

# ASPIRE

Dec 24 - #1



# ASPIRE

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# Q&A

## with Mr Whatford

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**N**ew to the school since Autumn 2024, Mr Whatford expresses his gratitude to Imberhorne for making him feel so welcomed, and outlines his hopes for school community, while also giving us an insight on his role as headteacher.

### **What inspired you to be a teacher?**

I didn't come from an educational background, my parents left school at fifteen and sixteen without any qualifications. Because of this, they placed a very high value on my education, and my brother's education and they really supported us.

I had some really good experiences at school and have always really believed in public service. When I finished university, I had a few different routes that I was thinking about, but in the end the one that I thought I would feel the most gratification from is teaching.

I felt that the opportunity I had received through my education and the support from my family was really significant and quite life-changing. And that kind of life changing experience made me feel that teaching was a really important and valid profession.

First of all, I did some volunteering in Brighton School in their behaviour unit and worked with year eleven students who really struggled with school. Then I trained in Bristol, in a city school, where fifty percent of the students didn't have English as a first language, which was an incredibly interesting experience.

The kind of relationships and connections you make with your colleagues and students confirmed to me that teaching was the right way to go.



### **Can you tell us more about your role as headteacher?**

One of the things that's unique about this school is that we have a split-site, so as headteacher I try to divide my time between the two sites. I do at least two days at each school a week and the fifth day of the week is a bit more flexible and I will go between the two.

Every day, I do break and lunch duty as it's really important for me to be able to talk to students and get to know them. I undertake all of the recruitment for the school- for all of the teachers, and other members of staff. I collaborate with the leadership team to organise the overall direction for the school, and from there we will write plans and evaluate the school, which will go through the governors. I attend all the governors' meetings and report to them and they will check and scrutinise all the work that I'm doing and that the leadership team are doing. There are also various external meetings with West Sussex County Council, the other heads and associations in the area, that I attend. I also lead all of the work with federation (Imberhorne is in a federation with Sackville and two other schools), to attempt to share priorities across the schools and ultimately bring them closer together.

Additionally, I meet very regularly with the senior leadership team and other key people.

My days can be really varied, there are some things that are kind of quite fixed like meetings and light management, but overall are quite varied. Part of that is what I like about the job actually; that no two days are really the same. And as a new head, my real priority is getting to know students and staff to build those connections with them and for them to hopefully get to know me and trust me.

## What do you hope to bring to Imberhorne School?

I hope to maintain a really strong sense of community. I hope that people can see me as an approachable leader, and as somebody that cares. To encourage the sense that we should do everything around the focus of the child and in their best interests. There's been quite a lot of change with headteachers in the recent years, so I hope that I can be here for a longer period of time in order to achieve all of the goals that we have as a school. I hope that I can maintain our brilliant extracurricular offer. I hope that I can continue to raise our standards and expectations, for that's something we're really working on across the school. I hope that I can ensure that every student that goes here can leave with a very clear sense of their destinations. That they have had the opportunity to develop as a whole person and be a kind of active citizens when they leave school so that they can contribute to society and so they can think, speak, and act for themselves and feel relatively sort of independent. And ultimately to maintain the high standards that this school has already got.

## Have you seen anything at other schools that you think would be a good idea to implement here?

Yes, lots. For starters, we're starting to think about our approach to being an anti-discriminatory school and there are lots of schools who've had focusses on being anti-racist and inclusive. I think that is something which Imberhorne could do really well.

And I strongly believe in the importance of inclusion, and I think that that's a step in the right direction for us to stand up in a front-footed, proactive way and say that we absolutely reject all forms of discrimination. So, that's something at the bedrock of our culture.

I think that other schools that I've worked in have got a really good culture in coaching. I would like to introduce more of that into our school. I think that there are some schools that do really well with dis-advantaged students, so students who come from various different challenges in their personal lives and home lives and can get really good outcomes for those students. At the moment, we're working with three other schools in the local authority with a project around helping our disadvantaged students, and I think working together as a four would provide a lot for us to learn.

“ I hope that people can see me as an approachable leader, and as somebody that cares. ”

## Where have you worked before Imberhorne?

Imberhorne is the third school that I've worked at, apart from my training schools. The first school I worked in was a coastal school near Brighton. While I was there, I did some whole school work on community, the student voice and citizenship. I was also head of media studies and the lead practitioner in humanities. Then I left, as the assistant headteacher, after doing that for three years. More recently I was at a school in West Sussex near to Little Hampton, that I worked at for six years as deputy headteacher. Whilst I was there, I had various different roles and responsibilities, but I finished with a responsibility for the quality of education, which includes all the teaching, the learning, the outcomes, the assessment. And various other jobs for example: writing the timetable, doing lots of data for the school, and working with staff and staff development too.



“Where you come from doesn't have to be a limitation on what you can achieve.”

## If you weren't a teacher, what would you be?

There were two other options I had when I finished university that I could have pursued instead of teaching. The first was that I had the offer to take on a journalism apprenticeship at an online organisation. So initially that apprenticeship would have entailed travelling and working and doing kind of exhibitions, displays, museums and so on. The other offer that I had was my university offered me to stay on to complete master's and a doctor to finish the work that I was doing for my dissertation, my undergraduate degree. So, I suppose I would have ended up possibly in writing journalism of some kind or maybe in academia. They were the only two things that I was choosing between teaching at the end of finishing my degree.

## If you had to give students any piece of advice, what would it be?

I suppose it would be to not ever feel determined by your circumstances because where you come from doesn't have to be a limitation on what you can achieve. And also, to confront things that you find difficult and really test yourself. By doing this, you can build up a capacity to manage certain scenarios better, and open up your window of tolerance. The other thing I would say is to not underestimate the power of friendship. I think as people grow older, they can become a bit more insular and more focussed on their careers. I believe that having a healthy social life is really important as you navigate school and beyond.

-by Gracie NEEDHAM

# DISTINCTION

For Eco-Committee

At Imberhorne, environmental learning is a priority and taught in all subjects- from R.E to art- throughout every year of school. We have an understanding that the world is at an environmental crisis point and small actions like turning lights off or reducing our meat consumption are just some of the ways that we can help to make a difference.

