

Sep - Jan 2022/3

The



# Park Times



Brought to you by your Communication Captains

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# WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON AT ROUNDWOOD

As always, life at Roundwood Park has been busy. Since our last edition there have been multiple charity weeks, House Music and festive celebrations.

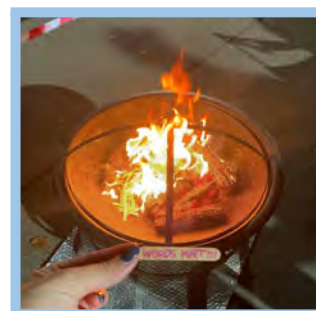
Kicking it off was Frank Charity week, running from the 19th to the 23rd of September. The week included cake sale 'exchanges' in support of St Albans District Food Bank as well as teacher bushtucker trials and a handprint mural. Well done to Emma and James for organising such a fun and successful week!



Next was House Music, hosted by our Community and Events captains, Leah and Matthew, with the help of Abdullah. The evening, as usual, was one to remember. Frank House dominated the leaderboard, winning conductor, choir and performance piece. Well done to everyone who took part, and a humongous thanks to Mrs Tatts for all her hard work.

The annual GT 'Sleep out to help out' took place on 18th of November with students across houses and year groups taking part. Throughout the evening, students played games, spoke to their friends and set up camp on cardboard around the fire. A massive thanks to the food tech students and Miss O'Coy who provided a wonderful meal for everyone.

GT then held their house week from 5th to 9th of December. The week was full of new ideas including holding a reverse advent calendar in which people were asked to give time, thanks, food and so on. Well done to the house captains Grace and Millie and of course the Head of GT, Miss Mullally, for such an amazing week.



The term ended with Christmas festivities. Thank you to the amazing catering team for the Christmas lunches and the SLG Christmas committee for the assemblies.

Good luck in 2023!

Your Communication Captains,  
Josie and Faith



# GT HOUSE WEEK



GT house week ran from 5th to 9th of December, and was full of innovative, new ideas.

The star of the week was GT's 'reverse advent calendar', where they asked students to give something rather than receive. Kicking off the calendar was 'give your time' on Monday - where people volunteered or helped out where they could. The calendar progressed with 'give a tin' on Tuesday, 'give a thanks' on Wednesday, 'give another food item' on Thursday and 'give a thought' on Friday, putting a festive spin on the week. Raising both donations and awareness, this calendar encouraged generosity throughout the school.



In addition, GT held cake sales themed around endangered animals, helped by their adopted animals Echo the elephant and Julius the jaguar. GT students baked animal-themed sweet treats and made information boards to help educate the schools. The animals included: red pandas, elephants, gorillas, turtles and rhinos.





## HOUSE MUSIC

House Music is one of our school's largest house events, attracting impressive levels of participation. It showcases not only the musical talents of RPS, but anyone who is willing to sign up for the choir piece and attend the rehearsals. Each year the event seems to grow, with the opening number allowing singers and dancers to perform together and the final '**Thank You for the Music**' getting all the audience up on their feet.

This year's theme for the event was '**one hit wonders**' (meaning one of the two songs performed by a House should follow this theme).

This year's overall winners were **Frank House**. The choir piece performance of '**Sweet Caroline**' took on a football theme and Mr Rowlands even got given the red card on stage. The impressive and slick performance was coupled with Frank House's high energy, ensuring the win they bagged.

Frank's performance piece, "**Love Me Again**", also won gold. A massive well done to all members of Frank House who took part and a special well done to Frank House's conductors, Emma and Amelia.

Second place in House Music was awarded to Owens and Scott House achieved third place.

The Staff Choir performed '**Don't Stop Me Now**' by Queen, which was as entertaining as usual! The SLG performance was an energetic Spice Girls medley, organised and choreographed by our incredible HBHG team.

Ultimately, 2022 was another enjoyable, successful year for the event and a special way to bring people within each House together. Well done to everyone who took part.





## Other school events:

### Anti-bullying activities

This year the whole House System got involved in anti-bullying week in order to help share positive messages. This ranged from Wilberforce putting together messages for their anti-bullying board, to Frank inviting students to decorate pebbles with warm and inspiring messages.

### Music

#### RPS Christmas Concert

At St John's Church every year, the students of RPS put on a concert, with an all day rehearsal on the day and an evening performance for parents.

