

At Solihull, we aim to encourage as varied a life beyond lessons as we can so that our students not only have the pleasure of activity when they are young, but also find and develop essential skills which will form a vital part of their adult lives. This could involve a love of the outdoors, a passion for the Performing Arts, learning a new skill in Sport or pursuing an area within Academic enrichment. Students at Solihull should see their co-curricular activities as something that they love taking part in and leave Solihull having enjoyed their experiences, taking with them a lifelong passion for something outside of the classroom. The programme also aims to provide opportunities to de-



velop key skills such as leadership and teamwork, with the scope to work with peers, staff, and pupils from other year groups. Students in the Sixth Form are encouraged to lead on co-curricular activities, perhaps (after consultation) setting societies up themselves or running clubs for pupils in other parts of the school community.

## Co-curricular Activities - Our 'Big 6'

### Academic Enrichment

There are over 30 academic enrichment activities which complement and enhance the academic experience of our students outside the timetabled curriculum. Academic societies and clubs that take place during the school day help to create a series of opportunities to explore new ideas, learn new skills or simply have a space in which to develop interests and passions. In addition to this, lectures by visiting speakers and a wide range of trips and visits aim to inspire pupils and to help foster a love of learning.

Solihull also has one of the largest debating societies in the country. In addition to the weekly internal debates, pupils have been highly successful in a number of university competitions and have represented Central England at Oxford Finals Day for the last seven years. Michael Buerk, award winning BBC journalist and Old Silhillian, is the Patron of this society.

### Community Relations

Throughout the year, there are numerous opportunities for pupils to become engaged in and actively support charitable initiatives. These may be events, volunteering opportunities, fundraising activities, collections or donations, and are often organised by the pupils themselves. The Community Ambassadors, a student group led by Head of Community Relations, and a team of staff are central to this organisation and pupils are encouraged to take a proactive and thoughtful approach to this key area of school life. The school is very proud of the links fostered with local, regional and international charities, and the concept of giving and being supportive, generous and altruistic are central to our school ethos and aims. Community also starts within the school, and strong links between the Prep and Senior School are fostered, with opportunities for Senior pupils to lead and work with the younger members of the school.



### Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education is an important, highly valued and continuously expanding part of school life at Solihull. Many students join the Combined Cadet Force in the Sixth Form, which comprises both an Army and a RAF Section. This weekly training is open to all. Frequent camps take place throughout the year which include both military and outdoor pursuit activities. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is also open to students in the Sixth Form. Many complete their Silver and Gold Awards, even if they have not had the opportunity beforehand. The school is very lucky to have a Mountain Cottage in Snowdonia which is often used as a hub for such activities. Highly ambitious, overseas expeditions have taken place and locations have included Thailand and Cambodia, the Himalayas and Alaska. These take us to incredible places, are very challenging and help young people to develop personal qualities such as leadership, resilience, independence and self-belief, characteristics which are critical as students move into higher education and the world of employment. Student leadership again forms an important part of Outdoor Education, with some Sixth Form students becoming trained as instructors to assist with the running of Terriers (a timetabled program of Outdoor Pursuits) for the Third Form.



### Music

The school has a very strong tradition in Music with about a third of all pupils studying a musical instrument in school. There are numerous musical ensembles meeting weekly, comprising vocal and instrumental groups. Provision is also made to support students' aural and theory progress. Involvement in ensembles is open to all pupils, whether they have instrumental lessons in or out of school. The school is also part of the Steinway Initiative and has three Steinway grand pianos. Some twenty concerts/recitals are given each year, in addition to regular outside musical engagements. A programme of workshops and masterclasses by visiting professional musicians further enhances our students' musical development and outlook. Considerable success is achieved by individuals at local and national music competitions as well as in graded music examinations. Singing in the School Chapel is strong, with highlights being the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at Christmas and visits to Cathedrals nationwide to sing services. A full-scale musical production is presented each year in conjunction with the Drama Department (such as Made in Dagenham, Joseph, The Phantom of the Opera, Les Misérables, Twelfth Night and Little Shop of Horrors).





### Performing Arts

The school has an enormously vibrant theatrical calendar with numerous productions a year, as well as clubs, trips and workshops. Sixth Form students play a key part in events, directing, playing lead roles and heading up and design teams. Venues such as the Bushell Hall, the SMARt Performing Arts Centre and the Drama Studios are all used for productions. The schedule is extremely varied with a large scale musical every year, classic plays, adaptations and comedies as well as devised and contemporary work, all staged in ambitious productions of varied cast sizes. Pupil involvement and engagement lies at the heart of these activities, which command a very strong reputation for quality. Dance also forms a vital part of school life, with this feeding into the vibrant Performing Arts scene that takes place at Solihull. Dance Society is a popular and thriving club, with numerous student leadership opportunities available. Dance rehearsals take place weekly, with internal workshops being run, or external companies visiting the school also.



### Sport

We aim to be a physically active school community through a range of different sports and other health and fitness related activities. The benefits of partaking in these are crucial to maintaining a balanced lifestyle, and the link between physical and mental wellbeing is something that we are keen to support throughout a student's time here. There is a compulsory games afternoon once per week with many different options on offer from sports such as rugby, hockey and netball (with cricket and rounders in the summer term), to activities such as Zumba, yoga, squash and badminton. Further games options are available off the school campus that will incur a termly cost, such as clay pigeon shooting, golf, water sports and climbing. Whilst games afternoons are compulsory for all, there is a choice of sport, health and fitness activities for all that are run before school, at lunch and after school. These range from House sport, such as the annual One Mile Run, and 5k, to lunchtime activities such as badminton, cross country, squash, strength and conditioning and athletics. There are also fixtures throughout the week and at the weekend in other sports such as netball, hockey, cricket and rugby. Teams regularly compete at local, regional and national levels. Some sessions, such as sailing, also take place at the weekend. Solihull has developed a tradition of international tours, and our rugby, hockey, cricket and netball teams have toured parts of Holland, New Zealand, South Africa, France, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Malaysia in recent years.