The Eco-committee works towards an Eco Award every year, where we can be graded either Pass, Merit or Distinction as a result of changes we have made at Imberhorne to help educate, involve and encourage environmental respect and understanding. We are extremely proud to have achieved a Distinction from our work during the 2023/24 academic year. This was our first Distinction and we are already reaching for another this year.





Some of the changes implemented last year included pen recycling boxes in classrooms, a bake sale, turn off the light stickers and our very successful revision guide recycling scheme, where we have been able to return over 200 books to departments for re-use in class or at home.

The Eco-committee meets fortnightly, and enjoy some snacks whilst filling in our action plan and environmental surveys. There is also the opportunity for upper school students to meet with Governors and members of the Senior Leadership Team to share our ideas for the school and gain support for larger projects.

At lower school, students meet every week and get an opportunity to partake in a variety of activities from helping out with the lower school chickens to litter picking the outdoor area. The plants of kindness for teachers have been exceptionally successful. The scheme encourages teachers to use live plants in their classroom decor. Plants in the classroom encourage cleaner air and better wellbeing. Similar to Upper School, students meet during lunch.

The work for this academic year has already begun; we have completed a whole school environmental survey, a bake sale to help fund our endeavours, participation in a creative writing competition and made more pen recycling boxes.

We have been very excited to meet new members at both sites and are looking forward to another brilliant year with lots of support from the wider community. Looking toward the future, the committee's goal for this academic year is to reduce paper, implement meat free days in the canteen, build bug homes at lower school and continue strengthening our other schemes, including pen recycling.



# Library News



## What has been happening to the library?

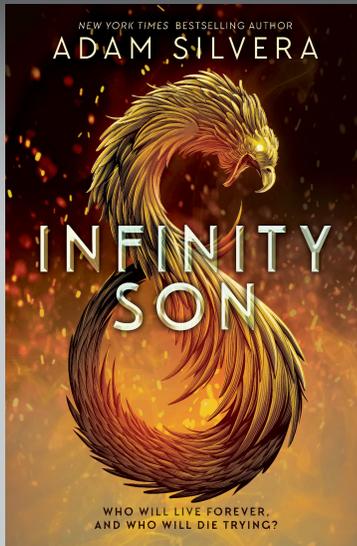
After the impromptu internal water feature back in September, our refreshed library at the Upper School should be opening soon. It will look fabulous with a new carpet, a new librarian desk and freshly painted walls, we are excited and can't wait for you to see it!

Unfortunately, due to the leak, we have had to re-shuffle the shelving so if you can't find what you are looking for, please ask us.

Remember we are always grateful for student book recommendations so, if you have a favourite book or go to author, please let us know.



Reading Recommendations

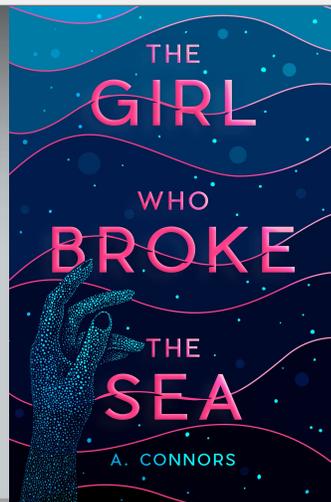


Fantasy fiction/  
Paranormal fiction



Book 1 and Book 2

Science fiction/Dystopian  
fiction/Adventure



YA/Sci-fi/Thriller



# BETTY AND THE WISHING WELL

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- MADDIE DANIELS

“My name is Taylor, thank you for voting me the towns environment association leader. It means the world to me and my daughter, Betty.”

It started in a small, quiet town where a girl named Betty lived in a little cottage with her mother, Taylor. Betty was an eleven year old girl full of curiosity with a bright imagination. Behind her small cottage was a lush, green forest, full of chirping birds and rustling leaves. She loved to walk around and explore the forest, climbing trees and watching different birds. It was her safe place, where she felt free.

But one day, Betty returned home from school to find her beloved forest transformed. The air was full with echoes of chainsaws. Betty watched men in hard hats demolish and tear away her favourite place. She felt as if a part of herself had been ripped away. She was hit with heart stopping waves of hurt.

Determined to find solace, Betty wandered through the shattered remains of the forest the next day. She was looking for any sort of remain of her beloved trees. As she was searching, she came across something unusual. A stone circle sat there covered in fallen branches and dead leaves. Her fingers brushed the cool surface; it was an old wishing well.

The well was old and covered in moss, the stones warm and slightly glistening in the sun. She was confused since she has never come across a well before when exploring the forest. As she peered inside, she noticed that it went a lot deeper than she had expected. Betty closed her eyes, made a wish for a world full of nature and leaned in toward the well. Her heart pounded in excitement. Suddenly, the ground beneath her moved and she tumbled into the well.

The fall felt as if it was lasting forever, but Betty felt no fear, only curiosity. When she finally landed on grass, she opened her eyes to a beautiful view. It was a shimmering world which seemed untouched.

Towering trees filled the sky with leaves full of vibrant colours that changed with each flutter of the wind. Bright flowers danced under a diamond sky and streams of water sparkled as if they had been sprinkled with stars.

“What is this place?” Betty whispered. Her eyes were full of wonder and the air was fragrant with the smell of flowers. The familiarity of nature comforted her heart. As she stepped forward, a tiny creature fluttered by with wings which caught the sunlight. It was a fairy, no larger than Betty’s hand.

“Welcome to the Wishing Well World,” the fairy said with a voice like tinkling bells. “you have found our hidden realm!”

Betty could not believe her ears. “The Wishing Well World?”

“Yes!” the fairy giggled. “A place full of magic and nature. Take a look around.” The fairy waved her hand, gesturing for Betty to follow.

Together, they wandered through lush meadows, discovering bright plants, singing animals and trees which told stories through their rustling leaves. Betty learned about ancient trees and different flowers and plants and about how different animals enjoyed each. She danced with fairies and climbed trees taller than she had ever seen, time slipped away with each minute of laughter.

As the sun began to set the sky turned a gorgeous shade of gold. Betty felt a tiny bit of sadness. She wanted to tell everyone about this enchanted place. The fairy sensed how Betty felt and hovered close.

