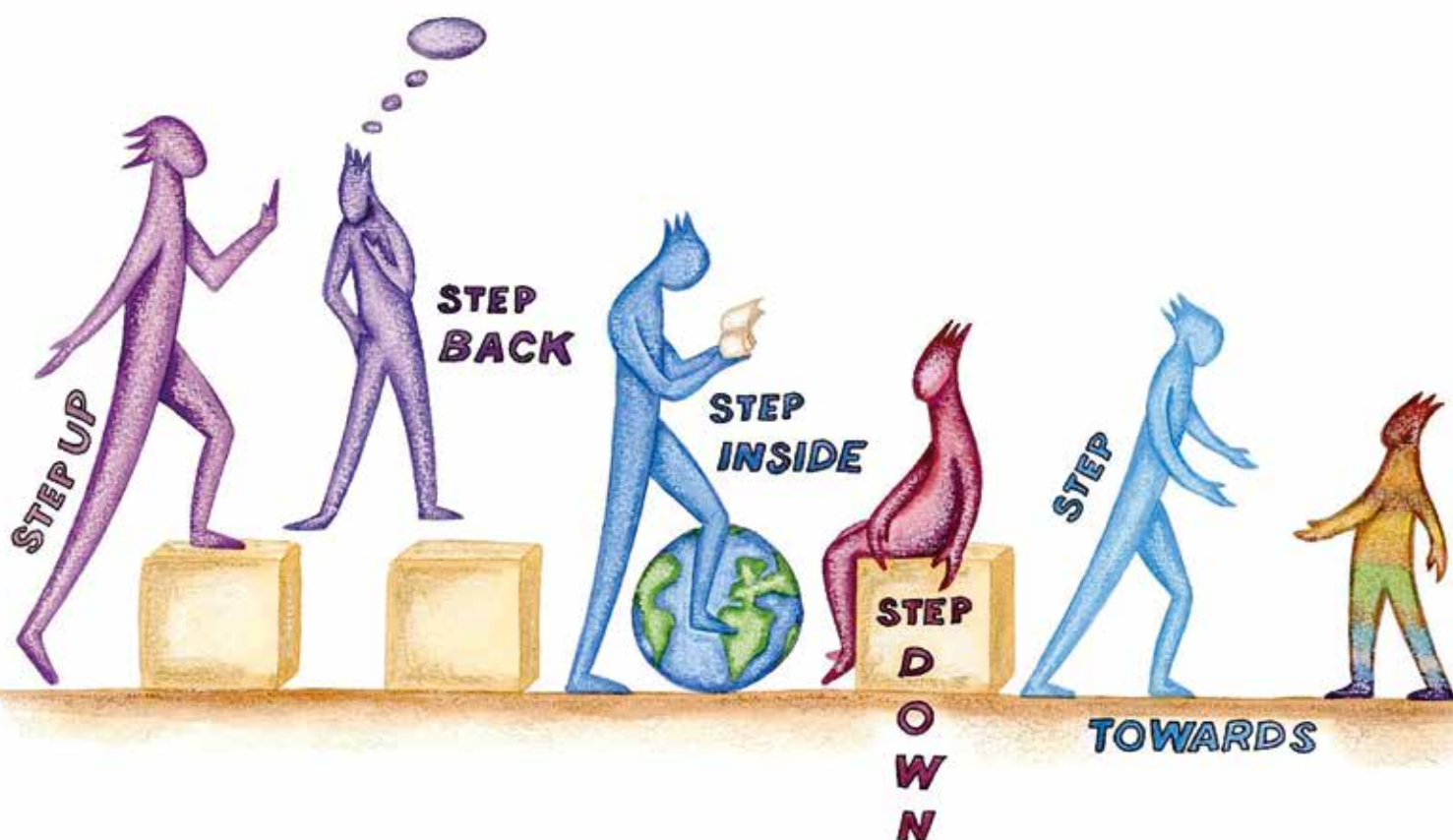


Easter Term 2021

The Greyhound



SOLIHULL



Our 5-Steps Against Discrimination



The Greyhound Interviews ...
Mrs Humphreys, Preparatory School
 Deputy Head (Academic)

How long have you worked in education?

34 years! For 33 of those years I've been a Form Tutor, and as I am now in a new position at the Prep School, this is my first year without a form. In my role as Preparatory School Deputy Head (Academic), I'm overseeing teaching and learning across the 3 to 11 age range at the Saint Martin's campus and am currently undertaking a review of the curriculum. I am also keen to support every child to find books they can enjoy reading and that inspire them, as I've always taken time to read and know how beneficial it is in so many ways.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Seeing young children develop their love of learning, (especially reading), helping boys and girls grow greater self-belief, and those special moments when 'the penny drops' and a pupil suddenly understands something they have been struggling with.

If you didn't work in education, what career would you most want and why?

As a child I wanted to be a Blue Peter presenter, but, now I believe, if I wasn't a teacher I would be a children's nurse or forensic scientist!

What do you like doing outside of school?

I am an avid reader, enjoy baking and cooking, solving puzzles and I have to confess that I am a knitter! When possible, I also try to do weekly fitness classes at the gym and enjoy Body Combat! My signature bake would have to be 'tiffin', which I make occasionally for the staff and also when we go away on residential trips. It disappears very quickly! At home, my family's favourite is my coffee and walnut cake!

What's your favourite book of all time?

My childhood favourites were Anne of Green Gables, the Malory Towers series and The Railway Children, because I wanted to be Anne Shirley, Darrell Rivers and Bobbie, having exciting adventures! My current favourite is 'Where the Crawdads Sing' by Delia Owens, a beautifully written mystery, which tells the story of Kya, a child who is abandoned, and how she flourishes, overcoming many challenges. It's soon to be a movie starring Daisy Edgar-Jones.

Who would be at your fantasy dinner party?

Michelle Obama, Jacinda Ardern (Prime Minister of New Zealand), Maya Angelou, Doris Day and probably my favourite authors... Isabel Allende, Kristin Hannah, William Boyd, Emma Donoghue and Tracy Chevalier, with dinner cooked by Mary Berry and Delia Smith, and music from Mick Hucknall of Simply Red, Phil Collins and Chris Martin! We'd need a very large table!



Our 5-Steps Against Discrimination:

- Step up - challenge prejudice in any form
- Step back - reflect on our part
- Step inside other's experience - get educated
- Step down with humility when we get it wrong
- Step towards to support and help





Snowy Start!



There was excitement across Solihull as boys and girls witnessed a snowy start to the Easter term. We all enjoyed snow days with a difference, as Critical Worker pupils made snowmen at break and learning at home ended with chilly outdoor fun!

Nursery

Our Nursery boys and girls were, of course, the lucky few this term as they were allowed to be in school from January and throughout the COVID lockdown restrictions. In the first half of the Easter term, pupils explored space with their 'To Infinity and Beyond' topic, learning all about things out of this world - writing facts about the sun, moon and planets, spacewalking, flying to the moon, alien painting and making planet cake pops! A highlight of the themed classroom was the rocket role-play area.

After half term Nursery pupils began a tasty journey, discovering 'Food around the World' including pizza, churros and croissants Boys and girls even cooked up a Forest School paella!

During the first week of the whole Prep School return, Nursery joined the belated World Book Day celebrations, expressing themselves by dressing up as some of their most-loved characters. From Hungry Caterpillars and Harry Potters to Peter Rabbits and Stickman. It was fantastic to see so many fictional favourites come to life!





Reception

During distance learning, Mrs Crowton and Mrs Litwinko's Reception pupils joined *Teams* as they travelled to outer galaxies, researched Chinese New Year, discovered European countries and more. Whilst focussing on these exciting topics, boys and girls continued to enjoy timetabled lessons with curriculum classes for Maths, Music, Phonics, Handwriting, Reading, PE and Forest School.

At home, shops were 'opened' so children could work through money and change, indoor and outdoor scavenger hunts took place for PE and handwriting was practiced by writing postcards, weekly news, menus and stories. Music with Mrs Peat involved calm colouring and Lego building or expression through dance and Forest School focussed on bird watching, bug hotels and mud kitchen creations.

So much was posted by teachers, pupils and parents on the *Teams* channel, when Reception turned chefs the meals looked restaurant standard and boys and girls loved sharing news and weekend updates in one to one calls with friends.

The weekend before return to school, children were encouraged to seek signs of spring in gardens and on local walks and, as the Saint Martin's campus reopened, it was clear to see the new season on its way!

Since being back in the classroom, Reception have been inventors for British Science Week, dressed up for World Book Day, feasted on a French breakfast and learnt about Australia.

A full and fun-packed term with many Wow Awards presented, well done to our enthusiastic little learners!





Infant 1

I1 took to *Teams* for Science, English, Geography, Art and everything in between - keeping to their usual timetable throughout remote learning.

In Science boys and girls learnt about materials, with many of the pupils presenting their finds from floating and sinking investigations, and discovering what could be a suitable material for an umbrella - not getting the gingerbread man wet was the name of the game!

In English, I1 studied '*The Snail and the Whale*' by Julia Donaldson, writing from the snail's adventures around the world, and in Geography children thought about how the weather affects what we do, wear, how we feel and how we travel.

Van Gogh and Lowry were compared in Art, where pupils enjoyed creating 'Starry Night' and 'Sunflowers' by Van Gogh and pictures in Lowry's style, including St Alphege and the Prep School.

Forest School was, of course, a chance to be away from the screen, as boys and girls explored, made dens, created rock cairns, constructed bug hotels and participated in the Big Schools' Birdwatch.

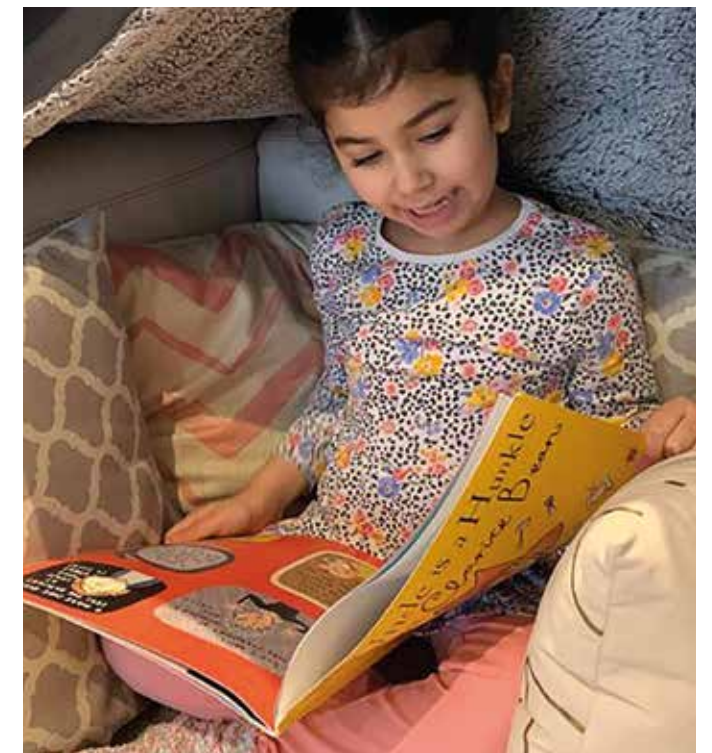
Remote Co-curricular activities were a huge amount of added fun with Drawing Club, Book and Biscuit and Construction and Craft all well attended from home.

