

# Visiting Speaker Programme

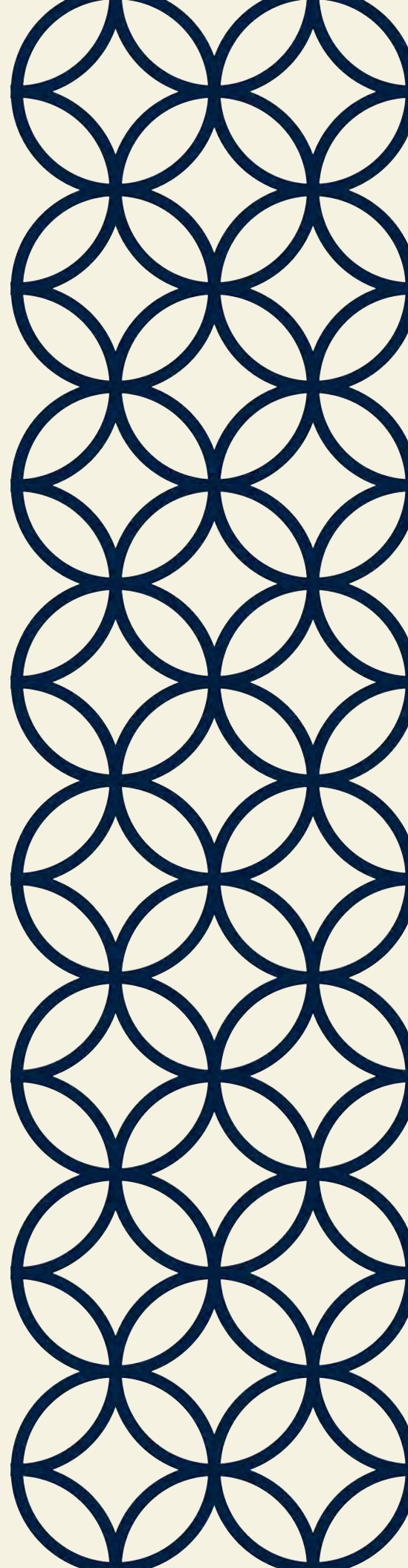
2025-2026

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BISHOP'S  
STORTFORD  
COLLEGE

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# Introduction

We are excited to announce Bishop's Stortford College's Visiting Speaker Programme, featuring a variety of engaging talks, workshops, and unique lessons that our enthusiastic teaching staff are keen to offer to schools, local voluntary organisations, clubs, and societies.

At Bishop's Stortford College, we hold a strong belief in the transformative power of education for both individuals and communities. Our Visiting Speaker Programme embodies this belief, as we aim to extend our positive impact beyond the campus. By sharing our expertise and passions, we hope to inspire and empower those within our community.

Our staff are celebrated for their teaching excellence and bring their special interests and expertise to life through distinctive lessons that go beyond the standard curriculum. These lessons are crafted to spark curiosity and foster a love for learning.

The sessions cover a broad spectrum of topics, ranging from academic subjects to personal development and more. Whether you seek insights into the latest scientific discoveries, historical perspectives, or motivational talks, we have something to offer.

Many of these sessions include hands-on workshops designed to actively engage participants in the learning process. These workshops are tailored to different age groups and interests, ensuring a meaningful and enjoyable experience for all attendees.

This service is provided at no cost, and visits can be arranged to meet the specific needs of the audience. If you would like to schedule a visit or learn more about the opportunities available, please contact the school via the email below. Our knowledgeable and passionate staff from all areas of school life are eager to share their insights and skills with the community.

