

Christmas Term 2017



The Greyhound

SOLIHULL



This term we were treated to four performances of *Jane Eyre*, and we also welcomed our new Head of School Cerys Stansfield and her deputies Alexander Sasse, Jim Bate and Asha Abram.





Huge well done to Matthew Vaughan who won a bronze medal in the Junior Recurve event at the Archery GB Youth Festival over the summer! (4 September)

Our Junior School are celebrating #RoaldDahlDay by wearing yellow & inside-out clothes and taking a @roald_dahl quiz! (13 September)



*The **Greyhound** Interviews...* **Mrs Wana, Head of PE & Games**

How long have you been teaching?

This is my seventh year of teaching. I spent two years at Wolverhampton Grammar School and have been at Solihull ever since.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

My favourite part of my job has to be the satisfaction that I get when a pupil realises that they can achieve in PE and Games. All too often, we are plagued by self-doubt and question our ability to be 'good enough' in a variety of different capacities. I see this all the time in my subject. It is remarkable to watch the positive impact that PE can have on an individual's self-confidence; these skills can then be transferred elsewhere into school and social life.

What do you like most about teaching PE?

The best part of teaching PE is the summer term! After spending lots of dark, cold, wet nights outside on the astroturf or the netball courts during winter, enjoying tennis, rounders and athletics in the sunshine is a real treat.

Who's your favourite sporting icon and why?

My favourite sporting icon is probably Serena Williams. What an athlete she is! She also sends a great message to women and girls about how remarkable the female form can be, especially when she won the Australian Open whilst eight weeks pregnant!

What would you do if you weren't a teacher?

If I wasn't a teacher, I would work overseas for the UN. I would implement global change and bring about world peace. I would work hard to raise awareness of inequality in the world and assist in the delivery of emergency aid. Maybe in the next life.....!

What hobbies or interests do you have?

Outside of school, I am an avid yogi! I try to practise three times a week to keep me calm and grounded. I also enjoy cooking, being outdoors, and babysitting for my niece (Jessie, 18 months) and nephew (Angelo, 4 weeks!)

Heads of Lower and Middle School

Congratulations to this year's new Heads and Deputy Heads of the Lower School and the Middle School – Cameron Rees, Katy Thomas, Tom Boake, Isabel Fennell (Head), Freddie Truman (Head), Emma Gahan, Joshua Woodman and Jenny Hodge in the Lower School, and Lily Evans, Fraser Blackhurst (Head), Georgina Hart (Head) and Jacques Barker in the Middle School.



Oxbridge Solihull Schools' area network

Solihull has been the leading light in establishing a collaborative network to provide all schools in the area with events and reciprocal experiences to enhance the experience of their students' preparation for Oxbridge applications. Two events have occurred this term – one focused on interviews and featured Dr Lorraine Wilde from St Hilda's College, Oxford, and one focused on the application process. In addition, the network provides mock interviews across the area schools, so students gain experience of being interviewed by experts to whom they are not known. To date, around 15 students have had interviews at other schools in preparation for their Oxbridge interviews in early December.



We have had 74 Bronze, 44 Silver & 18 Gold DofE Awards completed over the past year! (9 September)

Absolutely epic speech from @aoifemannion_ tonight at @solsch1560 Speeches. Heartfelt and inspiring, exactly what we needed to hear. (15 September)





Thank you so much to all of the Heads of School who visited us today for leadership training! Good luck for the year ahead! (19 September)

All of our clubs are up and running again - including our very popular Lower School Maths Club! (20 September)



Speeches Evening

This year we were delighted to welcome Aoife Mannion, Birmingham City Ladies and England footballer, who spoke passionately about her career and the importance of perseverance and teamwork. Lots of prizes were awarded on the evening, including a number in the name and memory of Tsz Fok, generously donated by Dr Lee Aye (Old Sil).



Parents' Association

The Solihull School Parents' Association Committee are a group of like-minded parents who work throughout the school year to organise events for both parents and pupils of the school. Fundraising is fundamental to our role within the school but we also have a secondary purpose which is to foster a wider sense of community spirit.

During the Autumn term we held our annual Race Night, Quiz Night, the Christmas Fair, and Junior Shopping Day. Please take a moment to read through the schedule of events for 2018. We are particularly excited to announce a Summer Ball which will be held at the National Conference Centre in June. We hope that we offer something for everyone. Further details of our events will be sent out via Parentmail nearer the date.

