



# The W.A.T.C.H. Word



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 Lead Journalist: Alice Fuller  
 Journalist: Oscar Vaughan  
 VI Form Correspondent: Sophie Sysum

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## Chinese New Year



*Amelie White takes a trip into Chinese New Year to find out what the celebrations are all about!*

As of the 17th of February 2026, marks the start of the Chinese New Year. However, they celebrate a little differently compared to how we do it here in England. For starters, for each Chinese New Year they have a different animal and this year, is the year of the horse. Furthermore, the animals for Chinese New Year are used to represent a 12-year repeating calendar cycle which links to the ancient mythology and folklore.

Another tradition is the exchanging of the red envelopes. In these envelopes, each of them contains a certain amount of money which are given to friends, family and children to symbolise good luck, wealth and prosperity, whilst also warding off evil spirits. This tradition has rules set in place, such as you must receive the envelope with both hands. Unusual right? Also, it is seen as impolite to open the envelope in front of the giver and the envelope containing the money should only contain new, crisp bills as a sign of respect to the receiver.

One of the most famous Chinese traditions is the dragon dance. It involves a team of dancers who use poles to manipulate the dragon puppets which are often very long and move them using in waves and winding movements. They do this unique tradition to ward away evil spirits and to bring good luck, fortune and prosperity. The music is often high energy and rhythmic which is used to correspond to the with the synchronised movements of the dragon dancers.



The food served for Chinese New Years is very specific and each dish has a clearly defined purpose. The food is served at a reunion dinner where some of the foods served are:

- Fish representing abundance,
- Dumplings representing wealth,
- Spring Rolls representing gold bars
- Longevity noodles.

These foods often contain gold colours and auspicious shapes to bring good fortune.

I think these traditions are so unique and special as not many countries celebrate a specific way and the Chinese New Year has many different parts to it that makes it one of

the most exciting festivals to celebrate.



221'022  
Points



220'977  
Points



221'067  
Points



233'676  
Points

## House Points Standings

Whittle seem to be storming ahead this year. With only a few more months left of this year's competition, can the other houses catch up in time?

Stay tuned to find out!





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## THE VI FORM FORUM

### BALANCING THE CHAOS OF LIFE

*Insert Biline for Article*



A lot of Sixth Formers have a job as well as school, including me. Something that I have found hard recently is trying to work out the balance between school, life and work. Sometimes I have focused too much on school, which leads to me neglecting my social life. Other times the social butterfly in me comes out and I end up prioritising that over academics.

However, I am now starting to work this balance out. Everyone is different, which means everyone's balance is unique. One way to balance our commitments is to set clear boundaries for yourself. For example, you might say you will work one night in the week and one weekend day. Or you could work one day at the weekend and every so often choose to work both instead. By setting clear boundaries you avoid overworking yourself and have the necessary energy to do the things you love (and sometimes need) to do.

Everyone needs time to themselves to de-stress; this is extremely important for our mental health and wellbeing. If you are planning out your week, for example, make sure to always leave time to do something you enjoy – even if that is doom-scrolling. Having said that, don't forget friends, as they are really important for that emotional support in those stressful times. Like salt, a bit of socialising can make a real difference to your work : life balance, but too much can make it a lot worse.

Work and school can be a lot, especially when you put the two together. For example, when exams roll around, revision is another thing that adds to your plate. Scheduled blocks in a day may help; for example: you could say that the two hours before work you will revise and then the hour after work you'll use for relaxation. This could help break up the day into manageable chunks.

Whilst everyone's balance point is different, the universal truth is that doing nothing about will things a lot worse. These are just some strategies that might make a difference but feel free to play around with what works until you find something for you.





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## THE VI FORM FORUM

### JAPANESE EXCHANGE



By Sophie Sysum

A few weeks ago on the 28th of January, Chosen Hill received a visit from some Japanese students as part of a cultural exchange. Many Sixth Formers got involved with this including the A-level Geography students.

The Japanese students first had a tour of our school, seeing many classes in action as well as having the opportunity to see how our school differs to theirs. You may have even seen them walking around.

Then after the tour they did a cultural exchange with our Sixth Formers. They were shown how to write in Japanese and even some origami. This was an amazing opportunity to meet new people and learn more about different cultures.