“There is magic in your world too Betty,” the fairy said gently. “You need to take all that you have learned here and share it to help heal your world. But remember, you can come back whenever you wish, as long as you believe.”

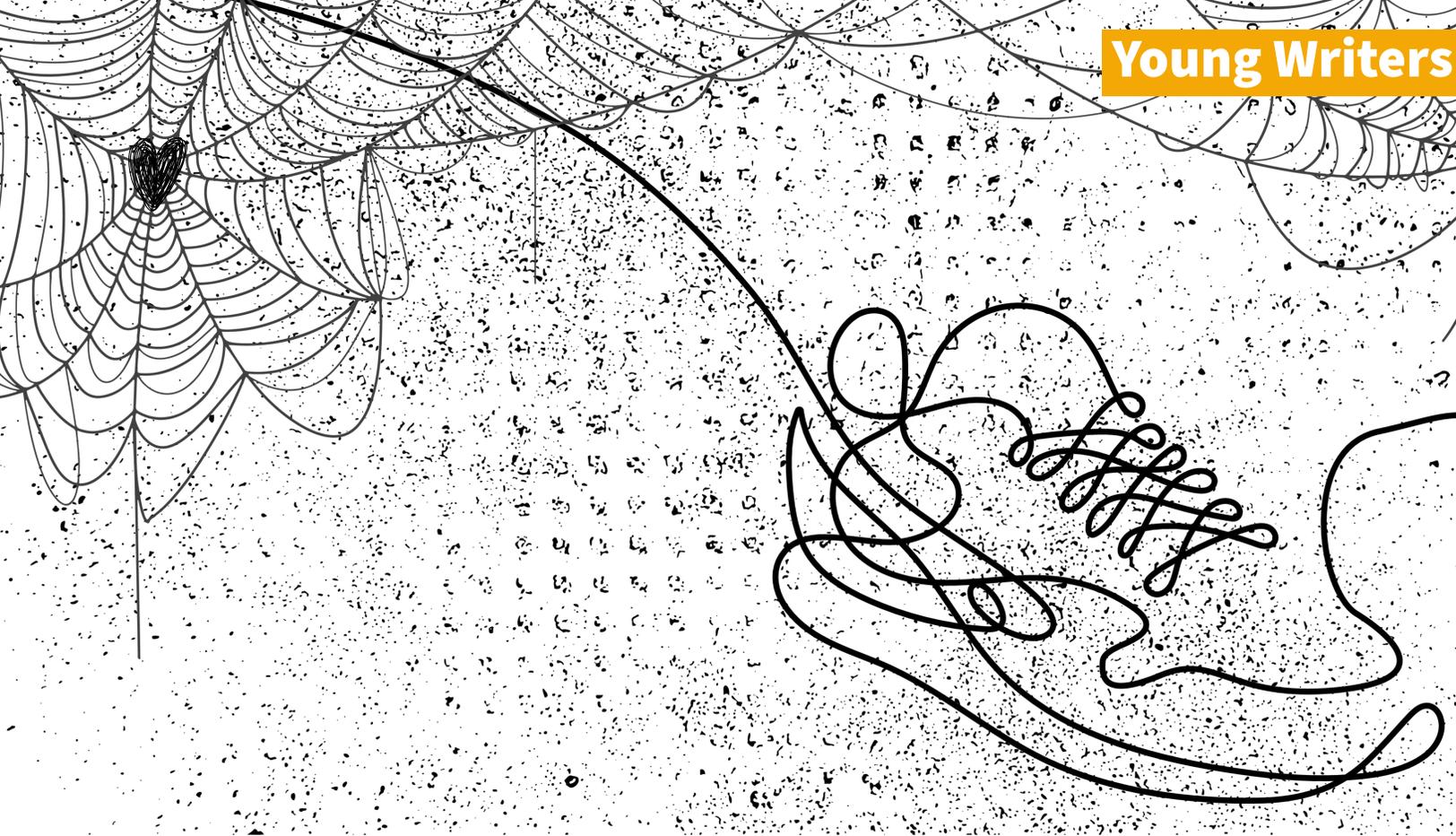
The fairy gestured toward a path which lead away from the heart of the Wishing Well World. She followed the path and eventually found the well where her adventure had begun. She said a heartfelt goodbye to her new friends and climbed up the steep walls of the wishing well. As her feet touched the ground of her garden, she looked back and saw the Wishing Well World fade and shimmer. Although she had come back, she felt changed.

The next morning, a leaflet came through her cottage door looking for an environment ambassador. Betty took the leaflet to her mum , Taylor, and begged her to sign up, especially after what had happened to the forest behind their home. Taylor agreed, filled it in and posted it back.

Betty waited anxiously and three days later, her mum received a letter back from the town mayor. The letter confirmed Taylor’s acceptance as the towns environmental activist leader. Taylor and Betty danced in delight. That afternoon they attended a town gathering, celebrating Taylor and she gave a heartfelt speech.

“My name is Taylor, thank you for voting me as the towns environmental activist leader. This means the world to me and my daughter, Betty.” Taylor finished her speech.

In the days which followed, Betty became a huge protector of the towns natural spaces, keeping memories of the Wishing Well World in the front of her mind. With help from her mum, she organized tree-planting events and encouraged her friends to join. Betty and her mum spread their love for their environment, encouraging and inspiring others to love and cherish it too.



# THE FINAL KNOT

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- FAYE BEGG

**T**ying things is simple. We tie knots, shoes, and even relationships. But no matter how many knots you tie, you can't physically bind yourself to a lover or a friend – only emotionally. And yet, those ties can be fragile. Someone who once promised you their life can sever those ties with just three words

Crunching through the woods, I gaze down at my untied shoes. White laces drag along the dirt, gathering a layer of grime that will no doubt drive my mother mad when I return home.

My feet press into the soft earth, grass bending beneath my steps like miniature umbrellas. Wildflowers stand tall and proud in the spring breeze, their vibrant reds, blues, purples and pinks dancing in the sun. They are rooted, bound to the earth, loyal to mother nature.

Above me, birds perch on branches, singing and swaying, while spiders spin silk webs, tying their homes together with delicate precision.

