factory Club.

Audiences were moved to tears and dazzled by the talent on stage. The cast never faltered, despite the adversity of rehearsing via Teams and stepping into roles at the last minute when some actors were forced to isolate. A group of pupils who started the process without knowing each other very well became a theatre company who supported each other and took immense joy in watching one another succeed. Pupils were hungry for live theatre to return to its usual place within the school, and they heralded its return with powerful performances and much deserved pride.

Mrs Fiona Jones





DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD GOLD EXPEDITION

There's something really special about standing at 450m watching the sun rise over the Welsh mountains. This is how we spent our final morning trekking through the Brecon Beacons, and as we stood at the endpoint of our final day, we all felt a great sense of pride at our accomplishments. It is not an experience that we will ever forget and we couldn't recommend it enough.

Ella, Becca, Eve, Emily and Bea, Upper Sixth

GERMAN FILM COMPETITION WINNERS

This term the Guildford Twinning Association challenged our pupils to create a short video introducing Guildford to pupils in our partner city of Freiburg. Rebecca and Katie in Year 10 were chosen unanimously as the winners, beating dozens of entries from other schools. Announcing the result at the Guildhall, the Mayor of Guildford praised their production skills, their excellent German, and their inclusion of subtitles to make the film accessible. The winning film will be included at our 'Languages Festival' during Modern Languages Week in February.

Mr Tom M'Clelland



MODEL UNITED NATIONS

On Friday 5 November, we had the opportunity to attend a Mock COP26 event with other local schools, representing the UK. The day started with short presentations from each team about their country's position regarding climate change and the effects they are already feeling. Afterwards, we questioned and debated with each other, before working together to suggest new ideas to limit climate change. Lastly, we suggested and selected a few key areas which need work in the wider world to limit climate change, before discussing what changes could be made in the local area.

We introduced the current UK policies, particularly those made in the Paris Protocol, and critiqued the UK's current carbon emissions not being on track for net zero by 2050. Our proposals focused on government and organisations limiting their carbon use, as well as a push for more electric vehicles and more public transport. As a developed country we thought the UK should also be supporting countries which are yet to industrialise, to help them do it in a greener way.

It was eye-opening how urgent our action must be to combat climate change on an individual and global scale. The day was extremely informative and insightful and we hope that every one of us can do something to combat climate change.

Bei and Celia, Upper Sixth

HOUSE ACTIVITIES

It has been a fantastic term for the Houses. All of the Heads of Houses have noticed how enthusiastically the pupils have been throwing themselves into the various House competitions since September; the House spirit is definitely back following the lockdowns of the past two school years. We have run a wide range of competitions, from House 'Just Dance' and Dodgeball, to Christmas Bauble decorating and Music Quizzes. We have also held some old favourites, such as Pointless and lots of Baking! All the Houses have enjoyed success in one or more of the competitions, and the term has finished with Ruby in first place for the House Cup. However, more important has been the large number of girls taking part, and the smiles and laughter that have accompanied every House event. It has been good to be back!

Mr Will Saunders

CERN VIRTUAL TOUR

On Tuesday 5 October, GHS hosted a virtual tour of the ATLAS experiment at the Large Hadron Collider in Geneva. At 46m long, 25m high and 25m wide, the 7000-tonne ATLAS detector is the largest volume particle detector ever constructed. It investigates a wide range of Physics, from the search for the Higgs boson, to extra dimensions and particles that could make up dark matter. Dr Clara Nellist gave a tour of the detector, described how it works and provided an overview of current developments. She then answered questions from Sixth Form students from GHS, as well as students from local schools who had joined the tour, giving them a fascinating insight into her own personal research and career progression.

Mr Jon Norrey

A LEVEL ART VISIT ST IVES

The A Level Art students travelled to St Ives to enjoy a two-day painting course at the famous St Ives School of Painting. The school is renowned as a centre of innovation, hosting artists such as Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson, as it became the epicentre for new theories and practices in Art. The girls were tutored by local artists who directed them to draw from the rugged coastal scenery and still life set ups back in the studio.