These exchanges are extremely important as it not only gives the opportunity to learn about other cultures, but it also gives the opportunity to showcase our amazing school and to exhibit togetherness which is one of the W.A.T.C.H values.



### The Truth Behind St Valentine's Day

By Josh Saunders

February 14th is widely celebrated as Valentine's Day, but its origins are far more complex than the modern holiday suggests. The identity of Saint Valentine is uncertain, as records from the 3rd century are limited. He is believed to have been either a Roman priest or a Christian bishop, living during a time of persecution under the Roman Empire.

One legend describes Valentine as a defiant figure who opposed Emperor Claudius II Gothicus. Claudius allegedly banned marriage for young men, believing unmarried soldiers made better fighters. Valentine secretly performed marriages for couples in love, defying imperial law. When discovered, he was arrested and eventually executed, becoming a Christian martyr.

Another popular legend focuses on Valentine's imprisonment, during which he is said to have befriended the jailer's blind daughter and miraculously restored her sight. Before his execution on February 14th, Valentine reportedly wrote her a farewell note signed, "From your Valentine," a phrase that would later become associated with romantic messages. In 496 AD, Pope Gelasius I established February 14th as Saint Valentine's feast day to commemorate his martyrdom. Some historians also believed that valentine's day replaced the Lupercalia. Lupercalia was a pagan fertility festival involving rituals intended to promote health and reproduction.

Although the Catholic Church removed Valentine from the General Roman Calendar in 1969 due to limited historical evidence, he is still recognized as a saint and remains the patron of lovers. Over time, these stories blended faith, sacrifice, and romance, ultimately shaping the modern celebration of Valentine's Day.





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## DISNEY'S DARE TO DREAM



By Emily Prentis-Hart

Our school musical production this year was Disney's Dare to Dream, a fun musical with lots of well-known Disney songs. Instead of telling just one Disney story, the musical brings together lots of popular songs and characters to celebrate the power everyone's dreams.

The story follows a group of junior imagineers on their first day of training at a fictional Walt Disney Imagineering Studio. At first, they are nervous and unsure of themselves, especially one of the Juniors who doesn't know what their dream is yet. As the show goes on, they all discover that everyone has something unique to offer, and that dreaming big can always lead to amazing things.

One of the best parts of the show was all of the music. It included songs from Disney favourites like Frozen, Encanto, Moana and more. The cast was amazing and really showed their talent through their acting, emotions and singing performance! The audience also appreciated the student's talent through all of their loud applause and cheering.

Overall, the musical this year was a hit and our thanks go to the drama studio, art department, our students and all the teachers that were involved in making this production run smoothly.



### Being a Dancer in Dare to Dream

Sophia Rowe gives us a glimpse into what it takes to be a dancer on the stage of Disney's Dare to dream.



Wow! I'm exhausted! If I'm being honest, the last few months have been draining. I didn't even know if I would have enough time to write this article! This whole experience has made me feel both incredibly optimistic and fulfilled, yet also very burnt out and ready to jump into bed for a nice long sleep.

When first being asked by a friend if I was going to do the show, my immediate response was: "Yep, no thanks!". I had seen previous shows and decided that maybe the stage wasn't for me. The shows were both great, although I didn't know if I was capable of anything like that - especially the singing! Little did I know that there was SO much more to the show than then I could have ever imagined!

So how come I ended up doing it? Well, I realised that you should take the leap and try something new, even if it scares you. So, halfway through my lunch break I ran to the main school hall and learnt about 5 seconds of the choreography before then performing it and hoping for the best. And, before I knew it, I had signed myself up for months of endless rehearsals, but also lots of amazing memories that will last a lifetime.



Rehearsals flew by and all my nerves started to kick into place. What if I mess up? What if I'm disliked by the crowd? But all those "what ifs" were total rubbish! I think the only time I really got nervous was when I saw my Mum and Nana in the crowd! Oh, and when my shorts came 2 sizes too big! But, even the nerve-racking things got fixed, my shorts got tailored to fit me and my Mum gave me an unforgettable smile as I danced my way along the stage.

Several shows later and lots of warm-up games and it was all over. And even though it was tiring, I think I could do it all over again.