This year's Christmas Concert was held on 8th December and as per usual, there was an impressive array of enjoyable performances featuring musical students. Indeed, the Stage Band performed "All I want for Christmas" and "Santa Claus is Coming to town".

In addition, this year, three Roundwood Park musicians provided the music for Jack and the Beanstalk at the Library Theatre in Luton. Congratulations to E. Erman, H. Johnson, and J. Hilton!

### Sport

On 15th December, the lower school sports awards were awarded. Issy and Abdullah (Extra-Curricular and Clubs Captains) presented, supported by the SLG members who went along to help and the tech team who supplied food. Well done to everyone who achieved an award!

The years 7-9 boys trampolining squad returned as national champions in November, the Senior Netball team had a superb performance and year 9/10 girls football team won their match against Loreto. Massive congratulations to all sports teams that have secured a win in the last term, as well as to everyone who has participated at all in extracurricular life at Roundwood.



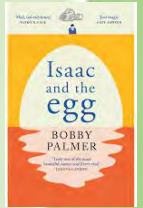
### Art Competition

The curriculum captains hosted an art competition, receiving some fantastic contributions. Congratulations to A. Godfrey from 7GT for winning!



## School Alumni

On 7th September, Roundwood Park invited back an old student, Bobby Palmer. Having written a book, "Isaac and the Egg", he took the time to answer questions and signed books in the Library, which was a great opportunity to celebrate his success and inspire students.



## Visiting Senior Citizens



On 14th December, Sixth Form students of our school attended local homes and care homes to give out hand-made hampers and cards to the elderly. This annual event allows students to spread holiday cheer and give back to the local community.



## CLUBS

### PE

It's been a great start to the year and the second academic term! The under 16 Netball team won in the semi-final of the district plate and I Turner took first place in the South of England indoor championships at Lea Valley, not to mention the amazing win in the country league for the Senior netball team.

### Music

Currently, Stage Band is working on selections from 'Chicago'. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with Mrs McPhun about joining Stage Band, or alternatively Training Concert Band.

### Debate Club

Presently, Debate Club are thinking about the wider world and debating current affairs. They've recently debated whether Prince Harry's publication of his book, *Spare*, was the right thing to do, looking at both sides of the argument. They also plan to centre a debate on environmental issues during the upcoming 'eco week'. Excitingly, the club has an upcoming debate with KWS and St. George's.

### Creative Writing Club

Until half-term, the focus of the Creative Writing Club is poetry. They might also be entering a poetry competition. Mrs Burke says be there or be square.



