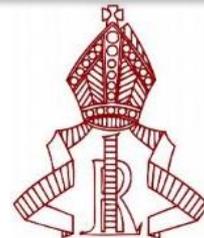


# Bishop Luffa School

2025-2026 Issue 3  
February 2026



Dear friends of Bishop Luffa School,

Schools are full of energy and noise, so the moments of stillness stand out. On the 27th January, Ben Webster, one of our Year 13 Music students, strolled the corridors playing his violin. Doors were quickly opened up and, as he finished, he received spontaneous applause from all of the students and staff who had been listening in rapt silence. Ben had been playing the theme to Schindler's List, and this was our way of marking Holocaust Memorial Day.

Many adults are surprised when I tell them about moments like this, because they think of teenagers as being cut off from the real world. What they miss is that this generation has had an experience that I never had as a child. Next half term begins with the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine. Our school has been enriched by our Ukrainian families in ways we never imagined. Most of all, though, every child in our school has learnt first hand what the price of war is. When they hear about the Holocaust or are listening to the Last Post on Remembrance Day, they are thinking about real people. Our prayers are with our Ukrainian community as we reach this sad milestone and we give thanks for all of the blessings that they have brought to our lives.

Best wishes,

Austen Hindman  
Head Teacher.

## Otter House Roses 2026

**A** huge thank you to everyone who was kind enough to donate money to Macmillan in exchange for a rose, or three! Mrs Smerdon-Corp has yet again done a fabulous job of ordering the roses, arranging the sales and, with the help of 9Otter and 11Otter, delivering them this morning.

Total raised to be confirmed – there's a lot to count!

**Jas Stone, Head of Otter House**



## Debate Club

On a dark, wet and windy evening in mid-January ten members of the esteemed Bishop Luffa Debate Club set off with Mrs Pegram and Mx Thomas through the countryside to the prestigious Churcher's College in Petersfield.

Their challenge: to enter into lively and informed discussions with some of the best debate teams in the area, vying for a place in the regional finals of the famous ESU Mace competition. Unlike some of the competitors Bishop Luffa decided to mix up the speakers and give other members of the team an opportunity to take to the stage. Furthermore, due to another team being unable to attend, Luffa also had the honour of providing a swing team (an additional team who cannot qualify but who allow the remaining lone team to continue to compete).

It was a high stakes event and the team took it in their stride. Led by Year 12 students Rachel Cook and Amelia Geraghty-Bellingham the two Bishop Luffa teams also comprised of Year 10 students Eva Callaghan and Ella Blamire, and Year 9 students Eesa Salah and Ivy Revill, as well as four additional lively supporters. Up against students who were up to four years older than them, our younger debaters held their own in a strong field. There were three rounds of debate and Bishop Luffa were contesting the following motions as the proposition teams:

*This House would hold tech companies legally responsible for the mental health impact of their platforms.  
And: This House Believes that modern politics does not represent the interests of young people.*

The teams presented thoughtful, balanced and well-informed arguments. In the first heat Rachel remained completely unflappable despite fielding numerous points of information from her opponents (essentially challenge mid debate) before 13-year-old Eesa took to the floor engaging his audience and working the room; finally, Eva tied everything together eloquently and concisely to round off the first debate.

In our next go Ella kicked things off for the swing team grabbing the audience's attention with a personal story, before Amelia got the audience laughing and participating throughout her speech and also posed some really tricky points of information to her opponents. To finish, Ivy, juggling numerous bits of paper full of rebuttals, (responses to what has been heard from the opponents) took to the floor and calmly and clearly rounded off the evening. It was an insanely strong field and we were unlucky not to progress. Feedback was positive and constructive and the team left Petersfield for the wild and wet journey back to Chichester in high spirits. We will be back next year for another go!

**Katie Pegram, Second in Charge of English**

## Student Digital Leaders visit BETT UK

In January our Student Digital Leaders visited the BETT UK show, the UK's biggest event for education technology, and returned buzzing with ideas. Over the course of the day, students had the chance to try out a wide range of new and emerging technologies, from classroom tools to innovative software, and speak directly with exhibitors about how these products are used in real schools.





They were particularly focused on spotting potential tech solutions that could enhance learning and teaching in our own school, asking thoughtful questions and evaluating how practical and inclusive different ideas might be.

