



## **Virus to Vaccine**

A brief insight about one of the world's leading vaccine experts.

## **Carbon Capture**

Learn more about Iceland's ORCA project and its potential to help with climate change.

## **Legal Minds**

Which are the top 5 Universities in the North West for Law?

## **Retrospective**

Are these the best albums of 2025?

# **The Hub**

## **St Christopher's Sixth Form Magazine**



## Welcome to our first edition of **The Hub.**

**Inside you will find some exciting articles, written by our students which showcase some of the interests that they have outside of their academic studies.**

Check out the fascinating article on vaccines and the incredible work of Sarah Gilbert. Gilbert is inspirational in her field and is inspiring young female scientists to pursue a career in scientific research and STEM pathways. Will you agree with Evie and Grace's opinions on Reform membership? Or do you prefer to read the review of Love Island?

As I write our Geographers are travelling to Iceland to explore the land of Fire and Ice and Micah writes with passion about the ORCA Plant and its carbon capture. A must-read article.

I have highlighted just a few of the articles written by the students and I trust you will have as much pleasure reading them as I have.

**Miss H Davies - Director of Sixth Form**

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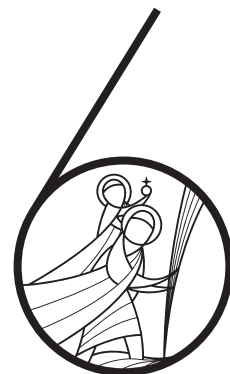
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# Sarah Gilbert: From Virus to Vaccine

By Chloe Gregory

**Gilbert's dedication and determination throughout the entirety of her professional career not only enabled the rapid development of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine but also revolutionised the process in which new vaccines are produced.**

Sarah Gilbert, born in Kettering, Northamptonshire originally studied biological sciences at the university of East Anglia before obtaining her doctorate from the university of Hull in genetics and biochemistry. Prior to the corona-virus outbreak, Gilbert had over twenty years of experience with immunology, in 2014 she led the first trials of an Ebola vaccine and even set up her own group who endeavoured to create a universal flu vaccine (affective against all strains).

Within a few weeks of the corona-virus pandemic, Gilbert (the lead professor and architect behind the vaccine) and her team at the University of Oxford had studied the composition and structure of the virus; developed a method for effectively and safely limiting its adverse effects on the body.

Previously, vaccines used a weak or inactive version of the original infection to inhibit contracting the same disease again, however, Oxford scientists took a common cold virus that infected chimpanzees and engineered it to become a vaccine against almost anything. Their method - labelled "Platform Technology" - involves modifying the chimpanzee virus (so it does not have any effect on humans) before inserting the genetic information from the corona-virus into the chimpanzee virus. This method is extremely diverse and has been described by professionals as

a "microscopic postman", all the scientists must do to treat other diseases is change the package - the genetic information of the pathogen. The Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine was a huge success, with Britain pre-ordering 100 million doses of the jab and currently over two billion doses have been administered across 170 countries. Despite this invention being viewed by many pharmaceutical companies as a way to make colossal profits, this was not the intention or motivation for Gilbert as she did not feel threatened or pressured by other companies or universities, as

she described the process as being "a race against the virus, not against other vaccine developers" and claimed that she was not "in this to make money".

Despite Gilbert's impressive and extraordinary successes within the scientific world, she was at times unsure as to whether she was suited for this role and even considered "leaving science at one point and doing something different". Whilst studying her PhD, Gilbert stated that she found tunnel-like focus difficult as she much preferred considering ideas from lots of different areas. However, Gilbert decided to persevere with her career in science, a choice which led to one of the

most significant medical advancements of the 21st century.

Sarah Gilbert's diligence has not gone unnoticed as a major company (Mattel) has created a Barbie doll of Gilbert to inspire the next generation of women in STEM. Furthermore, Gilbert herself is pioneering with the University of Oxford to perform studies and research to try and understand why less women hold higher positions of responsibility within the scientific community, such as professors.

*"Find a part of science that intrigues you, then continue to study it."*

# Women in STEM

By Elise Donovan Sayers



## Professor Jessica Downs

Professor Jessica Downs earned her Phd in biology from the Gurdon institute at Cambridge university in 1999. Her doctoral research focused on the structure of chromatin and examined how the arrangement of DNA ensured it maintained its integrity. This sparked her interest in the relationship between epigenetics and genome stability, which inspired her post-doctoral research training within another sector of the profound school.

For her work on epigenetic regulation after DNA damage, she was awarded the Jenner Fellowship from the Lister Institute of Preventative Medicine in 2002. This award allowed her to establish her own research lab within the biochemistry department of Cambridge which has since relocated twice, most recently joining the Institute of Cancer Research, London in 2016.