I1 have thrived from being back in the classroom with their friends embracing each activity and new challenge. Well done to Leo who won the I1 and I2 category of Mrs Middleton's British Science Week Invention task and thanks to everyone for participating in our first Prep School World Book Day and Creative Reading Space and Dress the Egg competitions. We're excited for the summer term!



Down Behind the Dustbin with I1

During lockdown, our I1 boys and girls have enjoyed writing their own versions of Michael Rosen's '*Down behind the Dustbin*'. The pupils worked hard on this creative writing project and Mrs Atkins and Mrs Pimlott were really impressed by their poetry work. On return to school we shared a photograph of some of the children with their pieces and were delighted to receive a retweet from the English children's author when we shared the poems on Twitter.





Infant 2

In I2 pupils have enjoyed many practical learning opportunities during their time at home. Boys and girls celebrated Chinese New Year and crafted Chinese Dragons, 'Porridgies' were made in English, relating to the class read, *Katie Morag*, and in Forest School pupils constructed 'Stickman', bird feeders and had fun with frozen things! Computing included 'Stop Motion' with some excellent films produced and Tracksuit Friday was embraced from lounges and kitchens!

In Science, I2 children learnt about food chains and habitats and were tasked with making a shoebox diorama of their choice. The designs and detail were incredible, ranging from Amazon rainforests and the Savannah to underwater worlds. Pupils really enjoyed presenting their creations to their peers in *Teams* breakout rooms – superbly demonstrating their excellent speaking and listening skills.

Remote Co-curricular activities were always well attended with Drawing Club and Book and Biscuit a popular wind-down after a full day of learning!

Back in school I2 have loved being with their friends – and getting in the swimming pool and out to Forest School, not forgetting delicious lunches! On Thursday 11 March the Prep School celebrated World Book Day and I2 made 'potato head' characters from their favourite stories and we also participated in the British Science Week initiatives. It's been so fantastic to be on campus and see the return of clubs such as Scuffle Singers, Multi-Sports, Craft and Spanish.

Well done I2, Miss Hicks and Mr Walker are delighted with your progress this term.





Head Boy and Head Girl

Thank you to William and Samantha, our Prep School Head Boy and Head Girl for the Easter term.

William joined Solihull in J1 and his favourite subject is DT. William says: "Solihull Prep is great because we learn a lot here, when I leave school I would like to be a Rugby player."

Samantha started at Solihull in J3 and enjoys Maths. Outside of school Samantha loves riding her bike. Samantha added: "Solihull Prep is good because there are lots of clubs. My favourite is J4 Choir." William and Samantha both look forward to the days when it's pizza for lunch at the Prep School! Congratulations to both on completing their important roles.



Critical Worker Thanks Initiative

Before half term, our Prep School pupils created videos, cards and drawings to say 'thank you' to our Critical Workers during the latest lockdown. The artwork produced was outstanding and a much needed lift.

Hannah in J4 used her initiative to design an impressive 'World's Best People' certificate and copies were printed for the J4 children in school to take home to their parents.

The response and replies from those in receipt of the messages were equally wonderful! Mrs McArthur's daughter, Mary-Ann, an Intensive Care Nurse shared her delivery with colleagues at St George's Hospital, London; Sarah from Dyson Richards Funeral Directors sent a lovely reply and Worcestershire Acute NHS tweeted "Thank you to the children at @solsch1560 for the wonderful letters, cards and poems you sent to our Palliative Care team. We were full of smiles when we received them - although the masks hide this!"



Critical Worker Children

Throughout lockdown Critical Worker children were able to be in school and we are very grateful to our staff for their support on both campuses during this time. During the school days, pupils enjoyed time away from Teams, getting creative with their classmates.



Christingles with a Difference

In January, our Junior School pupils would traditionally spend a lunchtime with Mrs Morgan making Christingles for our candle-lit, celebration Chapel service. This year, during Father Andrew's weekly Chapel Assembly on *Teams* he explained what each element of a Christingle represents and invited children to create them at home. Well done to Tilda in Reception for her wonderful work.



Safer Internet Day

Mr Walker led a competition to mark this year's Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 9 February. Based on the theme 'An internet we trust: exploring reliability in the online world', boys and girls were invited to design a poster or develop a presentation to highlight that not everything you read on the internet is factual. The overall winners were J2 pupils Joe, Theo and George with a superb video compilation of the boys chatting on Facetime, enjoying a Roblox game and discovering that not all you see and hear online is correct.

Young Imagineers Challenge

Congratulations to Tarun who won first prize in the Young Imagineers Challenge.

The J2 pupil's submission on the topic 'A world problem you would like to see solved' was voted the best in the annual competition which was hosted by Equinor, a partner of the Science Museum. Tarun's prize was a selection of fantastic educational books.





J1 and J2 Creative Skills Club

Mrs Morgan's online Creative Skills Club proved very popular with our J1 and J2 boys and girls this term. The first session focussed on bright and colourful 2021 floor art, followed by weekly construction and creation activities including wooden spoon characters, bunting, fans and folding, Valentine's Day cards and Easter wreaths. Thanks to all who joined the club every Thursday afternoon.



Junior School Cookery Club

Numbers grew week on week for Mrs Humphreys' Junior School Cookery Club. Open to all pupils in J1 to J4, this term's recipes included brownies, chocolate cake, Mary Berry's lemon drizzle, shortbread and cookies. Boys and girls also shared photographs of their own ideas and creations, from J1 pupil Yukun's steamed buns for Chinese New Year to J2 Claudie's pizza parlour and a celebration chocolate Oreo cake for Dr Spratley's special birthday made by daughters, Emily and Beth in J3.

All the end results looked so delicious, we clearly have some super talented bakers in the Junior School.



Español

In Spanish, J1 have been working hard to learn vocabulary for items in the pencil case and colours; J2 pupils designed funky monster posters - a fun task to help the boys and girls to develop their understanding of shapes and adjectival agreement. In J3, children explored food and description, creating delicious designs for menus and posters based on European cuisine.

Estupendo!



J1 Computing Club

In J1 Computing, pupils constructed LEGO WeDo kits to create and program models, which use sensors, motors and led lights. At the start of March, boys and girls in Miss Lynch's class made a rare species of glowing snail and a cooling fan. Brilliant!

J3 Model Making

Mrs Rich and Mr Mitchell led Tuesday afternoon's J3 Model Making Club. The entertaining and environmentally conscious sessions involved pupils in creative constructing projects using unwanted boxes, craft materials and a variety of household recycled items. With different weekly themes – superheroes, vehicles, animals - children had a time limit to design, create and evaluate their masterpieces. It was great for boys and girls to see friends online, catch up, share stories and challenge each other. Thank you to all who attended for their unending enthusiasm, laughter and jokes.

Express Yourself

During Children's Mental Health Week (1 - 7 February) Prep School pupils had the chance to 'express themselves' by wearing an item of clothing. Jeevan in J3 embraced the opportunity, creating this fantastic jumper displaying all the things he loves.

Here he explains a bit about his wonderful handmade top:

- I added a kindness cross-stitch because I love it when people are kind.
- I put the tape on because I use it all of the time and it is a tiny bit annoying!
- I am holding the rugby ball because I love to play rugby in my garden.
- I included the empty toilet roll because I always recycle what I can.
- I used the yo-yo because my closest friends wrote their names on it and I kept it.
- I put the wooden stick on because it was the first thing we cut in DT, a new subject to me.
- I added the sewing thread because in my free time, I sew.
- I finished my outfit with a party hat because I love parties!





Junior School Eco and Gardening Club

Mr Poole's Tuesday afternoon club invited Junior School pupils to become garden designers as they looked at options and layouts to transform the area between the Saint Martin's campus Junior School building and the lunch hall, to create a useful and attractive new outdoor space.

Boys and girls were tasked with planning the garden, taking into consideration scale and budget, as well as deciding on items for planting and special features.

The Eco Council reviewed the entries and will be voting on a winner – which may blend a few of the projects.

Other Eco and Gardening Club sessions included researching and creating a planting calendar and designing and building a miniature enchanted garden.



J3 and J4 Virtual Aerobics Club

Throughout distance learning, J3 and J4 pupils kept active by joining in with high-energy and fun aerobics! Some children also created their own routines and led these for their classmates.

Miss Smith said: "It was great to see so many smiles at the end of the day each Wednesday during this club!"



J4 'Together Again' Workshop

On Wednesday 17 March, all of J4 joined an inspiring virtual workshop run by The Anne Frank Trust UK. Pupils looked at the story of Anne Frank and discussed different forms of discrimination and prejudice. The children also reflected on what they had learnt from lockdown and used this to set their own values and goals moving forward.



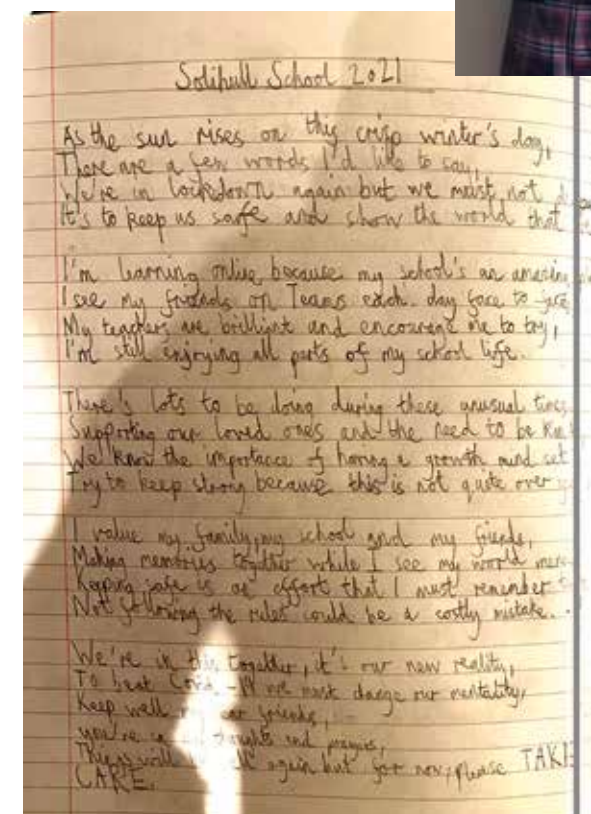
J4 Theatre Design Club

Pupils in J4 Theatre Design Club created fabulous diorama story scenes. Themed on their favourite book or film, the children had great fun bringing their pieces to life, with everything from James Bond to under the sea, and a boxing ring to a scene from Hamilton. Each boy and girl designed and made the set, created characters and finally gave their artwork extra razzamataz by adding twinkly stage lights. Mrs Morgan can see some skilled set designers of the future ... Bushell Hall here we come!