Chosen Hill School



28th February 2026

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## DISNEY'S DARE TO DREAM: IN PHOTOS





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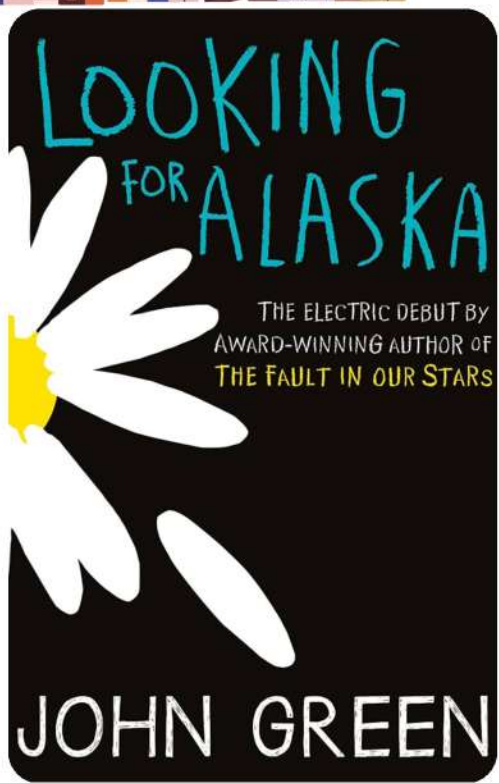


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## Book of the Month



### Looking For Alaska

**John Green**



*by Author's Name*

Miles "Pudge" Halter is a quirky, average boy who longs to escape his ordinary life. His whole life has been just about one big non-event, and his obsession with famous last words has only made him crave "the Great Perhaps" even more (Francois Rabelais, poet). He heads off to the chaotic yet exciting world of Culver Creek Boarding School, where his life becomes the opposite of everything he has ever known because he met Alaska Young.

The gorgeous, intelligent, mysterious, and utterly fascinating Alaska Young. In a short time, he befriends strategist Chip 'The Colonel' Martin, gifted Takumi Hikohito and Alaska Young. The wild and troublesome group quickly grows close and inseparable; until one fateful day arrives, which changes their lives completely forever.

Looking for Alaska by John Green is a heartbreaking yet meaningful story that truly shows a strong emotional impact. This was a very unique and beautiful story that explains the act of forgiveness and fun. It uncovers the truth about ignoring a problem, reckless behavior, suppressing conflict, blaming yourself constantly; all which leads to serious mistakes. Even though your mind knows you are not guilty,

your heart still asks, was it your fault?

This novel is a must-read for anyone who wants to shed a tear or two, while still enjoying moments of humour along the way. Overall, John Green suggests that suffering is an unavoidable part of growing up, and that the forgiveness of others is essential to move forward.

4.5\*\*\*\*\*



## CHS Sports



*By Amelie White*

We have had some amazing sporting events this month. The girls U16 football team played in the County Football Tournament after winning the District Tournament. It was tough, Our girls were competing against teams from Bristol, The Forest and different areas of Gloucester. Despite lots of close chances, we narrowly missed out on wins and, unfortunately, we missed the chance of a spot in the final by a matter of points.

In addition, the boys U15 rugby team had the unique opportunity to train at the Gloucester rugby stadium in preparation for their National Bowl quarter final against Gravesend Grammar School, from Kent. The boys have worked incredibly hard these last few years and consistently win games against other tough teams in big games. Unfortunately, it was not to be. The boys valiantly lost their quarter-final game.

Whilst not the celebration of victory, well done to all involved. You really have shown the Chosen Hill Spirit!





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## Media Corner



### Movie of the Month Lady and the Tramp (Hamilton, USA, 1955)

By Lacey Cross

"A human heart is only for love and affection" is a line from the most romantic Disney film ever made: *Lady and the Tramp*. Made during the silver age of Disney, *Lady and the Tramp* was based on Ward Greene's 1945 magazine story: "Happy Dan, the Cynical Dog".

Set in 1909, a husband gives his wife a puppy named Lady. Meanwhile, across the street there is a stray called Tramp who flees the dog-catcher, ends up on Lady's street, and falls utterly tail over paws for her due to her beauty.