Her most recent publication (2025) discusses how damage to a particular type of chromatin remodelling complex known as PBAF can lead to centromere fragility as its main role is to safeguard centromere stability. Jessica's hard work and passion for science highlights women's capabilities and talents within a currently male-dominated field.



## Doctor Arlyne Simon

Dr Arlyne Simon was born in 1986 in the small Caribbean island known as Dominica. At 17 years old she moved to the US to enroll in college and pursue a degree in her passion- chemistry, which she received from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Afterwards, she completed her graduate studies in macromolecular science and engineering at the university of Michigan. During these studies she was a crucial member of a team which patented a blood test to detect when patients rejected a bone marrow transplant in 2012.

Since this achievement she has progressed to patent yet another biomedical device and become a well established children's author. Her first book, titled "Abby Invents Unbreakable Crayons" was published in 2018 and tells of a young, black girl who aims to solve the problem of her crayons frequently breaking by inventing her own.

In 2021 another book was added to the series and discussed Abby overcoming yet another issue through innovation and engineering. Arlene uses her own successes and talents to inspire the next generation of women in STEM, particularly those from ethnic backgrounds.



# Inform on Reform: Why is Reform Membership on the rise due to the Conservative downfall?

By Evie Williams and Grace Tomlinson

**Following the 2024 General Election, The conservatives, formally considered the official opposition of the Labour Party, have faced a significant decline in voter interest due to the rise of another right-wing party- Reform.**

Over the past few months, many conservative MPs have defected to the Reform UK party, including Suella Braverman and Robert Jenrick. The former failing party members are thought to be attaching themselves with a successful and popular party- making Reform appear like Tories 2.0. In fact, figures from YouGov show that more people are seeing Reform and Conservative as the same party.

Recently, political scientists have argued that Reform wouldn't get in due to the rising 'Left Block' within UK society however, due to Reform's association with the Conservative Party they have been thought to be the more viable option increasing an up and coming 'Right Block'. High profile Conservatives moving to Reform makes it look like a promising party and in turn, improves Conservative voter's opinions on Reform, and their policies as they see them aligning with their own. This reduces voter qualms about switching.

About 63% of Labour voters, 67% of Liberal Democrat voters and 64% Green voters dislike Reform and their policies anyway and with conservatives attaching themselves, their dislike stays constant, if not increasing.

In essence, it doesn't take a genius to understand that politics is becoming a popularity contest, and it appears that Conservative MPs are simply glory hunters. The policies become irrelevant when all these MPs are gratified by is fame and power.

## Legal Minds Top 5 Universities for Law

by Aleeza Hussain, Aisha Qureshi and Amirah Nawaz

**The North West of England offers several excellent universities for students who want to study law. These institutions are known for strong teaching, research, and opportunities that help prepare students for careers in the legal profession.**

One of the most respected universities in the region is University of Manchester. Its law school is internationally recognised for academic excellence and research, and it supports strong links with major law firms and legal organisations. Another leading institution is University of Liverpool, which has a long tradition of legal education and provides students with opportunities to gain practical experience through legal clinics and internships.

Lancaster University is also highly regarded for its law programmes. The university focuses on innovative teaching methods and encourages students to develop both critical thinking and practical legal skills. Meanwhile, University of Central Lancashire offers career-focused law degrees with opportunities for hands-on learning and connections with local legal organisations.

Completing the list is Edge Hill University, known for its supportive learning environment and modern law facilities that help students gain real-world legal experience.

Together, these five universities make the Northwest an excellent region for studying law, offering students high-quality education and strong pathways into legal careers.



# Love Island

## Do you conform to the tears?

By Sarah Pearson and Eliza Williams

**All stars series 3. 6-7 weeks of controversy, romance.... and pies? Arguably this season was the most entertaining of them all, with heated rivalries, online backlash and fierce feuds. In all there's simply too much gossip to fill you in on. BUT let's charge it to the game and give you a quick review.**

Flash back to season 12, hide away Helena was throttled with hate from the public against her shenanigans with Shakira and Harry in their infamous love triangle. However, this season she proved herself to be an ultimate baddie bagging the hot shot, smouldering American Carrington. Was Hurricane Belle really the bully of the season? Sit back down if you're already sat because it's giving two sides to the story. The big question is how hypocritical were Belle's actions against her words and did she really hurt Lielle's feelings in the heart rate challenge... wait a minute who's Lielle?