# Extra-Curricular clubs timetable Spring 2023

Day	Lunch Time				After School			
	Subject	Location	Year group	Run by:	Subject	Location	Year group	Run by:
Monday	Philosophy Club	Hum 2	Yrs 7, 8 & 9	PRE Dept	Youth Speaks	E6	By Invitation	English Dept
	Dance Club	Dance Studio	Year 7	Year 9 Students				
	Senior Netball	Sports Hall	Seniors + Yr 11	ZMU				
	Bookclub	E3	Years 10 & 11	LMA				
	Football - Boys	Astro	Year 7	MHU				
	Glee Choir	MU2	All years	Music Dept				
	Homework Club	Learning Support	All years	MEL				
	KS4&5 Creative Writing	E4	Yrs 10-13	English Dept				
	Computer Science	IT2	Yrs 7 & 8	CS Dept				
	KS3 Creative Writing	E1	7, 8 & 9	EBU				
Tuesday	Cubing Club	M1	All	Year 10 Students				
	Economics Drop-in	BS2	Year 13	EWI				
	Book Babble	Library	Year 7	K O'Brien	Cooking	Food Tech	Yr 8	CCO/HJA
	Flute Group	M2	All years	Music Dept	Textiles GCSE Enrichment	Art2	Yrs 11 & 12	GJE
	Netball	Sports Hall	Year 10	ZMU				
	Dance Club	Dance Studio	Years 8-10	RPO				
	Table Tennis	Old Gym	KS3	MHU				
	Football - Boys	Astro	Year 10	JCO				
	Football - Girls	Astro	All Years	EEL				
	Homework Club	Learning Support	All years	MEL				
Wednesday	Textiles GCSE Enrichment	Art2	10	GJE				
	Young Enterprise	Library and BS2	Y12	MDE				
	LGBTQ+ Pride drop-in sessions	Studio 8	All years	GBU				
	Artful Maths	M3	All years	Maths Dept				
	Training Concert Band	MU2	All years	Music Dept	Squad Trampoline	Old Gym	Squad	PMO
	Trampoline	Old Gym	All	PMO	Bookclub	Library	Years 7, 8 & 9	English Dept
	Board Games/Chess Club	M2	All	Maths Dept	Astroclub	SL6	KS3	Mr Jacquinot
	Basketball	Sports hall	Year 7	JCO	Drama National Theatre Connections	Studio 1	All years	MGA
	Squad Trampoline	Old Gym	Squad	PMO + ZMU	KS3 Book Club	E7	Years 7, 8 & 9	English Dept
	Football - Boys	Astro	Year 8	CWI				
Thursday	Netball	Outside Courts	Years 8 and 9	RPO + EEL				
	Drama Club	Studio 1	Year 8	Y10 & MGA				
	Climate Action Group	HU9	All years	Geography				
	Problem Solving Club	M3	Yrs 12/13	VPR				
	SPACE- Explore faith and life	HUM 2	All years	ADA				
	Spanish Club	ML7	All years	MFL Dept				
	Concert Band	MU2	All grades 3+	Music Dept	Art GCSE Enrichment	Art 3	11	EBA
	Homework Club	Learning Support	All years	Music Dept	Dungeons & Dragons Club	Library	All years	S Humphrey & N Jupe
	Pokemon Club	Bus. 2	All years	Keshav				
	Rock School	Practice rooms 4,5,6	All years	Music Dept				
Friday	Football - Boys	Astro	Year 9	JCO				
	French Club	MFL	KS3	MFL Dept				
	Kinoklub	MFL	KS4	MFL Dept				
	Squad Trampoline	Old Gym	Squad	PMO				
	D&T CAD/CAM	T1	Year 8	SHI				
	Thursday Typing Club	E1	Invite Only	LS (EBU)				
	Open Studio	Art1	All years	JDU				
	DofE Drop In	M3	Yrs 10,11,12,13	JTh, Lja, CGO				
	Economics Drop in	BS2	Year 12	EWI				
	GCSE PE Drop in	PE1	GCSE	EEL				
Friday	String Group	MU1	All years	Music Dept				
	Warhammer Club	SL2	All years	CRO				
	Rugby - Girls	Field	Years 8-11	CWI + ZMU				
	GCSE PE Drop in	PE1	GCSE	EEL				
	Plant Club	HUM1	All years	PRE Dept				
	Debating Club	E5	All years	English Dept				
	Drama National Theatre Connections	Dr1	Year 9 & KS4	Drama Dept				
	Science Club	SL8	Yrs 7, 8 & 9	Science Dept				
	Bass Broup	MU1	All	Music Dept				
	Basketball	Sportshall	Year 8	MHU				
GCSE Dance Practice	Dance studio	GCSE	PE Dept					
GCSE PE Trampoline	Old Gym	GCSE	ZMU					
1st XI Football	Astro	1ST XI	JCO					
German Club	MFL	KS3	MFL Dept					
Music Theory Club	MU2	All	AGr					
D+D Club	Tech	7 8 9	ALI					
Warhammer Club	Art3	All years	CRO					
KS5 History Book Club	Hum 5	Yrs 12,13	KBA					
Homework Club	Learning Support	All years	M Elliot					
Economics Drop in	BS2	11	EWI					
Year 7 Netball	Outside	Year 7	EEL +RPO					



## **FOCUS ON A HISTORICAL FIGURE**

### **MALCOLM X**

Malcolm X, original name Malcolm Little, was born on the 19th of May 1925 in Nebraska. As an infant he moved to Michigan with his family, where his father died after being hit by a streetcar. Soon after, his mother was committed to an insane asylum and Malcolm and his siblings were sent to foster homes.



While in prison for robbery from 1946-1952, he underwent a conversion that eventually led him to join the Nation of Islam, an African American movement that combined elements of Islam with Black nationalism. Following the Nation tradition, he replaced his surname 'Little' with an 'X', a custom among followers who considered their family names to have originated with white slaveholders. After leaving prison, Malcolm rose in the ranks, eventually being named the National Representative of the Nation of Islam.