With its action-packed exhibitions and focus on EdTech excellence, BETT proved to be an inspiring experience, giving our Digital Leaders plenty of food for thought as they help shape the future of technology in our school.

**Helen Williams, Team Leader of Computer Science**

## Year 9 Cinema Trip to Commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day

**O**n the 21st January twelve of us from Year 9 attended a trip to the New Park Cinema with Mrs Fowles, organised by the Chichester Marks Holocaust Memorial Day group. The trip consisted of a workshop, and a film. In the workshop, we were instructed to analyse an image from WW2, which we will be studying in History later this term. We sorted the people into categories such as victim, bystander and perpetrator. We then inferred the hierarchical state of the image, and correctly identified the Nazi soldiers, and their marginalized victims. We were then sorted into groups, and given a set of flashcards to sort into the categories mentioned above, finishing with a debate about the hardest card to sort. We came to the conclusion that some bystanders can become perpetrators by doing nothing; as one voice we can feel small, but together, we can stand up against bigotry and hatred.



This then leads me onto the film we watched afterward, 'One Life'. To give a brief synopsis, it followed the true story of Nicholas Winton, and his work in WW2, transporting and giving homes to children from Prague, via the Kinder Transport in the midst of Nazi occupation. The children would be given a numerical tag, visa and foster parent in England to take care of them until they could be reunited with their parents.

Finally, we were given a talk by the chair of the organisation, Clare Apel. She told us about her cousin, who was one of the children saved by Mr Winton, and who would not have survived had it not been for his honourable deed. It was very fascinating to learn of a real-life account, but it also left me feeling very pensive. The horrors of the war is something no one should ever have to endure, especially small children. I came back feeling almost altered, and so incredibly lucky to be in a safe place in the world, free of the shackles of wars and genocide. We must never forget the sacrifice of the dead, and the word of the survived. I would hope everyone remembers these horrendous genocides, and strives to prevent those still occurring today. Stand for peace, freedom and justice.

**Nova Dossett-Roberts (9Burrows)**

## Bishop Luffa remembers the Holocaust

Once again, Bishop Luffa took some time to reflect on the horrific events of the Holocaust, as we marked Holocaust Memorial Day, which falls on the 27th January (the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz).

As well as 'Connect' resources for tutor time, students had assemblies which outlined the importance of this day and how it marks not just the horrific events of World War Two, but other subsequent events. There was also a display outside the Bartlett Hall that reflected on this year's theme of 'Bridging



Generations' (my thanks to Ms Cooke), as well as a display in Humanities curated by Miss Sutton. A group of Year 9 students also visited New Park Cinema to see a special screening of 'One Life' and to take part in a workshop regarding the Holocaust.

On the 27th January itself, we remembered the Holocaust through music. Ben Webster (13Sherborne) played a short piece of music from Schindler's List, at various points around the school, which, with classroom doors open, allowed students to pause and reflect on the events we were remembering. His superb, and moving, performance aided that moment of reflection, and showed the power of music as a form of remembrance.

My thanks must go to the school community for their support for this important annual event. Their excellent attitude ensures that we will make sure that we all reflect on how we can make a difference in the future, and in our own way, ensure that we work to avoid the horrific events of the past repeating themselves.

**Justin Barnett, Head of Humanities**

## Spanish Exchange Programme

Our Spanish friends from Tenerife spent a week with us and returned home with suitcases full of unforgettable moments!

We had a week packed with activities. We visited Brighton, Old Portsmouth and Chichester together, ate fish and chips and did a traditional pub quiz. The students designed a mural (with Miss Sutton's help!) to decorate our corridors and they enjoyed a lot of fun plans in the evening.

This exchange has been so much more than just language practice; it has been a



total immersion in different cultures, living with families and sharing classes in an international setting. These experiences are essential for our youth to develop autonomy, confidence, and a much broader worldview. We cannot wait to visit them in June and continue our learning with them!

**Team Tenerife (Alex Bravo & Elizabeth López Gamero)**



## Primary Performance Poets

**W**e were very excited to welcome three professional performance poets from the group 'Tongue Tied' to work with Year 5 and 6 students from across the Bishop Luffa Partnership.

The students loved hearing the poet's own compositions live, especially a poem inspired by a vending machine, as well as picking up some great top tips to use in their own poetry. Did you know that if you can write a list, you can write a poem! The whole morning had a real energy with the students loving the chance to play with words, master tongue twisters and try out some new breathing exercises. Thank you so much to Ryan, Charlie and Shannon for all their inspiration, and to all our students for their excitement. We can't wait for the next instalment in March where we will be able to hear more of the students' own work.