My feet keep me going, but my mind drifts. I replay the day in my head, each moment as clearly as if it's happening all over again.

Me and him, sitting at the back of the class with his hand intertwined with mine. Around us, the classroom buzzes like a chaotic orchestra.

He squeezes my hand and leans in, his voice a whisper in my ear.  
*"Meet me behind the school,"* he says, smiling.

My heart flutters like a butterfly. His words hammer against my chest, and as soon as the bell rings, I dash down the stairs, racing to the spot behind the school—the perfect hidden corner by the bins, away from the eyes of any teachers. The old, brick wall is covered in graffiti, its colours fading and swirling as the first drops of rain start to fall. The sky groans, and the ground beneath my feet grows soft, the grass turning slick and muddy as the rain intensifies.

Twenty minutes pass before he finally shows up. But he's not alone. He's brought a gang of his friends, my enemies, and even my closest buddies, who all have their phones out – cameras at the ready. I'm cornered against the wall as they surround their prey.

He steps forward, hand extended, smirk twisting his face into something sinister, almost like the Joker.

“Let's break up,” He says, “you were a nice distraction.”

They laugh. Every single one of them. And, in that moment, I feel my strings snap, cut loose by invisible scissors. The rain mixes with my tears as the world blurs around me.

Their laughter still echoes in my mind, growing louder with every step I take. My legs feel heavy as if the earth is swallowing me with each step. I glance down again at my untied shoes, the laces dragging through the mud, smearing it across the once-white canvas. I should stop and tie them, but the thought feels exhausting. What's the point? Nothing stays tied for long, not shoes, friendships, or love.

Picking up the pace as I try to shake the thoughts away, they cling to me like cobwebs. But the more I try to escape, the more tangled I feel. The knots of the day tighten in my chest – the whispers, the smirks, the wicked laughter.

My vision blurs, the forest blending into streaks of green and brown. I push forward, driven by the need to escape.

And then, just as the pressure inside me builds, I feel my foot catch.

A sudden jerk and the ground rushes up to meet me.

I stumble, arms flailing as I try to regain balance but it's too late. My untied laces have wound themselves into a mess beneath me. Falling forward, my knees hit the dirt first, followed by my arms and finally my head. Thudding against the earth.

For a moment, everything is still. The birds stop singing, the breeze halts and all I can hear is my ragged breathing and the thumping of my heart. I lift my head, blinking away the dirty and leaves clinging to my face, and that's when I see it.

Above, tree branches intertwined with one another. There are no birds. No spiders. Just the twisted branches of the trees.

For a moment, I can't remember how I got here. The last thing I remember is the betrayal of my laces as I stumbled to the ground.

I push myself up onto my elbows, glancing around at my surroundings. It's a forest but not the forest I was in before. No, this place is entirely different to the point it doesn't feel real. It's too quiet. The breeze is absent, and everything is frozen like an image. The trees loom overhead, their trunks dark and gnarled, thick ropes of vines coiling around them like snakes. As if the forest is bound together.

Making my way to my feet, I notice my shoes; still untied with the laces curling and twisting like lifeless worms against the earth. I reach down to tie them, but they slip through my grasp, as though resisting me. Frustrated, I let them be.

Through the trees, I can make out figures swaying like puppets on strings although there was no wind or breeze. Looking closer, the figures seem to retreat and vanish into the fog that clung to the air – swirling and shifting as if it had a mind of its own.

The sky is covered by the canopy of twisted branches, and I don't know what the time is in this place.

I take a few steps forward, almost stumbling over the roots that covered the floor. Intertwining and connecting one another to create a maze of bracken that is dedicated to tripping me up. Crisscrossing in every direction, some thick as rope and others thin as silk.

I try to follow the thicker-roped roots as best I can into the fog, letting them lead me through this maze.

This place feels wrong. My chest is tight, constricted by an invisible force that I can't explain. It feels like a dream, a vivid and sharp one, yet it's too distant to make sense.

My heart is being tugged and pulled further into the fog as if my heart was controlling my body. I continued through the forest; everything looked the same. A foggy, tangled world that's imprisoned me, captured my heart. Behind me is nothing but mist and shadows.

Ahead, the fog parts way to reveal a clearing.

Morning light beamed down onto the cleared area, shining against the dew-dropped grass.

The twisted path of roots had split and parted to allow me to walk freely, without the fear of tumbling over my heel.

There, the clearing was warm and comforting - surrounding me with the love I had yearned for. Basking in the light, I glanced around. The shadows moved through the trees, and the creaking of wood and bones rattled through the forest.

A figure circled the clearing, its arms up high as if controlled by the trees, by the creator of this world.

Slowly, the figure stumbles into the light, revealing a form draped in black, a cloak covering them from head to toe. Pale, wooden-like skin is connected by thin, silken strings embedded deep into their ankles, knees, and wrists. They move awkwardly, with their limbs jerking in time with the tugs of the strings.

And then, a face emerges from the shadows. My breath catches. It's him.

He chuckles darkly, his mouth clicking open and shut like a nutcracker.

"This is a nice distraction, isn't it?" he says, his voice dripping with mockery. "You'll never untie yourself. You're bound here, my love."

His eyes are dark, blackened like ink smudges, boring into my soul as I cautiously approach. I reach out toward the strings embedded in his limbs.

"Cut my strings and you'll regret it," he echoes, as if reading my thoughts.

My hand closes around his wrist, pulling against the delicate silk thread. His response is a horrid, banshee-like scream that pierces the air. The sound is unbearable, and I instinctively tug my shoulders up to cover my ears, trying to block out the noise as I continue to wrestle with the fragile strings.

And finally, the string snaps with a loud crack. He wails loudly, grasping his wrist. A black smudge ran down his face, looking like he was crying liquid mascara.

I reached for his other wrist, snapping that string too which causes his shoulders to sag down and his torso to fall till his nose pressed against his knees, the snapping of his spine made me cringe. One by one, I break each of his strings. With each snap, he sags further, his movements growing more erratic until, eventually, he collapses to the ground turning into a lifeless, motionless corpse. Stepping back, my blood runs cold. Did I just kill him? Am I a murderer?