During the American Civil Rights movement, Malcolm expressed his frustration at the mistreatment of African Americans, preaching on the streets and speaking at major universities. He criticised the mainstream civil rights movements, challenging Martin Luther King Jr's central notions of integration and nonviolence. He argued that more was at stake than the civil right to vote- the most important issues were Black identity, integrity and independence. In contrast to King's strategy of his nonviolence, civil disobedience and redemptive suffering, Malcolm urged his followers to defend themselves 'by any means necessary'.

However, Malcolm brought bad publicity when he declared that JFK's assassination was an example of 'chickens coming home to roost'. He then left the Nation in March 1964 and in 1965 he founded the Organisation of Afro-American Unity to move from civil rights to human rights. The growing hostility between Malcolm and the Nation led to death threats and open violence against him. Until, in 1965, Malcolm was assassinated whilst delivering a lecture, three members of the Nation of Islam were arrested and one confessed.

Malcolm X's ideas contributed to the development of Black nationalist identity and the Black power movement, helping to popularise the values of autonomy and independence among African Americans in the 1960s and '70s.



## **CURRENT AFFAIRS** **(Written Jan 23rd)** **STRIKES**



Over the last few months, there has been a spike in industrial action, driven by the cost of living crisis. This includes strikes from ambulance drivers, nurses and now teachers.

### **Why are teachers striking?**

Union leaders have announced that teachers will strike in February and March. Teacher strikes are part of the wider wave of industrial action from the public sector and represent the impacts of the economic crisis in the UK.

“The union is striking for a fully funded, above-inflation pay rise after the government said last summer that most teachers would receive a 5% pay rise.”

### **Who is the public sector?**

Those working in the public sector are paid by the government, who also decide their wages. Jobs within the sector include NHS workers, teachers and the civil service. There are approximately 5.6 million people in the public sector.

Inflation, which refers to higher prices for goods, has led to a higher amount of money needed in order to survive and support one’s family. This has led to a cost of living crisis, as people are struggling to do this on their current salaries.

Public sector workers have been significantly hit in the wake of inflation and the cost of living crisis as their wages have not grown in pace with these increasing prices.

However, this crisis may have exacerbated a more ongoing issue: many feel teachers have been underpaid for years. It is an “unsustainable situation” according to Union leaders, as it is causing teachers to leave the profession, meaning that we desperately need more teachers in the UK.

The decision for teachers to strike has received heavy criticism from the government with Education Secretary Keegan stating that teachers “don’t need to strike to get my attention”.



In the wake of inflation, do you think that public sector jobs are entitled to pay rises?

### Why strikes?

Strikes are a form of direct action. Historically, strikes have been a way for citizens to stand up for a cause, or for themselves. This ranges from the only ever general strike in Britain, to miners striking during the Winter of Discontent.

## Nadhim Zahawi's tax affairs

Tory party chairman, and previous Chancellor, Nadhim Zahawi, is facing calls to resign after it was revealed that he paid a penalty to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) over a previously unpaid tax, whilst chancellor as part of a multi-million pound dispute.

Rishi Sunak, who has now asked his independent ethics adviser to look into the disclosures made about the tax affairs, has declared that Zahawi will remain Tory Party chairman during the investigation. However, opposition parties are calling for Mr Zahawi to be sacked from his role straight away.

The dispute was resolved between July and September last year and the total amount paid is in the region of about £5m, including a penalty. However, Zahawi has not confirmed how much his penalty amounted to, nor the total value of the final settlement with HMRC.

Keir Starmer (the leader of the Labour Party) has called for Zahawi to resign, saying that “The prime minister should sack him, and sack him today and show some leadership”

**Starmer: Job of PM 'too big' for Sunak after failure to fire Zahawi** updated 5 minutes ago

Politics news - latest: Zahawi makes it past 'major hurdle' - but there's no sign of him at PMQs

**Nadhim Zahawi news - live: Sunak facing Starmer at PMQs as Tories warn chairman must go now**

Conservative Party chairman Zahawi coming under increasing pressure to resign over multimillion pound settlement with HMRC.

# UK POLITICS TIMELINE 2022

Politics is always changing, and 2022 was no exception to that, with three Prime Ministers and two monarchs here are some of the main UK political events of 2022!