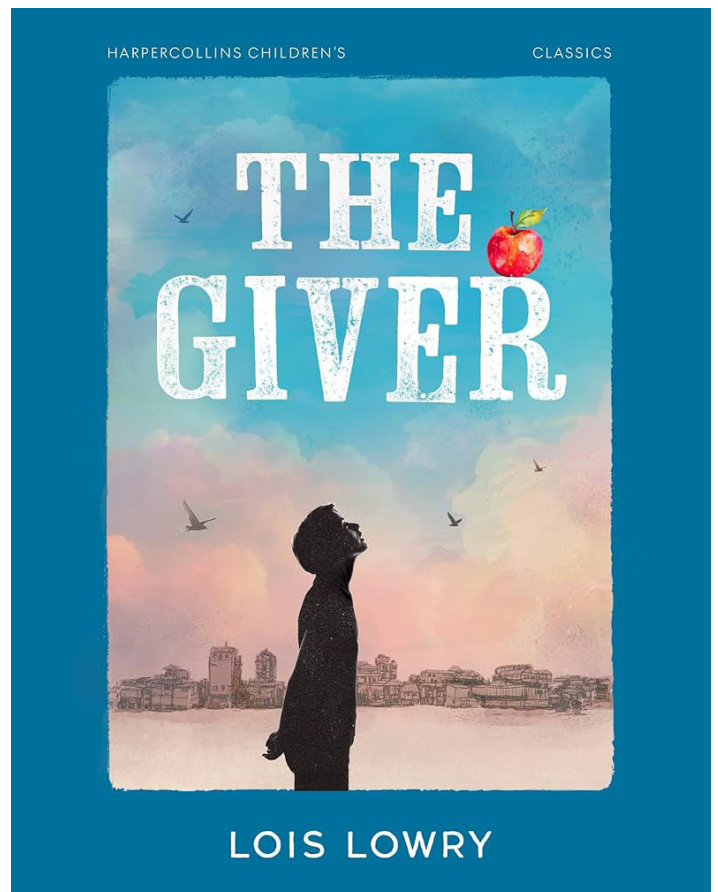
Speaking of Lielle aka Leanne, her and Scott's relationship blossomed from day one all the way till the final despite Scott's constant debate over the logistics over the outside world. The royalty of the season, Princess Pookie Pie and Prince Pookie Pops, Lucinda and Sean. Their relationship received conflicting opinions on their lovey dovey connection, are they living inside a bubble or are they just in love? Well post villa, the couple have gotten matching flower tattoos together, it's giving locked in.

Cha Cha-ing swiftly on, Millie fell victim to the undeniable charms of Curtis Pritchard. Still being the guy who likes to get up in the morning and make coffees for everyone, his heart was not only crushed by Trish but also by Millie finding her true prince charming in the American villa. To cope with this defeat, Curtis has now converted his profession from dancing in the ballroom to dancing in the ring. Boxing is now his forte.

The nation's sweetheart Tommy struggles to find his match in love and in friendship. In the words of Shaq-Attack "I thought we were friends but maybe I was wrong". Sean cunningly snatched Lucinda from Tommy breaking boy code. Justice for Tommy boy.

This year's ghost of the love island villa (Lauren season 12) was the puppeteer from the outside. Bashing out podcasts and slandering Harrison, she ruthlessly dropped insider information that made Harrison's "new and improved self" seem questionable.

After a long African summer, the public came together and crowned the lovely Welshman, Ciaran, and roadman Samie as victors. But hey as long as Ciaran is safe!



## St Christopher's Book Club

By Emaan Khan

**Open to students in Years 11, 12 and 13 with a love of reading or who are just looking to get into reading more, the book club has been meeting weekly to read and discuss The Giver - a dystopian novel where a 12-year-old boy, Jonas, believes he lives in a perfect society until he begins to discover the dark truths behind it.**

The club is all about enjoying reading in different ways, in a social setting rather than in a lesson or individually. Whilst reading the book, we all agreed that it was thought-provoking and that was one of the reasons it was chosen. It challenged us to think about how we would live without emotions, pain, and individuality like the characters in the novel do. If most aspects of our life were the same as everybody else's in the community would that be a negative or positive thing?

Everyone enjoyed the storyline and it has encouraged some to read more, as this is the first book they have read the entirety of in a while. A few wished the ending had been a bit more detailed as it left us with some unanswered questions. Overall, everybody happily got involved in the discussions and enjoyed the book.



