



**Parent and carer newsletter**

**December 2025**

# Welcome from the Head of School

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to an unexpected end of term, it's the perfect moment to reflect on what has been a truly fabulous autumn term. This has been a time filled with achievement, innovation, and community spirit, and we have witnessed a wonderful variety of experiences that have enriched learning for all our students.

Highlights include celebrations and student-led events, inclusive sports, and inspiring music performances. Imagination and originality have shone through, with students creating and exploring new ideas that have brought learning to life in meaningful ways. To find out more, please enjoy the articles within this newsletter.

I hope you are looking forward to Christmas and a restful holiday. Thank you for your continued support in making Treloar's a place where every student can thrive.

Wishing you all a healthy, happy start to the new year.

Lisa Bond  
Head of School



<u>Dates for your diary</u>	<b>Spring Term 2026</b>
Monday 5 – Tuesday 6 January	Professional development days for all staff (2 days)
Wednesday 7 January	Start of half term 3 Residential students return to houses/school 9.00 am onwards
Friday 13 February	End of half term 3 School closes 3.30 pm Houses close at 3.30 pm
Monday 16 – Friday 20 February	Half term holiday for staff and students
Monday 23 February	Start of half term 4 Residential students return to houses/school 9.00 am onwards
Friday 27 March	End of half term 4 School closes 2.00 pm Houses close 3.30 pm
Monday 30 March – Friday 10 April	Easter Holidays



# Updates from Sally Nissen, Head of Nursing and Healthcare

## NHS facing 'super flu' surge

The NHS is facing a "worst case scenario" for December due to a surge in flu cases, with an average of 2,660 patients per day in hospital beds with flu. This is the highest ever for this time of year.

- To protect others and prevent hospital admissions, we ask you keep your young person at home if they have a cough or cold.



## Vaccinations

The children's flu vaccine is offered on the NHS every year in autumn or early winter.

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>

- We urge you to review your young person's immunisation records. Please seek advice from your GP if unsure.
- We need to keep accurate records of student and staff vaccination records so please contact Health Centre Admin team to update them. This helps us risk assess in the event of an outbreak.

## Balloon gastrostomies

Our clinical assistant checks and replaces the water in student gastrostomy balloons each week. This helps reduce the risk of displacement, which can cause local trauma and interrupt routine medicines and feed.

- If your young person is not registered with our contracted medical practice, Farnham Dene, please send in a sufficient stock of 'water for injections'.



# Updates from Sally Nissen, Head of Nursing and Healthcare

## Health Centre has a new email address

The Health Centre administration team has a new email address:  
[HCAAdmin@treloar.org.uk](mailto:HCAAdmin@treloar.org.uk)

NHS teams may prefer to use our secure NHS email: [treloar.admin@nhs.net](mailto:treloar.admin@nhs.net)

Season's greetings from the Health Centre Team: administration, nursing, dietitians and medicines management.





## Primary Halloween Party

During the last Primary Student Voice event, students demonstrated initiative and leadership by proposing a Halloween-themed celebration across the primary department. This idea was not only embraced but transformed into a rich learning opportunity, where students took ownership of the planning process, developing skills in collaboration, decision making and creative thinking.

Students thoughtfully selected the activities they wished to include, resulting in a dynamic event featuring a lively disco with musical statues, imaginative costume design, a sensory exploration area, interactive games and a pumpkin decorating contest. Each element reflected student interests and choices and the event was a testament to the power of student voice in fostering engagement, responsibility and community.

## Halloween fun at Treloar School

During autumn Physical Well-being sessions, school students were actively engaged in refining both gross and fine motor skills through purposeful, student-led exploration. Using familiar PE and sports equipment in innovative ways, they demonstrated adaptability, problem-solving and creative thinking. For instance, repurposing table cricket ramps to launch larger balls at skeleton skittles or aiming through pumpkin polybat targets encouraged students to experiment with force, coordination and precision.

More importantly, students modified activities to suit their individual needs, tailoring their experiences to achieve personal goals as well as boosting their self-esteem and confidence. It is clear that when learning is both inclusive and imaginative, the outcomes go far beyond the activity.



# Student artwork showcased at a London event

We are so proud of our students who during the autumn term prepared their artwork for a special projection at Beyond the Frame, Treloar's new event that took place in November in Mansion House, London.

The event was a chance for the students to express their creativity and for their talents to shine outside Treloar's walls. During the evening, guests saw a 5-minute installation that featured approximately 50 pieces of artwork created by Treloar's students.

