

CLASSICS MATTERS

The Classics for All Magazine Spring 2023



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CLASSICS MATTERS

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Widening Horizons, Raising Aspirations

Classics for All's CEO, Hilary Hodgson.

2022 was a challenging year for schools. As the threat of the pandemic receded, the cost-of-living crisis took centre stage, forcing many head teachers to cut staffing or the curriculum. In such circumstances, even the most dedicated teachers have been hard pressed to keep humanities subjects including classics alive in their classrooms.

Despite the financial pressures, most teachers are weathering the storm and new schools continue to embrace classics with enthusiasm. In 2022, with support from our regional networks, we trained 832 teachers from 235 state schools across the UK to teach classical subjects. As a result, over 23,000 pupils, many from areas of acute social disadvantage, engaged with the ancient world for the first time.

As our charity enters its thirteenth year, we can be proud of our impact and confident that the outlook for classics in schools is healthier than a decade ago. The charity is now a familiar name in 1,200 UK schools and colleges, inspiring young people's imaginations and raising their aspirations.

With our support, seven new secondary schools introduced a classical subject at GCSE or A level last year and more young people from Classics for All supported schools now go on to study a classical subject at degree level.

Our teachers, many new to classics, are enthusiastic about its breadth and speak eloquently about its benefits for literacy, widening cultural horizons, and increasing aspiration. As Helen Wilson, Head of Languages at Hillcrest Primary

School in Bristol said recently:

"I'd never studied Latin before so I was quite nervous, but I love teaching it now! It doesn't feel hard and the students have really taken to it. They're loving making connections with English and we've seen noticeable improvements in their spelling, punctuation and grammar. It's been a great success."

We remain ambitious for classics and passionate about transforming educational opportunity, for all pupils, not just the privileged few. Chances to learn about the ancient world should not depend on where you live or the school you attend.

By 2025, we aim to reach over 1,500 schools and to close the opportunity gap, reaching more schools outside London in the Midlands and the North. As part of this, we will promote the teaching of Latin in primary schools, introduce GCSE and A level classics and encourage more young people from state schools to aspire to classics at university.

To widen young people's horizons we are also planning to work with local heritage sites and museums to bring the past to life for pupils wherever they are in the country. So often it is a gallery exhibit that captures young imaginations but the costs of trips are often beyond the means of schools with limited budgets.

Last but not least, we will continue to make the case for classics, producing new resources and studies which demonstrate the continuing relevance of classics for future generations.

To realise our ambitions, we cannot



“As our charity enters its thirteenth year, we can be proud of our impact and confident that the outlook for classics in schools is healthier than a decade ago.

rest on our fundraising laurels. The economic climate is tough and competition for funding is fierce. A huge thank you to all of you who have supported us in the last year. Through your continued generosity we are unlocking the rich legacy of the ancient world for pupils irrespective of their background or abilities.

Hilary Hodgson
Chief Executive Officer,
Classics for All

New Approaches to Exploring the Ancient World

Introducing a new classics qualification for pupils in state schools.

One of the joys of classics is its breadth; It is not just the narrow study of language, history, literature, material culture or philosophy – it encompasses all of these and more. It is this interdisciplinarity which attracts many people to the study of the ancient world.

In a crowded Key Stage 2 or 3 curriculum, where teachers often squeeze the study of the ancient world into English or history lessons, the flexible nature of classics comes into its own. This 'stealth' approach is proving successful in state schools, offering pupils a tantalising insight into the ancient world and laying foundations for the introduction of classical subjects at examination level.

Last year, we were delighted to collaborate with the Independent Schools' Examination Board (ISEB) on a new classics qualification encouraging pupils with limited study time to develop their knowledge of the ancient world.

The ISEB has a long tradition of creating examinations and assessments, such as Common Entrance tests for schools in the independent sector. The most recent addition to its assessment portfolio is the Independent Project Qualification (IPQ) for pupils in Years 5-8.

The IPQ encourages pupils to set and research a question, develop their views and present their findings. The emphasis is on exploration and critical thinking and encourages an interdisciplinary approach crossing the usual boundaries between curriculum subjects.

Using the existing ISEB rubric

as a starting point, in 2022 we set about adapting the qualification for schools in the state sector. To support time-poor teachers, we produced optional stimulus lessons and accompanying resources packs on three classical topics: Myths and Stories, Ancient Technology and Society and Everyday Life. These example materials give pupils a broad introduction to life in the ancient world and a starting point for their project work.