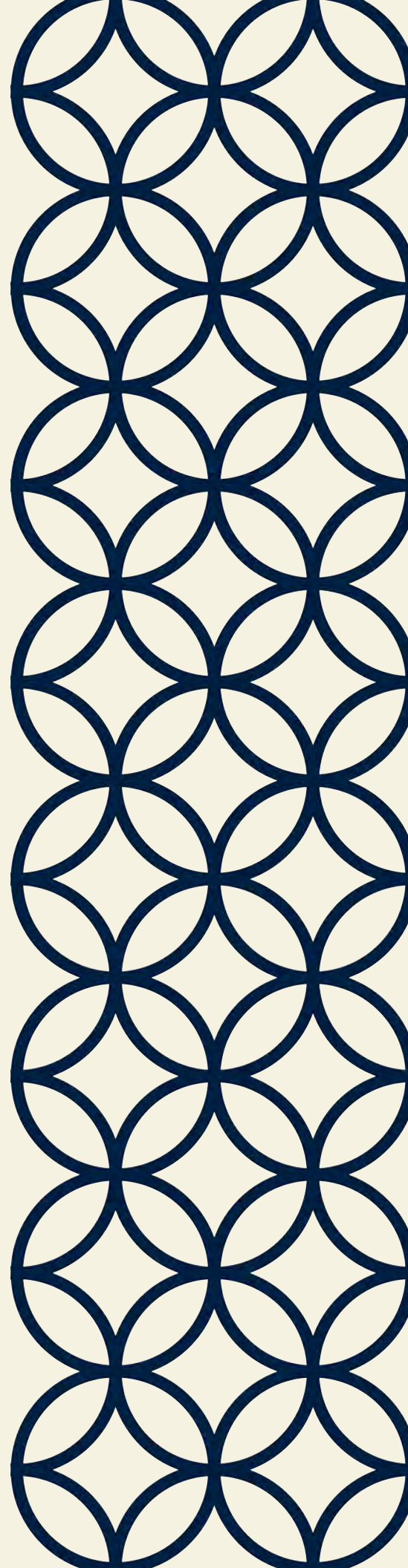
Our programme will continually be reviewed and updated. Please scan the QR code below for the most recent publication.

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# For Primary Schools

Suitable for children aged between 5  
and 11 years old



| Title                                    | Staff            | Details  |
|--|------------------|--|
| The Art of Watercolour                   | Thomas Plunkett  | A fun and creative introduction to watercolour painting for younger learners. This session explores basic techniques like washes and blending, while encouraging children to experiment with colour and express themselves through their own mini masterpieces.  |
| Musicians from the German Speaking World | Colleen Marshman | Take a lively journey through the rich musical heritage of the German-speaking world, from the grandeur of the Baroque to the boldness of the Modern. This session highlights iconic composers like Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schoenberg, exploring how their innovations shaped the sound scape of Europe and beyond.                        |
| Grimm Tales                              | Colleen Marshman | Step into the enchanting world of German fairy tales with this lively and flexible session. From the darkly dramatic to the delightfully bizarre, we'll explore classic plots, bring characters to life through drama, and adapt the tales to suit any age group or setting; perfect for sparking imagination and storytelling skills.           |
| Made in Germany                          | Colleen Marshman | From the printing press to precision engineering, this session explores the remarkable innovations and global brands that originated in German-speaking countries. Discover how inventors and entrepreneurs shaped industries, from automotive and optics to household names like Adidas and Haribo, leaving a lasting mark on the modern world. |

| Title   | Staff              | Details   |
|---|--------------------|---|
| Introductory British Sign Language            | Luci Neville       | A friendly and practical workshop for beginners to learn the basics of BSL. Participants will explore finger spelling, how to introduce themselves, and simple conversational skill - building confidence in inclusive communication from the very first session.   |
| Learning Spanish Through Songs and Games      | Angustias Estrella | A fun and interactive introduction to Spanish using music and play-based learning. In this session, students will explore numbers and colours through catchy songs and engaging games - building confidence and vocabulary in a lively, memorable way.  |
| Chalk It Up: Shading Shapes into 3D.          | Jennifer Payne     | Pupils will discover how to bring their drawings to life using chalk pastels. Through guided activities, they will learn how to blend colours, add highlights and shadows, and use layering techniques to create the illusion of three-dimensional forms.   |
| Fossils: Using the Present to Unlock the Past | John Maguire       | This session explores how studying modern geological processes helps us interpret the fossil record and Earth's ancient history. Learn how fossils form, what they reveal about past environments, and how the principle of uniformitarianism guides scientists in piecing together the story of life on Earth. |
| Say What? How Words Shape the World!          | Joanna Pinches     | A session that introduces the subject of Philosophy, invites curiosity and gives a sense of adventure in thinking critically. Students will consider the validity of words and how language connects to reality.  |