Positive Poetry

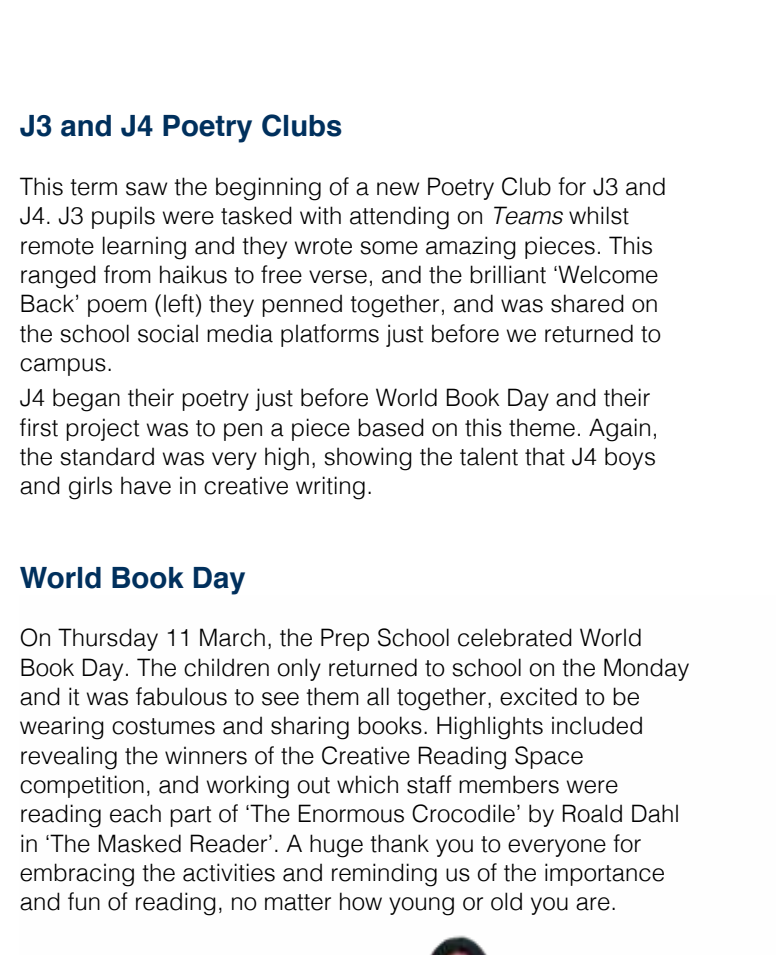
A beautiful, positive poem written by Eliana, a pupil in J1. We shared Eliana's recorded recital on our social media. We hope it brightened your day.



J4 Monitors

Thank you and well done to J4G our Monitors for the Easter term. Mr Grove is very proud of you all.





This term saw the beginning of a new Poetry Club for J3 and J4. J3 pupils were tasked with attending on *Teams* whilst remote learning and they wrote some amazing pieces. This ranged from haikus to free verse, and the brilliant 'Welcome Back' poem (left) they penned together, and was shared on the school social media platforms just before we returned to campus.

J4 began their poetry just before World Book Day and their first project was to pen a piece based on this theme. Again, the standard was very high, showing the talent that J4 boys and girls have in creative writing.

On Thursday 11 March, the Prep School celebrated World Book Day. The children only returned to school on the Monday and it was fabulous to see them all together, excited to be wearing costumes and sharing books. Highlights included revealing the winners of the Creative Reading Space competition, and working out which staff members were reading each part of 'The Enormous Crocodile' by Roald Dahl in 'The Masked Reader'. A huge thank you to everyone for embracing the activities and reminding us of the importance and fun of reading, no matter how young or old you are.



It's World Book Day,
It's finally come,
I've waited a whole year
To dress as someone.

Should I be a princess?
Could I be a crook?
What about an assassin?
Or a pirate with a hook?

I nagged my mum for a costume,
She said it would cost too much,
I went off in a big huff
And nibbled on my lunch.

When I went through the gates,
And made my way to school,
I saw a crowd of characters,
And I said, "That's so cool!"

When the day ended,
Sad I had to wait
For this day to come again,
And dress up as Captain Hook's crew mate!





Creative Reading Space Competition

So many wonderful entries for our Prep School Creative Reading Spaces competition. The *Teams* channel was full of images, each pupil clearly searched high and low and really used their imagination to find somewhere unusual to take time out with a book.



Well done to our winners:
Nursery – Vihaan
Reception – William
I1 – Ava
I2 – Melissa
J1 – Finley
J2 – George
J3 – Sophia
J4 – Tilly



Everyone's Story Matters

Mrs Pemberton led the creation of a wonderful display in the Prep School library in March. Themed around 'Everyone's Story Matters', the colourful artwork was based on a quote from *'The Fantastic Flying Books of Morris Lessmore'* by William Joyce.

The book was shared with pupils who then designed a 'My Story' piece for the library wall. The idea involved every child from Nursery to J4, the intention being that all would be part of the Prep School project, which really bought everyone together following lockdown.



Eco Group

Thank you to Mrs Crowton for leading our newly formed Alice House Eco Group. We look forward to hearing all about the group's ideas and initiatives in the summer term - first jobs are litter picking and compost bins.



Lily's Unicorn Car



Leo's Tipping Point



Joe's Football Table



Alistair's Marble Run

Science Week

In March, we celebrated British Science week (5 – 14 March), with Prep School pupils enjoying exciting activities during the first week back in school.

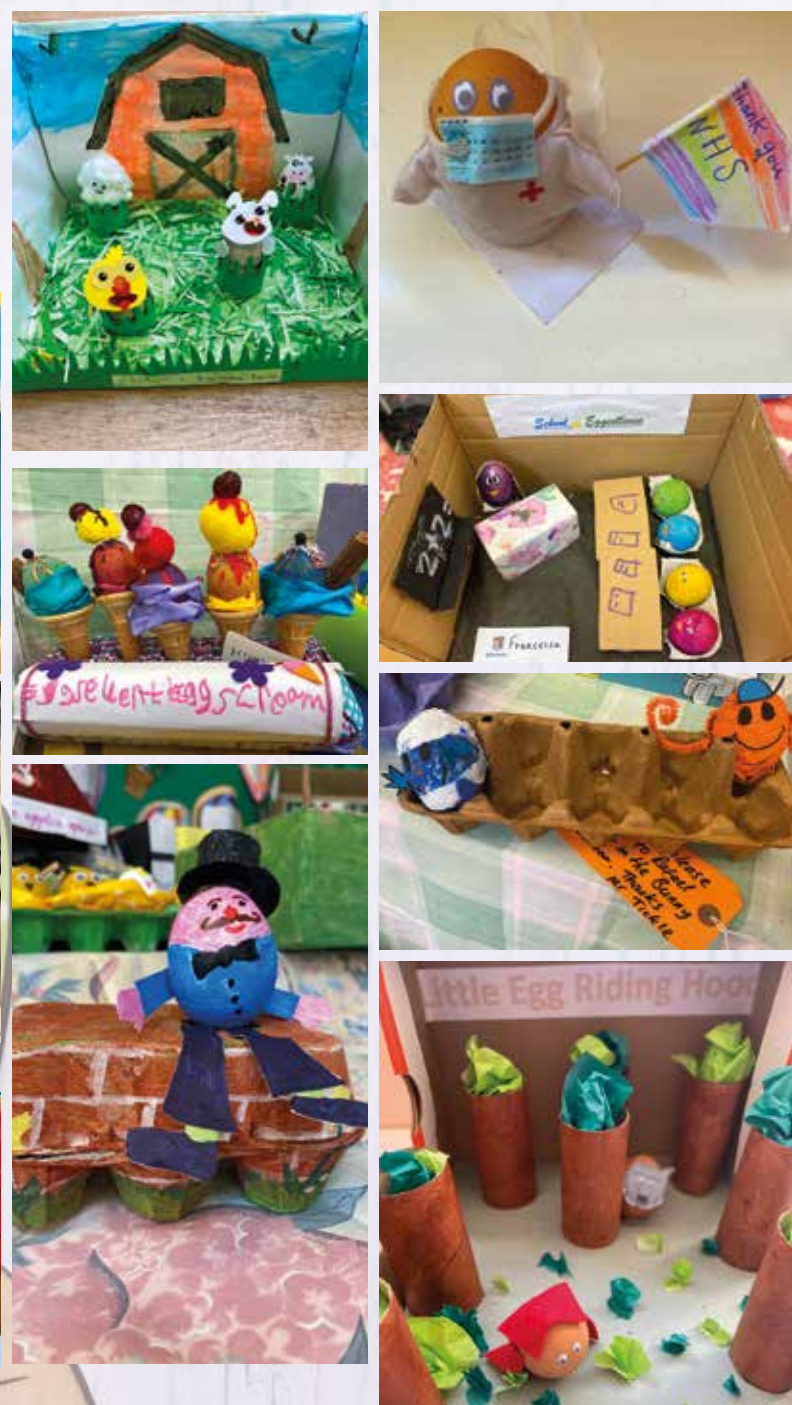
One of the tasks was an invention competition where boys and girls from Reception to J4 had the opportunity to create a new toy. Thanks to all who participated, we saw lots of super entries, and well done to Mrs Middleton's winners (pictured above).





Dress the Egg

Egg-straordinary, egg-cellent ... you really egg-celled! The Prep School Dress the Egg competition entries were absolutely cracking! Thanks for participating in this brilliant annual House event and well done to our winners.



Easter Art and Crafts

Colourful creations from I2, J1 and J2.



Third Form Birthdays

The Headmaster hosted two remote Third Form January and February birthday parties this term, with the final March celebration back in the Refectory.

Star Wars and *Harry Potter* themed events took place on Teams with the Headmaster, Mr S Morgan, Mr Gledhill, Mr Davis and Mrs Brown all online for remote bingo, and boys and girls enjoyed a *Pokemon Go* game on the Warwick Road campus on Friday 19 March, with bingo, prizes and the most amazing cupcakes!