# Iceland's ORCA Plant:

## Why the Carbon Capture Project Matters

By Micah Pellet

**During our visit to Iceland, we will learn about an important and innovative scheme that has the potential to change the current global path of climate change. Iceland's ORCA carbon capture plant – operated by Swiss climatetech company Climeworks – became the first direct air capture (DAC) project in the world to receive a coveted AAA rating which identifies a programme that has an “exceptionally high likelihood of delivering on its promises and targets.” This rating not only recognises the project's technical excellence but also signals a new era in carbon capture and storage.**

Located in Hellisheiði, Iceland, the ORCA plant has been operational since 2021 and represents a pioneering approach in carbon capture and storage called Direct Air Capture Carbon Storage (DACCS). Unlike nature-based solutions such as tree planting, which come with uncertainties around longterm storage, DACCS allows for measurable and verifiable removal of CO<sup>2</sup> directly from ambient air. The results of this programme so far indicate that they are most likely to achieve genuine, longterm climate impact, a level of confidence not seen before in the carbon capture and storage industry.

### **How ORCA Works: Technology Built for the future**

ORCA uses a system of CO<sup>2</sup> collector containers that capture carbon dioxide through an active adsorption process. Once captured, the CO<sup>2</sup> is processed with water and injected inside Iceland's natural basalt rock formations, where it mineralises into stone within a two years. The system allows carbon to remain stable for over 10,000 years essentially preventing its release back into the atmosphere and locking it away forever. This is a 10 time increase in previous carbon capture and storage timelines.

The entire system is powered by geothermal energy, enabling the process to run with minimal emissions and environmental impacts. The initial pilot programme and its subsequent expansions were set up on the site of the Hellisheiði geothermal power plant run by Icelandic power company ON.

The plant currently removes 2,600 tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> annually, and while this is relatively small on a global scale, its importance lies in proving that high quality, permanent carbon removal is not only possible but already happening.

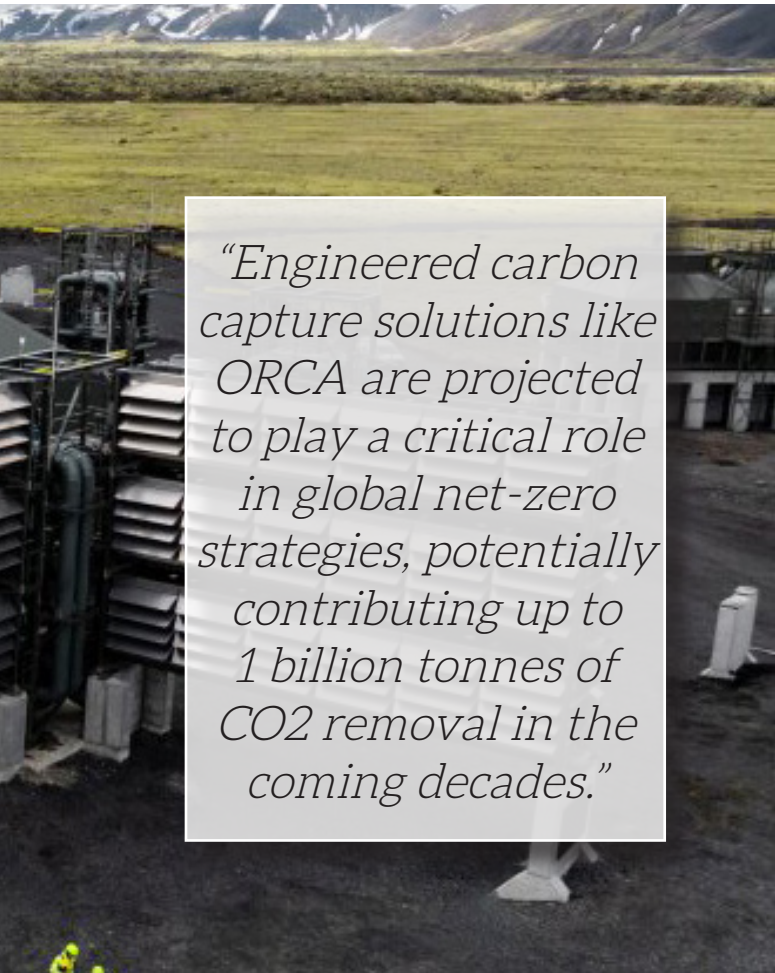
### **A Model for the Future of Carbon Removal**

Engineered carbon capture solutions like ORCA are projected to play a critical role in global net-zero strategies, potentially contributing up to 1 billion tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> removal in the coming decades. Many climate scientists argue that even aggressive emission reductions won't be enough to change the rate of current climate change. The world must also remove historic emissions already in the atmosphere. The technology that is currently working at the ORCA site is among the most promising paths forward because it offers precise measurement, permanent results, and a replicable and scalable method.

Iceland's unique geology and renewable energy infrastructure make it an ideal testing ground, but ORCA's success has global implications. The project demonstrates that high yield carbon removal is technologically and economically viable, especially when paired with renewable energy.