And as our poets said - 'I just want to shout / That there is always something you can smile about!'

**Emily Husband & Sally Pilgrim, Teachers of English**

## Bishop Luffa Students win awards at Chichester Music Festival

**B**ishop Luffa students performed at the Chichester Music Festival recently and the results are in!

- Lucy Matthews (7Ridgeway) - Solo grade 1-2 was awarded Commended
- Toby Swires-Hennessy (7Sherborne) – Solo grade 1-2 and duet grade 2-4 was awarded Honours
- George Whitfield-Hayward (8Burrows) – Solo grade 1-2 was awarded Honours
- Ralph L’Amie (8Ridgeway) – Solo grade 3-5 was awarded Honours
- Rebecca King (10Otter) – Solo grade 6-8 was awarded Honours and received the Patron Clarinet Cup. Rebecca also was awarded Outstanding for the duet class and received the Helen Maltby Cup



Congratulations to our wonderful music students and their teacher Emma Milne for a fantastic outcome!

**Jane Bowen-Melfi, Head of Music**

## A visit to Germany that we'll never forget!

**A**s Thursday 5th February dawned little did the 56 students and staff bound for Berlin know how the next 48 hours would map out. Below is an account of a somewhat memorable trip!

We boarded the coach on Thursday morning with a sense of relief, having used an agency to hire the coach at short notice, as our planned coach company had recently gone out of business. We were delighted by good service and an unbelievably good journey to Heathrow. In fact, our only worry was that we had so much time to spare before check-in. A mention of some cancelled flights to Berlin caused interest, but no real disquiet. Mid-afternoon we boarded our flight, aware that adverse weather may delay our departure (Berlin had faced freezing weather and no flights were going in or out), but we were on the plane and on our way!

Unfortunately, our excitement and anticipation were premature. The flight was cancelled, and we had to 'deboard'! As that was announced I felt 55 pairs of eyes turn my way! As the other staff supervised the students with their baggage collection, we spent time arranging an overnight hotel by the airport, and alternative flights the next morning. A very cramped bus took us to the hotel, where Mrs Syms-Evans skilfully roomed the students. After a long wait we had a buffet meal, and retired, tired but hopeful of an onward journey on Friday. Thankfully the airport hotel was extremely pleasant, which, after the day we'd had, was welcomed.



A 3.45am alarm call, and departure soon after 4am was the start of a long day. Through a combination of shuttle bus and night bus we made it to Heathrow, only to find that our re-booked flight apparently wasn't! Thankfully we could be accommodated on a flight to Munich and then on to Berlin. I was naïve to

think things may be getting simpler as we then found out that, for some reason, there was no space for one student on the flight. Pleas regarding the fact we were a school party had no impact, and after a phonecall to the parent concerned, one student, along with Mr Collins were booked onto a separate flight to Hamburg, for onward rail travel to Berlin. Meanwhile the rest of the group boarded a flight to Munich, with the staff on the aircraft appreciating our predicament, but warning us that flights to Berlin were in question.

Munich Airport was lovely! However, I saw little of it beyond the Lufthansa Service Desk, especially once our flight to Berlin was indeed cancelled. At least we were in Germany, but now had to get to Berlin. The decision was made that the train would be incredibly crowded (everyone who could, was getting the train to Berlin as the airport was closed), and that an epic coach trip was the only option. Soon after 2pm we boarded our coach and set off for the capital!



Bavaria was a winter wonderland, and we made good speed as we headed to Berlin. However, it was hundreds of kilometres, and the first sign did say 550 km to go! We settled in, and only had two stops, one of which had toilets that were most definitely unforgettable!

Meanwhile the 'Hamburg Two' had arrived in Berlin (although Mr Collins had had to stand most of the way) after a speedy rail journey. We were getting there, but the time went on and on. An arrival time soon after 9pm on Friday was our aim, and red lights/diversions meant it was nearer to 9.45pm when we arrived.



Our meal was re-booked for 10pm, and it was a 10 minute coach journey away. As we pulled in, a logistical machine swung into action and we offloaded all cases in 3 minutes. The bulk of the party then proceeded to a waiting second coach and headed off for a very delayed evening meal. Meanwhile, myself, Mr Collins and Sacha Neal from Year 12 used a shuttle run to put all of the

cases in the hotel. We then dashed by taxi to join the meal! Around 11pm we were still eating. The restaurant staff were patient and welcoming, and the meal was appreciated by everyone. After a coach journey back to the hotel and check-in it was lights out, after a 21 hour day!!!