Turning around, I find my path obstructed by a barrier of intertwined thorns and branches. The clearing is being slowly encircled by more puppet figures and thorn barriers. The blinding sunlight intensifies, and I can feel my limbs lifting, as though a UFO were pulling me up.

A sharp pain pierces my wrist, and I look up to see a small hole being drilled through my skin and bone. A thin, silver thread is threaded through it. The agony intensifies as the thread is driven through my ankles, knees, and eventually my head, drilling a hole through my scalp and neck. Blood swells out, spreading across my skin, and my entire body throbs with excruciating pain.

I try to scream, but the sound fades into a mere whisper as the threads tighten and the last knot is tied. My body is paralyzed, leaving me powerless. My screams fade to silence.

The light is blinding as if an angel were hovering above me. The room is stark white, proper, almost pure. An annoying beeping fills my ears. A man looms over me, draped in a white coat, a lanyard jingling on his chest. His mouth moves up and down, but I hear nothing

Slowly, his voice starts to register.

"A coma from a simple trip is highly unlikely," he says, shifting the clipboard in his arm.

Suddenly, hands grab my face, forcing my head still. A brighter light shines into my eyes, making me wince.

"We're positive, sir," Another voice - a woman's - rang, "Vision is fine, hearing is dulled, but overall, they'll recover. Discharge them in a couple of days."

I manage to weakly turn my head. Two women in loose blue scrubs stand to my left, smiling warmly as they gather their things. In the far corner, stands another man. He stares at me with shock, maybe even fear, and his face is frozen. Weird.

It takes another day before I can sit up, and I've been told to stay in the hospital for a week. The doctor says I've experienced some kind of serious mental trauma. Trauma? How? From a trip? It doesn't make sense.

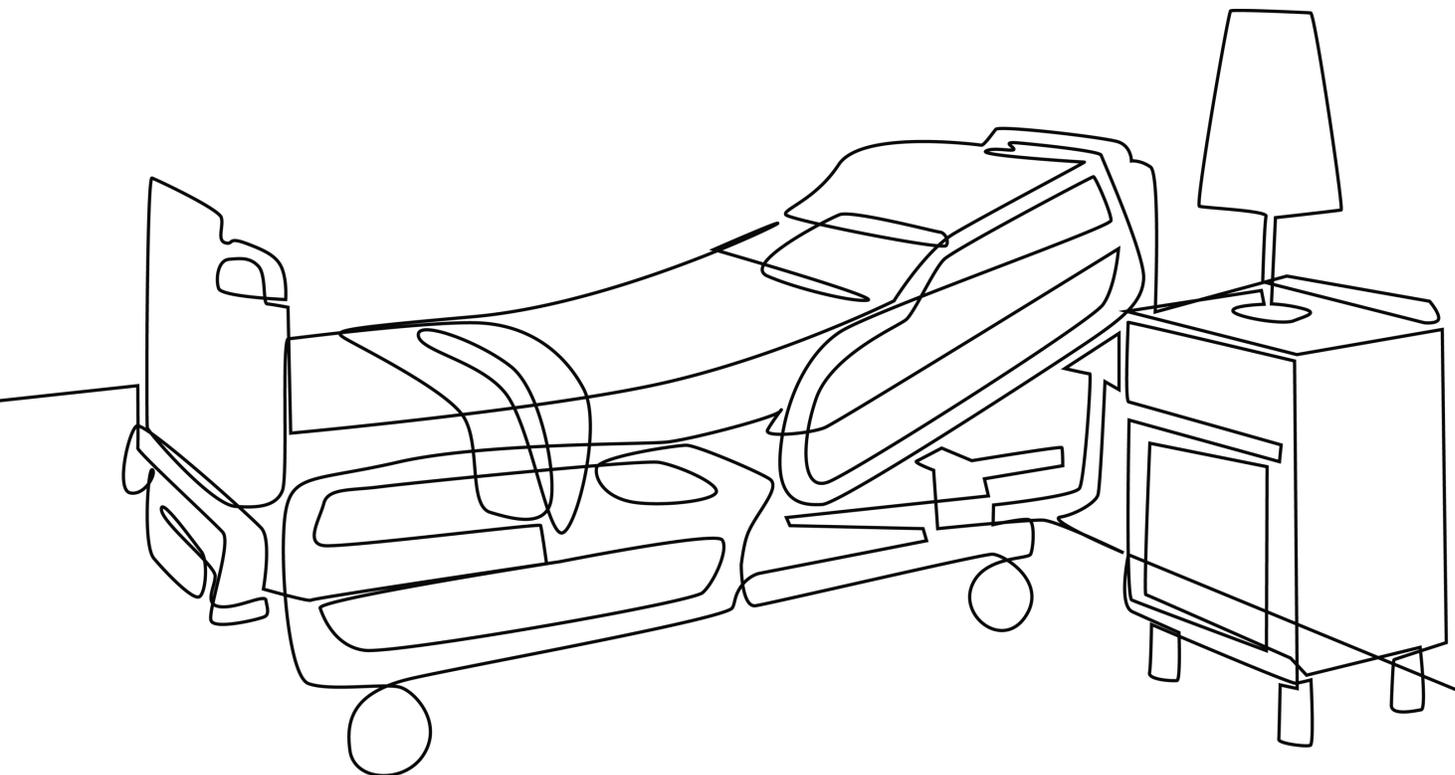
My body feels more bound than before. My limbs barely follow my commands, stiff and slow, as if someone else is pulling my strings.