Our new 'Exploring the Ancient World' Project Qualification encourages pupils to follow their own research interests and to present findings in a medium of their choice. They might for

example produce a podcast comparing food in Roman or contemporary Britain or create a stop animation illustrating the siege of Troy as told in the Iliad.

The freedom and flexibility offered by the Exploring the Ancient World PQ offers a fresh approach to learning at Key Stage 2 and 3. The award can be fitted flexibly into the existing school curriculum with clear links to National Curriculum requirements in a range of subjects.

After piloting the award with a few schools in Autumn 2022, we are excited to launch the qualification formally in 2023 in partnership with the ISEB, which will be assessing and accrediting pupils' projects.



If you would like to find out more information about the Exploring the Ancient World PQ, please contact hannah@classicsforall.org.uk



The Chorus

Augusta Ivory Peters on Classics for All's new forum for young classicists.

Classics for All depends on the generosity of donors, many of whom were lucky enough to study classics in the halcyon days when classics was widely available in schools.

Sadly, the last 40 years have seen a steady decline in classics teaching, especially in state schools. A report by Steven Hunt and Arlene Holmes-Henderson for the Council of University Classical Departments estimates that only 24% of the students sitting A Level Latin in 2019 were from state schools¹.

Dwindling pupil numbers have sometimes made it difficult for universities to recruit classics undergraduates and threaten the survival of some school classics departments. The harsh reality is that classical subjects will not survive in school or at university unless young people understand their wide appeal and choose to study them.

There are signs of hope. A steady stream of young people is now opting for a GCSE or A level in a classical subject and in 2022, around 100 pupils from schools supported by Classics for All went on to study for a classics degree.

Change is also afoot in universities, including King's College London, Manchester, and Cambridge. Here, revised admissions criteria mean that applicants no longer need prior knowledge of a classical language and can start one from scratch as an undergraduate, removing a significant barrier to study for pupils from state schools. Keen to encourage and nurture a new

generation of classicists, in September 2022 we set up The Chorus – a network of young classicists committed to increasing access to classics. The group brings young people age 16-25 together to meet like-minds and share their classical interests.

Abigail Pole, who attended Xaverian College and now studies classics and English at the University of Oxford, told us why she was so excited about The Chorus:

"I hope to meet and network with other young people who share my background and passions, and make classics more accessible for future generations of classicists."

Since its launch, over 80 young classicists from across the UK have signed up. We have also received more than 20 submissions to our new student blog, *The Rostra*, which is co-edited by postgraduate students Luke Bateman and Kitty Low.

In December, we hosted our first online gathering of The Chorus. Members heard from the author and poet Clare Pollard, enjoying a dramatic monologue from her poetry collection *Ovid's Heroines* and an extract from her debut novel, *Delphi*.

Illustrator, classics graduate, and member of The Chorus, Charlotte Bunney, also discussed how the ancient world informs her art and shared some of her recent work.



Although still in its infancy, we have ambitions for The Chorus. We recently set up a student committee to plan activities and the next online gathering is at the end of the spring term. By promoting the platform widely we hope to spread the message and encourage more young people to give classics a try.

India Nayak-Sheehy, a year 13 pupil at Parris Wood Sixth Form, sums up the spirit of The Chorus:

"Classics is a subject that anyone can get involved in no matter what socio-economic background they come from. I think classics is something that everyone deserves to experience."

To find out more about The Chorus, or to sign up, visit classicsforall.org.uk/chorus

The logo for The Chorus was designed by Charlotte Bunney. You can view Charlotte's classics-inspired work via her website: charlottebunneyart.squarespace.com

¹ Hunt & Holmes Henderson, 2021, A level Classics poverty, CUCD Bulletin 50 <https://cucd.blogs.sas.ac.uk/bulletin/>

The Case for Classics

Rt. Hon Sir Rabinder Singh, Chair of Classics for All's Lawyers Group makes a personal and eloquent case for the value of studying the ancient world.

I started learning Latin at the age of eleven and classical Greek at the age of twelve. I then studied both subjects up to A Level. This was not because I came from a privileged background, far from it.

I attended Bristol Grammar School on a scholarship from my local authority. It is often thought that classics are the province of a social elite but that is not how it should be. Classical civilisation is the common heritage of all humanity and, in principle, everyone should have access to it.

