



ST HELEN &
ST KATHARINE



Beyond

ACTIVITIES AND CLUBS

What's on offer?



1. CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

Books and beyond			
Junior Book Club	6	Geography Society	8
Lower School Creative Writing Club	6	Green Power	9
Secret Shadowers Society	7	Helicon Club	9
Sixth Form Extension English	7	History Film Club	9
Sixth Form Joint Literary Society	7	History Society/Politics Society	9
		History Extension Club	9
Chaplaincy groups		Junior History Club	9
Confirmation Classes	7	Knit Chicks	9
Perspective	7	Language Leaders	10
Quest	7	MedSoc	10
World Prayer Group	7	Minecraft	10
		Model United Nations (MUN)	10
Chemistry Club	7	Natural History Club	10
Chess and Board Games Club	7		
Cooking and Blogging Club	8	Modern foreign languages	
CREST	8	Chinese Calligraphy and Culture Club	10
Debating Club – Lower and Middle School	8	Joint MFL Club	10
Debating Society	8		
Engineering Education Scheme	8	Orlando	10
Geography Club	8	Young Philosopher Society	10
		Philosophy Society	11
		Physics Practical Olympiad	11
		Pi Club	11
		Pride: SHSK Gay-Straight Alliance	11
		Psychology Book Club	11
		Schools Challenge	11
		School Council	11
		Space News Club	11
		Young Enterprise	11

2. ART AND DESIGN

Junior and Lower School Art Club	12
Art Scholars	13
DT Clubs	13
GCSE Art Club	13
Jewellery Club	13
Life Class	13
Lower School Craft Club	13
Oil Painting	13
Photography Club	13
Pottery Open Studio	13

3. DRAMA

Drama Clubs	14
-------------	----

4. MUSIC

Bass Club	16
Big Band	16
Brass Band	16
Camerata	16
Cantores	16
Chamber Music	16
Chapel Choir	16
Clarinet Group	17
Concert Band	17
First Orchestra	17
Flute Group	17
Jazz/Rock Bands	17
Joint Choral Society	17
Junior Choir	17
Lower School Choir	17
Music Aural Classes	17
Musical Theatre Club	17
Musicianship for sight singing	17
Music Theory Classes	17
Saxophone Ensembles	17
Sinfonia	17
Sinfonietta	17
Tea Concerts	17
Team Pachelbel	17
Vocal Ensembles	17
Wind Band	17

5. SPORT

Athletics	18
Badminton	18
Ballet	19
Basketball	19
Biathlon	19
Cheerleading	19
Cricket	19
Cross-country	19
Dance	19
Equestrian	19
Fitness Suite	19
Football	19
Group Cycle	19
Gymnastics	19
Indoor Hockey	19
Indoor Rowing	19
Lacrosse	20
Netball	20
Netball Youth Umpires Award	20
Rounders	20
Rowing	20
Sailing	20
Sports Leader Award	20
Swimming	20
Tennis	20
Trampoline Club	20

6. EXPEDITIONS

Battlefields Trip	21
Berlin Trip	21
Geography Field Trip to Iceland	21
Residential Art Trip	21
Ski Trip	21
Vancouver Exchange	22
Kilve Court	23
Sixth Form Study Trip to Spain	22
History Trip to Russia	22
Biology Field Trip	22
Junior Department Trip to Stratford Upon Avon	22
Geography Field Trip to Snowdonia	22
Geography Field Trip to Dorset	22
Art Trip to Cornwall	22
French, Spanish, German and Italian Exchanges	22
The Duke of Edinburgh's Award	22

7. LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Trips and visits	23
National challenges and competitions	23
Lectures and dinners	23
Thinking suppers	23



Introduction

At St Helen and St Katharine we place great emphasis on our broad extracurricular programme. Life beyond the classroom is so important in offering girls the opportunity to explore and extend their wider interests, to make friends across age groups and to build confidence. It is this combination which embodies the ethos of the School.

Life beyond the classroom here is full. A wide range of sports, clubs and societies, music, drama, educational visits, lectures and expeditions are available. We encourage the girls to explore their interests and try new things. They can participate purely for fun, to broaden their interests or to follow their strengths and excel through selective teams and groups or music and drama productions. We aim to inspire them to develop their learning and experiences, to enjoy all that is on offer and provide them with the space and opportunity to make their own choices and find their own niche.

We hope the following pages will inspire the girls and help them to plan enjoyable, interesting and fulfilling lives beyond the classroom, in preparation for rewarding lives beyond school. The extracurricular programme continues to develop and grow; the latest version of Beyond can be found in the Beyond section of the School website at www.shsk.org.uk.

1 CLUBS AND SOCIETIES



A wide variety of clubs and societies are available. Catering for all year groups and from general interest to specialist subject areas, there is a club or society for everyone, designed to spark a new interest or develop an existing passion.

Books and beyond

Junior Book Club

Years 5 and 6

We discuss and recommend books to each other, play games and take part in other book related activities.

Lower School Creative Writing Club

Years 7 and 8

We will meet approximately fortnightly to share our writing and try out new techniques, aiming to enter competitions, produce our own publications and have fun being creative. See English Department noticeboard for further details.

Secret Shadows Society

Years 9 – 11

Following the success of Carnegie Shadowing in School this reading group has been set up for students who enjoy reading and discussing contemporary young adult fiction. We generally read two books and discuss them at the meetings before members nominate and vote on the books to read for the next meeting. Titles selected are often on current awards shortlists. The group is run in collaboration with students and library staff at Larkmead School.