Solihull Sounds Podcast

Four Lower Sixth students - Aimee, Freddie, Yuvraj and Soraya - have produced great things by creating, developing and recording Solihull School's first ever podcast. Two episodes in, and it looks like the new opinion and news platform is here to stay! Broadcast content has ranged from discussing Black Lives Matter and other current affairs to teacher quiz features and film reviews. A super new addition for the school community, and brilliantly compiled by those involved.

Masker Teacher Lower School

Lower School had the opportunity to take part in a fun 'Masked Teacher' competition this term, where pupils received images and clues and were invited to identify the person underneath the character cover up! From a donkey to a frog and various other guises in between, guessing the member of Solihull staff was a tricky task!





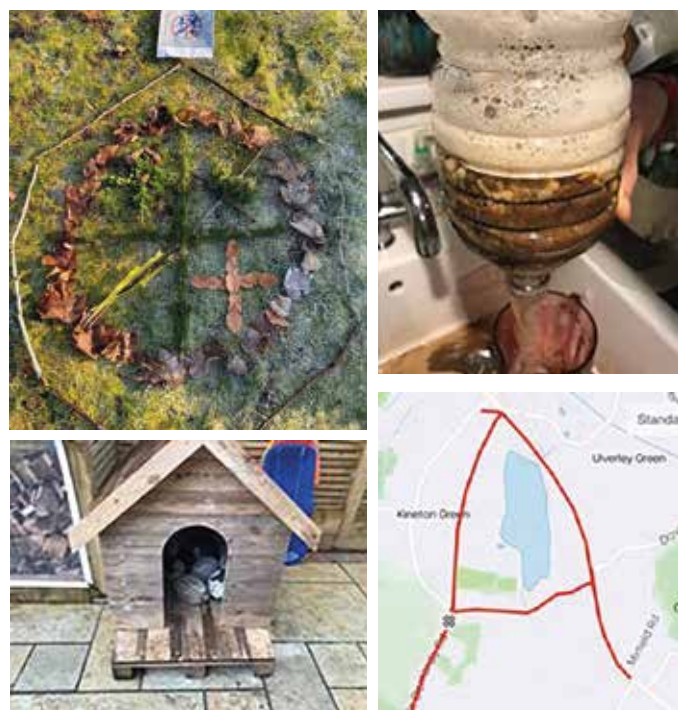
Terriers

In January, our Terriers were tasked with getting outdoors and making the Solihull Terriers symbol from whatever they could find! Mr Bate, our Head of Outdoor Education, was super impressed by the imagination, skill and detail in the natural artwork created.

Since then, the Third Form continued to undertake excellent things in their Terriers sessions! A different challenge has been set each week including both environmental tasks, and also those related to Outdoor Education. The pupils have responded with fantastic work, showing great creativity. The Terriers calculated the height and age of trees at home or in the park, they developed garden trim trails to keep exercising, took part in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch and also identified different types of clouds, looking at shapes and researching interesting facts.

Here are some of the remote Terriers projects including – Thomas' dog kennel made out of pallets as part of a recycling challenge; a water filter by Surya; Anna's digital mapping – completed within the task of planning and completing a route, and as an extra challenge, to make a shape!

Great work during lockdown, Terriers. It's been so good to see you, and your red fleeces, back around the Warwick Road campus this month.



Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Over 100 Fourth Form pupils have been attending sessions each Monday evening since Christmas, training for the expedition section of their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This year's activities have nearly all been through *Teams* and pupils have coped fantastically well, covering topics such as mapwork, first aid, emergencies and campcraft. Boys and girls in small socially distanced groups, have undertaken some face-to-face map and compass work now that we are back in school too. We do not know when the expeditions can take place but when they do, we are up for the challenge! Pupils have also been progressing their Skill, Physical and Volunteering sections of the Award, making the best of really difficult circumstances. Evidence uploaded to e-DofE is superb and shows they were very worthy Team of the Week winners ... well done to you all!



RAF

On Monday 18 January cadets joined a *Teams* talk by Luca on History of Flight followed by a session with Sgt Sach-Brian who introduced the Method of Instruction (MOI) course. The following week, as part of the MOI, cadets presented to their peers on a topic of their choice. This teaches cadets 'how to teach', with feedback provided by a virtual visit from an RAF Sergeant.

- Laavunya - Malware
- Shriya - 3, 4, 5 Breathing
- Jonathan - Extreme Weather
- Frankie - Welcome to the Irish language
- Jane – The Problems of Fast Fashion
- Harry – Quick Reaction Alert (Plane Scrambling)



A Level - Rambert Dance Company

A Level Dance has been introduced to the Curriculum for the new academic year, and the Upper Fifth pupils are thrilled to be able to carry on their studies in Dance at Solihull. The specification for the A Level includes studying the Rambert Dance Company, so the department will be embarking on embracing the knowledge of a former male Solihull student who joined the famous Rambert Dance Company! We are excited about A Level Dance and its future candidates are already forthcoming with ideas to run Co-curricular workshops for the younger year groups.

GCSE Dance

The practical components for GCSE Dance are progressing, even though at times during lockdown it was tricky to dance remotely, within confined spaces. The Upper Fifth's choreography exam took place just before the Easter break, and the Dance department will proudly share some of the pupils work virtually after their exam. All have choreographed a solo due to COVID restrictions but, despite the upheaval to their studies, their pieces remain strong - paying testament to their determination and creative passion for Dance.





Classics Exploring Online

The Classics Society has taken two 'trips' on *Teams* this term – firstly to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and secondly to the Hermitage in St Petersburg. In both virtual visits, pupils researched a range of Greek and Roman art, including statues, mosaics, vases, sarcophagi and votive offerings. In honour of International Women's Day on Monday 8 March, The Classics Society explored the idea of the Amazons, looking at how they are presented in ancient art, and why they are presented in that way, as well as thinking about what modern Amazons we have, and how we can all strive to be a bit more like Amazons ourselves!

Marginal Gains

Two more fascinating issues of Marginal Gains have been published this term. In the January edition, the magazine, which is largely written and compiled by Lower Sixth Politics students, featured articles on lockdown, vaccine misinformation, whether we should have to take a test to vote and the American election and February focussed on Joe Biden's inauguration.



Spanish Spelling Bee

Congratulations to Shell Form pupil Shivani who achieved joint second place in the National Final of the Spanish Spelling Bee - Solihull's best result in our five years participating.

The competition was carried over from 2020 and would usually have been held at Cambridge University. Well done, Shivani



Debating

This has been a successful term for Debating, where pupils have coped admirably with the difficulties of meeting online and not being face-to-face with their own debating partners. One highlight was a fantastic performance in the Oxford University Debating Competition, with Upper Sixth students Freddie and Lauren reaching the national finals and placing in the top 40 out of 1,000 teams. We also enjoyed success in the Nottingham University Debating Competition, with Keon and Imogen reaching the open finals and two further teams progressing to the novice finals. With the ESU regional finals and Durham University Competition still to take place, the level of Debating this year has been exceptional.



Whole School Council

In February, members of our Whole School Council met with Mrs Speirs to discuss a range of topics including:

- Distance Learning
- Camera On v Camera Off
- Screen Time and Prep
- Co-curricular Activities
- Pastoral Support

Thanks to our Senior School pupils for openly sharing opinions and thoughts and to Prep School Head Girl and Head Boy, Samantha and William, for their confident feedback on behalf of our 3 - 11 boys and girls.



Heads of School

Thanks to our Bethan, Hanaan and Will for their Easter term blog highlighting a different start, but the same Solihull camaraderie and brilliance and sharing their thoughts on strong leaders.





Oxbridge Offers

Congratulations to our eight Sixth Form students who won conditional offers to study at Oxford and Cambridge. A fantastic achievement in an incredibly competitive year for Oxbridge admission, and in such challenging circumstances. Well done, Keon, Carys, Frederick, Shiuli, Kiarn, Lauren, Isaac and Jack.



International Competition Success

In February, pupils and staff entered a series of International Inter School Competitions as part of the 7th International Exchange Programme by Global Connect 2021, hosted by a school in India and supported by The British Council. This year's theme was 'Being Humane' and looked at building a better world post COVID. With categories for all age groups, and entries from around the globe, we were delighted to learn of three awards for Solihull! Upper Fifth pupil Kaitlin won first prize for her essay 'Why feminism is not just a women's issue' and Mrs Speirs and Mr S Morgan were awarded first and second respectively for their entries in 'The Kindness Cure' short story category, relating to our response to COVID-19. Look out for more international competitions coming soon!

Laptop Initiative

At the start of this term's lockdown, we launched a laptop appeal to support local organisations in urgent need of devices to distribute to children and clients in their care. Upper Fifth pupil, Kitty; Solihull parent, Mrs Yeaman and Old Silhillian, Harry Morgan instigated the appeal and we are thankful for all your donations. We supplied a number of devices to Colebridge Trust and Kitty independently went on to collect 80 laptops and raise enough money to buy 20 brand new items. Kitty also presented a cheque for £3,000 to St Thomas More School in Sheldon.



Feeding the Communities

Well done to our Catering Team who prepared meals for Thomas Franks Foundation Feeding Communities. We're proud to have been able to support the campaign and took great delight in seeing 750 dishes leave our kitchen one February afternoon to be delivered to those in need across the region. Thanks to Mr Green for his assistance with distribution.



Home Starter Kit Appeal

Thank you to all who supported our Solihull Churches Action on Homelessness Home Starter Kit Appeal at the end of the Christmas term. Louise Cox, President of the Saint Martin's Old Girls, who introduced us to the local organisation's vital work, was overwhelmed by the response and the SCAH team were so grateful for our generous donations.

Virtual Fitness Mission

On Friday 19 March we launched our Virtual Fitness Mission supporting The Tommy Godwin charity to raise funds to for Marie Curie. The challenge, which follows the iconic 932 mile Lands End to John O'Groats route, is open to pupils, parents, staff, alumni and friends; runners, walkers and cyclists.

Thank you to all who have signed up for this activity, aimed to be completed throughout the summer term - please don't be deterred if you're lapped by Mr Super, Mr Corbett or Mr James! If you're interested in taking part, it's not too late to join. Contact ransonj@solsch.org.uk or visit Community Relations at www.solsch.org.uk





Easter Egg-stravaganza!

Miss Airdrie was full of egg-citement and egg-cellent puns for our Easter term chocolate collection. Pupils in the Senior School were asked to donate eggs for Solihull Hospital's Children's Ward and local foodbanks so boys and girls could enjoy a treat during this special celebration. Thank you all for your generosity.

Egg-stras special mention for Prep School pupils Enaya and Arniya who saved money by doing chores around the house and bought 96 chocolate Easter bunnies and Ava who donated 60 eggs. The Senior School collection totalled over 500 items. Wonderful!