| Title   | Staff         | Details  |
|---|---------------|--|
| Adolphe Sax and his eponymous-o-phone                             | Beni Atkinson | This exciting session introduces pupils to the fascinating world of 19th-century musical invention. Discover how new materials and technologies from the Industrial Revolution helped shape modern instruments, explore the genius of Adolphe Sax, and see how design and sound came together to create the orchestra we know today. |
| Music - Spotlight on a Composer                                   | Iago Nunez    | Discover the magic of classical music with our engaging and educational workshop series, designed for schools and tailored to captivate audiences of all ages. In these sessions, Iago Nunez will take you on a musical journey through the works of renowned composers such as Beethoven, Chopin, Grieg, Ravel, and Bach.           |
| WW1 – Ypres, the Somme, and the Home Front                        | Graham Brooks | Journey through the mud and memory of the Great War, with a focus on Ypres and the Somme. This talk also explores the war's impact on everyday life at home, offering a human lens on one of history's most devastating conflicts.   |
| WW2 – Air War, D-Day, and Key Battles                             | Graham Brooks | From the skies over Britain to the beaches of Normandy, this session dives into the pivotal moments of WWII. Discover the strategies, sacrifices, and stories behind the air campaigns, D-Day landings, and decisive battles that shaped the modern world.   |
| Politics is Everywhere: What is Politics and Why is it Important? | Alison Self   | This fun and accessible session introduces young learners to the basics of politics: what it is, how it affects their lives, and why it's important to care. Students will explore how decisions are made and how they can have a voice in their communities.  |

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|--|-------------------|--|
| Exploring Oil Pastel   | Emma Bowater      | In this creative session, students will use oil pastels to explore colour mixing, complementary colours, and texture techniques. Through guided practice, they will create a vibrant small study of a cupcake - developing both artistic confidence and a deeper understanding of colour theory.   |
| Narrative Writing Workshop   | Sarah Culley      | In this creative writing session, pupils will explore classic nursery rhymes, like Humpty Dumpty, through the eyes of different characters. By writing empathetic narratives, they will develop perspective-taking, emotional literacy, and storytelling skills in a fun and imaginative way.  |
| The History of Sport: Football, Rugby, and Cricket   | Alex Swart-Wilson | Explore the origins and evolution of three of the world's most beloved sports. This session traces how football, rugby, and cricket developed over time, highlighting key moments, cultural impact, and how each sport reflects the society in which it grew.  |
| Croissants, Cancellations and Customer Reviews - The Reality of Running a Holiday Business in Rural France | Emma Tumelty      | Ever dreamed of running a holiday business abroad? This lively and interactive talk lifts the curtain on life behind the scenes of a rural French rental business: where croissants meet customer complaints. Students will explore entrepreneurship, cultural adaptation, and the unexpected lessons that come from navigating real-world challenges far from home. |