**12th of January-** During Prime Minister's Question Times (PMQs), Johnson admits that he attended a 'Bring Your Own Booze' event in the No. 10 garden during the first lockdown in May 2020. This led to many calling for his resignation.



**19th of January-** Bury South MP Christian Wakeford crosses the House of Commons and switches benches during PMQs, defecting from the Conservatives to the Labour Party.

**24th of February-** After weeks of filing increasing numbers of troops to the border, Russia invades Ukraine.

**12th of April-** Boris Johnson, Carrie Johnson and Rishi Sunak are all issued fixed penalty notices over breaches of Covid lockdown rules in June 2020.



**25th of May-** Sue Gray's long-awaited report into rule-breaking Downing Street lockdown parties is published by the Cabinet Office.

**23rd of June-** Boris Johnson is booed while attending a service of thanksgiving for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at St Paul's Cathedral!

**6th of June-** Conservative MPs hold a vote of confidence (one of the few ways a PM can be removed from office) in Boris Johnson. Whilst the majority vote in favour of Johnson, more than 40% vote that they had no confidence in him.



**23rd of June-** The Conservatives suffer a double by-election defeat.

**30th of June-** Tamworth MP Chris Pincher resigns as Tory whip after reports of sexually inappropriate behaviour.

**5th of July-** Sajid Javid and Rishi Sunak resign from the government. Their departures trigger mass Conservative resignations over the subsequent 48 hours. In total 57 ministers resigned.



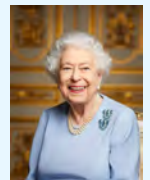
**7th of July-** Boris Johnson announces he will stand down as Tory Party leader (and so in effect, Prime Minister).



**5th of September-** Liz Truss wins the Conservative leadership contest and vows to deliver a “bold plan to cut taxes and grow our economy”.

**6th of September-** Liz Truss becomes the UK’s new Prime Minister.

**8th of September-** Queen Elizabeth II- the UK’s longest serving monarch- dies at 96 in Balmoral Castle.



**19th of September-** The state funeral of Queen Elizabeth is held at Westminster Abbey with political leaders from all around the world attending.

**23rd of September-** Following Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng’s announcements of unfunded tax cuts, the pound crashes.

**14th of October-** Suella Braverman resigns from her position of Home Secretary over a data breach.

**20th of October-** Liz Truss announces her resignation, becoming Britain’s shortest serving Prime Minister.



**24th of October-** Rishi Sunak is voted to be the next leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister.

**15th of December-** Nurses hold the first strike in the Royal College of Nursing Union’s history.



# 2022 UK POLITICS WRAPPED



## Top Artists

- 1** Boris Johnson
- 2** Liz Truss
- 3** Matt Hancock
- 4** Sir Keir Starmer
- 5** Rishi Sunak

## Minutes Listened

**35,000,000**  
(the cost of Liz Truss's  
mini-budget)

## Top Songs

- 1** He Won't Go by Adele
- 2** Don't Blame Me by Taylor Swift
- 3** I Kissed a Girl by Katy Perry
- 4** I'm Still Standing by Elton John
- 5** If We Make It Through December by Phoebe Bridgers

## Top Genre

**Blues**





## STAFF NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

The first New Year resolution dates back to the Babylonians, some 4,000 years ago. However, these took place in mid-March as opposed to January in a 12-day religious festival called Akitu. Nowadays, New Year resolutions are used to allow individuals to set personal goals or improvements, here are some the staff and SLG of RPS have set themselves in 2023:

### **Mr Henshall**

'To create more family time and to enjoy every day!'

### **Mrs Bridgman**

'I think mine would be to drink more water as I used to drink easily two litres a day and now I struggle with one! When I drink more water I find my concentration levels are much better!'

### **Mr Hunter**

'I'm not a big one for resolutions, but I would definitely like to be a bit more efficient with planning, organising and marking, so I can reduce school work that needs to be done over weekends. As my two young boys are getting older and more active, they want me to do things with them more and so I need to bring less home on a Friday night. It should be doable if I push myself during the week.'

### **Mr Hambridge**

'My new year's resolution is to make sure that I fit my running training in for the London Marathon in April!'