This unique experience acclimatised them to their creative context; to see clearly what resonated with them in their surroundings. This could be the minutiae of sand and stones on the beach, the sweeping swathes of Cornish landscape or the granite gravestones and chapels. They began to comprehend the story of their sketchbook and their viewpoint on the world. Visits to the Tate St Ives and the Barbara Hepworth Sculpture Garden also contributed to their first-hand observations.

Back in the studio, they examined their sketchbooks for recurring themes and motifs. They considered form, structure and composition to produce compelling paintings that captured their personal lens on the world. This work will contribute to the girls' A Level Art coursework, and will be especially useful for those students going on to apply for Art Foundation courses.

Mrs Sue Kew



AFTER SCHOOL OUTREACH

At the beginning of term, we invited local Sixth Form Art students to join our A Level Art students in life drawing sessions. Held once a week after school, the sessions have run in two blocks over the term. They have been incredibly popular with 10 external students joining us in each block. For all the students, life drawing is something new.

Pupils are normally used to drawing from photographs, but life drawing is a unique and important skill which teaches the students about form, tone, measurement and structure in a 3D context. We have explored form in a range of experimental media from a diverse range of life models, while keeping the traditional fundamentals of proportion and measurement in all sessions. Drawing from life is an essential skill to be able to demonstrate when producing portfolios for art colleges, architecture courses and a range of other creative degrees.

We are thrilled to have been able to offer this opportunity not only to our own Sixth Form pupils, but students from other local schools as well.

Mr Rod Laughton and Mrs Jenni Hall



SCHOOLS CHALLENGE CUP & SOUTH SCHOOLS TOURNAMENT

The 1st Lacrosse team has had a busy and exciting term. Having been listed as one of the top eight teams in the country, we were invited to participate in the Schools Challenge Cup which is run by Engand Lacrosse. It was a fantastic day of lacrosse and we finished in the top five nationally.

The 1st team also competed in the South Schools Lacrosse Tournament in November. This brought together schools from the entire region and presented us with yet another competitive day. The girls gained confidence throughout their seven group-stage matches, remaining undefeated. The team played with poise and control in the semi final and progressed to the final. Unfortunately, after a closely-fought game, Guildford High narrowly lost. We are exceptionally proud to have been runners up in the region. The girls conducted themselves excellently, and we cannot wait to see them continue to go from strength the strength next term.

Mrs Laura McHale



ESAA CROSS COUNTRY CUP

The 2021 cross country season has been exceptional for GHS. At the District Schools Cross Country trials on 14 November, our biggest cohort of 41 girls ran brilliantly, with 24 GHS runners being selected for the Surrey Schools Championships in January. We ventured further afield to join boys in a relays event. RGS hosted a team relay over 3km where GHS A team of Della, Sophie, Katie and Emmeline placed 1st and the B team of Robin, Millie, Ella and Ellie were 1st placed B team, and Katie clocked the fastest girls' lap time. Four brave girls embarked on a new race over a rigorous 7.5km course at Kings Wimbledon. Julia, Sophie, Katie and Millie were outstanding to finish 2nd girls team, with Katie finishing 2nd individually. Friendly races at St Edmunds resulted in Year 7, 8 and 9 team wins.

Over 1,600 schools entered the first round of the English Schools Cross Country Championships in October. GHS hosted the Surrey round and all three teams qualified easily for the regional round in November. Having zoomed through this, all three teams had a long journey down to Newquay, Somerset, for the ESAA National finals on 4 December. Our luxury minibus transported 18 runners, some parent supporters and two staff to the SW country. The Premier Inn was 'posh' according to the girls in their massive family rooms with a TV, kettle and hair dryer. After a hearty dinner and 'all you can eat' breakfast, the girls were fuelled to run their legs off on a muddy, hilly course in 40mph winds and occasional huge hail storms.