In addition to the immersive projections, guests took part in a live auction that offered one-of-a-kind pieces created by Treloar's students. Acclaimed artist, Treloar's Patron and former student Tom Yendell OBE was a special guest speaker during the evening, and talked about his experience of art at Treloar's.

## Students tackling disability employment gap

Hosted by Treloar's, the Business without Barriers event at Mansion House brought together business leaders, educators, and advocates who explored practical solutions for improving access to meaningful careers for disabled young adults.

During the event, former Treloar College students and members of Let Me In spoke about the mission behind their student-led business that offers accessibility audits to local business, venues and community spaces.

Visit our website to find out more:  
<https://www.treloar.org.uk/let-me-in>







## Celebrating National Occupational Therapy Week

At the start of November, Treloar's Occupational Therapy Team shared with us student stories that showcased the life-changing impact of occupational therapy across the school and college.

### Malita's story

Thanks to the support of our Occupational Therapy Team, school student Malita has been able to explore alternative ways to gain independent mobility. Through regular on-site driving sessions using the Ability Drive system, the OT Team has helped Malita demonstrate skills in driving a SMART Platform using her eyes. This adaptive technology has unlocked her potential to independently control a powered wheelchair.

### Zara's story

At the beginning of this year, school student Zara met with our OT Team to talk about her hand skills and identify what goals and targets she wanted to work on. Zara expressed she wanted to make her own prom dress and to be able to use a sewing machine. As a result, the team sourced a switch-operated sewing machine for Zara who made a beautiful black dress in time for her prom in July.

### What occupational therapy means to our students (in their own words):

"OT have been really helpful. I have been able to get different foot rests on my shower chair so they are more comfortable for me. I have been working with Lou on my community skills so I can go out on my own safely in the local town. I have been on some community skill sessions with my friend Thomas. We have been to Alton Town Centre and we have been on a train to Aldershot. With Lou's assistance I phoned up (National Rail Enquiries) about train assistance for wheelchair users."

"Our OT group on Thursday is amazing!"

"I like when my OT goes with me on community skills because she talks with me and last time we had a good time choosing X-box games."



## Remembrance Day

On Remembrance Day, our students and staff came together to learn about the significance of the day, the symbolism of the poppy, and to reflect on the courage and sacrifice of those who have served for the freedoms we enjoy today.

A member of staff who served in the armed forces shared their memories and reflections in short film clips shown in our Immersive Learning Zone helping to make these important stories accessible to everyone, giving us all a moment to pause and remember.



## Supporting local wildlife

On 11 November, college students from the Employability and Vocational Pathway and Sixth Form students welcomed volunteers from Exclusive Networks and Jenny Griffiths from AVLAN (Alton and Villages Local Action For Nature) for a day dedicated to supporting local wildlife.

The day began with an inspiring presentation from Jenny, who spoke about the work of AVLAN and the importance of creating habitats for insects and pollinators. After the talk, the volunteers headed outdoors to put their new knowledge into practice, building bug hotels across the campus.







## Multi-sensory journey into Caribbean culture.

As part of their 'Generations' topic, KS3 students have been exploring the important story of the Windrush Generation. Thanks to the Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery, who generously shared their 2023 exhibition pack Our Windrush Story, we transformed our Outdoor Learning Classroom into an interactive 'museum' experience for the whole of KS3.

Students learned about the significant contributions of the Windrush Generation to Basingstoke while taking part in a vibrant, multi-sensory journey into Caribbean culture. Students had the opportunity to explore traditional foods and spices, play steel drums, investigate themed suitcases, learn about Caribbean geography and flags, and immerse themselves in authentic music. This cross-curricular experience really brought the students' learning to life for them in an engaging and meaningful experience.



## KS3 students visit a local care home

As part of their topic on 'Generations', Treloar's students visited a local care home to meet and chat with residents from an older generation. This enriching experience gave them the chance to connect across age groups, ask thoughtful, pre-prepared questions and hear fascinating stories from the past.

The visit sparked meaningful conversations, built empathy and helped students deepen their understanding of history and community. It was a wonderful way to make what they have been learning real and relevant.





# When disability is no barrier to exceptional music-making

On Friday, 14 November, in the beautiful Chawton House, Treloar's former student Alessandro Vazzana performed with the Clarion Trio: Oscar Abbott on piano, Georgina Spray on French horn, and Alessandro on Clarion.

The programme featured modern works which were perfectly suited for a lunchtime audience in Jane Austen's home village. This talented trio demonstrated that disability is no barrier to exceptional music-making. Their timing, dynamic sensitivity, and focus were evident in every note, leaving the audience spellbound.