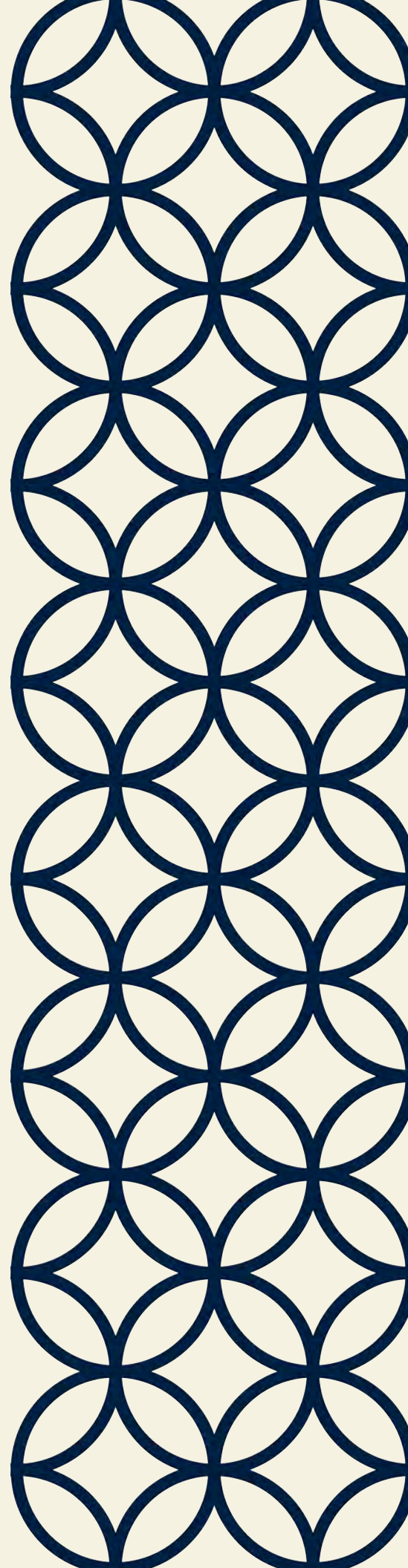


*Our sessions can form part of a varied co-curricular programme for students of all ages.*



# For Secondary Schools

Suitable for children aged between 11  
and 18 years old



| Title  | Staff          | Details  |
|--|----------------|--|
| How to be a Human in the 21st Century: Why Politics Matters Whether You Care or Not.           | Alison Self    | In a world shaped by global crises, digital echo chambers, and shifting power structures, this thought-provoking session explores why political awareness is more essential than ever. Whether you're deeply engaged or proudly apolitical, discover how everyday choices are shaped by policy, and why understanding politics is key to navigating modern life with purpose and agency. |
| Mindfulness for the Real World: How to Use Mindfulness to Help With Study and Life in General. | Alison Self    | This session introduces practical mindfulness techniques to support focus, reduce stress, and build emotional resilience. Learn how to apply mindfulness in everyday life and study routine; helping students and professionals alike stay calm, present, and productive.  |
| Music - Spotlight on a Composer  | Iago Nunez     | Discover the magic of classical music with our engaging and educational workshop series, designed for schools and tailored to captivate audiences of all ages. In these sessions, Iago Nunez will take you on a musical journey through the works of renowned composers such as Beethoven, Chopin, Grieg, Ravel, and Bach.   |
| Classrooms and Chatbots: How Generative AI Is Rewriting Education                              | Peter O'Connor | Generative AI is moving fast — and schools are beginning to feel its presence. This session explores how tools like ChatGPT and Copilot are changing the way students learn, teachers teach, and schools operate. Expect practical examples, big questions, and a glimpse into a very different educational future.  |
| Material Culture in the Writing of Sylvia Townsend Warner                                      | Claire Gale    | An interactive seminar for Sixth Form English students, looking at a short story of Sylvia Townsend Warner and her use of material culture to express political ideas.   |

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|---|------------------|--|
| Musicians from the German Speaking World  | Colleen Marshman | From Bach to Beethoven, Schubert to Stockhausen, this session explores the rich musical legacy of German-speaking composers. Discover how their innovations shaped classical and modern music, and gain insight into the cultural and historical contexts that influenced their work.  |
| Made in Germany   | Colleen Marshman | From the printing press to precision engineering, this session explores the remarkable innovations and global brands that originated in German-speaking countries. Discover how inventors and entrepreneurs shaped industries, from automotive and optics to household names like Adidas and Haribo, leaving a lasting mark on the modern world.                 |
| Idea Detectives: What Makes a Thought Great?  | Joanna Pinches   | A lecture that introduces the subject of Philosophy, invites curiosity and gives a sense of adventure in thinking critically. Students will consider the validity of ideas and how thoughts connect to reality.  |
| Uniformitarianism: How Do We Use These Principles to Unlock the Geological Record and Interpret Other Challenges. | John Maguire     | Discover how the principle of uniformitarianism, “the present is the key to the past”, helps geologists decode Earth’s history. This session explores how observing modern processes like erosion, sedimentation, and volcanic activity allows us to interpret ancient environments, tackle environmental challenges, and understand long-term planetary change. |