Sixth Form Extension English

U6 (Michaelmas term)

The Extension groups offer Sixth Form students the chance to enrich their A-level study with a broader and more challenging range of texts. They are particularly aimed at those who think they might like to apply for English at university.

Sixth Form Joint Literary Society

Year 11 and Sixth Form

We meet with Abingdon School Sixth Form students to explore literature beyond the A-level syllabus. We also arrange trips to local literary talks or plays and invite visiting speakers. We have an annual literary society dinner which this year takes place at Abingdon School.

Chaplaincy groups

These informal groups meet weekly. If you would like to join one for your age group, please do come along. All welcome!

Confirmation Classes

Years 5 – U6

For anyone wishing to be baptised or confirmed in Trinity term.

Perspective

Years 10 – U6

A chance to explore the reality and relevance of the Christian faith.

Quest

Years 7 – 9

Fun, games and a chance to explore the Christian faith.

World Prayer Group

All welcome

For anyone wanting to pray for current affairs issues.

Chemistry Club

Year 8

This club offers students the opportunity to experience a wide range of fun and entertaining practical chemistry. There will be lots of hands-on laboratory work, including fire writing, fireworks, golden coins, silver mirrors, blue bottles and much more.

Chess and Board Games Club

Years 5 – U6

An opportunity to develop your thinking skills and showcase your mental tactics and strategy – and have a lot of fun in the process!





Cooking and Blogging Club

Year 10

This club is open to girls in Years 9 and 10 not already taking a Food Studies course and will involve cooking, photographing and uploading recipes and photos to our very own food blog! There will be an emphasis on nutritious and delicious alternatives to fast food and snacks in this fun and creative club.

CREST

Year 9 Bronze and Year 10 Silver Awards

Would you like a taste of being a real scientist, doing your own research? CREST is run by the British Science Association and is Britain's largest national award scheme for project work in science, technology, engineering and maths. Through CREST you can undertake your own creative project work in an area that interests you.

Debating Club – Lower and Middle School

Years 7 – 10

Debating is a dynamic and challenging activity and a fabulous skill to learn. An interest in current affairs and an understanding of politics are not a requirement but, even if you don't have them before you arrive, you'll soon develop them! We look forward to welcoming beginners and intermediate debaters, with the aim of improving your skills entering competitions and holding a number of debates against local schools.

Debating Society

Sixth Form

Debating is a dynamic and challenging activity and a fabulous skill to learn. Debating complements all subject choices and gives you an opportunity to discuss, and hear others discussing, the key ethical and topical issues of the day. We also enter teams in a number of competitions over the course of the year.

Engineering Education Scheme

Twice weekly meetings in conjunction with a partner company to complete an engineering project.

Geography Club

Years 7 and 8

Geography club is an opportunity to delve more deeply into any chosen topic. This year we are hoping to get involved in the World Wise Quiz, an exciting inter-school competition, as well as other projects of geographical interest.

Geography Society

Sixth Form

National competitions, visiting speakers, research and projects around school are just some of the activities planned for Geography Society. In addition we host an annual geography dinner. Follow us on Twitter (@shskgeog)

Green Power

Years 7 – 11

Girls design and build a battery powered kit car which they will then race. The Green Power Racing IET Formula 24 series has been established for a number of years now and schools from all over the UK take part.