Jocelyn Watkins said: "As a music teacher of children and young people with disabilities, a trustee of Open Up Music (the creators of Clarion), and a musician myself, this felt like the beginning of a new era—where traditional and modern instruments coexist without boundaries. These musicians have faced significant prejudice along their journey, and I listened with immense pride. This was not an audience hearing 'disabled musicians'; this was an audience just listening to beautifully played music."



## Future Fest

For over 25 years now the Future Fest transition event has provided a very successful and vital information service so that students can begin to investigate options available to them for when they leave Treloar's.

On 13 February 2026, we will host the event on site. Service providers are invited to Treloar's for the day to participate in an exhibition during which KS4 and Sixth Form students, their families and the staff are all able to access the people and resources the exhibition provides.

<https://www.treloar.org.uk/events/future-fest-2026>





## Pudsey-themed PE with RGS Guildford

It was a pleasure to welcome Royal Grammar School back to Treloar's!

RGS students joined us to coach our students through a series of Pudsey-themed PE activities inspired by different disability sports.

RGS students took the lead in guiding activities, interacting with all our students to explore a variety of movements and skills in a fun, inclusive way. Our students were eager to demonstrate how equipment and activities can be adapted to meet individual needs and together, everyone discovered new ways to make sport accessible for all.

RGS students shared that the experience was extremely valuable and that they plan to incorporate some of these inclusive ideas into their future coaching sessions. A fantastic day of learning and collaboration for both schools!

## Inclusive sports with The Ferns Primary Academy

In November, Treloar's was buzzing with energy as we welcomed students and staff from The Ferns Primary Academy for a day of inclusive sport! From Table Cricket and Polybat to New Age Kurling and Boccia, everyone got involved.

Students learned how adapted equipment opens doors for all because inclusion isn't just about sport, it's about equality and belonging. This collaboration between SEN and mainstream schools shows what's possible when we focus on abilities, not limitations.

A huge success and so much fun we can't wait to do it again!







## Introduction to switches

Our Assistive Technology Team has recommended websites for parents and carers who would like to practice some Switch access and have fun with their young person over Christmas break:

<https://www.shinylearning.co.uk/freegames/>

<https://www.eyegazegames.com/onboarding>

A switch is a device for controlling assistive technology for people who have difficulty with touch screen, mice or keyboards.

Switches can be activated with:

- head or chin,
- finger(s), arm or hand,
- knee or foot,
- voice
- eye-blink, etc.

In the context of access, a switch can be used by a person with complex disabilities to control a computer or tablet device. A switch, coupled with appropriate software and hardware, can also be used to control an individual's environment (environmental control), e.g. to close and open curtains, turn a TV on and off etc.

You can use a switch to:

- Operate a toy to help develop an understanding of 'cause and effect'
- Access a communication aid or control a computer, tablet or phone
- Control devices at home in conjunction with an environmental control system
- Drive a power wheelchair
- Play video games

## 3D printing to enhance educational access

Our Assistive Technologist, Dean Hall, attended the TechAbility Conference in Nottingham in November where he delivered a session on how 3D printing is used at Treloar's to enhance educational access of our students.

At TechAbility25, attended by practitioners in assistive technology, Dean showcased 4 case studies that demonstrate how 3D-printed solutions are helping students at Treloar School and College to:

- Improve mobility
- Access and play musical instruments
- Take active part in lessons and activities

Read all about it on our website: <https://www.treloar.org.uk/news/2025/11/19/3d-printing-enhance-educational-access>





## Spotlight on the PE Option for KS4

A key feature of KS4 are the wonderful learning experiences on offer in the form of Options.

The concept of Options for KS4 is to enable students to have autonomy over their learning and develop their passions.

During Option PE so far students have been thinking about Leadership.

'Freya the Terrible Teacher' made a guest appearance highlighting how not to teach and the students were quick to tell staff what was wrong with the session, one even commenting: "I came here to do PE not wait around" before the theme of the lesson became clear and we all were able to laugh about the awful lesson presented. Soon students were animatedly discussing the strengths of a leader and things that should be done in each PE Lesson.

They have all been planning their Warm Ups for future leadership sessions and thinking how different skills can be broken up in to different stages to make them easier to grasp. We also thought about language when giving instructions and demonstrations but also how students might need to change or modify an activity to suit.

## Wacky Racers

During their weekly Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy sessions, Treloar's primary students have been busy bringing their own Wacky Racers to life: from designing and measuring to decorating and building. This hands-on project has been a wonderful way to develop fine motor skills, decision-making, communication and imagination. It has also been a fantastic motivator for students learning powered mobility, giving everyone the chance to join in the race.







## Annual Leavers' Tea celebration

In December, we welcomed back the class of 2025 together with their families and carers for a Leavers' Tea during which they received their certificates.