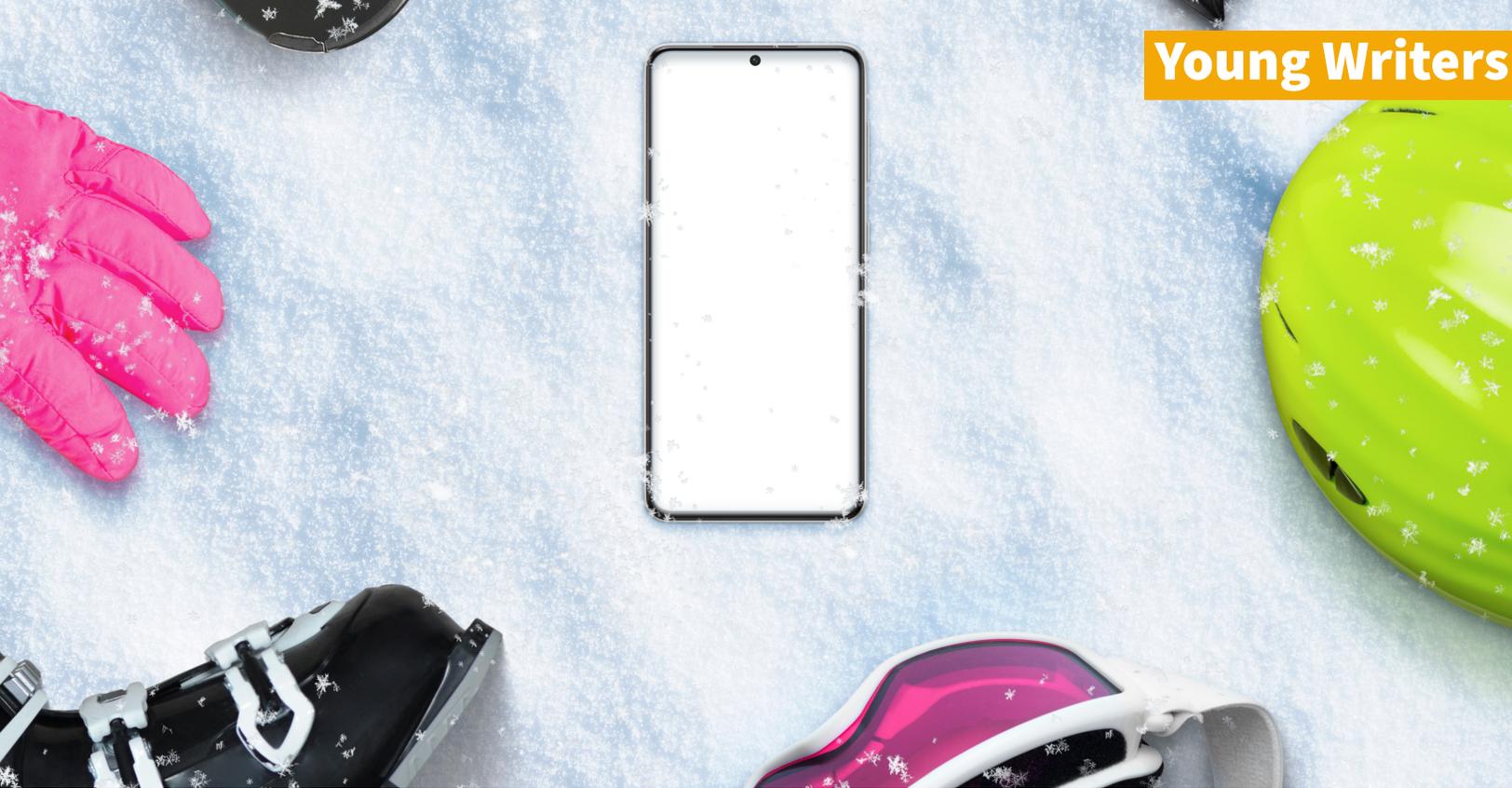
A week passes, and I'm finally allowed to pace around the room. No longer confined to the bed, but my body still feels wrong. No matter how many supplements they prescribe, no matter how many drugs they give me, the piercing pain in my joints lingers. It's as if needles are constantly stabbing me.

The other doctor has been watching me. He doesn't speak much, just sits there in my room, watching me as I sleep, as I eat. His limbs are stiff, frozen, moving with unnatural pulls like a doll. There's something wrong with him, but every time I bring him up, everyone ignores me. They call me crazy.

But I'm not crazy. No, I'm not. Why would I be?

I.Am.Not.Crazy.





# MOBILE PHONE: Friend or Foe?



- ALFIE HICKMAN AND LILY DERCKSEN

## Friend:

We all own a phone. There are countless debates with mobile devices at the centre of the argument. Today, I would like to draw your attention to one such debate that does not impact working adults, but students on the cusp of adulthood- banning phones and mobile devices in schools.

Mobile phones allow students to connect, not just to friends but the wider world, through the internet. And that is just a small portion of what smartphones can do. Therefore, it is not rocket-science to recognise the dependency teenagers have with their phones. It provides a means of escape from the ordinary, a way to be creative and express ourselves and a space to be an individual.

In knowing the importance placed on phones, is it fair to separate students from their devices? Is there no way to integrate mobile phones into education? Mobile phones have the power to support education and engage students in learning. Some students, like me, find it difficult to focus on complete silence, and a form of background noise will help me stay on task. Also, there are numerous learning apps we are encouraged to use like Duolingo, Kahoot and Quizzes. These apps allow us to consolidate our learning and a means to access additional resources beyond those within the classroom.

Besides providing help or easy access to resources for school, mobile devices provide a sense of security. As a student, I see news of school attacks in America and the odd one in the UK and I feel scared. What if one happens at our school? How would I contact my family to let them know I am okay? My mobile phone lets me feel connected no matter where I am.

## Foe:

**M**obile phones are a controversial subject, as they become increasingly prevalent in everyday life. Some people are starting to question if they are too much of a distraction for students.

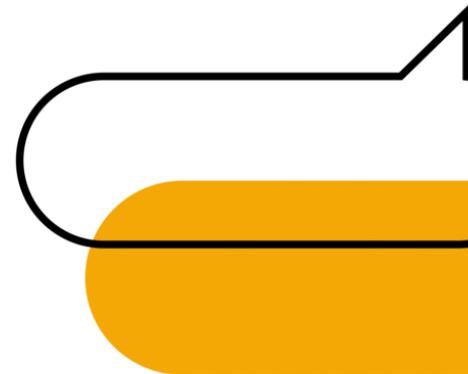
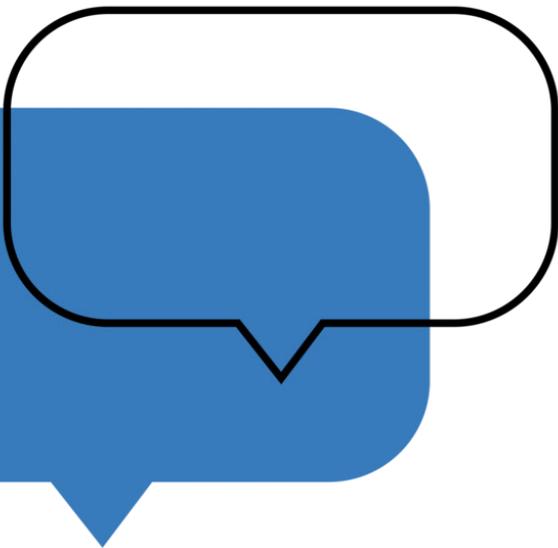
Mobile phones are bad for physical and mental health. Whilst they are a good escape to relax, they are also sheltering students from the harsh reality of the real world.