Helicon Club

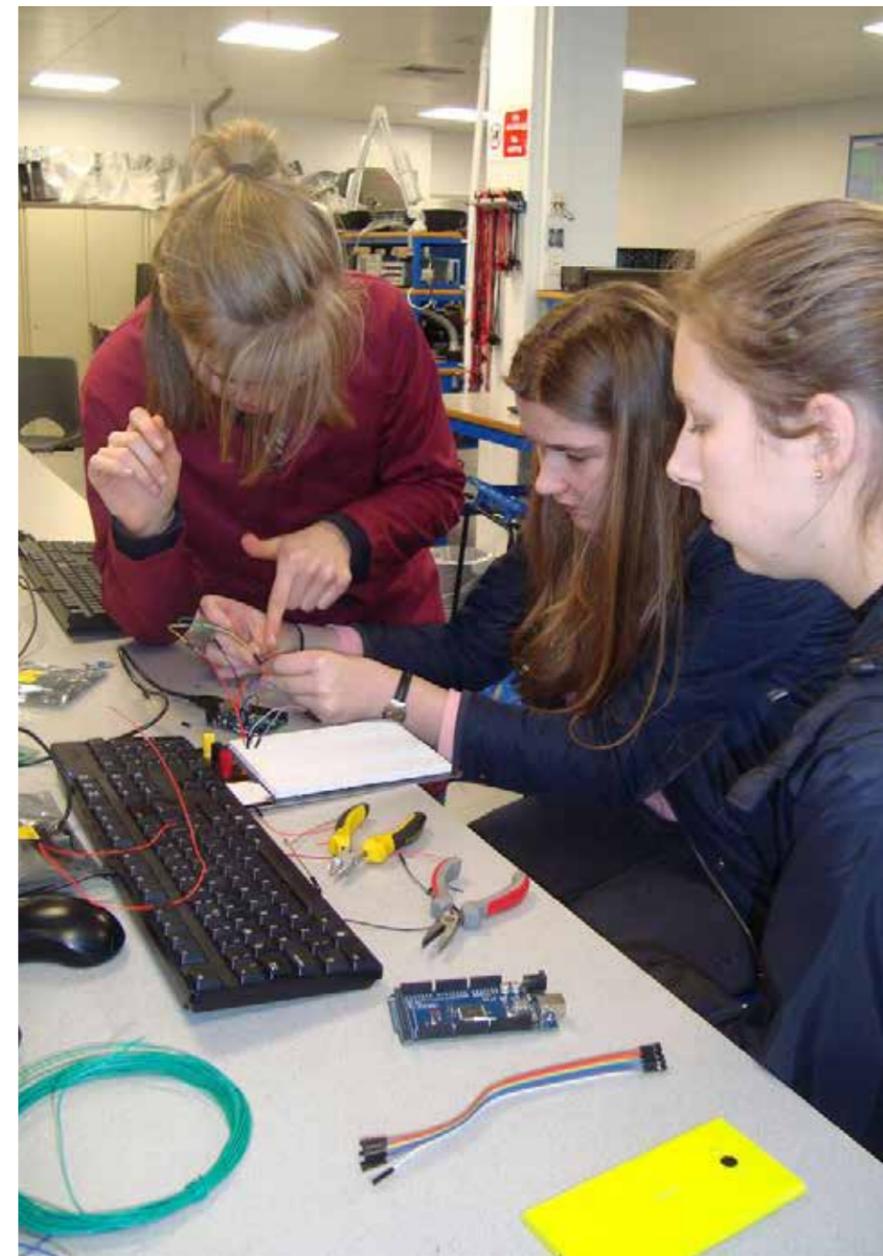
Years 5 – U6

This is a club for all ages interested in classical activities. No knowledge of Latin or Greek is required. Roman cooking and Greek vase painting, writing and performing in plays, games, films and jigsaw puzzles are typical pursuits of club members.

History Film Club

Years 10 and 11

Ideal for those studying IGCSE history (or those with a keen interest in history) to come and watch films related to the course being studied in order to enhance your appreciation of the period. Food will be provided.



History Society/ Politics Society

Sixth Form

The History and Politics Societies, which run on alternate weeks, offer sixth form girls the chance to enrich their A-level study with the intended focus being on discovering a wider range of topics than we have time to cover in the classroom. There will be a variety of activities such as reading new texts, listening to visiting speakers, presentations from other members of the group and much more.

History Extension Club

U6

An opportunity for any Upper Sixth history student to come and discuss a wide range of topics on the study of history. Excellent preparation for university.

Junior History Club

Years 5 and 6

Fun activities for budding historians to help you appreciate the past in a lively atmosphere. Activities include designing and producing your own mini museums, debates, film-making and creative projects.

Knit Chicks

Years 5 – U6

Knitting and handicrafts for all year groups. Come and learn a new craft or share your skills with other students.

Language Leaders

Years 9 and 10

Learning to lead and leading to learn; an opportunity for Years 9 and 10 linguists to take on a leadership role. Students will spend two terms preparing to deliver a language lesson to Years 5 and 6 students from St Helen's and local primary schools.

MedSoc

U6

A weekly session for Upper Sixth students wishing to apply to study medicine/veterinary medicine/dentistry/healthcare options at university. UKCAT/BMAT preparation sessions are also provided. Additionally, MedSoc provides information and talks about medical careers to Sixth Form students.

Minecraft

Years 5 – U6

The chance for girls of all ages and experience levels to come and create something wonderful, be it a big design project, learning to use Redstone for engineering projects or coding in the game.

Model United Nations (MUN)

Years 9 – U6

This exciting simulation of the United Nations develops research and debate skills. Teams take on the roles of member countries to propose and discuss a range of resolutions. We take part in a number of MUN conferences over the year.

Natural History Club

Years 5 – 8

Natural History Club gives the girls a chance to find out more about the natural world around them through a wide range of activities based indoors as well as outdoors.

Modern foreign languages

Chinese Calligraphy and Culture Club

Years 5 – U6

A chance for girls to experience the culture of China and learn Chinese calligraphy.

Joint MFL Club

Years 7 and 8

A joint St Helen's and Abingdon School Club. An opportunity to explore a range of languages and cultures in a fun and sociable way. Parents must complete and sign a permission slip committing to a full half-term's attendance.

Orlando

Sixth Form only

This is a student led club for sixth form only that explores issues surrounding gender and identity. They invite outside speakers and discuss topics within the group.

Young Philosopher Society

Years 7 and 8

An opportunity to explore and discuss ideas, ponder difficult questions, learn to reason logically and structure convincing arguments.

Philosophy Society

Years 9 – 11

An opportunity to explore and discuss ideas, ponder difficult questions, learn to reason logically and structure convincing arguments.

Physics Practical Olympiad

Years 10 – L6

A nationally recognised competition run by the British Physics Olympiad to complete an investigation and produce a report.

Pi Club

Year 7

An opportunity for students to explore mathematics in a wide variety of exciting and fun contexts. We will be looking at a different puzzle or concept each week with opportunities for team challenges and to broaden students' understanding and knowledge of mathematics in the real world.

Pride: SHSK Gay-Straight Alliance

Middle School

A casual discussion group talking about topics in and surrounding the LGBT community, both inside and outside school. Open to anyone and everyone in Middle School of any sexuality or gender.

Psychology Book Club

Any sixth formers with an interest in Psychology

We all know that Psychology is the most interesting A-level – so what better way to deepen our knowledge of the subject than to read more about it? Students are always told to 'read around the subject' but it is often unclear how to go about this and it can feel quite lonely. There are huge benefits of reading and discussing in a small group. We have had great discussions ranging from how we diagnose insanity to whether we would push the button in Milgram's famous study into obedience.