### **Mr Stowe**

'To start skipping again, which I seem to have drifted away from'

### **Mrs Gallagher**

'Mine will be to exercise early morning again - 2 x 6am training sessions during weekdays (which again helps me with focus and concentration during the day)... this also means I have to get to bed earlier, at least twice a week...to enable the 6am start to happen!'

### **Mrs Brooke**

'My resolution is to improve my Yoga skills, especially my balance!'

### **Mr Pettengell**

'To get fitter everyday and to be more healthy.'

# SLG NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS



## **Charlie Soanes- Head Girl**

'My resolution is to stretch every night before bed'

## **Zak Bruzas- Head Boy**

'Mine is to take more risks'

## **Emma Craig- Deputy Head Girl/ Frank House Captain**

'To go to the gym at least three times a week, and to catch up on all of my revision for my A levels which I missed before Christmas'

## **Gabe Lamb- Deputy Head Boy/Environment Captain**

'My new year's resolution is to drink more water'

## **Deniz Bekat- Wilberforce House Captain**

'Mine is to relearn the piano and learn a programming language'

## **Aidan Thomas- Scott House Captain**

'Work towards getting better at hockey'

## **Grace Shelton- GT House Captain**

'My new year's resolution would be to read more books and make a productive use of my time'

## **James Grice- Frank House Captain**

'To learn how to play the guitar'

## **Jamie Lilley- Mandela House Captain**

'To continue being awesome'

## **Issy Moseley- Extra-curricular and Clubs Captain**

'Mine is to learn how to drive on the motorway'

## **Leilani Arrow-Smith- Charity House Captain**

'My new year's resolution is to read a book every week'

## **Freddy Francis- Learning Captain**

'To read more books'

## **Leah Jay- Community and Events Captain**

'My resolution is to eat less chocolate'

## **Ella Moffat- Diversity and Wellbeing Captain**

'Mine is to read 10 books a month and pass my driving test'

## **Samah Mostafa- Diversity and Wellbeing Captain**

'To structure and plan my weeks/days more'

## **Eve Duddy- Curriculum Captain**

'My resolution is to stop crying every time google maps takes me near a motorway'



## PUZZLE PAGE SUDOKU

3			8		1			2
2		1		3		6		4
			2		4			
8		9				1		6
	6						5	
7		2				4		9
			5		9			
9		4		8		7		5
6			1		7			3

		7	3		8	1		
	4		9		2		8	
		9		5		7		
9	5						1	6
3	8						2	7
		1		4		2		
	7		2		6		5	
		5	1		7	9		

### RIDDLES

1. What has to be broken before you can use it?
2. What is always in front of you but can never be seen?
3. What can you keep after giving to someone?

### ANAGRAMS- FOOD

1. As angel (7)
2. Find his chaps (4,3,3)
3. Filter (6)
4. To riots (7)
5. Tie coat peg (7,3)

### GUESS THE FLAG





## **STUDENT ARTICLES**

Turn the page for some amazing articles written by the students of Roundwood Park School

Do you want your writing to be featured in the next edition?

If so, email your article to

[parktimes@roundwoodpark.co.uk](mailto:parktimes@roundwoodpark.co.uk)



# HOUSE MUSIC: FRANK HOUSE

## By E Craig 13F

There's a running joke in the SLG that my favourite thing to bring up at every possible opportunity is House Music – from SLG Parliament meetings to even the SLG Christmas video, I always find a way to talk about what I consider one of the best evenings of my time at Roundwood (and as Frank House Captain, I'd say that you could probably understand why).



Since starting at Roundwood in Year 7, I've been lucky enough to be involved in House Music in some way pretty much every year. From joining Frank choir in my very first year and singing a George Michael mashup, to playing a flute duet in the performance piece of 'I want it that way' in Year 10, I've always absolutely loved the event. Having been elected House Captain last February, I already knew that the part of the role I probably was looking forward to the most was House Music, and the opportunity to take on the challenge with Amelia and James was one we were all so excited for!