“I feel lethargic, unmotivated and unhappy after a long period of time on my phone,” one student said.

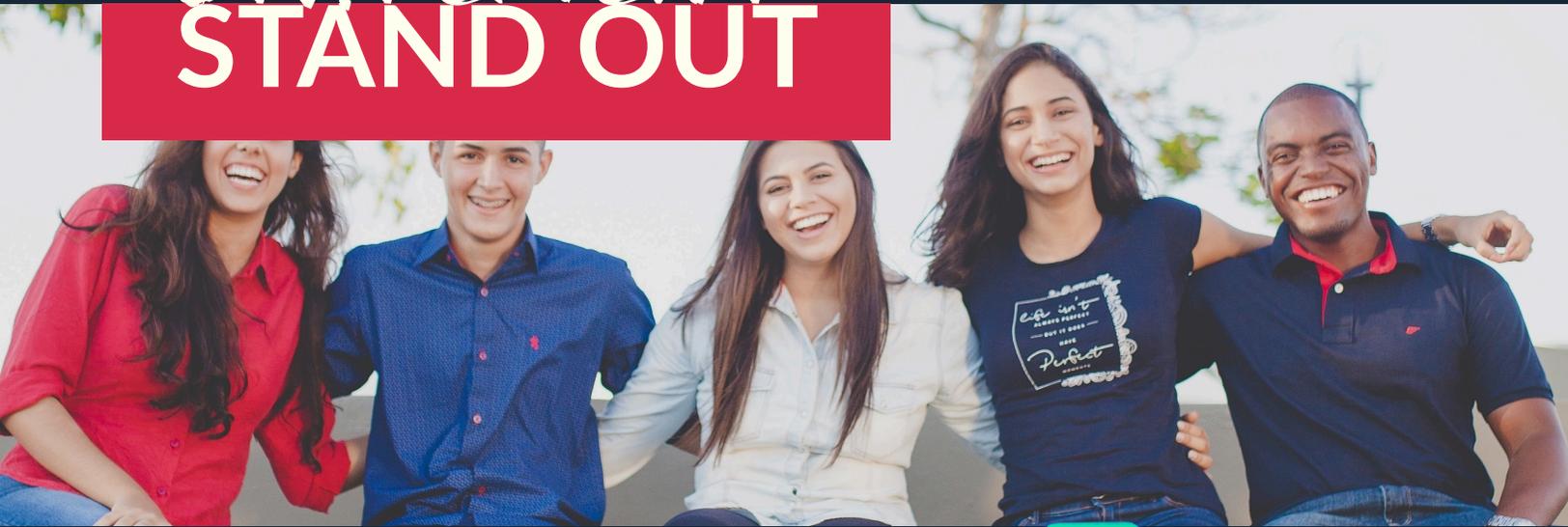
Constantly looking at a screen - particularly in the evening - has an impact on sleep and brain function. A study shows that “Night-time smartphone use leads to sleep deprivation, resulting in decreased cognitive functioning and lower academic achievement”. They are also bad for physical health. This is because people sit at home and never exercise.

Yet... After all these negative impacts and studies to back it up, we still find ourselves sitting on our phone scrolling and procrastinating. Why? Dopamine! Dopamine is the chemical reaction which is released when we feel pleasure, satisfaction or motivation. 80% of teenagers check their phone every hour and 50% feel addicted to their phones. This is a huge distraction. If students check their phone every hour that means at the start of every lesson they lack focus and their brains don't function to full efficiency. Dopamine causes us to be addicted to our phones.

In conclusion, mobile phones have become a distraction with no one admitting it. Teenagers are missing out on valuable life experiences and life lessons as they are being trapped by their phones.



# MAKE YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT STAND OUT



With thousands of students writing Personal Statements for UCAS each year, is there anything original or new to be said?

Of course there is! You are a unique individual and anything that represents you makes it special. The purpose of the Personal Statement is to allow your individuality and uniqueness to shine through. Every student goes through unique individual experiences.

Therefore, your personal statement allows you to talk about them and show how they have added value to your life and will make you a better candidate.

A personal statement lets you elucidate your accomplishments and show how they relate to you being a better student. It also lets you explain your goals and how you aim to attain them.

## TOP QUESTIONS TO ANSWER IN YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT:

1. Why have you chosen this course?
2. What excites you about the subject?
3. Is my previous or current study relevant to the course?
4. Have you got any work experience that might help you?
5. What life experiences have you had about which you could talk?
6. What achievements are you proud of?
7. What skills do you have that make you perfect for the course?
8. What plans and ambitions do you have for your future career?

## GENERAL PERSONAL STATEMENT TIPS:

- Do not overthink the opening. Just start by showing your enthusiasm for the subject, displaying your knowledge and understanding, and sharing your ambitions of what you want to achieve.
- Avoid cliches! Remember, this opening part is simply about introducing yourself, so let the admissions tutor reading your personal statement get to know you.
- Keep it relevant and simple. You are limited on how much you can include so avoid long-winded explanations. Why use twenty words when ten can make your point?
- Find aspects of your five courses that are similar and talk about these in your personal statement.
- Get feedback from the subject teacher of the course you are applying to as well as your personal mentor.

## GENERAL APPLICATION TIPS:

- Research, research, research – make sure you are interested in the courses and want to live in the places you are applying for.
- Be realistic – Make sure you have at least one university in your five choices that you are going to make the grades for. I suggest one aspirational choice, three realistic and 1 insurance (less demanding selection criteria).
- Be honest, accurate and thorough.
- Check, check, check again (e.g. use capital letters for your name!).
- Use the guidance booklet given to you in PD to make sure there are no errors and you have included everything required.