Schools Challenge

Eight students from Years 7 – U6

A general knowledge schools quiz competition based on the TV programme University Challenge. Two teams will be put forward for the regional competition, including two 'junior' members (Years 7 – 10) and two 'senior' members (Years 11 – U6). St Helen's teams regularly reach the Regional Finals, so if you have a brain full of random knowledge come and join.

School Council

Years 5 – U6

Advertised in September, students need to apply to represent their year. They can also sit on the associated councils for the environment, sport and digital leaders. The School Council meets one lunchtime per half term as a council to discuss developments in school for example furniture for the Jean Duffield building, ideas for the House system, sport or Chapel.



Space News Club

Years 7 – 9

A small team meet weekly to create content for the physics screen covering all aspects of space news, including updates on the International Space Station, iconic astrophotography, space missions as they happen and new insights in astrophysics and cosmology research. This is an opportunity to have your work seen by everyone hanging out in the breakout area. The team will also help host live lunchtime link-ups in the Science Atrium as the opportunities for these arise.

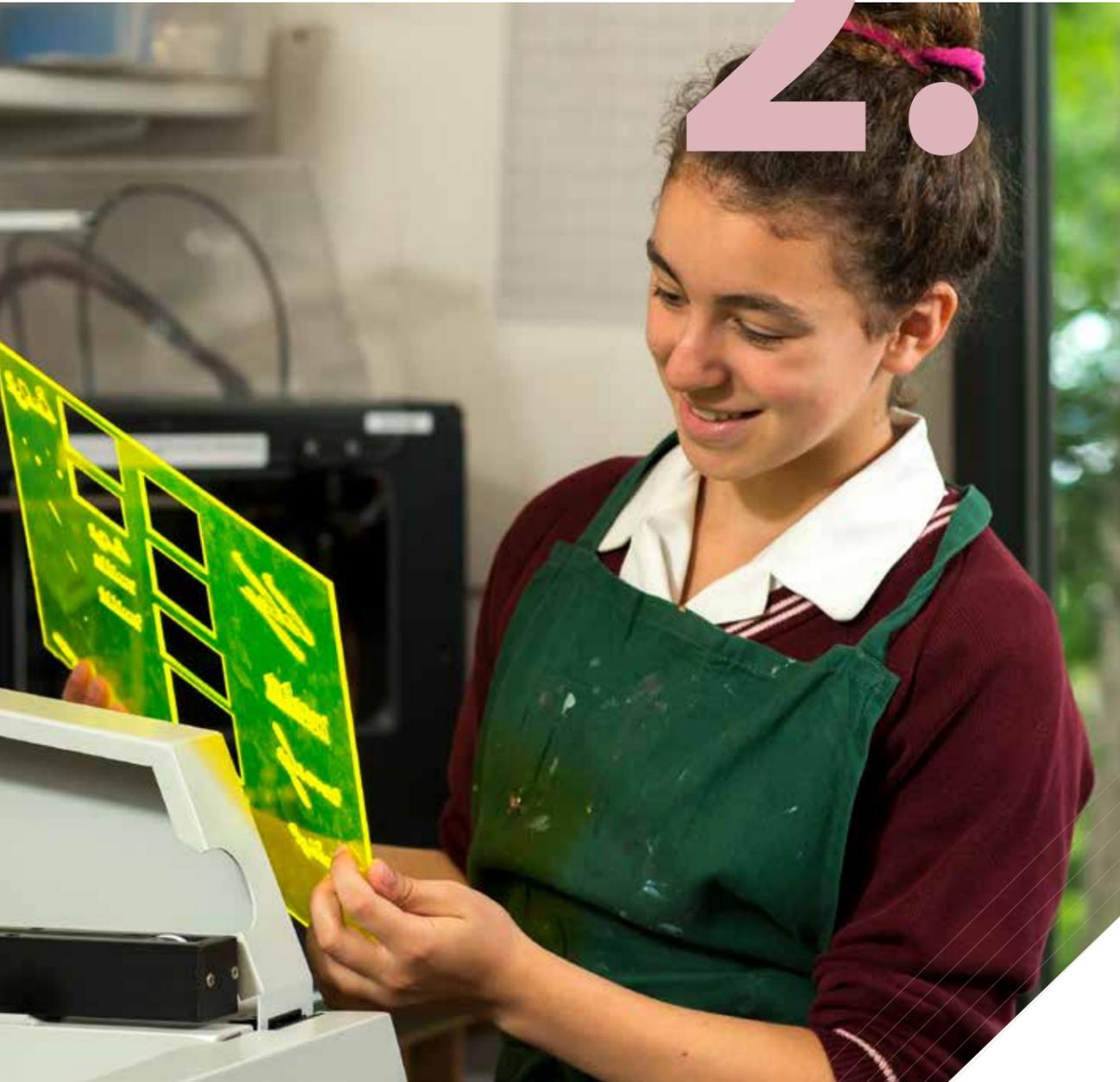
Young Enterprise

Years 10 and L6

Students run their own company for a year designing, manufacturing, marketing and selling products. Starting with market research to help to define product ideas, they put together a business plan and a management structure which will enable them to run a successful company. They take part in trade fairs and area presentations which result in companies gaining awards in a range of business skills.



2. ART AND DESIGN



Art and design technology are vital to a creative and expressive way of relating to the world. We offer a range of clubs and societies to allow girls to continue to explore their artistic side even if they no longer take Art as a subject, or to extend and develop their skills and understanding beyond the curriculum.