Charity Bakes

Throughout lockdown, Hassan has been raising money for Heart Research, in memory of his grandparents. The Lower Sixth student had planned to climb Mount Snowdon in December, but due to restrictions, this activity was postponed until March. Undeterred by the set-back, Hassan swapped his boots for baking, creating an Instagram page selling brownie boxes and handmade sweet treats for charity! Well done, Hassan – H J Desserts look incredible – and good luck for your climb on 27 March. www.instagram.com/hjdesserts1/



Non-Uniform Day

On the last day of term we held a whole school Non-Uniform Day, fundraising for LAFF, Latin American Foundation for the Future. Pupils and parents across both the Prep and Senior School once again donated in excess. We appreciate your support on this last charity push of the Easter term.



Holocaust Memorial Day

Well done to our Holocaust Memorial Day Creative Competition winners:

Lower School Essay: Isabella, Shell Form; Art: Isaac, Third Form; Middle School Essay: Rhea, Lower Fifth; Poetry: Raksha, Third Form; Photography: Ziqi, Third Form.



Science and Engineering Club

With pupils back in school, Science and Engineering Club has resumed for the Lower Fifth Form bubble. Over the past fortnight, pupils have continued to work on their Technical Lego Engineering projects, which they started during the Christmas term. According to Mr Davis, it took a little while to get back up to speed!

Engineering Education Scheme

A huge well done to our Engineering Education Scheme class of 2019-2020, they completed their final projects during lockdown and their work has since been approved by the assessors from EDT. At the beginning of March, Mr Davis presented the Upper Sixth students with their Gold Level Industrial Cadets certificates.

Both teams worked extremely hard to put two projects together in partnership with JLR. One of these was looking at vehicle customisation, the second considered the use of wind tunnels in the development of new cars. With less than two months to go, the country went into its first national lockdown and work had to stop. The students have had to complete these projects in the first term of their Upper Sixth courses, a very busy time. Students have attended sessions before school, as well as putting in considerable time at home to finish the tasks.

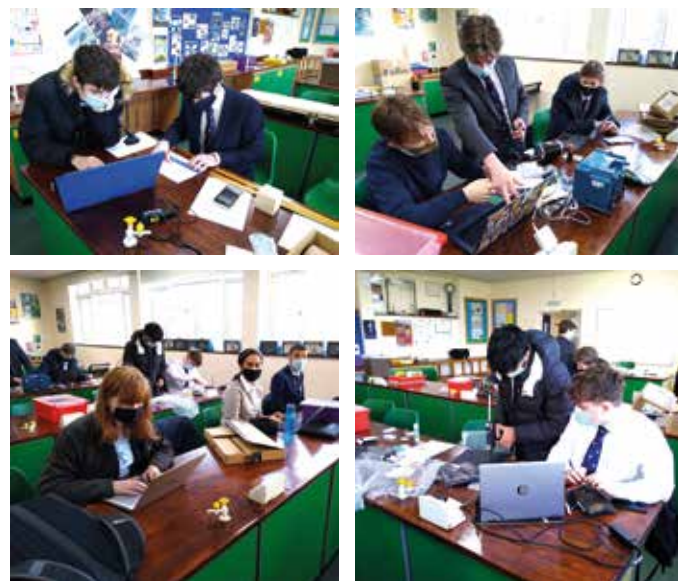
Congratulations to John, Sam, Emily, George, Megan, Amy, Daniel, Jisimrut, Edward, Kiarn and Khanh.





Enrichment CREST Award Group

After three months of planning, including a great deal of work at home, the Enrichment Science / Engineering CREST Award group have finally started their practicals. All students are working towards their Gold Level CREST Award, which requires a significant amount of activity both in school and in their own time. The projects include a skateboard, a new design for luggage storage on an aeroplane, a hydraulic arm for a Mars rover, an electric motor for a bicycle and a new design for a speaker system.



Eco Club

Eco Club normally spend their sessions at work in the school's Eco Garden. Unable to do this during lockdown, the pupils put their time to excellent use by starting the School's Environmental Review. This is the first step of seven in the Eco-Schools accreditation process in the aim of gaining a Green Flag. Similar research is taking place in the Prep School with the exciting possibility of this being something the school can work on achieving across both campuses. On return to school, Third Form pupils couldn't wait to get their hands dirty – clearing vegetable patches and planting potatoes.

Goodbye

In my deepest dreams,
I see your face one more time.
No longer do I imagine your scent,
Or the colours held in your eyes.
I feel the tears,
Fall into the hands of someone I loved,
Someone that loved me.
I hear the sound of the laughter that cling
To my bedroom walls,
But then began to leave.
I see the person that was the lock to my key,
The one forever gone.
I cry,
When I realise that you are the part of me
That will always be a scar in my heart,
Never undone.
But I will hold you one last time,
And I tell myself,
I am forever yours
And you are forever mine.

Thank you to Upper Fifth pupil, Charlotte for sharing one of her latest poetry pieces, Goodbye.

Spanish Zoom

On Wednesday 3 March, our Upper Sixth Spanish students engaged in a one hour Zoom call with students from our Argentinian partner school Colegio Yapeyú. The groups discussed current affairs, History and Politics in Spanish and English. The activity was a tremendous success and both sets of boys and girls showed excellent language skills.



History

Upper Fifth History pupils are required to study a historical site as part of their Elizabeth I topic and this year, due to restrictions, the chosen place was a local one - Kenilworth Castle. At the start of the Easter term, pupils were researching the changes that were made to the castle by its owner the Earl of Leicester (Robert Dudley) and how far these were motivated by his aspirations to marry Elizabeth I, who visited Kenilworth for the final time in 1575.

During half term, keen historian Lydia discovered that Kenilworth Castle was actually open, and decided to visit the site to see some of Dudley's alterations for herself. Great use of initiative, Lydia.



Computing

Since January in computing lessons, our Third Form pupils have been working on completing The Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award, known as iDEA – and they've achieved great success! Through a series of online challenges, boys and girls progressed to win badges, unlock new opportunities and, ultimately, gain industry-recognised awards. The following pupils have received their Bronze Award.

George, Jessica, James, Flynn, Darcey, Raphael, Jake, Saachi, Amy, Bella, Marcus, Ben, Isaac, Raahil, Jack, Hayden, Harry, Ella, Emma, Robert, Molly-Mae, James, Venaya, Clémentine.

Plus Taneesha who completed Bronze at her previous school and is now working towards Silver.

Great work and well done from the Computing Department.

Computing Challenge

Just before Christmas, all Lower School Computing pupils, GCSE ICT and Computer Science and A Level Computer Science students were entered into a national competition. Solihull received some great results and a number of pupils achieved a Gold Award as their score was in the top 10% nationally. One Lower Sixth student, five Middle School and 40 Lower School pupils were awarded the Gold Standard and they were invited to another demanding challenge organised by the University of Oxford in February.



Lower Sixth Law

In February, Mr Gledhill was delighted to welcome Old Silhillian, Mike Duck QC to lead an evening with our Lower Sixth Law Group. Mr Duck QC spoke about everything from dealing with vulnerable witnesses through to the challenges facing the Bar and criminal justice system during the pandemic. A really interesting and informative event.





European Youth Parliament Event

During the first weekend of March, nine Lower Sixth Politics students - Ciara, Huw, Freddie, Rhys, Jenny, Miah, Luca, Amy and Ed - took part in the European Youth Parliament Regional Forum, discussing some of the most pressing issues facing Europe and the world today, from men's mental health to the distribution of the COVID vaccine to recovery from the pandemic. On day one, Solihull students were allocated to committees, in which they worked with others from across the West Midlands to propose solutions to these problems in the form of European Parliament resolutions. Then, on the Sunday, a General Assembly session took place over Zoom where solutions were offered, scrutinized, debated and voted on. Regardless of which committee students participated in, the weekend was thoroughly enjoyable and engaging and Solihull boys and girls played a leading role in discussions.

In recognition of his excellent collaborative working and contribution to debate, Freddie has been invited to represent the West Midlands and the EYP National Forum in the summer.

Extended Project Qualification

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is all about developing new skills as well as building confidence, resilience and the ability to be flexible and reflective. The current circumstances have offered our latest EPQ cohort a wonderful opportunity to do just that. The presentations have been a little different this year with the majority taking place via video call and, whilst staff and pupils have missed inviting visitors to the George Hill Building for tea and cake, we can assure you that the projects were no less varied than previous years. Brilliant artefacts – podcasts, films and books to mention a few, and of course robust and thoroughly researched dissertations. Well done to all involved.

Physics Olympiad

The Physics Department have been running extension sessions in the Upper Sixth, Lower Sixth and Upper Fifth, with the aim to participate in the British Physics Olympiad Challenges.

All year groups have performed phenomenally well this year achieving a plethora of awards.

The Upper Sixth team earned three Merits and Commendations, and four students went on to achieve two Silver Awards, a Bronze I Award and a Commendation in the Round One paper. This is used to select the top Physicists in the country to represent Britain in the International Olympiad. The project assisted students in their preparations for Oxbridge examinations and interviews, where two successfully gained places to study Natural Science at Cambridge.

The Lower Sixth team was popular this year with nine entering and all receiving an award. The format of the paper had to change from a mix of multiple choice and longer explanation questions to 40 multiple choice in one hour. This meant the paper was more about quick thinking and logic, which proved to be a strength of the cohort. The team earned two Gold Awards, six Silver and a Bronze.

Finally, the Upper Fifth team, who again had a change in paper format. Physics staff were impressed with these pupils as they were committed to remotely join our sessions before school – even with mocks looming. The team managed to earn two Gold Awards and three Silver Awards.

The Lower Fifth will start extension sessions after Easter and enter in the Junior Challenge at the end of May. After which, the focus will be back on the Lower Sixth and preparing them for Oxbridge applications and the build-up for the Round One paper next year.

The results have improved this year ... but unfortunately, no biscuits due to these being remote sessions ... watch this space next year!



Food and Nutrition

Our Third Form and Shell Form pupils continued to develop their cooking techniques in Food and Nutrition lessons at home and we've been really impressed with their progress, and for Children's Mental Health Week, Third Form boys and girls expressed themselves in cake creations! Now back in school, pupils have demonstrated new skills in our kitchens producing shortcrust pastry in practical lessons and preparing delicious dinners – whilst clearing out our store cupboards! Zero waste here we come!

French Celebrations

In French lessons, Mrs Black's Shell Form pupils celebrated La Chandeleur, the French Candlemas or Crêpe Day, which takes place in France on 2 February, 40 days after Christmas. Pupils learnt about the occasion, how and why it is marked and used French vocabulary to describe their favourite crêpe. They were then tasked with making a pancake.