The first thing I learnt was the importance of thinking logically. Both Latin and Greek are highly structured languages, and like most languages but unlike English, they have different genders and many "cases" for nouns. The exercise of doing an unseen translation from Latin or Greek into English was difficult. But this is a good discipline, not least because the sentence structure tends to be logical. In this respect Latin is very similar to, for example, Hindi, which is descended from Sanskrit, which in turn is a cousin language of both Latin and Greek. They are all descended from "Proto-Indo-European". Typically, at least in prose, the subject of the sentence appears at the very beginning; the verb appears at the very end and there will often be an object somewhere in the middle. This meant that, even if I did not know the exact meaning of each word, I could usually deduce what it meant from the logical structure of the sentence. This ability to think logically is of obvious importance whatever people end up doing later in life. In my own case, this has been very important in my career as a lawyer.

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The next thing I enjoyed about studying classics at school was that whereas English is written in the Roman alphabet, Greek uses a completely different script. I also found that Greek was a more fluid language than Latin. This may be why Greek poetry and plays are still read and performed today, whereas Latin plays are hardly known to a modern audience. Even Virgil himself, the greatest of the Roman poets, would, I think, have acknowledged that Latin poetry was never as good as Greek poetry. The first literature that we still have in Europe was the Iliad by Homer, composed approximately 750 BCE, at a time when the Greeks had only recently re-invented a script, which they borrowed from the Phoenicians.

The third reason why I have found classics so exciting is the access it offers to that great body of classical literature. I think this is one reason why Greek plays are still performed today. Plays like Medea by Euripides, which is on the stage in London at present, speak to eternal truths about the human condition.

If these works can only be read in translation, then they are still worth reading and listening to and performing. If one does have the ability to read them in their original languages, so much the better. Translation is always an imperfect exercise. The example I usually give is of one of the most memorable lines in Greek literature, which comes from Antigone by Sophocles:

“Wonders are many and none more wonderful than man.”

The Greek word which is translated as “wonderful” is *deinos*. This is the same word which gives us the word “dinosaur”, which is usually



taken to mean “terrible lizard.” In other words, the word *deinos* can be translated as “terrible”. What this taught me was the importance of nuance in language and the need to use words carefully. That has been extremely important in my career as a lawyer and a judge.

The final reason why I think everyone should be able to have access to classical civilisation is that the legacy of the ancient world is still to be felt in modern society in the realm of ideas. So much of what people still debate, in the fields of politics, ethics and science, can be traced back in particular to the ancient Greeks. One example which I gave in my talk to Classics for All Lawyers Group in 2019, ‘Antigone’s Law’, which is now published as one of the chapters in my book, *The Unity of Law* (Hart, 2022), is the concept of a “higher law”.

As I suggest in my talk, Antigone’s defiance of the law of the state in which she lives is, so far as I have been able to discover, the first example in western thought of the concept of a higher law. This has

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Plays like Medea by Euripides, which is on the stage in London at present, speak to eternal truths about the human condition.

continued to resonate with people, including lawyers and judges, ever since. For example, in *Oppenheimer v Cattermole* (1976), the House of Lords declined to apply a law which had been enacted by the Nazi regime in 1941, depriving Jewish people of their property. Lord Cross said that a law of this sort “constitutes so grave an infringement of human rights that the courts of this country ought to refuse to recognise it as a law at all.”

I am delighted to have become Chair of Classics for All’s Lawyers Group in October 2022. I look forward to working with others to make sure that more children have the access to classics that I was fortunate to have, even if they are at schools where there has been no tradition of studying classics.

Established in 2015, Classics for All’s Lawyers Group supports the charity’s work in state schools and now has over 200 active members. For a subscription of £12.50 per month, Lawyers Group members benefit from several private, classically themed events per year, including our annual moot trial at the UK Supreme Court.

Find out more about joining the Lawyers Group at classicsforall.org.uk/join-lawyers-group

The Rt. Hon. Sir Rabiner Singh is a Lord Justice of Appeal and President of the Investigatory Powers Tribunal.

A Foundation for Success

A spotlight on **The A. G. Leventis Foundation**.

Classics for All is supported by several trusts and foundations whose generous, multi-year grants provide us with a secure foundation for offering essential training and support to state schools interested in classics. Here, we shine a spotlight on one of our biggest, long-standing funders, The A. G. Leventis Foundation.

The A. G. Leventis Foundation has generously supported Classics for All for over a decade. United by a shared belief in the importance of opening doors to ancient Greek language, literature, and culture, Classics for All's work with The A. G. Leventis Foundation has focussed primarily on Greek teaching and its revival in UK state schools.