Junior and Lower School Art Club

Years 5 – 8

Art Club enables girls to build on – and extend – their practical skills. Projects are set each half-term and include art, craft and design activities as well as competitions.

Art Scholars

Years 9 – U6

Each term there is a six week club for Art Scholars in Years 9 – U6, which is an opportunity to have an extended period of time outside of the taught curriculum to learn a new skill, have the opportunity to work with one another on collaborative projects and use materials not used in class.

DT Clubs

Years 8 – 10

Students have the opportunity to design and make their own project using a variety of materials and techniques.

GCSE Art Club

Years 10 and 11

An opportunity for students taking GCSE Art and Design to extend their classroom work, do specialist art homework, experiment with media and discuss progress.

Jewellery Club

Years 10 and 11

Students can learn how to design and make earrings, rings and pendants. No previous experience is required. Silver and semi-precious stones are available at cost if girls wish to use them.

Life Class

Sixth Form

An opportunity for girls not taking A-level art to continue their interest in the subject.

Lower School Craft Club

Years 7 and 8

Lower School Craft Club gives students the opportunity to use a variety of materials and processes such as papier mache, embossed metal, mosaic, plaster casting and clay.

Oil Painting

Year 9

This workshop will introduce some classic oil painting techniques and also experimental processes. Come and get messy!

Photography Club

Years 9 – U6

Photography Club will introduce students to how to take a good photograph with their own camera or using school cameras. There will also be opportunities to learn new techniques in Photoshop and use Smartphones and iPads to take photographs.

Pottery Open Studio

Years 9 – 11

An opportunity to continue working on 3D projects that are being constructed in lessons.



3. DRAMA



Drama is a thriving part of school life. Productions take place throughout the year allowing students the opportunity to take part in technical support, design, stage management and front of house, as well as acting. Productions, where possible, join forces with Abingdon School. Original play writing is encouraged and supported through an annual playwriting competition, the winning entry being staged as a lunchtime performance. A busy calendar of theatre trips support those studying GCSE drama and A-level drama and theatre studies.

Drama Clubs

Years 5 – 9

Weekly drama clubs for each year group are offered at lunchtimes, supported by drama scholars and assistants, to provide opportunities for students to be involved in drama beyond the curriculum.

Drama productions and activities

	DESCRIPTION
SEPTEMBER	Y10 – U6 dramatists theatre visit
OCTOBER	Visiting theatre company (Y10 – U6)
NOVEMBER	Y10 and L6 dramatists theatre visit Y11 Production
DECEMBER	STEAM Outreach Project performance Middle School Production
JANUARY	Joint Sixth Form Production Joint Senior Production at Abingdon School
FEBRUARY	Joint Senior Production
MAY	Playwriting Competition, performance of winning entry
JUNE	Lower School Production
JULY	Junior Department Production

Drama rehearsals

LOWER SCHOOL PRODUCTION	Tuesdays and Wednesdays after school
MIDDLE SCHOOL PRODUCTION	Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays after school
YEAR 11 PRODUCTION	Lunchtime
JOINT SIXTH FORM PRODUCTION	Lunchtime
JOINT SENIOR PRODUCTION	Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays after school



4. MUSIC



Musical activities lie at the heart of the school, with hundreds of students involved in individual music lessons. The Music Department aims to provide opportunities for all students to participate and perform music, whatever their level of experience and expertise. Everyone who learns a musical instrument or has singing lessons in school or outside is strongly encouraged to join a group, ensemble or school choir. Groups and ensembles are directed by members of staff, visiting music staff and some by senior students.

Bass Club

Years 5 – U6

For anyone who would like to try playing the double bass or bass guitar.

Big Band

Any jazz players, Grade 5 level and above

The Big Band performs at the Christmas Revue, the Jazz evening and summer Jazz afternoon, covering a range of traditional and contemporary Jazz.

Brass Band

All brass players

Open to all brass players, the brass band performs at a number of events.

Camerata

String players, Grade 7 level and above (by invitation)

Camerata gives our most advanced string players an opportunity to tackle established string repertoire. They have taken part in tours abroad and in joint ventures with Abingdon School.

Cantores

Years 9 – U6

Cantores is open to anyone in Year 9 upwards who enjoys singing. They perform a variety of musical styles at a number of different events. They have taken part in tours abroad and featured on several CD recordings, available from the Music Department.

Chamber Music

By invitation

A large number of music ensembles are coached by visiting music staff and senior students. The groups have a special concert in February and participate in the Oxford Music Festival and school music festivals. A number of groups are selected to enter the national Pro Corda competition each year, and ensembles regularly reach the semifinal and finals stages.

Chapel Choir

Years 9 – U6 (by audition)

The Chapel Choir leads the school in weekly services, termly eucharists and special occasions such as Nine Lessons and Carols and the Confirmation service. The choir also performs in school concerts, the Oxford Music Festival and has taken part in tours abroad and featured on CD recordings, available from the Music Department.

Clarinet Group

Clarinet players, Grade 5 level and above

An opportunity for all clarinetists Grade 5 and above to play together and perform.

Concert Band

Wind players, Grade 5 level and above (by audition)

The Concert Band is for our most advanced wind and percussion players and has taken part in tours abroad and featured on several CD recordings, available from the Music Department.

First Orchestra

Orchestral players, Grade 6 level and above (by audition)

First Orchestra performs in the two Senior Concerts each year in November and May, often giving concerto opportunities to advanced music scholars. They have taken part in tours to Tuscany (2008), Germany (2010) and Spain (2012), and have also featured on several CD recordings, available from the Music Department.