This movie is most famous for the spaghetti eating scene however, it is not just that scene that is beautiful; the way the film presents love makes you forget you are watching a film about dogs and makes you feel like you are watching any other romance film. It's like *La La Land*, but you cry less. Also, I believe the animation made this film just utterly gorgeous, to the point you forget it was animated in 1955. However, critics point out that the Siamese cats are seen as a racially stereotypical of Asian people, having been designed with many harmful stereotypes associated with them.

Overall, whilst the racism is hard to ignore, it is still a very beautiful film containing the true Disney magic.

4\*\*\*\*



## Video Game Highlight: Overcooked



By Alice Fuller

Whether you're looking for a fun game to play when you are bored or a cheap last-minute date, with Valentines around the corner this game has you covered.

This cooking simulation game makes you head chef of a restaurant, or the co-op mode makes it so you must work as a team to cook up elaborate dishes before the eager costumers leave feeling disheartened. I love this concept because so many companies have attempted this idea, but only a few have been great.

Playing in co-op can be awfully difficult. Especially when it comes to the recipes like onion soup in which you have to carry both the soup pot from the stove to the counter without spilling it, but as you move it, the pot will move with ever slight movement in the controller. This makes it perfect for a new date night proposal other than your typical night out at the cinema or restaurant.

I loved this game, despite the stress that it inflicted upon me, I had such a fun time playing all the recipes and my favourite part was the unique ingredient combinations and the recipes I got to follow. Additionally, the timer didn't put me off either, it helped me strive to beat it for my customers satisfaction.

This game is definitely in my top 5 games of all time so for that I give it:

5\*\*\*\*\*





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## Year 8 Trip To SkillZone

By Sophie Prentis-Hart



This month Year 8 have had the amazing opportunity to go to Skill Zone, a place where they teach us about safety. Guided by friendly volunteers, who had given up their free time to help, assisted us and talked us through the whole tour.



Walking around fake buildings, planning what we would do in each and thinking about how we could apply it to our day-to-day lives was quite interesting to observe. This immersive experience provided us with new safety knowledge to help us out in the real world.

Few tasks that we got to do involved; spotting hazards in a kitchen and a bedroom, how to safely cross train tracks and how to be safe in a park. In the kitchen we spotted things like slippery floors, hot pans and even a knife in a toaster. Its nice to know that I now have a better understanding of what to do in an emergency and how to handle stressful situations

Personally, walking around made me realise how much i had admired the buildings as they really looked realistic. I That made me notice how they had paid good attention to the details by having shops in there and even a police station, complete with a cell and security cameras. Another moment that stood out for me would be, having wind blowing in my face to recreate the feeling of a train speeding past.

At the start of our visit, we had to answer several questions which we then revisited them towards the end to compare our answers. This was done so that we could see if we had learned anything from this experience.

Overall, the visit to Skill Zone was an invaluable experience; I highly recommend it to anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of personal safety and accident prevention.

## Things to W.A.T.C.H. Out for Next Month

### March Notices

- 5th March: World Book Day
- W/c 9th March: House Science Week
- 16<sup>th</sup> March: *INSET DAY FOR ALL STUDENTS.*
- 18<sup>th</sup> March: HPV Vaccines for Year 8 Students
- 23<sup>rd</sup> March: Year 8 Parents Evening
- 27<sup>th</sup> March: Final day of term!





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## Ask the Department



We asked on of the *splendid* Science department one simple question. You won't believe their responses!



I bake giant heart shaped *Smarties* cookies for my other half and kids for Valentine's Day.  
 I like to receive a spa day.  
 - Mrs Hall

"Football tickets for Cheltenham or Villa. And some money for a half time burger and chips."  
 - Dr Dinnis



"A mystery date somewhere. anything as long as I haven't planned it"  
 - Ms Wheeler



I tend to give a bunch of flowers, dark chocolate and the finest coffee!"  
 - Dr Walji

This month we asked:  
*What is your go-to gift to give of receive on Valentines day?*

A Cornish pasty "I ♥ you" hamper from the Cornish Company. Consists of Cornish pasties, scones, Cornish clotted cream, Cornish biscuits and tea bags plus Cornish ale.  
 - Ms Broomfield



"Chocolates for me please!"  
 - Ms Evans





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