SSPA Events Calendar 2018

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| 19 JANUARY | SSPA COFFEE MORNING |
| 19 JANUARY | CALL MY BLUFF & WINE TASTING |
| 27 JANUARY | AS NEW SALE |
| 2 FEBRUARY | JUNIOR SCHOOL FAMILY FUN NIGHT |
| 9 MARCH | LADIES' SUPPER |
| 9 JUNE | SSPA SUMMER BALL |

For further information please contact Catherine Casey and Fiona Newby at pres.sspa@hotmail.com

Congratulations to our Sports Scholars for 2017/18!



Our Lower Sixth welcomed @UniversityofLaw for the first professional skills programme as part of their Introduction to Law course yesterday! (20 September)

The whole school photo is happening today! (21 September)





Thank you so much to all the schools who came to visit us for World Languages Day!
#SolSchMFL. (21 September)

This week some of our mathematicians got the chance to go to the @LondMathSoc's
Popular Lectures! #SolSchMaths. (24 September)



Birmingham Business Drinks

Old Silhillians from across Birmingham came together with staff from Solihull at Primitivo Bar & Eatery on Thursday 5 October, for the biannual Birmingham Business Drinks. Alumni enjoyed networking with old friends and making new connections over a drink after work whilst having the opportunity to hear a little more about life at school.

Charity

Charity fundraising has got off to a good start in the Senior School. The Staff and Lower Sixth Coffee Morning raised £581 for Macmillan, and we raised £2085 for Children in Need. We have also raised money for Genes for Jeans, Fast Aid, and we continue to support Solihull Hospital's Children's Ward. The Lower Sixth Charity Committee visited the Hospital to present a cheque for £1204! This was raised by our Third Form last year as part of their sponsored read. The Charity Team will be working hard to raise even more money in the New Year. Many thanks for all your support!

European Business Challenge

On Tuesday 26 September, a group of Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth students of French from Solihull worked in partnership with students from a number of local schools in order to complete a marketing challenge. The event was organised by Business Language Champions and was a tremendous success. All the Solihull students used their French very proactively in order to complete a very challenging task.

Sixth Formers visit Parliament

In October, the Lower Sixth Politics students visited London. After viewing the statues of famous politicians at Parliament Square, we had a guided tour of Parliament, going into the Chambers of the House of Lords and the House of Commons (though we weren't allowed to sit on the famous green benches!) After that, by special arrangement, we passed through heavy security and entered Downing Street, going right up to the door of Number 10 – we even saw Larry, the Downing Street cat!



Our Engineering Club had some fun with spaghetti last week, creating new structures! #SolSchEngin. (22 September)

Our U10 girls are the first hockey team to use the newly resurfaced astro pitch today!
(25 September)



Classics Society

This term, there have been three Classics Society outings. In October we went to the Birmingham and Midlands Classical Association's Autumn Lecture, which was given by Professor Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge) and was entitled 'Walking through Athens with Socrates'. In November, a small group of Sixth Formers went to see the RSC's productions of *Imperium Part I* and *Part II*, the story of the consulship of the great Roman orator Cicero. Not only was this a fantastic production, full of the turbulence and excitement of the end of the Roman Republic, but it was also very good revision for those A-Level Latinists who are reading Cicero's speech *Pro Milone* (In the defence of Milo).

Greek Club

Six of our students in the Upper and Lower Fifth are proposing to carry through their Greek studies to GCSE in 2018, having studied Herodotus's *Histories* and Homer's *Odyssey*. A further fourteen from the Lower Fifth and Fourth Form are now in the process of preparing for Greek GCSE in 2019. All lessons happen after school and during lunch times and it is a real credit to the students that they have demonstrated such enthusiasm and commitment to the study of the Ancient Greek Language! Well done to all.

Engineering Education Scheme

On Tuesday 10 October, a group of 12 Lower Sixth students attended the Engineering Education Scheme Launch Event at Chetwynd Army Barracks in Nottingham. As well as introducing them to the engineering projects they will be working on over the next six months as part of their Enrichment programme at Solihull, the two groups also completed a series of team building activities during the day.



The English Society

The English Society hosted two successful events this term. On the evening of Tuesday 28 December Dr John Fagg from the University of Birmingham delivered an illuminating talk to students on 'Surface and Depth' in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. The following week, on Thursday 7 December, award-winning novelist and Old Silhillian Susan Fletcher visited the school. Fletcher spoke to students from a range of year groups about her career as a novelist and her literary craft.