Flute Group

Flute players, beginner to Grade 5 level

For all flute players, performing at the February and June concerts and school music festivals.

Jazz/Rock Bands

Years 5 – U6

The Jazz and Rock Bands perform at a variety of events and always feature at the Jazz evening and the summer Jazz afternoon.

Joint Choral Society

Years 9 – U6 (boys and girls)

The JCS includes students, parents and staff from schools in Abingdon and responsibility for its organisation alternates between St Helen's and Abingdon School.

Junior Choir

Years 5 and 6

A choir performing a variety of material for any junior school student who enjoys singing.

Lower School Choir

Years 7 and 8

The Lower School Choir is open to anyone in Years 7 and 8 who enjoys singing. They perform at the Christingle service in December, the Oxford Music Festival in January and at school concerts in February and June.

Music Aural Classes

Years 5 – U6

A number of classes designed to prepare students for the aural requirements of ABRSM and Trinity Guildhall examinations.

Musical Theatre Club

Years 8 – U6

An opportunity for girls to learn and perform old favourites and new West End tunes, they perform in the Musical Theatre Evening in May.

Musicianship for sight singing

Years 5 – U6

This club is for students preparing for ABRSM examinations and those who just wish to improve their sight singing skills.

Music Theory Classes

Grades 1 – 5

A number of classes covering the basics of music theory and preparing students for ABRSM Grade 5 theory. An advanced (post Grade 5) class is also available on request.

Saxophone Ensembles

There are various groups of differing size and abilities

The Saxophone Ensembles perform at a variety of events and always feature at school concerts and the summer Jazz afternoon.

Sinfonia

Any instrumentalist of any standard

Sinfonia performs a variety of light and accessible music, giving performances in two school concerts each year.

Sinfonietta

Any orchestral players from approximately Grade 3 level to Grade 6 level (by audition)

Sinfonietta tackles a mixture of standard orchestral repertoire and lighter material and they perform twice a year, in February and June.

Tea Concerts

Years 5 – U6

The Tea Concerts are an informal concert series which take place in the school Chapel. Anyone of any standard is welcome to sign up for each concert, whether they learn in or out of school.

Team Pachelbel

Years 8 – 9 String players

This ensemble provides an opportunity for violinists and double bassists in Years 8 – 9 to enjoy making music together and focus on specialist string skills. Girls learn the repertoire separately with their teachers, then come together for a few rehearsals before each concert. Students in Year 7 may be invited to join later in the school year.

Vocal Ensembles

Advanced Singers, by invitation or audition

There are a number of vocal ensembles which tackle advanced choral and close harmony repertoire, performing at a variety of events.

Wind Band

Any wind players from beginner to approximately Grade 5 level

The Wind Band performs at the February and June school concerts and members enjoy a range of music with an emphasis on enjoyment.

5. SPORT



Sport and Physical Education play a major role in life at St Helen's. We strive to provide opportunities for every girl to enjoy participating in a wide range of activities both within and in addition to the curriculum, whether it be for competition, skill development or recreation. A busy and inclusive extracurricular programme allows all students to participate and reach their potential in activities that they enjoy. Clubs in all age groups are open to every girl and participation is actively encouraged. There are many opportunities for students to play and perform in matches and competitions both within school and through fixtures, competitions and local, regional and national tournaments. Days and times of clubs for each year group are published in detail at the start of each term and can be found on the school website at shsk.org.uk/sports and in the PE Department.

Athletics

Years 5 – U6

Athletics clubs operate throughout the Trinity term and students compete in a range of fixtures against local, regional and national opposition.

Badminton

Years 7 – U6

Badminton clubs run at lunchtimes for juniors and seniors. Teams compete in fixtures.

Ballet

Years 5 – 9 by grade

This activity is provided by external teachers so will run subject to a sufficient take up rate by students. Parents will be invoiced for sessions directly by the external provider. Please contact Laura Addison at Oxford City School of Dance on laura.oxfordcityschoolofdance@gmail.com for further information.

Basketball

Years 9 – U6

Basketball is a popular sport played in Middle School and Sixth Form. Teams compete against other schools and in the county league.

Biathlon

Years 5 – U6

A popular choice to combine swimming and running, St Helen's biathletes compete with great success regionally, nationally and internationally.



Cheerleading

Years 5 – U6

A fun activity combining gymnastics, dance and cheer.

Cricket

Years 7 – 10

Cricket is an emerging sport at St Helen's and girls have the opportunity to play recreationally and competitively to regional level.

Cross-country

Years 5 – U6

Running and cross-country prove to be popular both as activities in their own right and as a supplement to fitness training. Students have the opportunity to compete in cross-country fixtures locally, regionally and nationally.

Dance

Years 5 – U6 by style and age

Students have the opportunity to perform in annual productions and local/regional competitions. Local dance schools offer a range of clubs in various styles of dance at St Helen's.

Equestrian

Years 5 – U6

Students have the opportunity to compete as a team representing the school. For enquiries please contact Arlina Mauree on arlina_import@yahoo.co.uk. This activity carries an additional cost.



Fitness Suite

Years 9 – U6

Our new Fitness Suite offers state-of-the-art equipment and technology to offer opportunities for students from recreation to elite sport. Designed to be welcoming and accessible, this is a highly popular facility offering both individual training and fitness classes.

Football

Years 7 and 8

Football club takes place in the Michaelmas and Lent terms. Football is an increasingly popular sport, training towards the county tournament and national league.