| Title   | Staff              | Details  |
|---|--------------------|--|
| Layers of Expression: Using Photoshop to Enhance Artistic Development.        | Jennifer Payne     | This creative digital workshop introduces students to the power of Photoshop as a tool for developing their art projects. Participants will learn how to edit and enhance images to create stronger references for drawing, explore how to respond to the work of other artists through digital manipulation, and gain confidence using layers to build complex visual compositions. (Ideal for GCSE & A level Art Students) |
| How International Involvement Influenced the Course of the Spanish Civil War. | Angustias Estrella | A session examining European politics and the role of external influences in shaping the Spanish Civil War and World War II.   |
| The Art of Watercolour  | Thomas Plunkett    | Dive into the expressive world of watercolour painting through this hands-on workshop. Learn a variety of techniques - from washes and layering to dry brush and lifting - that bring depth, texture, and vibrancy to your artwork. Whether you're a beginner or looking to refine your skills, this session will allow you to explore the medium with an expert tutor.  |
| The History of Photography and the cyanotype Process                          | Emma Bowater       | A lecture discussing the advent of photography and the magic of the blueprint process, cyanotype. The session can include a workshop into how to use the technique to explore negatives and traditional darkroom practices.  |

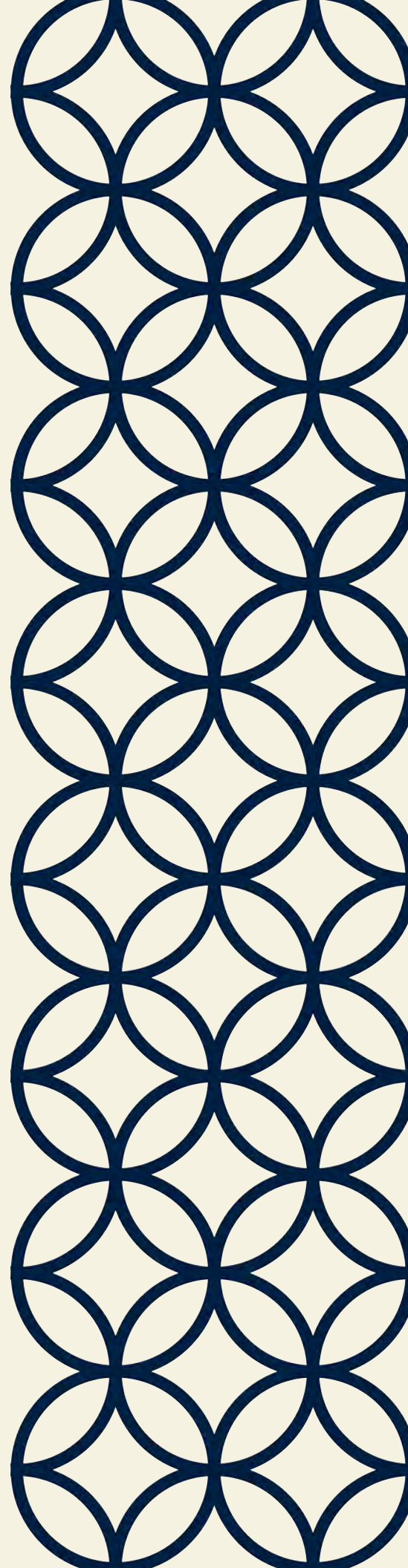


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|---|-------------------|---|
| Germany, Pitt to Peel, Russia 1905–1945, USA, Liberals and Suffragettes | Graham Brooks     | A flexible and wide-ranging offering tailored to your audience's interests. Whether it's the rise of modern Germany, the reforming zeal of Pitt and Peel, revolutionary Russia, American expansion, or the fight for women's rights, we can craft a compelling session to suit.                             |
| Sport, Identity and Politics  | Alex Swart-Wilson | Explore how sport shapes and reflects personal and national identities, and how it becomes a powerful platform for political expression. This talk delves into iconic moments where athletes have challenged norms, united communities, or sparked global debates beyond the playing field.                 |
| The Perils of Perfectionism   | Jane Pawulska     | Perfectionism may seem like a strength, but it often masks deeper anxieties and can hinder growth, creativity, and well-being. This talk explores the psychological roots of perfectionism, its impact on performance and relationships, and how to foster a healthier mindset of progress over perfection. |