Dance Society

Following the success of last year's charity dance show, this year has seen the launch of Solihull School's Dance Society! With budding dancers across the school, the new Dance Society encompasses lunchtime sessions led by staff and pupils in contemporary, street and modern dance. Transportable mirrors, a sound system and lino flooring from last year's Tommy have been installed in M1 in the Leonard Stevens Building to create our very own 'studio'! We would like to thank the Parents' Association for their contribution towards the mirrors and sound system, which were vital additions to creating our dance space. The studio is also being used by pupils in their free time, and by the staff ballroom dancing club!



Exchange Visit of Solihull School to Colegio Oleza (Orihuela, Alicante)

On Monday 16 October, thirteen Fourth Formers, accompanied by Head of Spanish Mr P Morgan and Ms Campbell, travelled to the town of Orihuela in the Spanish province of Alicante in order to visit their Spanish exchange partners. We had a great time as always and the Solihull and Oleza pupils helped each other get to grips with both languages. We are looking forward to welcoming the staff and students of Colegio Oleza to Solihull in April 2018.



Debating Society

The Debate Team's year is going well, From Upper Sixth down to the Shells. Disappointment and success to tell About our year so far.

To Birmingham University first,
Where not the best, but far from worst
The pupils prepped and well-rehearsed
Oli Rooney was the star.

At Warwick success was more forthcoming,
With ten top teams all in the running.
For the final break, the pairs were gunning
But narrowly missed the bar.

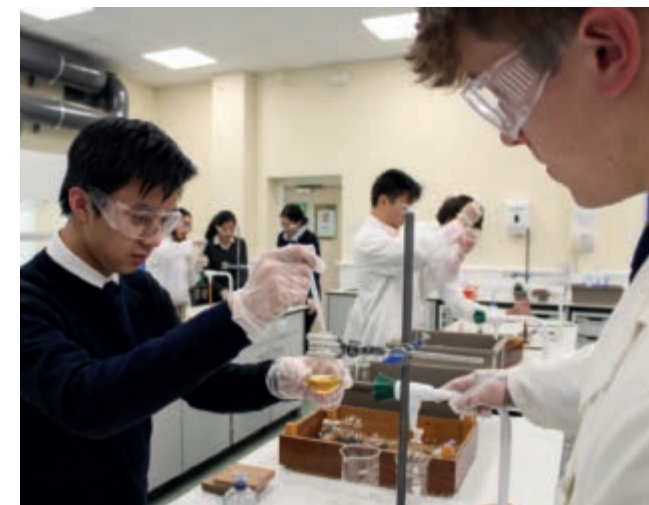
We've entered Public Speaking too
And Mace debates, we've had a few,
Run by the esteemed ESU
With potential to go far.

So all in all a promising start,
With youthful teams, staff young at heart.
The committee dutifully do their part;
My thanks to all of you.



Chemistry Lectures

The Sixth Form Chemistry students have had the opportunity to attend lectures at both the University of Birmingham and Warwick this term. The former was during the evening and focused on fireworks – how they are made, their explosive capabilities, how sound and colour can be varied, and the health and safety aspects of large firework displays. The demonstrations were excellent! A whole day was spent at the University of Warwick with students listening to lectures on: 'The Periodic Table of the Oceans', 'Gods, Devils and Alcohol', 'Nanoinvasion', 'Nature's Robots' and 'The Magic of Oxygen'. There was also a lunchtime session devoted to exam success, which was very informative. As well as listening to lectures on the practical nature of Chemistry, students carry out several of their own experiments as part of the course.





Our J1 rugby team played their first ever game this week against Balsall Common! Well done boys! (29 September)

Senior School House Activities

This has been another busy term for House activities. Students have been involved in everything from the One Mile Run, to House Sailing and Debating. Enthusiastic leadership has been provided from the House Captains, and a huge well done to all students involved in activities to date. With a busy final few weeks of House action this term, including House Hockey and a House Bakeoff, the current standings could all change. At the time of going to press, standings are as follows:

- 1st Shenstone 76 points**
- 2nd Jago 66 points**
- 3rd Windsor 65 points**
- 4th Pole 47 points**
- 5th Fetherston 42 points**



Our Upper Sixth Biology students spent the weekend kick sampling in the Afon Conwy and competing in the stone skimming championships! #SolSchBio. (2 October)



Remembrance

This year we were delighted to welcome back Squadron Leader Adam Collins (Windsor, 1985–1996). Adam has recently been appointed RAF Red Arrow Red 10 and will take over as the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team's Supervisor. Adam inspected the Guard of Honour, spoke to the NCO of the CCF and laid a wreath at our very moving Remembrance Service.