When in the lower school, I'm not sure I ever really realised how much work went on behind the scenes for House Music. The effort from the House Captains and conductors into organising choirs and performance pieces is genuinely incredible: organising rehearsals, a band of musicians and the all-important dance moves is certainly a big task. But being part of the SLG allowed me to also appreciate all the work that goes in on the day, from all the organisation backstage with runners moving people around constantly, to the logistical challenges of moving students back and forth from school for rehearsals on the day – Mrs Tattersall is a legend in her own rights for the amount of work involved before and leading up to the big evening! I'd say the whole process was all worth it when we were able to see the rewards of our hard work, watching students from each House absolutely smash it on stage and 'have the time of their lives' (Mandela choir, I'm looking at you...)

In the build up to the evening, conductors spend just under 3 weeks forming their choir and getting them polished to perfection. Although it's a somewhat stressful time, I'd say that having the opportunity to lead at the front of the choir as a Year 13 was such a



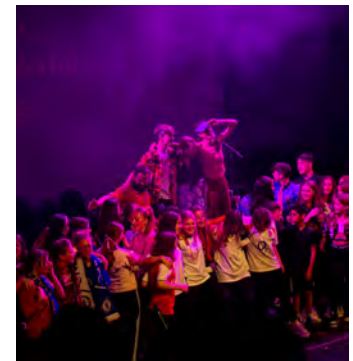
rewarding process that I know myself and Amelia both genuinely enjoyed. The preparations for the performance piece were also a lot of fun, getting to work with some extremely talented musicians in my House was really an incredible experience. On the night, the first chance for us to show off our hard work was in the performance

piece, 'Love Me Again' by John Newman. I don't think I've ever been a prouder House Captain than at that moment. As soon as Ashley started singing the first line and the crowd started screaming, I knew that they were going to smash it. Coming off the stage to chants of 'Frank! Frank! Frank!' made everyone involved smile, and hearing James's account of everyone backstage dancing for the whole song was just so lovely.

Going back onto stage for the choir piece was just as much fun, and it was quite nice to not have to look out nervously into the audience, but instead look towards the smiling faces of our choir. After a dramatic red card, sending off, and football scarf filled chaos, we finished our rendition of Sweet Caroline – there was even some singing involved, I promise. All that was left to do now was wait for the results...

As the judges came onstage to announce the results, I'm sure every House Captain and conductor would agree on the nervous state they were in. I remember standing upstairs with James and Amelia in anticipation of the results, not really knowing what to expect because everyone's performances throughout the evening had been so incredible to watch. When they announced that we had won the performance piece, cheers erupted from our side of the Alban Arena, and I think that was when we started to believe that we had a shot at winning. When they called out Frank in 1<sup>st</sup> for both the conductor and choir category, it would be fair to say that everyone in Frank lost it – we were in disbelief! Running down the stairs to stand on the side of the stage and wait to all run on and collect the trophy is something I'll always remember: despite all those years of competing for Frank, since I've been in Year 7, we've never won House Music.

Lifting that trophy all together for the first time was such an amazing feeling, I've never seen so many happy faces on one stage – I believe it even reduced a few to tears. Singing the evening goodbye with Thank you for the Music by ABBA was just such a perfect ending, and I can't express how proud I am of everyone that was involved in the choir or performance piece. You all truly made Year 7 Emma, Amelia, and James so happy.



And so, with a sweep of all 3 categories and a long awaited victory, that is how Frank House became House Music Champions 2022... and I'm so sorry to everyone in the SLG, because I will continue to talk about it for as long as I can!



## The US debt ceiling

**This is an extract from R Janes's (13C) economics newsletter which covers macroeconomic and financial developments. It is aimed at students considering economics GCSE or A-Level**



The US Treasury

US national debt has hit its debt ceiling of \$31.4tn, roughly 128% of US GDP. At first this may seem shocking; this number is almost inconceivable. For someone earning the US median income, just short of \$60,000, it would take roughly 16 million years for them to reach \$1tn, assuming they spent none of it - 502.4 million years to reach \$31.4tn. Even if you received a dollar every second, you'd have to wait almost one million years to reach \$31.4 trillion. Yet, even with this, there are, for now, no major issues arising from this colossal figure. Debt is primarily compared to GDP, therefore due to the US' sheer economic size this debt figure is only, as mentioned, 128% of GDP. This places the US in 12th in highest debt-to-GDP countries – demonstrated by the figure to the right. Since half of the nations presented here are first world, it helps contextualise how the high debt may not yet be problematic. The US' debt ceiling The US Treasury Highest Debt to GDP Ratios 1-12.