# For the Community

Suitable for those aged 18 years old  
and over



| Title  | Staff           | Details  |
|--|-----------------|--|
| An Introduction to Mindfulness for Stress Reduction              | Alison Self     | This introductory session offers simple, effective techniques to help manage stress and improve focus through mindfulness. Learn how to slow down, breathe, and build calm into your daily routine, ideal for both beginners and busy professionals seeking balance.   |
| Woodworking and Construction                                     | Julie Cotterell | A hands-on guide to creating wildlife-friendly habitats for your garden or school grounds. Learn how to design and build bird boxes, bug hotels, and other simple shelters that support biodiversity, perfect for nature lovers, families, and eco-conscious educators.  |
| Why Kids Give Up Music: A Guide to the Pitfalls Before You Start | Beni Atkinson   | This insightful session explores the common reasons children disengage from learning music, and how to prevent them. From unrealistic expectations to lack of support or the wrong instrument choice, we'll highlight practical strategies to help young musicians thrive from the very beginning.   |
| Wise Clicks  | Sasha Gunes     | Discover the digital world at your own pace in a friendly, supportive environment. Wise Clicks is a beginner friendly computer club designed especially for older adults who want to build confidence using modern technology. Whether you are learning to email, browse the internet safely, create a poster, basic spreadsheets or connect with loved ones online, our patient instructors and small group sessions make it easy and enjoyable. No experience needed, just curiosity and a willingness to learn! |



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|------------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Great Mops and Military Buttons    | Claire Gale      | This session offers an introduction to the work of 20th century writer Sylvia Townsend Warner, a writer who was greatly overlooked during the 20th century despite her significant success in the USA and with her short stories for the New Yorker. My lecture introduces her life and writing, focusing particularly on her novel Lolly Willowses and the ways in which it considers the role of women in inter war Britain, especially through its depiction of mundane household items. |
| The History and Art of Watercolour | Thomas Plunkett  | Discover the rich heritage and evolving techniques of watercolour painting in this engaging lecture and live demonstration. From its early use in illuminated manuscripts to its role in modern artistic expression, this session blends historical insight with practical artistry, perfect for enthusiasts and curious creatives alike.   |
| Musikreise durch die DACH-Laender  | Colleen Marshman | Take a virtual journey through Germany's diverse federal states, each with its own unique culture, history, and traditions. This engaging session offers a curated selection of highlights, from fairy-tale castles and vibrant cities to regional cuisine and dialects, perfect for learners of all levels.  |
| Introductory British Sign Language | Luci Neville     | A friendly and practical workshop for beginners to learn the basics of BSL. Participants will explore finger spelling, how to introduce themselves, and simple conversational skills—building confidence in inclusive communication from the very first session.  |

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|---|--------------------|--|
| Gentle Parenting: What's Best for Raising Today's Younger Generation? | Francesca Mann     | This friendly, interactive workshop will explore the key differences between gentle parenting and restorative parenting, and how each approach can support young children's emotional growth and behaviour. It's a chance to learn, reflect, and connect with other parents in a welcoming space for discussion and idea-sharing.  |
| Unlocking New Worlds: The Benefits of Learning Languages as an Adult  | Angustias Estrella | Learning a new language as an adult brings cognitive, professional, and personal benefits. It enhances brain function, opens career opportunities, and deepens cultural understanding. This session explores how age is no barrier to language learning and provides practical strategies for success.   |
| Secrets in the Sand: The Kalahari's Climate Story During the Ice Ages | Peter O'Connor     | While ice sheets advanced across the northern hemisphere, what was happening in the sun-soaked sands of the Kalahari? This talk explores how Africa's great desert swelled and shrank over the last 100,000 years, revealing a dramatic story of shifting rainfall, ancient lakes, and global climate connections. Come discover how faraway glaciers helped shape one of the world's driest landscapes. |
| Music - Spotlight on a Composer                                       | Iago Nunez         | Discover the magic of classical music with our engaging and educational workshop series, designed for schools and tailored to captivate audiences of all ages. In these sessions, Iago Nunez will take you on a musical journey through the works of renowned composers such as Beethoven, Chopin, Grieg, Ravel, and Bach.   |