Tres bien to all!



Ancient Greek

Ancient Greek is a real differentiator as pupils move up the school. It is challenging, interesting and an opportunity for fascination with language. Learning a new alphabet stretches boys and girls and promotes flexibility of thinking - and those who love Latin or other languages will also love Ancient Greek.

Ancient Greek off timetable is going from strength to strength. 11 Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth pupils are undertaking the GCSE course this year and a further 11 Fourth Form children have started their studies. There is already a huge amount of interest amongst current Shell Form pupils for next year's course, which will begin formally in September by invitation and will cover basic alphabet familiarisation in the summer term. For fun, stretch and challenge, Ancient Greek is a real must for those who have commitment to their growth and development and want to find out more about the Ancient World in the original language.



Chemistry Olympiad

The Chemistry Olympiad is the leading Chemistry competition for A Level students and is organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry. This is a very difficult exam which goes significantly beyond the specification. Preparation sessions have been run by Dr Jennings, however COVID restrictions have made this a particularly challenging year for participants. Congratulations go to Shiuli for achieving a Gold Award and to Isaac and Morgane for their Silver Awards. Preparations are now underway for the Lower Sixth Chemistry Challenge which takes place in June.

Routes into Languages

On Wednesday 3 March a number of our A Level Spanish and French students attended an event staged by Routes into Languages on the subject of 'Careers and Future Study in French and Spanish.' Participants listened to lectures in each language and attended a talk, given by two current undergraduates, about languages at university.



Maths

Thank you to Mr Macarthur for his involvement in our Maths Enrichment Lecture: The Powers of Two which was presented on *Teams* this term, and well done to our pupils who worked throughout lockdown on the Dr Frost Maths platform – almost 100,000 questions answered in total!

Back in school, the Maths Department celebrated Pi Day on 14 March with cake from Mr Bishop and a ‘Dingbats’ competition, open to Lower School pupils. Prizes were awarded to the winners from Third Form, Shell Form and and Fourth Form. Well done to Saachi, Olivia and Aimee.



House Events

Thanks to all pupils and staff for once again embracing our House activities.

The first was a physical challenge - The House race to the David Fricke Mountain Cottage, and up Snowdon, and back to Solihull! The David Fricke Mountain Cottage in Mynydd Llandegai, Snowdonia is a cherished place and an important part of the heritage of Solihull School. Pupils and staff were encouraged to leave their screen and be active by either running, walking or cycling. Collective distances were collated to discover which level each House achieved.

We then received many super submissions from our whole school in our A - Z House Creativity Challenge. From baking something new and dancing in the kitchen to getting outdoors and painting with your eyes closed. Some simple, some more tricky. Something for everyone - and all earning those important House points.

We’ve also seen House Music, Drama, Netball and Hockey and, at the Prep School, the Creative Reading Spaces and Dress the Egg competitions.

Roll on the summer term!



| CURRENT STANDINGS | |
|-------------------|-------|
| PREP SCHOOL | |
| FETHERSTON | 465 |
| JAGO | 460 |
| POLE | 522.5 |
| SHENSTONE | 562.5 |
| WINDSOR | 460 |



| CURRENT STANDINGS | |
|-------------------|-----|
| SENIOR SCHOOL | |
| FETHERSTON | 604 |
| JAGO | 549 |
| POLE | 667 |
| SHENSTONE | 624 |
| WINDSOR | 657 |



Photography Challenge

Lower School pupils contributed some fantastic images to Mrs Terry’s photo challenge this term. Each week, a new picture activity was set to encourage creativity and make the photographer view things from a different perspective. Themes included Foreshortening, Bugs Eye View, Collections and Googly Eyes! Wonderful work, well done.



Natural Creations

In Art, Shell Form pupils created natural form collages of birds based on the work of Hannah Bullen-Ryner. The boys and girls produced some fantastic pieces, so Mrs Trim set a challenge for the rest of the school community to join in the fun over half term, inviting would be artists to get outside and get involved!



Marathon Challenge

Well done to Fourth Form pupils Olivia and Angel who walked a marathon in February!

The girls set themselves a half term challenge to complete the massive 26.2 miles together, and they did just that in 8hrs 45mins.



Volunteering for Vaccines

Great to see Sixth Form student Alaric (left) spend some of his weekends volunteering at a COVID vaccine clinic in Coventry this term. Thank you for giving up your free time to support this important work. Alaric is pictured with another volunteer, a pupil at Heart of England School.



Messenger Award:- Aunya and Mahira, Third Form and Beatrice, Giorgiana, Samuel, Zara, Khushi, Aryanna, Daniel, Barney, Katie, Isabella, Phao and Gracie, Fourth Form.

Bronze Award: Yichen, Helena, Olivia, Daniel and Rosie, Shell Form; Giorgia and Simone, Lower Fifth and Laura and Reece, Upper Fifth

Silver Award: Ellis, Lower Fifth

Gold Award: Alex, Lower Fifth and Lola-Blue, Upper Fifth

A further 28 pupils will take exams either before or just after Easter and we look forward to continued success.

Lockdown Shakespeare

Despite all the trials and tribulations that comes with lockdown, Solihull pupils have risen to the creative challenge of not only adapting their performance skills for online tuition (of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts Shakespeare Awards), but even sitting their exams remotely. Last year the cohort studying the RADA awards as part of the school's Co-curricular activities, was just under 40 strong, this year's it as grown to over 60. Half of these pupils (those who had not taken exams in October) were able to take their exams from home before the February half term.

Some 26 boys and girls were examined over two full days - co-ordinated by the Bushell Hall's Theatre Technicians over *Teams*. Candidates ranged from Third Form to Upper Fifth; from those at the start of their RADA Shakespeare journey, on the first level Messenger Award to those taking the advanced Gold Award. We are delighted to announce that as with the October sitting the school received another 100% success and some glowing feedback on the creativity and polish of their performances. Such is the high standard of our pupils' work, Solihull is fortunate enough to be granted permission by the Royal Academy to breach the normal age restrictions with many 12 and 13 year olds involved in submissions usually reserved for those over 15 years of age. The awards demand clarity and creativity as well as knowledge of a range of plays and sonnets, demonstrated through two speeches or scenes and with examination time taking from 15 to 45 minutes.

At Gold Level, in addition to two speeches, candidates are given an 'unseen' sonnet to perform after only 15 minute preparation. RADA is internationally recognised as one of the best drama schools in the world: training the likes of Tom Hiddleston, Alan Rickman and Judi Dench. As the awards are examined by current directors from RADA, the exams give pupils the opportunity to work individually with top industry professionals.

If you would like to find out more about opportunities to study RADA Shakespeare or other acting awards please contact staffordk@solsch.org.uk



Birmingham Hippodrome's Young Advocates

Congratulations to Lower Sixth Drama Scholar Hiba who gained a place on Birmingham Hippodrome's Young Advocates programme. Hiba was selected from 150 young people who completed a rigorous application process, including three rounds of interviews and auditions, to become one of 16 successful candidates.

Here Hiba explains a bit more about the programme: "The Birmingham Hippodrome Young Advocates programme is a group of 16 young people aged 14-22, brought together to help shape the future of Birmingham Hippodrome's work. Since January, the young advocates have been working towards presenting our ideas for the future at an upcoming TedXYouth event in the form of a short film. I took on the role of creative director for this project giving me the responsibility of creating the overall vision of the film, overseeing all aspects of filmmaking and ensuring that everything works cohesively. This role has given me the chance to develop both my leadership and collaboration skills, especially when working recently with professional videographers and editors. The skills that this opportunity has provided me with over the last three months has been invaluable and I hope to see the programme continue in the summer."

Well done, Hiba, we are incredibly proud of this wonderful achievement.



Theatre Design Club

Lower School pupils have enjoyed Mr Hunton's lunchtime sessions of sewing, painting, crafting and construction as they work hard on preparations for our forthcoming Drama productions.



Lower Fifth Drama Productions

During distance learning, Lower Sixth students, Hiba and Ellie have been working with Lower Fifth pupils on the production of *Heavy Weather* and *DNA*. Rehearsals started before lockdown, continued online and have now commenced face-to-face in the Bushell Hall studios.





Girl Up Solihull!

This term has seen the formation of Girl Up Solihull, a new club comprising of a group of Lower Sixth girls, led by Emma. Girl Up is an International organization that focuses on 'uniting girls to change the world'. It was founded by the UN Foundation in 2010 as an initiative to help support UN agencies. Girls are encouraged to start their own group and so the Solihull School branch has been born! The Lower Sixth pupils have already run a competition connected to International Women's Day and the theme of 'Choose to Challenge', and they have big ideas moving forward, planning to address period poverty, using STEM skills to highlight gender equality and contributing to the important debate surrounding women's safety and gender based violence.

Mrs Speirs has been thrilled to attend the initial meetings and firmly supports Girl Up Solihull in their mission to involve more females in the school, promote gender equality and enable girls to find their voice, self-confidence and strength.



Film Club

In Film Club, Mrs Rooney and the pupils decided on an old classic, *The Goonies*, a film about a group of children searching for treasure, finding their homes, going through adversity and helping each other along. It was just the right thing to be watching!



Holocaust Memorial Day

On Wednesday 27 January, we marked Holocaust Memorial Day with some outstanding reflections on 'Light the Darkness'. WPD and The Equity Group contributed to the overall recognition of this event, including a beautiful rendition of a poem by Anna Whitmarsh reading Auschwitz by Charles N Whittaker. 'The semiquaver chugging of the train on the track....'



International Women's Day

Great focus again from The Equity Group and WPD with excellent tutor resources on the Glass Ceiling for future generations to help smash. Fabulous research and work by Eleanor, Jinzhu, Eve and Kaitlin, with special guest, Mr Delaney reading Kaitlin's award-winning poem about why feminism is everyone's issue!

Peer Mentor Training

A fabulous intake of 30 Lower Sixth Peer Mentors completed their rigorous training to be able to offer pastoral support and guidance to pupils in our younger years. Badges were distributed just before Easter with allocations to mentees expected after the break. Students have trained hard to know all about boundaries, typical pastoral difficulties, safeguarding and being a positive role model.



Children's Mental Health Week

With the theme of Express Yourself, the Wellbeing and Personal Development Department and The Equity Group again pooled their resources with a fabulous musical video inviting everyone to 'express themselves' by sending in videos and photos of our school community doing things that they love. The music video featured the many talents of our staff and members of The Equity Group and the response was really positive and uplifting - so many images uploaded and shared to our VLE.

Safer Internet Day

Tuesday 9 February saw WPD delivering important lessons as part of the Relationship and Sex Education provision, focusing on the dangers of sexting, intimate image abuse in the older years and digital identity.