From 2017-2019, The A. G. Leventis Foundation funded our pioneering Electra Programme, which aimed to introduce ancient Greek in 30 primary and secondary schools. The programme was a huge success: over 51 schools started Greek, resulting in 1,000 pupils learning Greek on a regular basis. As part of the programme, we developed our Mega Greek classroom resources for primary schools and supported Basil Batrakhos, an innovative Greek textbook for ages 9-12, which offers a fun and accessible introduction to the world of ancient Greece.

We trained over 60 teachers to learn or refresh their knowledge of Greek, and after listening to their feedback, discovered that one reliable way to embed Greek in a school was by starting Latin, which often acts as a steppingstone. The scope of our work with The A.G. Leventis Foundation increased in 2020-2022 to include support for extending the take-up of Greek and Latin in state schools. Subsequently, we are proud to have supported ancient



Cambridge Greek Academy pupils

languages in 182 new primary and secondary schools, including 20 schools where Greek is now taught.

Beyond training teachers, funding has also supported new approaches to teaching ancient Greek which overcome some of the barriers to study commonly faced in state schools.

For most state schools, a full GCSE in Greek is unachievable with limited teaching time. In response to this, we allocated funds from The A.G. Leventis Foundation to create a new pre-GCSE Greek qualification: the Intermediate Certificate in Classical Greek (ICCG). This qualification covers roughly half the content of the GCSE and gives young people important recognition for their work. Over 450 pupils have signed up to sit the exam this June, over 250 from state schools!

It can also be tricky for schools to justify running ancient Greek with

a small group of pupils. That is why we launched the Cambridgeshire Greek Academy, in partnership with the Cambridge School Classics Project (CSCP) and the University of Cambridge. Open to all abilities, this online Greek school gives passionate young classicists from state schools that do not teach classics the opportunity to learn Greek from scratch.

Multi-year funding from The A. G. Leventis Foundation has helped us to find new ways of introducing Greek and Latin in more UK state schools. It has enabled us to bring ancient Greek language and culture to schools in some of the country's most underserved areas – from Liverpool to Hull – and to stimulate demand for Greek at both primary and secondary level. We are very grateful to The A. G. Leventis Foundation and all our trust and foundation funders for their invaluable support.

Against the Odds

Harley Aston, aspiring Head of Classics at Hemel Hempstead School reflects on her own unusual classics journey.

My first encounter with classics was one of disappointment – not being chosen to study Latin. In my state comprehensive school teachers told me that my Year 6 SATs results were too poor to take Latin: Latin was for the most able, not for all.

Fast forward to my Sixth Form open evening a chink of hope, I was approached by the Head of Classics about a "new and exciting" A-level that appeared to combine my love of English Literature, Drama and History – classical civilisation. I thought I'd give it a go and it quickly became my favourite subject. The drama of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, the pain portrayed in Greek Tragedy – I was transfixed. This was what learning should feel like.

Later, my lack of knowledge of Latin or Ancient Greek prevented me from pursuing a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in classics. I opted for history instead. In my interview at the Institute of Education I presented on how the breakdown of the Roman Republic could be taught through enquiry. I was the only person accepted onto the course with a degree in archaeology, not history.

Four years into my first teaching position my attempts to introduce A-Level ancient history were thwarted by the school leadership, even though there were students interested and support available from Classics for All. Fortunately, in my second position at The Hemel Hempstead School I found a much more supportive environment. Within weeks of starting in 2019 I had persuaded

the Head of Sixth Form to allow me to offer ancient history A-level. Each year the course is becoming more popular, with some students applying for undergraduate courses in ancient history, classical civilisation or archaeology.

Since then, at every opportunity I have made my ambition to introduce more classics abundantly clear. Some may describe me as passionate, others as unrelenting in my drive to make sure that ancient history and classical civilisation are available for all students.

In September 2021, I started a lunchtime classics club covering mythology, dabbling in beginners' Latin (which was new for me too!) and even, with the art department, clay sculpture sessions. Attendance varies from 20-32 students weekly. With a strong core of students enthusiastically supporting me in pushing for the option to study this 'amazing stuff' at GCSE level, they went as far creating a petition.

Thanks to these 'nudges', in September 2022 I began teaching GCSE classical civilisation to 32 enthusiastic Year 10 students. There are plans to accommodate all students wishing to study classics at The Hemel Hempstead School in the future.

I have had invaluable help and support in my mission from Classics for All. I have attended numerous in person and online training sessions and gratefully received funding for textbooks and wider reading material. Classics for All has given me the knowledge and support I needed and without this, classics at The Hemel Hempstead School would not be a reality.