## International Volunteer Day

Every year on 5 December Treloar's community recognises international volunteers who help us transform lives of children and young people at Treloar School and College.

Since 2014, Treloar's has been welcoming international volunteers who join our school and college across various departments. Thanks to the partnership with International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE), we are able to offer work experience and support volunteers from all walks of life.

Being a volunteer at Treloar's offers the opportunity for practical experience of living with, and caring for young people who, because of disability or illness, require the very special support available onsite. Moreover, all volunteers have access to professional training which helps them prepare and gain experience within their roles.

Thank you to our volunteers for all your hard work!







## Santa's Grotto

At the start of December, primary students gathered in the Chill out Zone to take part in Christmas activities and collect their gifts from Santa.

## Music assembly

Our termly music assembly treated students, staff and parents to an incredible showcase of musical talent as 12 students took to the stage. This event is always a highlight of the school calendar, and once again, our young performers, who attend 1:1 peripatetic music lessons, wowed us, not only with their musical ability but also with their confidence and poise in front of the entire school and a proud audience of parents.

The performances featured a wonderful mix of voice and adapted instruments, including the Clarion and the Strum. These innovative instruments, developed by Open Up Music and Arcana Instruments, are designed to make music accessible to everyone, regardless of physical ability. They open up exciting opportunities for creativity and inclusion, and it was inspiring to see our students embrace them so enthusiastically.

A huge thank you goes to our amazing peripatetic music teachers, Oliver and Hayley, whose dedication and expertise make these moments possible.

We couldn't be prouder of our performers and look forward to many more magical musical moments throughout the year.







## Visit the new Let Me In page

Let Me In is a student-led business that offers accessibility audits to local business premises to help them improve access and improve employment opportunities for disabled people.

To learn more about their mission, visit their new page:

<https://www.treloar.org.uk/let-me-in>

## Disability History Month

Disability History Month 2025 takes place from November 20 to December 20.

As part of it, our college student Alex, interviewed Treloar's Speech and Language Therapist, Caroline Casula, for The Knights Foundation, a trust that offers gifts and help to carers and families managing disabilities.

In the video, Alex explores the impact technology has had on her development. She demonstrates how she uses Eyegaze in order to communicate, and Caroline explains the technology in more detail.

You can watch the interview on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmqW2cifags>







## Christmas Fair

On Friday 12 December, Treloar's parents, carers and the local community attended the annual Christmas Fair held on the campus in Holybourne.

Visitors had a good time browsing through a number of stalls with Christmas items hand-made by students and Treloar's staff. There was also the famous annual hamper raffle, offering a chance to win from an assortment of hampers.







## Brass band back at Treloar's

We were delighted to welcome back the wonderful brass band performers to play for college and school students. Everyone loved singing along to carols and festive favourites such as 'Last Christmas' and 'All I want for Christmas is you'.

We were so pleased to have singer Bex with us as well whose beautiful voice lead the singing in great style. A wonderful way to enjoy the season.





## Open for nominations: Commitment to Excellence Awards

Did you know that you can nominate a member of staff, or a whole team, for a Commitment to Excellence (CTE) Award? These valued awards recognise staff for the hard work and contribution that they make towards Treloar's, our students and their families.

There are two ways of voting:

1. When you visit reception, there will be a red box with leaflets for you to complete and drop in.
2. Send an email to [quality@treloar.org.uk](mailto:quality@treloar.org.uk), provide the full name, including surname, of the member of staff you would like to nominate with a short description why you feel that member of staff has demonstrated our values or has excelled in their work.

Staff can be nominated through the year.

All staff nominated are personally thanked by the CEO and receive a certificate under one of Treloar's core values, described below.

Treloar's core values:

- **Inclusive:** e.g. staff who model inclusive behaviours, may actively promote an inclusive culture, or work to remove barriers for our students and others.
- **Integrity and Respect:** e.g. staff who listen to students' views, or support them to make age-appropriate choices; they may treat everyone with mutual respect, or support a culture of openness and honesty.
- **Striving for Excellence:** e.g. staff who provide students and families with outstanding care and support, who actively challenge others to ensure quality improvement, or innovate to ensure students receive the cutting-edge, excellent support they deserve.

## Internet filtering to student iPads

Please remember that any Internet filtering that is applied to student classroom iPads on site at Treloar's is not replicated if the iPad is used at home.

Please make sure that appropriate parental controls are switched on if available from your Internet service provider, or your young person is supervised in their use of the iPad.

InternetMatters.org have a guided parental controls tool to support creating a safer online experience.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>