LGBT History Month

February marked LGBT History Month – in WPD and with the support of our fabulous Equity Group, we compiled important lessons about the history of LGBT rights, bringing Solihull up to date to reflect contemporary society. Advocating always for 5-Steps Against Discrimination, the message applies across the board when considering the difficulties of any group that feels 'othered'.

Here we share our 5-Steps Against Discrimination:

- Step up - challenge prejudice in any form
- Step back - reflect on our part
- Step inside other's experience - get educated
- Step down with humility when we get it wrong
- Step towards to support and help

Wellbeing and Personal Development

Our Wellbeing and Personal Development lessons, started this term with a focus on resilience through what turned out to be another period of working from home – but Perseverantia prevailed and we spent our time looking at things that inspire and motivate us and things that give us strength and confidence.

Staff Training

WPD lessons and learning extends to the whole of our community and, January saw the completion of important CPD for Staff on Professional and Personal Resilience. The department also started the 8-week Mindfulness for Staff course, again for either personal support or for those teachers who aspire to deliver our paws b and .b Mindfulness in Schools Programmes in the Prep School and Senior School.





Virtual Informal Concerts

At the beginning of the Easter term, as we were in lockdown again, we quickly reverted to our tried and tested platform of 'Virtual Informal Concerts' being broadcast on Friday afternoons at 4pm. We were able to start these events in the second week of term, and are very grateful to those pupils who were ready to perform straight away:

Melissa, Yiyan, Isabella A, Isabella S, Daisy and Katy. The first recording had an Irish theme as Mr Rice closed the concert with Irish Tune from County Derry by Percy Grainger, Isabella sang the traditional Irish song Rose of Tralee, and Katy undertook an amazing quartet where she played all four parts in a wonderful arrangement for clarinet quartet of Molly on the Shore by Percy Grainger.

Just before half term, following the sad news of Captain Sir Tom Moore's passing, Kaia and Yichen from Fourth Form, created a remote duet performance playing a beautiful piece of Bach 'Alle Menschen müssen sterben' which conveys the idea that people are not immortal and must pass on at some point - what a poignant tribute to an amazing man.

Some pupils have participated in several concerts, whilst others have worked hard for a single performance. One event in February featured pupils from both ends of the 3-18 school - we opened with Evie in Nursery and closed with Bethan in Upper Sixth. Well done to everyone for their hard work, and thank you to teachers and parents for their support.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement that all pupils would return to face-to-face learning in schools on Monday 8 March, we decided to keep to the same model of concerts for the rest of the term in order to offer the opportunity to perform to as many pupils as possible. By the end of term, we had put on another ten 'Virtual Informal Concerts' featuring all instrument families and all ages of children in the school.



Virtual Concert Trip

In the absence of being able to get out to hear live concerts, we were thrilled to be part of an initiative by the Hallé Orchestra. They recorded a socially distanced programme of music illustrating the development of the orchestra over the centuries, all linked by BBC Radio 3 presenter, Tom Redmond. Over 40 pupils and staff watched together online, with more viewing on catch-up. Sharing the experience of live music as a community is so uplifting, so we are all looking forward to a time when we can be back in concert halls in person.

Exam Successes

Our normal music exams have not been able to take place this term. The main music exam boards have adapted to this situation by offering candidates the opportunity to do new recorded exams. Increasing numbers of our pupils are taking these exams, and they have proved themselves brilliantly, adapting to a very different way of working. In one set of entries, which were examined at the end of January, every single one of the eight candidates received a Distinction - well done to all of them. One pupil even achieved 146 marks out of 150 - wow, what an accomplishment!

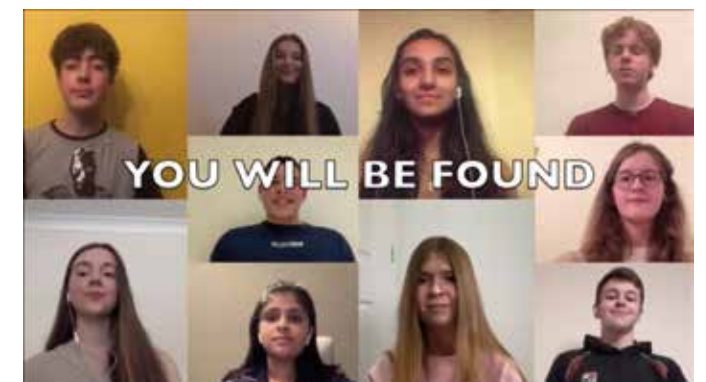


Return to School

We continue to think of creative ways for ensembles to meet safely within the confines of our COVID safety measures. This mainly means that groups are built around existing bubbles within school. We have a good number of budding string players within J3, so the J3 String Orchestra has been meeting in person again. During lockdown, they held sectional rehearsals on *Teams*, but they are very pleased to be back together as a whole group. Some of our pianists have been working on their individual parts for piano duets, and have been able to bring their parts together now that we are back in school. We also have brass groups across the Senior School, two wind bands in the Junior School and a number of wind ensembles in different Senior School year groups.

Children's Mental Health Week

Hannah Greenwood in Lower Fifth spearheaded a wonderfully moving remote performance of the song *You Will Be Found* from the musical *Dear Evan Hansen*. Each pupil recorded their part individually, then Hannah spent several hours (in fact it was about 20 hours!) mixing together audio tracks, and editing video montages to create a wonderful final result. The message of the song was felt to be particularly appropriate given the challenges of the pandemic, which has left people feeling lonely and vulnerable.



Chapel Music

The Chapel has been in much demand this year, including as a staff working area and recently as a lateral flow testing centre. During lockdown, our year group choirs enjoyed rehearsing a variety of repertoire including some sacred music, which is currently being recorded as part of a special Easter service with Father Andrew.



Music Success

Congratulations to J2 pupil Ryan who achieved his guitar Grade 2 with Distinction this term.





Lateral Flow

On Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 March, Solihull staff and volunteers undertook a full weekend of lateral flow testing for Senior School pupils. A massive task and we are so very grateful to all involved in this incredibly important work to ensure a safe return to school on Monday 8 March.



Lower School Test Centre Poster Competition

Thank you to the Third Form pupils who entered our COVID-19 Test Centre poster design competition. These super colourful creations, with messages of hope, happiness and positivity, really brightened up our Sports Hall. Huge congratulations to competition winner, Sophie.



Back in School

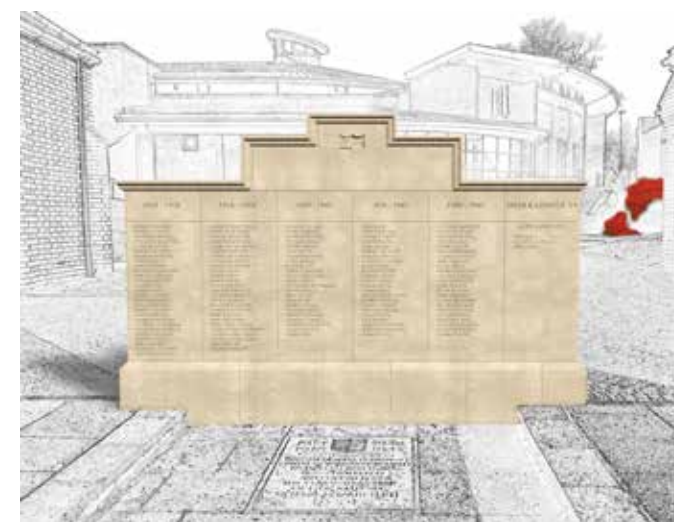
There was very much a 'first day of term' feel when we came back in to school on Monday 8 March. Pupils, parents and staff looked happy and excited, if a little anxious. Thank you to you all for your on-going support and positivity. Spring is in the air and we look forward to the summer term.



One Year On

At 4.10pm, on 17 March 2020 we closed our doors due to the onset of COVID-19.

On 17 March this year it was a much better story, with happiness and positivity from pupils and staff across both campuses. A very difficult year in our history.



War Memorial

To mark the centenary of The Old Silhillians' Association and to celebrate the strong bond that exists between the school and its former pupils, a decision has been made to replace the old war memorial, now rather worn and weathered. A new war memorial, accurately listing in full the names of the fallen, is currently under construction.

Details are available online at <https://alumni.solsch.org.uk/.../120-The-New-War-Memorial> with an opportunity to donate to this important project here <https://alumni.solsch.org.uk/supportus>





Meet the Teacher

This term we introduced our Meet the Teacher Monday posts on social media, an opportunity to learn a bit about our Solihull teaching staff. Keep an eye out on our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages for more in the summer term ... plus we'll be launching Non-teaching Staff Saturday, a chance to hear from other members of our Solihull School community.



Miss Rutherford
Head of Religious Studies

Out of school I ... love watching cricket and am a lifelong Bears fan.

I have worked at Solihull for ... nine years.

My one piece of advice for pupils is ... let yourself make mistakes, that's when you learn the most.



Mrs Trim
Head of Art and Photography

Outside of school I ... draw, paint and build things.

I have worked at Solihull for ... 14 years.

You should always try ... food before you say that you don't like it.

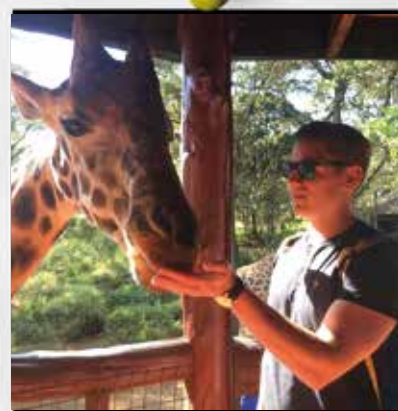


Mrs Patel
Head of Computer Science

Outside of school I enjoy many pastimes, cooking, walking, dancing, visiting new places, singing, keeping active. It's OK to have more than one hobby!

I have worked at Solihull for 4 ½ years.

My favourite subject at school was ... Geography, which inspired me to travel. I have visited Hawaii, Cuba, Singapore, Switzerland amongst other places, and eventually worked abroad for three years in Dubai.

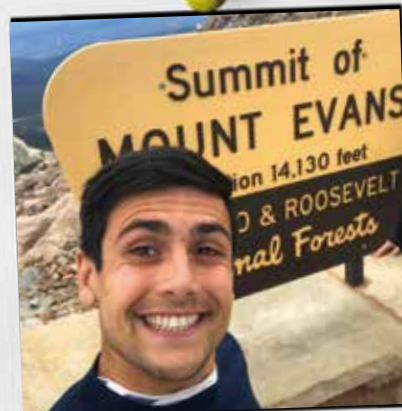


Mr Walker
I2 Teacher

Outside of school I love to ... travel. I have been fortunate to live in Australia, USA and the UAE, and explore different parts of the world. Hopefully I can do more of this in the future!