What to do with one day in Berlin – as much as possible. We were there and we were going to make the most of it! We did everything not cancelled by the weather, and more! I also made sure that each journey had a commentary so students could see just 'how much history' there was in Berlin.

- Breakfast in the hotel.

- Uberplatz and the Berlin Wall (the East Side Gallery is the longest surviving piece of the wall, and is covered in works of art), and the frozen River Spree
- Unter den Linden – to see ‘Imperial Berlin’ and to hear about Bebelplatz, where the Nazis infamously ‘burned the books’.
- Brandenburg Gate (avoiding the protest taking place nearby)
- Ku’damm – to see one of the beating commercial hearts of the city.
- The Wannsee House: A sobering pause to visit the house where the Nazis decided on the Final Solution. The contrast between the beauty of the location and building, and the horror decided within wasn’t lost on the students, who showed a quiet maturity as they looked around the exhibits in the building. What was most telling was the quiet as they boarded the coach.
- The Olympic Stadium: Superb guided tours of the stadium, looking at its sporting role and its history. Highlights included going trackside, the chapel with walls of gold leaf, and the sheer scale of the building. The Olympic Stadium was built by the Nazis for the 1936 games, and students learnt more about how the building itself, and the games, were examples of how the Nazis used propaganda.

These two visits really helped emphasise the tactics the Nazis used to control Germany, a combination of terror and propaganda.

Then it was back to the hotel, and then on to our evening meal, where currywurst was an extremely popular choice! The location of the restaurant, at the base of the TV Tower in Alexanderplatz added to the experience, as the tower loomed like a ghostly presence in the mist.



Sunday went to plan! We departed the hotel and headed to the airport, taking in various sites on the way, such as the memorial to the Berlin Airlift. It was a tired group that arrived back to School on Sunday evening, after a trip that none of us will forget in a hurry.

My thanks must go to everyone on the trip. The staff worked superbly as a team, handling all the changes with skill and calm, which was so important in the smooth running of the trip, and coping with admirable calm with all the changes involved in getting to Berlin. The students were a superb group of ambassadors for the School. They were where they needed to be, and when they needed to be there. They didn’t complain, they just ‘got on’, showing resilience, adaptability and maturity. In Berlin, their behaviour in the hotel and out and about was superb. As I said to the group, they didn’t just go to Berlin, they went to Germany. It was a real adventure, and memorable for so many reasons.

It hasn’t put us off going to Berlin, and we hope to go again in 2028. Hopefully next time we’ll get there as planned!!

**Justin Barnett, Head of Humanities**

## International Training Programme

As part of Bishop Luffa International Training Programme, we welcome trainee teachers from different countries every year. This term we have hosted four trainee teachers from South Korea in collaboration with the University of Chichester. They spent a week with us developing teaching techniques in a secondary school and exploring British culture. They observed lessons in every subject, learnt about our inclusion strategy and our reading and EAL programmes.



On their last day they also taught some lessons about Korean culture. Together we learnt about Korean temples, traditional costumes, school meals in Korea, traditional Korean games and of course, our students' favourite lesson, K-Pop! Our students really enjoyed being immersed in another culture for the day. It was a very fun and multicultural experience for them!

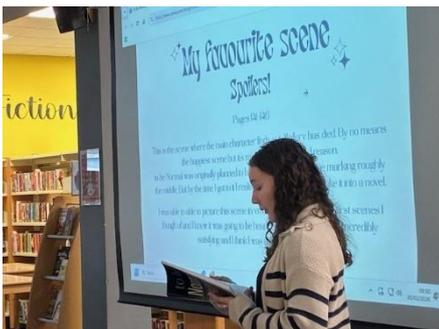
**Elizabeth López Gamero**  
Team Leader of Spanish

## National Storytelling Week

During the first week of February, we were delighted to celebrate National Storytelling Week. Throughout the week, we shared favourite poems, top writing tips, and reading recommendations of our school community in Assemblies whilst launching our 12/12 Story challenge inspiring students to discover new authors, new books, new genres and rediscover the joy of storytelling and reading for pleasure.