Group Cycle

Years 9 – U6

A popular and healthy lifestyle activity, group cycle runs in our new Group Cycle Studio.

Gymnastics

Years 5 – U6

Gymnastics is a popular sport at St Helen's. There are clubs for all year groups and we train junior and senior squads who compete in local and regional competitions.

Indoor Hockey

Years 5 – U6

Hockey is played in the curriculum and as a club. Girls are directed to local clubs as appropriate and many represent the county.

Indoor Rowing

Years 8 – U6

Indoor rowing is a highly popular activity at St Helen's and recent investment into our new Ergo Suite has increased provision. Training will be focused on technique and there are opportunities for competitions in local and national leagues.

Lacrosse

Years 5 – U6

Lacrosse is one of the major sports at St Helen's. Coaching is provided by specialist lacrosse coaches and regular weekend fixtures against local schools provide ample opportunity to develop match play skills. Teams also compete with great success at area and national level. St Helen's students regularly achieve county, area and national representation.

Netball

Years 5 – U6

Netball is a major sport. Specialist coaches work with teams of all age groups who play regular fixtures against local schools. St Helen's hosts area tournaments and enjoys significant success at county, regional and national levels, regularly being crowned county champions at various age groups and progressing to regional and national finals.

Netball Youth Umpires Award

Years 10 and 11

Girls have the opportunity to qualify as a netball youth umpire by following the nationally recognised qualification during their curriculum PE lessons. There is an additional cost for this activity.

Rounders

Years 5 – U6

Rounders is a major summer sport, played at the highest competitive levels, with St Helen's currently represented at county, area and national level. Teams play regular fixtures against local schools and compete in national competitions.

Rowing

Year 8

St Helen's runs a beginners course for potential rowers, in partnership with Abingdon Rowing Club. This activity carries an additional cost.



Sailing

Years 5 – U6

Students learning to sail do so in pairs in Picos. We also have use of Laser Funboats and Fireflies depending on conditions and ability of sailor. This activity carries an additional cost. Open to all year groups although during Michaelmas term priority will be given to girls in Year 8 and above. There will be a four-week *Learn to Sail* course offered in Trinity term for complete beginners in any year group.

Sports Leader Award

Years 10 and 11

Girls have the opportunity to follow the Sports Leaders Awards at Level 1 and Level 2 during their curriculum PE lessons in Year 10 and/or 11. There is an additional cost for this activity.

Swimming

Years 5 – U6, Swim Squad

Swimming takes place throughout the year. Our competitive squads swim at all levels and are highly successful, enjoying regular inter-school galas and swimming regionally and nationally.

Tennis

Years 5 – U6

Tennis is a major summer sport with a full programme of clubs, squads and private coaching available during PE lessons, lunchtimes and after school sessions, provided by specialist tennis coaches. Private lessons continue all year round on Saturdays and Sundays. Please contact Head Coach Simon Parker for further information at thirty15@live.co.uk. There is an additional cost for private tennis lessons.

Trampoline Club

Years 7 – U6

Trampoline Club is open to students of all abilities and provides the opportunity for competition against local schools.

6 EXPEDITIONS

First-hand experience is an essential part of developing life-long interests. We therefore provide a range of expeditions both in length and scope which offer opportunities for personal development for all ages, aptitudes and interests.

Battlefields Trip

Year 9

All Year 9 girls, accompanied by their form tutors and history teachers, spend two days in Belgium and France visiting battlefields, memorials and war graves; this brings their study of the First World War to life. Spending time together also helps to build bonds and friendships, with chocolate buying in Ypres an added highlight.

Berlin Trip

Year 11

The Year 11 History trip to Berlin visits some of the key historical sites in and around Berlin relating to the Modern World GCSE course girls are studying. Sites visited include Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, The Wannsee Villa, Jewish Museum and Stasi prison.

Geography Field Trip to Iceland

Sixth Form

This biannual visit allows students to explore the breathtaking volcanic and glacial landscape in Iceland. Students will visit volcanoes, waterfalls, geysers and, of course, the Blue Lagoon.

Residential Art Trip

Sixth form

Sixth form residential art trip to Manchester and Liverpool museum and art galleries.

Ski Trip

Years 8 and 10

We will be taking 50 girls to Folgarida, Italy for this year's ski trip. We will be staying in a 'ski in – ski out' hotel directly on an easy blue slope. Folgarida is situated in a high snow-sure position with an outstanding ski school. The hotel is 300m away from the resort town so easy reach for all evening activities. It has an award winning chef who will provide hot lunches – the girls will receive a real Italian ski experience.

Vancouver Exchange

Year 10

An exciting global opportunity for two students in Year 10 to link up with two students at York House School, Vancouver. Like our school, York House is an aspirational and high-achieving independent girls' school. The aim of the exchange is to inspire students and cultivate their engagement with the wider world. This exchange allows the students to experience the curriculum on offer in each other's countries and is an opportunity to enjoy recreational and cultural activities that reflect the location of the host families.



Kilve Court

Year 7

The annual residential trip to Kilve, Somerset, is one of the most eagerly awaited events in Year 7 and the one which many older students look back on with real fondness. Set in the Quantock Hills, an area of outstanding natural beauty, these three days are spent in a variety of outdoors activities. Having visited Cheddar Gorge to complete Geography fieldwork, students settle in at Kilve with a beach visit and night orienteering. Over the following days students challenge themselves with a range of sports including climbing and abseiling, mountain boarding, archery and the much-discussed Fantasy Trail!