### **What This Means for Young People and the Climate Movement**

For students and young climate activists, the story of ORCA carries several important lessons:



*“Engineered carbon capture solutions like ORCA are projected to play a critical role in global net-zero strategies, potentially contributing up to 1 billion tonnes of CO2 removal in the coming decades.”*

# Eco Report

## Greening St Christopher’s



By Charlie Gerrard

Although not many of you may know this, at our school we have an Eco Group which is very well attended. Although it is majority students from our Main School we are open to all.

We have done a lot of stuff this year and our largest project is the revamp of our Polytunnel which is currently ongoing and we are due new doors that will help in the grow of food for our Food Department and Kitchens.

This year we have borrowed a fruit press from Prospects which meant that we could make apple juice from the trees within the grounds. Also working with Prospects we worked to make willow wreaths using materials from the Coppice.

We have also started an initiative to help rooms to power down just before each half term. As a group we have applied for the National Education Nature Park funding and the Ernest Cook trust to give us funding to help bring biodiversity back to the school. We have also joined the Green school Project and will complete our Carbon Calculator and Climate Action Plan.

We are only just beginning and are excited to see where we will go from here.

1. Innovation Matters More Than Ever  
Climate technology is advancing rapidly. ORCA’s success shows how bold innovation and engineering can turn theoretical ideas—like mineralising CO<sub>2</sub> into rock—into operational reality.
2. Small Countries Can Lead Big Changes.  
Iceland, though small, is now shaping the future of global climate policy. The ORCA plant proves that leadership in sustainability isn’t limited by population or geography, it’s driven by innovation and commitment.

### A Transformational Milestone—But Only the Beginning

While ORCA’s annual carbon removal volume is small compared to global emissions, its scientific importance cannot be overstated. As the first project to earn a AAA rating, ORCA has set the gold standard for what responsible, verifiable carbon capture should look like.

As climate concerns continue to escalate, projects like ORCA highlight a hopeful future. The tools for meaningful climate action already exist, and they’re getting better. For students imagining a sustainable future, Iceland’s groundbreaking carbon capture success is proof that innovation, science, and environmental consideration can reshape the planet’s destiny. We are looking forward to learning more about this on our visit to the site!!

# Music Based on Your Reading

Do you like books? What about music?  
Well, this article is for you.

By Zoe Leslie

If you are someone who likes to put songs to books, then you are like me. This article is going to recommend you songs to listen to based on the books you like.

The first book is “**Betting on You.**” *Betting on You* by Lynn Painter is a young adult rom-com brimming with humour, heart, and teenage angst. The story revolves around Bailey, a high school senior dealing with the emotional aftermath of her parents’ divorce, and Charlie, an unlikely acquaintance she first met on a flight. When fate brings them together as co-workers at a hotel waterpark, the pair navigates family struggles, friendship, and growing feelings for each other. With witty banter, fake dating trope, and plenty of heart-warming moments, *Betting on You* offers a delightful blend of romance, humour, and relatable teenage dilemmas. I recommend you listen to these songs:

- Anchor - Novo Armor
- Right where you left me - Taylor Swift
- All Too Well (Ten Minute Version) - Taylor Swift
- Line Without a Hook - Ricky Montogomery
- Water Fountain - Alec Benjamin
- Still Into You - Paramore

The second book is “**A Good Girl’s Guide to Murder.**” In the quaint town of Fairview, Connecticut, the summer air buzzes not only with the promise of senior year but also with the echoes of a cold case that’s about to be reopened. Holly Jackson’s “*A Good Girl’s Guide to Murder*” plunges readers into a captivating young adult mystery, where every clue and character is a piece of a complex puzzle. I recommend these songs:

- No body, no crime - Taylor Swift
- Pacify Her - Melanie Martinez
- Ghosting - Mother Mother
- Headlock - Imogen Heap
- Twisted - MISSIO
- She Knows - J.Cole, Cults, Amber Coffman

The third book is “**The Naturals.**” *The Naturals* is a Young Adult suspense novel by American author Jennifer Lynn Barnes. It is the first novel in the *Naturals* series, which follows Cassie, a teenager with a natural talent for profiling people based on a careful study of their behavior. Cassie meets other teenagers with similar abilities when she joins a special FBI program meant to use their skills to solve murders. Throughout the series, Cassie must also work to solve the mystery of her mother’s disappearance five years ago, which left behind a bloody crime scene that still haunts her. I recommend these songs:

- Softcore - The Neighbourhood
- Checkmate - Conan Gray
- Black Out Days - Phantogram
- Control - Halsey
- Blood // Water - grandson
- I Know The End - Phoebe Bridgers

# Amy's blasts from the past

## Standout albums and songs from decades gone by

By Amy Partington

Have you been searching for some new songs to add to your playlists? Need some recommendations? Well, look no further! I'm here to recommend some of my favourites from times gone by!