My one piece of advice for pupils is ... if you try your best and are a nice and kind person, you can achieve anything.

My favourite subject at school was ... (that's a tough question) ... Art, PE and English. If I could go back to school I would love to revisit my History lessons.



Mr Evans
Senior School Teacher of English and Teacher of Drama

My favourite subject at school was ... Drama.

A song that makes me happy is ... Bob Dylan's 'Don't Think Twice, It's All Alright'. Brilliantly sarcastic.

I was born in ... Dorchester, Dorset the birthplace of Thomas Hardy (the novelist and poet, not the actor).



Mr Bate
Head of Outdoor Education

I have worked at Solihull for ... 17 years in September

A person I admire is ... David Attenborough. I am currently reading his latest book 'A Life on Our Planet, My witness statement and a vision for the future'. It's fantastic and his story and what he has witnessed is truly amazing. I appreciate that he is commonly chosen but he really is an incredible and inspirational person.

My one piece of advice for pupils is ... challenge yourselves as often as possible to do or try something different. It is amazing what you CAN achieve if you have the ambition.



Mrs Crowton
Lead EYFS at the Prep School

My one piece of advice for pupils is ... never be afraid to get it wrong!

One thing people not many know about me is ... I drive racing cars.

Teaching is brilliant because ... I help children to learn essential life skills!



Mr Super
Head of Academic PE at the Prep School

Outside of school ... I train to compete in Ironman Distance Triathlons – 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike, 26.2 mile marathon run - #anythingispossible

When I was growing up I wanted to be ... an acrobat in the circus!

A person I admire is ... my Dad, for so many reasons.



Mrs Mansell
Junior School Teacher

Outside of school I ... sing at weddings with Crystal Gospel Choir and I also enjoy long distance running and, recently, open water swimming.

I have worked at Solihull for ... almost a whole year – most of which has been through Microsoft Teams!

My favourite subject at school was ... Drama and PE. I still love the adrenaline that comes with competing and performing.



Mrs Farnan
J3 Head of Year

Outside of school I ... enjoy taking my daughter to the park, and 'being forced' to go on the slide with her!

My favourite subject at school was ... Psychology – I loved it so much I went on to study it at Warwick University.

My favourite quote is "I am not what happened to me. I am what I choose to become." Carl Jung.





Mr Maddy's England Legends Call Up

Playing international cricket against some of the greatest players to ever have graced the game was the last thing on my mind in the middle of a pandemic and during a third national lockdown.

So you can only imagine my surprise and delight when I received the call inviting me to represent the England Legends in the Road Safety World Series in Raipur, India.

It was with great excitement and yet some trepidation that I boarded the Virgin flight to Delhi at Heathrow Airport, knowing that I hadn't played professional cricket for eight years and hadn't batted in a competitive cricket match for over four years.

Arriving in a bio-secure Indian hotel, I was initially quarantined in my room for three days and wasn't allowed out of the hotel resort for a further four. This gave me ample time to think and reflect on this exciting new situation I found myself in, before I could finally get a bat in hand at my first team practice. However, the first game against Bangladesh was only a day away.

It goes without saying that we have all been living in unprecedented times during the past 12 months, so walking out to bat that next evening in front of ten thousand people and knowing that it was being televised throughout the whole of the subcontinent as well as across various countries around the world, was quite an unforgettable moment and an opportunity I thought I'd never get to experience again.

As if life couldn't get any better, a few nights later we played against India in front of a home crowd of thirty thousand and an estimated TV of a hundred million people ... the highlight of course was playing against Tendulkar, Sehwag and Yuvraj, not to mention the noise and the atmosphere the crowd made in adoration of their heroes. The game didn't disappoint with a tense and exciting last over victory for the England Legends reminiscent of the World Cup final!

Further games against South Africa, Sri Lanka and the West Indies soon followed and this celebrity lifestyle that I was experiencing started to feel like the new norm.

Unfortunately, all good things have to end (although I did return to Solihull!) and after three weeks of playing with and against true royalty of the game my tournament was over and I was heading home.

India is truly an amazing country with the friendliest people that I have ever had the pleasure to meet. Their love and passion for the game of cricket is refreshing and I can't recommend highly enough for any young cricketer wishing to play out there.

What a fantastic way to start the 2021 cricket season.

Thanks for sharing your experience, Mr Maddy.



Lockdown PE and Exercise Sessions

Sport was very different during lockdown. PE lessons were delivered live and staff enjoyed seeing the pupils at home working hard in High Intensity Interval training sessions. The boys and girls put the staff through their paces and we believe the department became a little fitter as a result!

For Games afternoons, pupils were able to access their coaches and teachers on video providing ideas for drills and skills, to be carried out individually or with a sibling at home, using whatever equipment available.

It was also great to see so many taking part in the online exercise morning and lunchtime sessions. From Monday Motivator to Friday Energiser with Yoga and Zumba in between, every year group enjoyed exercise together and inspiring one another. Well done to those faces who seem to make it to every session. Very impressive!

Sport, Health and Fitness

So great to see Sport, Health and Fitness sessions being enjoyed back in school during the day and in Co-curricular Clubs after school on both campuses.



Fancy Dress Fun

Mrs Higginson ensured our Reception pupils were fully engaged in PE lessons online, taking to *Teams* in fancy dress most weeks! A particular highlight was when Mrs Higginson came to the recorded remote lesson dressed as Buzz Lightyear, and just 24 hours later, The Body Coach, Joe Wicks, donned the same costume for his live fitness session. Our question is, who wore it best?





REASONS TO REJOICE

An Easter Message
from Father Andrew



It has now been a year since we were able to hold public services in school chapel. The pandemic has changed and challenged our experience of and interaction with the Christian Church on many levels.

Firstly, church buildings, in particular our school chapel. For many of us the place of worship really matters. We worship with all our senses and no video can capture the full experience. *Teams* and *Zoom* have provided excellent platforms for teaching and meetings, but I consider it inadequate for worship. Participation becomes optional, less complete and more of a download than a spiritual interaction.

Secondly, our chaplaincy community. The smiles, hugs, handshakes, laughter, support and warmth experienced through Sunday worship. During lockdown this has been largely removed. This community and what happens before and after any service is an extension of the liturgy itself and a source of strength and support to all.

Thirdly, the extended community through which people access the living church. Although pastoral care has continued through *Zoom*, phone and letter and the Sacraments celebrated in homes and gardens when permitted, the absence of our communal gatherings such as the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, Midnight Mass and Christingle have been sorely missed.

In his recent book, 'Dear England', Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York, addresses some of these issues for our country at a time of division and pandemic. He begins on a personal level by unpacking expectations about two types of religious people which one may encounter. Firstly, those who treat faith as a hobby and secondly those who embrace their faith so tightly that they frighten people away.

Archbishop Stephen wants to advocate a third way, particularly to those outside the church. "The heart of the Christian Faith" he says "has always been about a new way of inhabiting the earth". Furthermore, he reflects that "the Christian way offers something strange and beautiful and different about belonging to each other".

As we begin to emerge into a 'new normal' it is clear that there will be many challenges for the Church (and school) in the months and years ahead. For many institutions the financial impact of COVID will be the chief hurdle.

But apart from buildings and resources there are other needs to address. As a recent report from The Children's Society makes clear, children and young people are among those being hardest hit by the impact of the pandemic. A general slough

of despondency seems to be affecting many young people, according to the research carried out by the charity.

It is, therefore, of great joy that I'm able to congratulate our school community for their generosity. For many years we have donated collections from our Christmas services for the imperative efforts of The Children's Society. Last year we came second nationally in our Christmas donation, narrowly beaten to the post by Westminster Abbey. This year I am delighted to report that we have been awarded the accolade of the best giver in the UK. Out of all churches, cathedrals, schools and institutions we have come top! What fantastic news! Thank you so much.

As I write these reflections Christian communities are preparing, once again, to celebrate the events of Holy Week.

After the terrible trauma of Jesus' arrest, trial and execution, the disciples were disorientated, confused, afraid and desperately trying to make sense of all they had been through. A stranger met them along the road and asked why they were so sad. They poured out their story to him, and in so doing, they began the path towards healing.

In our busy, defensive world how often do we notice the sadness of strangers, and dare to ask them why? Like the Priests and Levites in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, we often keep our eyes down and pass by on the other side. But Christ calls us to a culture of encounter, even in the face of pain.

Some of us, staff and pupils, have been engaging in such matters during our online Alpha courses which will become a permanent feature of chaplaincy life. The opportunity for such questioning and reflection is vital to our community of love and diversity.

And so to Easter – the celebration of Christ's Resurrection and the hub of the Christian Faith.

To every human tyrant and dictator; to every oppressor, Easter is a fearful time. To every person of prejudice and discrimination Easter is a fearful time. We come to celebrate the liberation of the human spirit. We come to celebrate the triumph of love over hate; the triumph of good over evil. Easter celebrates that the power of the cross is broken; the power of fear and despair is defeated. Because of Easter we can dare to hope; we can dare to encounter and be transformed.

God of new possibilities, new beginnings, new hope, bless us now with your risen life.

With my prayers and good wishes.





Easter Term Teams of the Week

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. The Equity Group | For their individual and collective ethical upstanding and for role-modelling the very best of common humanity |
| 2. Lower Fifth Singers | A fantastic team effort recording and compiling their own version of the song 'You will be Found' for Children's Mental Health Week |
| 3. EES Team | An excellent commitment and team effort in achieving their Industrial Cadets Gold Level Award |
| 4. Upper Sixth Physics Team | For their front-footed, independent approach and exemplary work ethic |
| 5. Upper Fifth Food Preparation & Nutrition Group | For their continued motivation and dedication for their subject |
| 6. Sixth Form Debaters | Fabulous team performance in the Nottingham Schools' Competition |
| 7. DofE Bronze Team | For ongoing commitment towards expedition training for their Bronze Award |
| 8. Lower Sixth Politics Team | Successful team effort in the Midlands Regional Forum of the European Youth Parliament |
| 9. Upper Fifth Form Debaters | A fantastic team effort in the regional finals of the ESU Public Speaking Competition |
| 10. Upper Sixth Form Debaters | A great team effort in the Oxford Schools Debating Competition |
| 11. Lower Sixth Physics Team | A wonderful team achievement in the Senior Physics Challenge |
| 12. Chemistry Olympiad Team | An excellent team performance in the Royal Society of Chemistry Competition |
| 13. Science & Engineering CREST Award Group | For their ongoing commitment working towards their Gold Level Award |

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