However, there are political implications of reaching the debt ceiling. In usual circumstances since 1917, when the debt limit was created, Congress would simply revise it when reached, raising it where necessary. The issue is, the Republican Party controls the House of Representatives, whereas the

Democratic Party holds the Senate. This poses a complication with raising the debt ceiling, as both chambers must agree on a bill to do so can be put before the president. This occurred in 2011, when during Obama's presidency the Republicans leveraged the threat of US default to force the democrats into capping aspects of their government spending.

So, it seems history is repeating itself, as McCarthy, Speaker of the House of Representatives, is insisting the debt ceiling should only be raised if the Democrats cut federal spending.

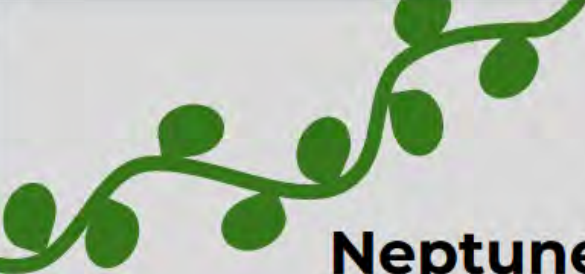
If the ceiling is not raised, the US government faces serious repercussions. The US government plans to spend \$5.8 trillion, running a deficit of \$1.2 trillion, for the fiscal year of 2023, a gap which requires borrowing to finance. If the ceiling is not raised, this deficit cannot be achieved and the equivalent sum of money must be obtained from elsewhere, typically from suspending pensions, withholding or cutting public sector wages and delaying interest payments. The most economically damaging of these is the lattermost, as it constitutes a default. The US has only 'defaulted' twice, in 1979 and 1812, due to a computer glitch and the British burning of Washington respectively, however while these occasions are technically defaults, they are not due to an absence of the funds to pay, but due to other factors, arguably not making them 'true' defaults. In this case, a failure to increase the debt ceiling would likely result in the first actual default of the US government, which poses a great threat to international economic stability, and thus we can only hope the ceiling is raised.

But this also highlights a broader issue. US national debt is rising at an unprecedented rate, with some economists expecting it to 'Approach \$89 trillion by 2029', equivalent to 277% of GDP. Debt growth at this rate, especially when unaccompanied by a similar rate of economic growth, is unsustainable. Conspiracy theorists have accused the treasury and federal reserve of running 'The World's largest Ponzi Scheme', and whilst this is unlikely, the rising national debt does seem dangerous. Raising the ceiling may only delay an inevitable default, or perhaps their national debt will instead continue to grow indefinitely along with every other nation. Only time will tell.

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<https://forms.gle/XfDrYFiYaQUiozox8>





# Neptune

## **How we began:**

Neptune began as a group of Year 12 students from Roundwood Park School, not only looking to learn skills in business, but more importantly, to make a difference to everyday greetings cards. We are now a fully established business, selling both face to face and online! Every year, the US alone throw away over 1.5 billion birthday cards - we are hoping to change this staggering figure. Our cards bring new life to the term 'sustainability', and after they've been enjoyed, our cards can be planted to grow into a vast range of flowers, fruits and herbs. As well as this, in the interest of keeping our product 100% sustainable, even our envelopes and packaging are made from recycled materials, in order to keep the environment at the forefront of our principles.

## **Our Products:**

Each week, our team spends time carefully, hand designing our cards. Currently, we are focusing on smaller occasions, such as Valentines and Pancake Day, whilst maintaining our usual birthday card range. Our group works collaboratively to quickly produce and sell our intricate cards. Throughout this process we have honed our organisational skills, having to keep up with our ever changing environment, and the fast paced production line. This



involves designing and cutting our lino, printing our images, and packaging our products. However, the production is only the half of it; we attend Trade Fairs in our local area to increase the exposure for our products, and also boost our online sales. On top of this, we also have a social media presence (@ye.neptune) on both TikTok and Instagram, where we post the behind the scenes stages of our business, and available discounts and deals!

## **Our Upcoming Events:**

On Sunday 5th of February we will be at the Milton Keynes Trade Fair, and on Sunday 12th we are in Atria - so if you're in the area, come and support us! We are also currently in the process of launching our new website - so look out for that too soon!

Thank you for all the support we have received!  
The Neptune Team :)