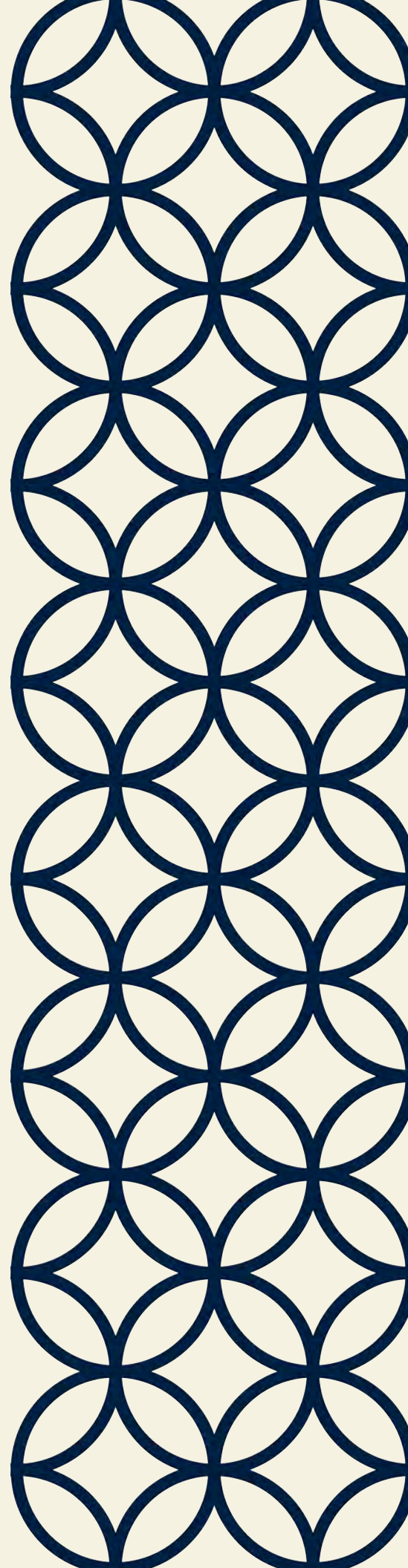
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| The Cold War<br>(1940–1955)                              | Graham Brooks | Explore the tense early years of the Cold War, from the uneasy alliance of WWII to the iron grip of ideological rivalry. This talk unpacks the roots of East-West division, the Berlin Blockade, and the birth of NATO in a world reshaped by atomic power.   |
| The Vietnam War  | Graham Brooks | A complex conflict that reshaped global politics and public opinion. This session explores the military, political, and cultural dimensions of the Vietnam War, from jungle warfare to protest movements.   |
| The Chimp Paradox  | Graham Brooks | Based on the best-selling book by Professor Steve Peters, this talk explores the powerful model of the mind that helps explain why we sometimes act against our best interests. Learn how to manage your inner “chimp,” improve emotional resilience, and make more rational, confident decisions in both personal and professional life. |
| Navigating the Great<br>Rewiring of the Teenage<br>Brain | Jane Pawulska | Adolescence is a time of extraordinary neurological transformation, often misunderstood as mere moodiness or rebellion. This talk unpacks the science behind the teenage brain’s “rewiring,” offering insights into behaviour, risk-taking, and emotional shifts, and how adults can support young people through this critical phase.    |





# For Teaching Staff

Professional Development  
opportunities



| Title  | Staff            | Details  |
|--|------------------|--|
| Classroom Design:<br>Designing Classrooms to<br>Progress Learning                                  | John Maguire     | Explore how thoughtful classroom design can enhance student engagement, behaviour, and achievement. This session looks at practical, research-informed strategies for creating learning environments that support focus, flexibility, and collaboration.   |
| Using Negotiation Theory<br>to Build Relationships with<br>Parents.                                | John Maguire     | This session applies key principles of negotiation theory to real-world interactions with parents. Learn how to foster trust, manage expectations, and navigate difficult conversations with confidence: building stronger, more collaborative relationships that support student success.   |
| Teaching at Sixth Form<br>Level  | Michelle Sorohan | This session offers practical guidance for teachers new to the profession stepping into Sixth Form teaching. It focuses on building confidence, developing subject delivery, and understanding the expectations and nuances of post-16 education.  |
| Bridging the Gap: Helping<br>Business Specialists to<br>Teach A Level Economics<br>with Confidence | Gareth Williams  | With rising demand for Economics and a shortage of specialists, many Business teachers are stepping into new territory. This practical CPD session builds subject confidence, clarifies key conceptual differences, and offers engaging strategies for teaching core topics like consumer behaviour, marginal utility, and microeconomics in a business context. |