A particular highlight was our exciting author visit programme. Year 7 and Year 8 students had the pleasure of welcoming the fabulous Melinda Salisbury, who spoke about her book *Echostar*, her journey to becoming a published author, and the dedication behind her craft. Students were captivated by her insights and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to have their books signed.



Meanwhile, Year 9 and Year 10 students took part in an engaging workshop with young author Rosie Sanderson. Rosie shared her experience of getting her book published and offered practical advice on how to turn an idea into a finished novel. Her session provided invaluable guidance and inspiration for our budding writers.

Our Launchpad students took part in a live online author workshop with Jeffrey Boakye on how music and lyrics tell stories that matter.

National Storytelling Week was a wonderful celebration of creativity, imagination and the power of stories to connect us all.



**Mx Thomas, Mrs Shuttleworth and Mrs Syms-Evans**

## Year of Faith Song Project: *Light from Light*

Students from Bishop Luffa have been involved in The Year of Faith project song in collaboration with song writer James Kirby and 4 other schools in West Sussex. The song was inspired by the Nicene Creed and created and performed by students from the schools. The final result is the song ‘Light from Light’.

Students from Bishop Luffa taking part were:

- Solo Vocalists: Lucy Pitts (11Sherborne), Fern Langford (11Wilson) and Maria Locke (11Sherborne)
- Instrumentalists: Jonathan Pun (8Story) – Violin; Ben Taylor (11Ridgeway) – alto saxophone; Myah Brent (13Sherborne) – flute and tenor saxophone; Toby Russell-Wells (11Story) – trombone; Blanka Maruszak (11Ridgeway) – bass guitar; Ben Webster (13Sherborne) – percussion.

Both the La Diva and Los Divos choirs performed for the chorus. This was a wonderful opportunity for our students to experience song writing with professional composer. James Kirby said that, *‘The journey from our initial songwriting sessions to the final recording has been genuinely inspiring, and the finished song is a wonderful reflection of the faith, creativity, and commitment shown by the students throughout the project.’*



Please listen to the final song by [clicking on this link](#).

**Jane Bowen-Melfi, Head of Music**

## PSHE Topics

The following topics will be covered during PSHE lessons during the second half of the Spring term (but may be subject to change). If you have any concerns about the topics being discussed, please contact your child’s Head of House or Mrs Smerdon-Corp, Teacher in charge of PSHE ([smerdon-corpc@bishopluffa.org.uk](mailto:smerdon-corpc@bishopluffa.org.uk)) The following subjects are being covered.

<p><b>Year 7</b></p>	<p>Knife Crime Energy Drinks Puberty Self Esteem</p>	<p><b>Year 8</b></p>	<p>Healthy Relationships Recap on puberty Equality Act and discrimination Racism</p>
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<b>Year 9</b>	STIs Introduction to contraception Self Esteem Grief Bullying	<b>Year 10</b>	Self-Harm Suicide FGM recap Pornography Unhealthy relationships Sextortion
<b>Year 11</b>	Sexual Health Online reputation Cosmetic and aesthetic procedures Festivals First Aid		

## Prayers

The Parents' and Carers' Prayer and Support Group have suggested that we circulate a school prayer list, so that families can reflect the present concerns of the school in their prayers. We will aim to update the list every month.

### Prayer List:

#### *Every month:*

- Students and their families
- All our staff
- Our Governors and Trustees
- Our Clergy Team and Youth Workers
- Our Worship Team
- Our Parents & Friends Association
- Our Christian Union
- Our links to the wider church
- House and Sixth Form Charities

#### *During February & March:*

- School Production
- Charity Week preparations
- Preparation for national exams
- Preparation for our Dance shows

## FEED ME SEYMOUR!

We are delighted to invite you to a hilariously horrifying night at the theatre as our students bring **Little Shop of Horrors** to life!

Set on the down-and-out streets of Skid Row, this musical comedy tells the story of Seymour Krelborn, a shy florist's assistant who discovers a mysterious new plant with an insatiable appetite. As the plant — affectionately named Audrey II — grows, so does Seymour's fame... but at a terrifying cost. Packed with catchy 1960s-inspired rock and doo-wop songs and larger-than-life characters, the show blends romance, comedy and sci-fi horror into a great night out.

Featuring musical numbers such as *"Suddenly, Seymour,"* *"Somewhere That's Green,"* and *"Feed Me,"* this production showcases the incredible vocal talent, and comic performances of our students. With a spectacularly monstrous plant, this is a production bursting with energy, heart and just the right amount of bite.