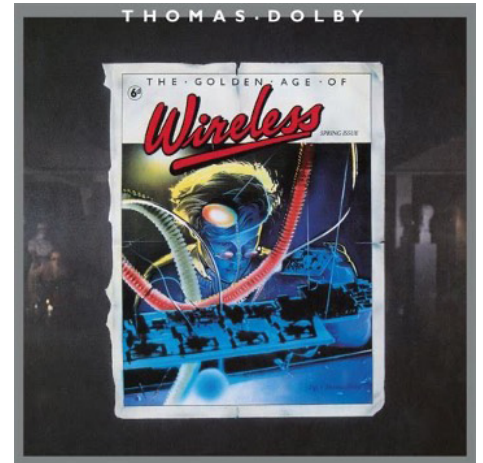
**Pictures of Matchstick Men by Status Quo (1968)**

This upbeat song with its iconic guitar riffs is the perfect thing to listen to on your way home from school. Inspired by the paintings of L.S. Lowry, this hit, with its psychedelic influences, was successful here and abroad, particularly in the US.



**This Town Ain't Big Enough For The Both Of Us by Sparks (1974)**

A little more on the niche side, but perfect for fans of bands like Queen, This Town (as it's affectionately known by Sparks fans worldwide) starts off the album it comes from with a bang, literally! Its clever use of gunshot sound effects reinforce the western film inspired idea created with the iconic line used at the end of every verse: This town ain't big enough for the both of us, and it ain't me who's gonna leave!



**She Blinded Me With Science by Thomas Dolby (1983)**

Again, another song on the nichier side, but this synth classic makes for a tune with perfect dance vibes. Imagine if a mad scientist was given a pen, some paper, and several synthesisers- that's what this song is reminiscent of, and Dolby nails it.



**Country House by Blur (1995)**

This track from the kings of Britpop themselves is perfect to listen to whilst lounging around after school. A classic from their 4th album, this upbeat jam, brilliantly blending together Damon Albarn's vocals and Graham Coxon's guitar, will easily lift your spirits any day!



**The Dark of the Matinée by Franz Ferdinand (2004)**

I will admit - no one who knows me will be surprised to find I've recommended a Franz Ferdinand track here! This one, from their debut album, is full of cool guitar riffs, and this track especially acts as the perfect song to listen to whilst struggling through some particularly troublesome homework. Remember: you'd have a happy life if you did the things you like!



**I Can Change by LCD Soundsystem (2010)**

This almost futuristic sounding track from LCD Soundsystem is full to the brim with exciting synthesiser sounds, reminiscent of those from the 80s. It's the perfect song to play when you're in the mood to impress your friends with your funky music taste- a little niche, but really cool and really catchy!



# Kindred Spirits

## Chapter 2

By Amelia Prendergast

**A dystopian novel where the world is organised oppressively by zodiac signs to prevent violence and establish universal peace. Two people of different Zodiacs meet to prove that segregation doesn't stop fighting and can create healthy relationships. It follows the perspective of both a Zodiac and a Disciple, which is the equivalent of a guard in regular society, showing how both sides are affected by an oppressive government.**

**T**he Central was essentially the meeting place, the place where everything happened, the fundamentals of the zone. This is where, after learning the basics, we'd separated and participated in classes to learn specifically about our own Zodiac sign, from personality to behaviours to symbols.

It had been decorated with bunting, strung from each building in the familiar gold and silver accents, a reminder of the upcoming festival. A yearly celebration that occurred in the summer months to celebrate the victory over the rebels who had opposed the creation of Astro.

Astro, it was called, derived from 'astrology' or 'astrological signs'. We were organised by our zodiac types, like a whole other planet. There had been talk of astrology before, but it had never been controlled. It was just a topic of conversation sometimes, something we'd put on our social profiles as an emoji.

The area was packed already, bustling with people all sporting the same orange band that was woven tightly around my own wrist, reminding us of our place in this strange society. I joined the crowd as a voice boomed out, too loud for it to be natural. I looked up and noticed the speaker above my head; there were 6, all positioned on the top of every pole in the area for perfect acoustics. No chance to miss anything.

**"Welcome! This morning marks the first ever Cancer-Capricorn Compatible Pairing Week!"** It sounded a mouthful and his joviality reminded me of the presentations given before, convincing people about Astro, leaflets advertising the place like a holiday home. We were so naïve, so stupid.