A-Level ancient history Students at Villa Jovis, Capri, April 2022

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

At Classics for All we are always on the lookout for creative ways to collaborate with other organisations, spread the word and introduce more young people to the wonders of the ancient world. Over the years we have conspired with many who share our mission, from museums and cultural heritage sites, to educational institutions and content creators. Here we profile the fruits of our some of our current partnerships.

Examination Reform: The Classical Association (CA)

With colleagues at the CA, we are working to address the decline in uptake of classical subjects at GCSE and A Level. In 2021, we produced a survey to help us better understand the causes and to explore ways of reversing the trend. The findings highlighted barriers to examination take-up including a crowded curriculum, teacher shortages and issues with examination specifications. While we continue to build a case for policy and examination reform, we are supporting teachers with targeted training and are running a programme of free online clinics addressing topics where teachers need help.



Alexander the Great at The British Library



To accompany the exhibition *Alexander the Great: the making of a myth*, we teamed up with staff at the British Library and Classical Association to host two inspiring study days for A-Level students. Through talks with academics, university students and curators, students delved into the origins and influences of the myths of Alexander. Highlights included keynote talks from Professor Paul Cartledge and Dr Lindsay Allen, activity-based workshops, a visit to the exhibition and sessions about classics at university.

Visual Literacy at Sir John Soane's Museum

Sir John Soane's Museum in London preserves the house and museum of the famous architect and collector. Last year we ran online training for 67 secondary teachers on developing visual literacy in the classroom, using objects in the museum to introduce ways of engaging pupils with material culture. We also developed a new classics themed tour of the museum for secondary school pupils and will continue to work closely in 2023 to devise more creative ways to bring ancient objects to life for young people.



Bursaries with the Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education (ICE)



The ICE offers short courses and certificates for adult learners. Last year, it offered five full bursaries worth £2,750 each to state school teachers from Classics for All schools enrolling on its online undergraduate Classical Studies course. This one-year course introduces academic principles as well as building subject knowledge in areas of study, including Greek drama, Latin epic and Athenian democracy. Bursaries aim to support applicants working in disadvantaged contexts and those for whom there are financial barriers to participation. We are grateful to the ICE for offering a further four bursaries in 2023.

Roman Inscriptions of Britain

This project catalogues inscriptions from across Roman Britain. In collaboration with Dr Alex Mullen at Nottingham University,



we have produced classroom resources to introduce inscriptions to state primary schools. Materials include lesson plans, teaching guides and classroom activities to bring Roman inscriptions to life for pupils and engage with local history. Combining the study of text and objects, these resources introduce ancient languages in new ways to young people and link the study of the ancient world with other subjects including art, design and technology, and English.

Donor Recognition 2022

This is our opportunity to warmly thank our supporters – individuals and trusts and foundations – who gave £1,000 or more in 2022.

In addition to publishing the names of Praetorians and above here, we

also acknowledge our Centurion donors (giving £100-£999) on our website: classicsforall.org.uk/centurions

Thank you to everyone who supported us in 2022. We are

always keen to welcome new supporters to our ranks. If you would like to discuss how you can become a supporter of Classics for All, please contact Jane Page at jane@classicsforall.org.uk

Heroes (giving £25,000+)

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Hadrian's Wall Champions

This year, we would also like to thank participants of the Hadrian's Wall Virtual Walk, who committed themselves to walking the equivalent distance of Hadrian's Wall (84 miles!) in September 2022 to raise funds for Classics for All. Together, they raised an incredible £9,891 toward our cause

To our Hadrian's Wall Champions: thank you for your hard work and participation!

Gemma Ball, Sophie Bassano, Gabor Betegh, Alice Case, Malinda Cracknell, Angela Dix, Rodney Duerden, Louise Duffett, Hattie Franklin, Sacha Glasgow-Smith, Louise Godley, Edward Hackett, Patrick Hayes, Catriona Irvine, Alice Jamison, Tony Keen, Andy Keen, Katherine Kurkic, Amber Law, Angelica Lawson, Catherine Lawson, Zoe Lister, Rhiannon Litterick, Julian Manfredi, Florence McGrath, Callista

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With special thanks to Rory Sutherland for sponsoring this initiative.

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Demand from state schools for classics is rising and we can only meet this with your support. To donate, please visit classicsforall.org.uk/donate

To find out more about our work and how you can help us, please contact Jane Page at jane@classicsforall.org.uk

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