The Inter team started the day and were beyond phenomenal. Katie came 3rd, Robin 6th, with Emmeline, Summer, Bella and Millie all in the top 42 places out of 150 runners. This resulted in the team placing 1st with an incredible team total of 35, the next team were way up with 96! The Senior girls were up next and despite a challenging start getting stuck in the starting pen, they picked off their competitors to finish brilliantly. The first four GHS runners of Julia, Katie, Della and Sophie placed in the top 30, and after a nerve-racking wait, the team had placed an amazing 3rd! It was an extremely emotional affair with tears all round. The Junior girls raced last, having endured the worst weather and had to cope with the worst course conditions. Amongst another incredibly competitive field of 154 runners, the Year 7s stormed to the front. Tilly flew round to victory with Kitty close behind in 3rd. The rest of the team of Hannah, Lucy, Keira and Liv dug deep and hung on to the bitter end for the team to finish 6th. At presentations, we were the only school to feature in all three age groups for team and individual results, which was immensely rewarding after all their hard training. I'm so proud of all the cross country runners!

Mrs Tara Oxley



NATIONAL SWIMMING FINALS 2021

The National Swimming Finals, held at the London 2012 Olympic pool, never fail to bring out the best in the GHS swimmers.

The Junior team of Sharon, Daisy, Hannah, Keira, Scarlett and Isabelle were not fazed by the occasion. Instead it inspired them to improve their qualification times in both the Medley and Freestyle relays. The finals were incredibly competitive, with GHS gaining podium finishes in both, a silver in the Medley and a bronze in the Freestyle.

Their performances certainly inspired the Intermediate team of Jess, Kara, Scarlett, Millie and Sadie who also swam superbly, reaching both finals and gaining a bronze in the Freestyle relay.

It was a most successful day and will hopefully inspire the swimmers to continue to train hard and return next year, even more determined to podium in their respective age groups.

Mrs Rachel Byrne



GYMNASTICS

The ISGA qualifier was held on Sunday 14 November at LEH school. The U15 team received a bye through, but the U13 and U19 teams competed in a set floor and voluntary vault competition. The top teams would qualify for National Finals in March. The relatively new U13 team did exceptionally well learning the routine, and some of the Year 7s were competing for the first time. The U19 team were experienced but had extremely tough competition. Both teams finished a brilliant 5th place, so they are safely through.

On Thursday 25 November, the Surrey U15 & U19 floor and tumbling competition was held at St Catherine's. They performed beautifully, enjoying being back competing in front of a live audience. Both our U15 and U19 teams were crowned champions, as well as Helena and Anna being top scorers of their age groups.

Mrs Tara Oxley



HOCKEY TOURNAMENT SUCCESS

The local tournament was the first time both the U12 and U13 teams have played against other schools this term, so our main aim was to have fun and learn from the experience.

The U13 team really grew as a group throughout the tournament, playing the eventual winners, Farnborough to begin with, and only narrowly losing, drawing against Tormead and winning against St. Teresa's very impressively. This put them in second place overall and they should be very proud of the progress they made throughout the day.

The U12 team had a stormer of a day, winning every game bar one which they drew, but they came out on top on goal difference and were therefore placed first! They grew in confidence and were making some really great moves as a team.

I was a very proud coach on both days, and I am already looking forward to the next set of matches next term!

Miss Jenna Wiles



SENIOR SURREY LACROSSE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The rescheduled Senior Surrey Lacrosse Championships took place in the first week back after the half term break. All four Senior Lacrosse teams were ready to play in the Cup, Plate and Bowl tournaments held at Caterham School. The 1st team played some fantastic lacrosse throughout the day, finishing as runners up in the Cup competition. The 2nd team continued to grow in confidence, winning their semi-final convincingly, but narrowly losing in the final to be runners up in the Plate competition. The 3rd and 4th teams competed well in the Bowl competition with the 4th team beating some Surrey 3rd teams, which was a huge achievement. The 3rd team continued to progress through to the final, where they dug deep and gave a really gutsy and determined performance to be crowned Champions. A superb day of lacrosse by all Senior teams as we look ahead to National Schools at the end of March.