**"...You'll form an orderly queue outside the Linking Building and then be directed to a booth by our Disciples."** He indicated a few dozen Disciples standing by, their batons on their belts in a non-threatening manner, a contrast to yesterday's violence. Hopefully that meant no Unluckies would be created today. He nodded. **"Happy Linking."**

The Disciples immediately moved into position as people queued, some looking eager to meet their Compatible, their eyes glowing like stars and smiles grinning widely, while others cowered, their steps reluctant until they were pushed forward by an impatient Disciple. I was with the latter, feeling the baton graze my back, just a slight warning to get moving. They didn't have to tell me twice.

I joined the queue behind a smaller girl who was hunched so low she might as well have been sat down on the path. Her eyes were wide with fear as she shot me a glance before immediately training them to the ground again. She couldn't have been older than 19 though maybe she had just been disregarded in terms of height and facial features.

**"Hey...you alr-"**

**"NO, YOU WON'T MAKE ME! YOU CAN'T!"**

All eyes turned to the source of the noise as three men apprehended, grabbing his arms as he flailed desperately. **"LET GO! YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME!"** His dark cheek swelled as he was whacked with the baton repetitively and held down.

I winced and noticed the girl stoop lower, her palms covering her ears and her eyes shut tightly. We were pushed forward by other Disciples, seemingly eager to avoid any gossip. The man disappeared out of my sight but not before I caught a glimpse of his limbs being tied together like a rhino caught by poachers, fighting for his horn before he inevitably fell in a heap, hopeless and damaged.

# Retrospective:

## The best albums of 2025

By Oliver Williams



### Getting Killed – Geese

After enigmatic and peculiar front-man Cameron Winter's solo debut in 2024, "Heavy Metal", Geese were thrust into a new spotlight ahead of the release of Getting Killed, their most ground breaking album to date - the horrific lyrics and disjunct opening "Trinidad" clearly signals the band washing their hands of the Americana-inspired themes of "3D Country". Its biblical, postmodern and poetic lyrical themes and reflection of the anxieties and dangers of the 2020s paired with its rip-roaring and surreal yet sweet and danceable instrumentals set it apart for me as the stand-out musical moment of 2025. From its release in September it has been celebrated internationally, winning the International Group of the Year prize at the BRIT awards (drummer Max Bassin's speech was also celebrated for his statement "free Palestine, f\*ck ICE").

### Space Cadet – CARRTOONS

This album is the beautiful progeny of the slick, reverent harmonies soul is beloved for and the one-man band, producer and prodigy electric bassist Ben Carr, who is gaining major traction even without traditional media fame, having no less than four NPR Tiny Desk performances to his name. Carr uses every tool at his disposal to make "Space Cadet" a lush voyage through a full Australian football team of 18 featured artists. These provide a comprehensive celebration of soul and hip-hop's rich history with a refined modern-day flavour that makes the experience of the album both smooth and futuristic while staying true to the roots the music – Marvin Gaye meets Madlib meets Tyler the Creator. With such a litany of collaborators, it's a true feat that the album turned out as cohesive and glossy as it is.



### Find A Way – Matt Wilde

This groovy and ambient piano/keyboard album is the perfect soundtrack to do your homework or revision to, feeling relaxed and free yet maintaining momentum thanks to the hip-hop style drum machine beats Wilde uses in perfect conjunction with the mellow keyboard voices and wandering melodies. Matt Wilde is a producer and jazz pianist from Manchester whose work is starkly unique in its texture and warm production. He has reported inspirations including J Dilla and Herbie Hancock, which shine through in Wilde's sheer creativity and how fun "Find a Way" is as a listening experience that never grows dull.



# Reading Week

By Emaan Khan

Between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> March, the Sixth Form had a range of activities to celebrate Reading Week as part of the National Year of Reading Campaign, 'Go All In'.

During form time, there was Reading Allowed where students read Chapter One of 1984 by George Orwell together - a thought-provoking novel about life in a controlled society. Even the teachers got involved!

*"This year we decided to celebrate the National Year of Reading by 'going all in' with our Reading Week. It was great to see such enthusiasm from staff and students alike throughout the week."*

- Mr Waller

Each day in the Hub a member of staff would read one of their favourite poems as part of Pop-Up Poetry, a great way to hear different styles of writing and appreciate literature in a variety of ways. A few of the teachers that took part were Mrs Saxby-Street who started the week off by reading "Hope is the Thing with Feathers" by Emily Dickinson which compares hope to a bird that never stops singing, Mr O'Doherty shared the sonnet "Strongman" by Tony Curtis - a powerful poem about the bond between a father and son and Mr Bailey recited "Instructions Upon My Death" by spoken word poet Harry Baker exploring life and death. This Pop-Up Poetry created a reflective atmosphere in the Hub as students took a moment to pause and listen.