### Performance Details:

3rd–5th March

6:00pm (approximate running time: 2 hours)

Bartlett Hall, Bishop Luffa School

£8 Adults / £5 Children

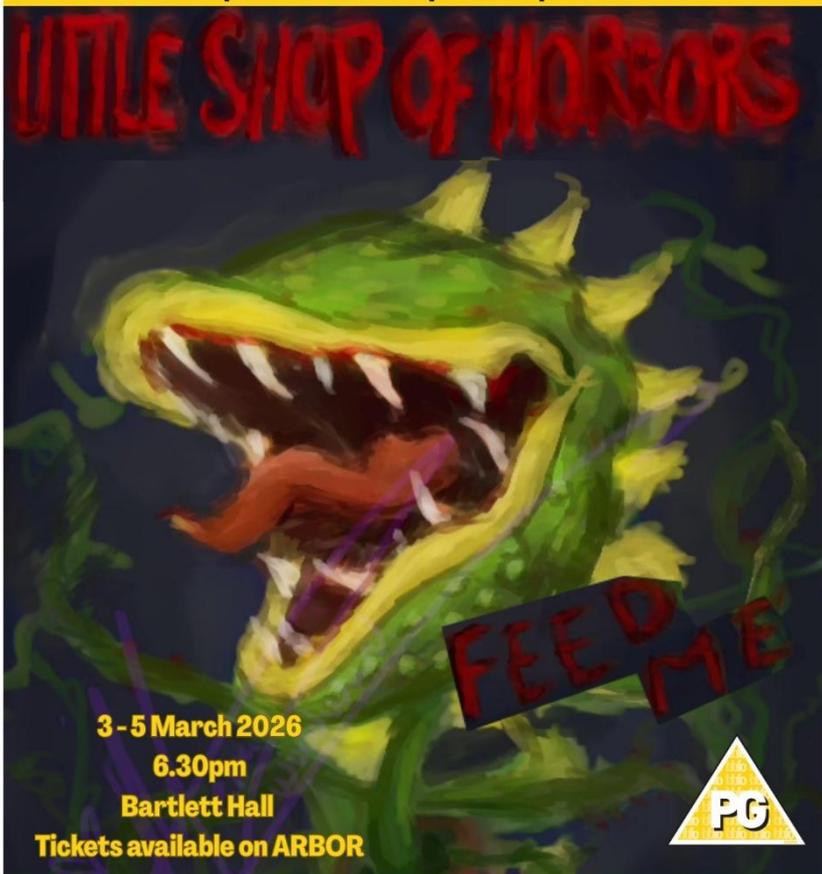
Tickets are now available to purchase via Arbor.

This production is proudly presented by the Bishop Luffa Arts Faculty, and we are incredibly proud of the commitment, creativity and talent our students have shown throughout the rehearsal process.

This play does contain a plant that eats humans and although this is a spoof and a cautionary tale, it is not suitable for children under the age of 8.

We do hope you will join us for what promises to be a thoroughly entertaining evening — it's guaranteed to grow on you!

Bishop Luffa Arts Faculty



**Bishop Luffa School is proud to present**

# LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

**FEED ME**

**3-5 March 2026**  
**6.30pm**  
**Bartlett Hall**  
**Tickets available on ARBOR**

**PG**

**Book & Lyrics by HOWARD ASHMAN**  
**Music by ALAN MENKIN**

Based on the film by Rodger Corman, Screen play by Charles Griffin  
Originally produced by the WPA Theatre (Kyle Renick, Producing Director) / Originally produced at the Orpheum Theatre, New York City by the WPA Theatre, David Geffen, Cameron Mackintosh and the Shubert Organization

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI

Parents are advised that this school play is recommended for children aged 8+ years

## School Calendar

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> – Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> – Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April

HALF TERM

INSET Day

Year 11 Mock Exams

Year 8 Eucharist

PFA Uniform Shop open 2.00pm – 3.30pm

School Production – *Little Shop of Horrors*

Information Evening for Multicultural Families & Carers

Year 12 Reports issued

Sixth Form Charity Week

Fancy Dress Friday

Year 8 Parents & Carers Virtual Consultation Evening

Interhouse Dance Finals

Celebration of Dance Evening

Easter Holidays

Start of the Summer Term.