Mrs Keely Harper



SKIING

A record 27 girls from Years 7-13 competed in the Surrey Schools Ski Racing Championships on 13 November at Aldershot dry ski slope. Nearly all skied two clean runs which was a great achievement. Congratulations to Ella for recording the 3rd fastest time, and the Senior teams for placing 2nd and 3rd overall.

Mrs Tara Oxley

INDOOR ROWING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The indoor rowing season has started with a vengeance, with students competing in new events this year. On Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 November, students competed virtually in the Dorset Indoor Rowing Championships. The students began with a 1000m qualifier piece on the Saturday, followed by a 500m sprint on the Sunday. Despite this being our first time entering the competition, we obtained six medals. Charlotte achieved 2nd place and Aleisha 3rd place in the Group C final, Sophie achieved 3rd place and Erin 1st place in the Group B final, and Francesca achieved 3rd place and Lucy 2nd place in the Group A final. Then, on Saturday 4 December, nine students rose to the challenge of competing in the British Indoor Rowing Championships live against students from around the world. It was a fantastic way to start the academic year. Many congratulations to those who rose to the challenge and we look forward to more exciting events next term.

Mrs Philippa Moriss-Jeffery

HORSE RIDING

The riders have been busy this half term, with an eventers challenge, show jumping and dressage. In an eventers challenge, a combination of show jumps and cross country jumps, Sofia had a super fast clear round for 70-75cm. In 80-85cm, Sofia and Sophie had clear rounds, Lucy had a pole down and they placed 2nd team. The top two teams qualify so it means they are off to the Championships in May at Hickstead. In 90-95cm, Lucy went clear and came 3rd, qualifying as an individual for Hickstead. In November, Senior riders competed at Snowball Farm and Parwood in showjumping. We achieved team 1st in the 60 and 70cm in both events, with Olivia and Sofia joining some Junior riders. This now means the team has qualified for the J4S Winter Final in Wales in March. It also places GHS in the BSJA Team league - 1st place in 60cm and 3rd place in the 70cm so far. Congratulations also to Olivia who competed in the NSEA National Plate Championships in December and placed in 2nd in the prelim dressage test.

Mrs Tara Oxley



NATIONAL SCHOOLS NETBALL

On the back of GHS's successes at the recent first round of the county tournaments, and their results so far this season, the teams went into the tournament with great confidence.

The U14s played some fine netball, but due to narrowly losing some matches by 1 or 2 goals they finished 4th in their section. It was a crisp November morning for the Senior tournament, however, the players acquitted themselves superbly.

The 1st team won their section and went onto play Trinity in the final, which they won in great style 17-6. The U16s were runners up in their section and so faced Wimbledon High. Saving some of their finest netball for the play-off match, they won 22-9. Congratulations to all squad members and we can now look forward to the regional round on Sunday 30 January.

Mrs Rachel Byrne, Mrs Amanda Whybro and Miss Sarah Gill

NETBALL CUP SUCCESS

Both the 1st and U15 Netball teams are through to the quarter finals of the Independent Schools Netball Cup having played some absolutely amazing netball along the way. Their toughest matches were played in the final week of term against Hurst and Bedford Girls. Both matches were highly competitive, but the GHS teams dug deep. Defensively, they turned over important balls and in attack they shot well under intense pressure to come out on top. Both teams now look forward to being in the last eight of the draw.

Mrs Rachel Byrne and Mrs Amanda Whybro





Inspiring Girls

Guildford High School, London Road, Guildford, GU1 1SJ

01483 561440 | www.guildfordhigh.co.uk