Sixth Form Study Trip to Spain

Sixth Form Spanish students

Sixth Form students of Spanish enjoy a week-long linguistic and cultural immersion in advance of their AS and A-level oral and written exams.

History Trip to Russia

Sixth Form

An exciting opportunity for girls to see the main historical and cultural sights of the heart of Russia.

Biology Field Trip

All L6 biologists

A residential field trip to Orielson, Pembrokeshire for all L6 biologists.

Junior Department Trip to Stratford Upon Avon

Years 5 and 6

For the first time the Junior Department will be visiting Stratford Upon Avon for our annual residential trip. As well as taking in the cultural sites of Shakespeare's birthplace, including attending a theatre performance, we will also be exploring the wonders of Cadbury's World and investigating the history behind Warwick Castle.

Geography Field Trip to Snowdonia

Year 10

This three day field trip is focused on developing Year 10s' investigative skills. Students study river processes and features, and investigate the impact of tourism in an upland glaciated environment.

Geography Field Trip to Dorset

L6 geographers

This visit offers A-level students the opportunity to complete two days of compulsory field work as part of their non-examined assessment. Students will study coastal management in Swanage and sand dune processes in Studland Bay.

Art Trip to Cornwall

Year 10

All Year 10 artists stay in a youth hostel outside Penzance, which has links with Tate St Ives, to spend three days working on an environmental project linked to their GCSE coursework. Students produce a finished sketch book having visited galleries, museums and gardens which are submitted with coursework for external moderation at the end of Year 11.

French, Spanish, German and Italian Exchanges

Years 10 – 11 (joint with Abingdon)

Designed to enhance students' linguistic and cultural knowledge, the exchanges run every year. Participating students are carefully 'matched' to like-minded students in our partner schools. The itinerary comprises a combination of time spent with the host family, at the partner school, and as a group on cultural visits.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Years 9 – U6

This nationally recognised scheme is identified by employers as the most desirable non-academic qualification in the UK. The Award operates at three levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold, each requiring participants to complete activities from each of the following categories: Volunteering Skills, Physical Recreation and Expeditions. At Gold a residential element is also incorporated. Each level of the Award requires organisation, commitment and perseverance to ensure completion. Support is provided by the D of E office in school to advise and guide participants through their chosen Award. Expedition training, practice and assessment is provided in school for Bronze and Silver Awards, Gold participants are encouraged to participate in expeditions organised by external providers in Wild Country Areas.



7 LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

We recognise the importance of broadening and enriching students' understanding of subjects beyond the curriculum. We encourage exploration beyond the classroom in a number of ways, some organised in school and others for girls to pursue independently.

Lectures and dinners

Evening lectures and dinners provide the opportunity to hear experts in their fields and discuss their ideas in more depth. Recent speakers include Professor Chris Read of Warwick University on the Russian Revolution, Nick Abbott of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office on the use of languages in his career in the Middle East, Colin Mayer, Professor of Management Studies at the Saïd Business School, speaking to the Joint Sixth Form Business and Economics Society, Professor Mitkov, Professor of Computational Linguistics and Language Engineering at Wolverhampton University, speaking at the European Day of Languages.

The annual Radley Conference, now in its 20th year, brings together the Upper Sixth students of St Helen's and Radley College in November to hear a series of inspiring speakers and engage in heated debate. This year the topic will centre around the Holocaust and students will be able to hear accounts of survivors as well as listen to lectures from experts on the subject. The conference, which takes place at Radley, is always preceded by a debating dinner hosted at St Helen's where group leaders get to know one another and explore the topics to be covered.

Thinking suppers

As part of our academic enrichment programme, recently introduced Thinking Suppers are a beneficial way to mix dining and debate for Years 9 and 10. Every half term, invited students are given the opportunity to meet up with Radley College students, either at their school or here at St Helen's to discuss and debate complex topical issues that there might not be the opportunity to explore in greater depth in the classroom.

Four or five girls are invited from Year 9 and Year 10 to attend and are briefed on the topics in advance by teachers. The visiting school gets to choose so that girls can research and do some critical thinking around the subject and develop their own ideas and opinions. Subjects can be discussed with teachers and parents beforehand to help build viewpoints and arguments, but ultimately it is about what the students themselves think and feel about the issues that matter to our society and the challenges our world faces.

Thinking Suppers are aimed at developing critical thinking, confidence, self-belief and presentation skills. As the girls have found, not everyone is going to agree with what you think, but that is the same in life, so it is very useful preparation for what lies ahead.

Trips and visits

Our subject departments offer a variety of day trips and visits. Groups of girls in all year groups regularly take advantage of the proximity of Oxford's lectures, plays and museums as well as travelling further afield, whether it is our PE GCSE and A-level students and elite athletes attending the Girls Go Gold conference; Year 10 scientists hearing leading scientists such as Robert Winston speak at Science Live!; or Year 7 investigating Roman life at Chedworth Roman Villa. In early December sixth formers travel to the Westminster Politics Conference. MPs talk to A-level students about current political issues.

National challenges and competitions

Many departments enter students into national competitions such as the biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and linguistic Olympiads, in which St Helen's students achieve regular success. University essay competitions in law, English and history; national poetry and play-writing competitions; the Language Perfect World Championships and Vocab Express League of Champions and challenges such as those posed by ARTiculation and the Institute of Chemical Engineers provide girls with opportunities to take their thinking further, if they wish to do so. All girls in Years 7 and 8 enter the annual Young Geographer of the Year competition in which we have been awarded a prize for the last three years.



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