# Rugby Round-up



## YEAR 7 RUGBY V CHARLES DARWIN SCHOOL

**Imberhorne 35 : 20 Charles Darwin**

Another good game for the year 7s!

With many students new to rugby, the players have come off to an amazing start. Their rucking game was vastly improved from a week ago. Excellent work b from Harry O'Nions, who was my man of the match.

Imberhorne U12s travelled to Old Beccehamians to play Bullerswood Boys School, The Hayes School and Riddlesdown School in the Bromley League, which resulted in three wins from three tries by Josh and Seb Szarzynski. Man of the Match was Seb M for his rucking and tackling.

## UNDER 12s

**Beacon academy 25 : 25 Imberhorne**

What a great game!! We were 4 tries to 1 up at half time and were leading 25 : 20 with 50 seconds left on the clock, only to concede to a strong Crowborough side. The mistakes we made were the right ones; dropped passes because we were hitting the ball at pace, coming off our feet at the rucks because we were racing to get to the breakdown. These are all good signs of a team that is trying to play in the right manner and in the right rugby style. As always, the boys were a credit to the school and are improving with every game. Hard work and dedication.

**Scorers:** Seb S (2), Jack, Carter and James. Man of the match: Seb S

## U16 RUGBY

**Uckfield 14 : 64 Imberhorne**

A nice win for the U16 boys, lots of good performances, lots of tries and it was nice to see so many new players having solid games. The pick of the bunch being Peter H and Ciaran Mc. Harvey S had a man of the match performance and one of the Uckfield players will still be feeling Charlie K's tackle for the next week!

**Scorers:** Dylan , Harvey (2), Harry, Radley, Ethan S, Ewan, Connor (2 + 7 conversions), Alfie

# Rugby Round-up

## RUGBY UNDER THE LIGHTS

A great night of rugby was had at the Friday Nights Lights event at East Grinstead rugby club. There were over 160 boys playing rugby and it was wonderful to see so many parents, ex-students and friends, there to support.

It's a cliché to say that the results are not important, but in this case it's true! Rugby was the winner and everybody who was there will agree that the standard of rugby was amazing and the atmosphere electric.



## RESULTS:

### U12

Teams were mixed with players from both schools. Some really promising players from both schools. Man of the match: Carter

### U13

The game of the night! Mr Celani's side went 3 tries to 1 down, only to come back and win it with the last play of the night! And what a try it was! Won the ball back on their own 5m line, passed the ball through the hands of all the backs, before Bertie out ran four players, to score the try of the night and seal the win 20:15. Man of the match: Bertie Mitchell.

### U14

The 1st loss of the evening but still a great game. Both sides were very physical but Mr Hill's year 9s really stepped up, and fronted up, to a much bigger Sackville side. They could have easily folded after going behind, but a spirited comeback saw them lose by just 2 scores; 20:10.

### U16

This game was like watching two freight trains, at speed, hitting each other in a head on collision! Will J set the tone with some monster hits and that seemed to make every player, from both sides, want to do the same. Early, silly mistakes and ill-discipline led to Imberhorne conceding points and the constant flow of injuries disrupted our line-up. When the ref whistled full time at 10:10 we all wished it could carry on!

**Injury of the day:** Connor O'S.

**Man of the match:** Harry T

A big thank you to EGRFC for hosting, to Dan Poulter for organising, to all the Sackville players, and to all the friends, family and Old Imberhornians who came out to support a great evening of sport.

# The Addams Family

## Click! Click!

For the last few months, students from year seven to sixth form have been hard at work on bringing to life the enigmatic Addams Family, complete with singing, dancing, and plenty of laughs. Along with the support of the drama department and some dedicated members of staff, The Addams Family successfully brought the magic of musical theatre to Chequer Mead.

From the first click of Thing's fingers, audience members were pulled into Imberhorne's latest musical production, and it certainly did not disappoint. Whether you wanted to bounce along with Cousin Itt, scream with Pugsley or dance with the ancestors, all was possible due to the level of talent and commitment showcased over three nights.

Yet none of this would have been possible if it weren't for the support of the teachers involved and everybody helping behind the scenes. From dance choreography to stage management, they all played a vital part in bringing us this creepy,

Kooky and altogether fabulous production.

-by Gracie NEEDHAM





# US ELECTIONS

-by Izzy REED-

**T**he 2024 US election was watched as a global phenomenon, from the campaigning, through the November 5th election, and even now as we wait to see how Donald Trump's Republican party will take power back from the Democrats' previous term in power.

Kamala Harris (Democratic Party) received 48.4% of the United States' votes, but was defeated by Trump (Republican Party) with 49.9% of votes.

Each Political Party published a "Party Platform" which states how they believe the US needs support, and why they believe that their party is the best for the nation's needs.

The Republican party, as represented by Donald Trump, published in their 2024 platform an agenda of twenty points, which can be summarised as: strengthening the USA's economy and army, protecting the social, financial, and physical security of American citizens, and running a deportation operation to prevent the "migrant crime epidemic".

The Democratic platform notes on the significant changes that their party has brought about, such as supporting students, advocating for gun safety laws, fighting the causes and effects of climate change, and more.

Furthermore, the Democratic party platform puts less emphasis on their own goals - equal taxes, lowered cost of living, and the rejection of political violence - they instead focused on the Republicans' recent reformations of anti-abortion laws, as well as their accused intention to cut free care services.

However, the campaigns of the political parties were tailored to what the majority of the public wanted to hear in order to feel a sense of security and trust under the judgement of their government.

In his victory speech, Trump countered accusations that "he will start a war", by arguing "I'm not going to start a war. I'm going to stop wars".

The reinstated president is believed to have told the Hungarian Prime Minister that he plans to cut all funding to Ukraine, thereby causing Ukraine to surrender as the country would not be able to continue to fight without the USA's financial support.

Trump will be inaugurated (officially made to be) the 47th president of the United States on January 20th, 2025, in which he and his vice president, JD Vance, will take oaths of office, followed by meetings with various important political figures.