Overall, the week allowed students and teachers to take a moment to enjoy literature in a shared and engaging way.

# Netball Team Goes Unbeaten

Strong teamwork and skill lead to a flawless season

By Hannah Reid

The Sixth Form netball team has had an outstanding season this year, remaining unbeaten across all their matches. Made up of a talented mix of Lower and Upper Sixth students, the team has shown excellent teamwork, determination, and skill on the court.

A key strength of the team lies in its solid defence, which has consistently prevented opposition teams from gaining easy points. In the mid-court, players demonstrate impressive speed and agility, smoothly transitioning the ball from defence to attack. This strong link play has been crucial in maintaining control throughout games.

Up front, the shooters have proven to be highly accurate, confidently converting opportunities into goals and securing victories for the team. Their consistency under pressure has played a significant role in the team's success.

Overall, the Sixth Form netball team has worked incredibly well together, combining individual strengths to create a well-balanced and effective squad. With such strong performances, they are deserving of every match they have won.

Here are the girls after winning matches in their sleek, sporty kits.



# Football Team's Strong Start Cup success and dramatic comebacks power team into semi-finals

By Josiah Finn

The Sixth Form football team has enjoyed a successful season so far winning 4 points from their first 3 league games. However, more importantly, they have won both of their County Cup fixtures sending them into the Semi-Finals of the cup.

They started the season off with a 4-1 victory against Ripley St Thomas. This was the teams first game together and many had never played with each other before as the team consists of a mix of Upper and Lower Sixth players. After a shaky start, the boys dominated the second half securing the first 3 points of the season. Goals from students Will, Tom, Josiah and Cameron sealed the team's first victory.

Next up, was the teams fist cup game. They faced Stonyhurst and with the prospect of a cup quarter final on the line, the boys were ready for the challenge. Unfortunately, they had a slow start to the game conceding 3 goals in the first half. With cup exit looming, manager Mr Ramshaw made some important tactical decisions. Most notably, moving midfielder Calen to striker proved genius. The boys managed to pull the game back to 3-3 in an epic comeback after a brace from Calen and a fantastic header from Will. This took the game to penalties where the boys won 4-3 with great penalties from Josiah, Joel, Joe and Calen and an amazing shootout save from goalkeeper Chris setting up a Semi-Final with Haslingden.

Two more league games followed with a hard-fought loss against Rossall ending up 6-4. A stunning hattrick from Calen and a clever lob from winger Tom was a consolation, however. There was then another thrilling comeback from 3-0 down vs Lancaster Grammar where the boys ended up drawing 3-3 again after goals from Josiah, Calen and Will.

Next up was the cup quarter-final vs Haslingden. A confident 6-0 thrashing, with 6 different scorers, meant the boys booked their place in the Semi-Final setting up a tie against QEGS. Tom opened to scoring with another clever lob and Will made it 2-0 before half-time. A dominant second half display came with an onslaught of goals from Calen, Josiah and an emphatic finish from Joe. During all that, Tom A scored a phenomenal long range free kick for his first goal of the season.

With a few league games remaining, the boys are ready to hopefully reach the cup final to bring home some silverware for the Sixth Form.



## Top Goalscorers

1. Calen Spencer .....10
2. Will Armer .....5
3. Josiah Finn .....3
4. Tom O'Doherty .....3
5. Cameron Green .....1
6. Tom Astin .....1
7. Joseph Van Zwaan .....1



# The Good News

By Tom Humphries

**As a part of our Sixth Form Christian Union this month we have been praying for and learning about the Christian Gospel. This good news about God's love has manifested itself through various opportunities to read scripture together and discuss the hope of Jesus. What a joy!**

I have particularly been inspired by the sheer amount of those who have taken up voluntary roles of leadership within Christian Union (CU), stepping out of the comfort zone to worship God and express their story's of faith.

Approaching the end of the academic year, we have been seeking God's will in relationship as to how the great things we have seen God do this year can continue into the next. To help us we invited Hannah, a representative from the Christian charity 'Festive' to lead a discussion on evangelism (the way Christians share God's message) and the ways we can bring the light of Jesus' kingdom to our school.

Coming together in agreement we decided we need to make our activities more widely known (Daily Morning prayer before form time in the textiles room and Christian union weekly in S8, ALL ARE WELCOME). We also agreed that we need to make Faith more accessible in sixth form through further outreach to all people in our community. If seeing the ups and downs of our CU this year has taught me anything it is this:

In a world of conflict and distress there is a tangible Hope in the lives of so many people within this sixth form and His name is Jesus.