Olivia's charity work for Sri Lanka

After spending the summer volunteering in Sri Lanka, Sixth Form student Olivia Barker has arranged for a shipment of stationery to be sent to the schools she worked in!



Careers in Translation and Interpreting

On Wednesday 15 November, a number of Sixth Form students of MFL accompanied Mr Morgan and Miss Noon on a visit to Aston University for a conference entitled 'Careers in Translation and Interpreting'. The students learnt a great deal about how to enter the job market in these two areas and had the chance to listen to some leaders in their field, such as a conference interpreter at the United Nations and a translator from the European Commission.



Today our Shells headed off for the first Snowdonia School of the academic year! #SolSchSnodSchool. (1 October)

The German exchange pupils had lots of fun at Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre today! (2 October)





Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Pupils enrolled on to the scheme at the start of this term are well underway with the Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections of their Award. Malaika Khan and Emma Gahan, for example, are volunteering before school every morning at Solihull Hospital which makes for a very early start to the week! Five groups of Upper Sixth students battled storm Ophelia over half term to complete a gruelling four-day trek across the Lake District from West to East. As well as the terrain and the weather, they had to contend with the National Trust closing campsites due to the storm and the Windermere ferry also being suspended. This led to some quite severe diversions to their planned routes; well done to all. Bronze pupil training begins in the new year and staff have been winter training recently in Snowdonia.



Jack Francis Architecture Award

Old Silhillian Jack Francis (2015) who is currently studying architecture at Portsmouth University, has just won third prize in the Ideas Forward 24 Hour Biomimetic-Collective Housing Challenge, an international architecture award. Along with two fellow students, Jack created an innovative design based on a fire cone.

Art Scholars at Compton Verney

In November we took all the Art Scholars to Compton Verney to see the illustration exhibitions by Quentin Blake and Jackie Morris. It was an interesting day where the pupils could see the ideas and early sketches that showed how the artists developed their characters.

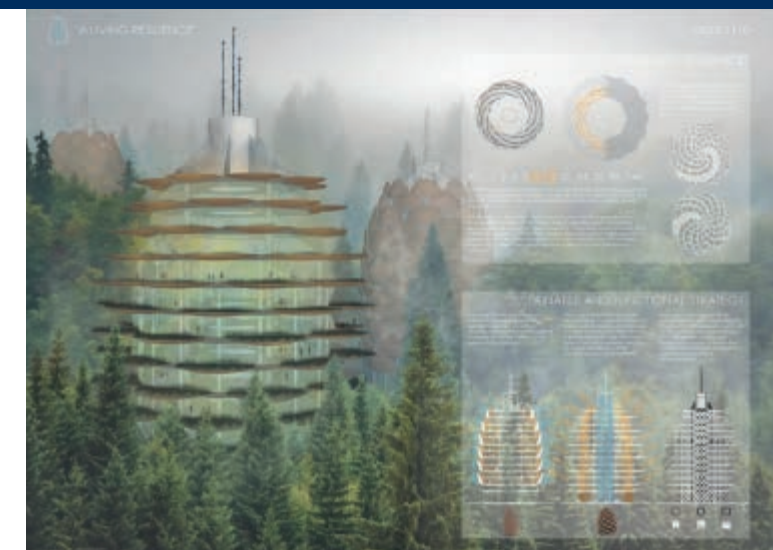


John Clover Photography Workshop

The Lower Sixth photographers had a very productive day working with professional photographer John Clover in November. Working in pairs, the students used studio flashes to create new and exciting lighting effects that they have now used in their practical work.

National Portrait Gallery Trip

In September, the A-Level artists and photographers spent a day in London visiting the National Portrait Gallery, the V&A Museum and the Photographers Gallery.



Nick Logan Portrait Workshop

The Lower Sixth artists enjoyed a portrait-drawing workshop by local artist Nick Logan in September. Students spent the day exploring new techniques with Nick while working from a model in the life-drawing studio.





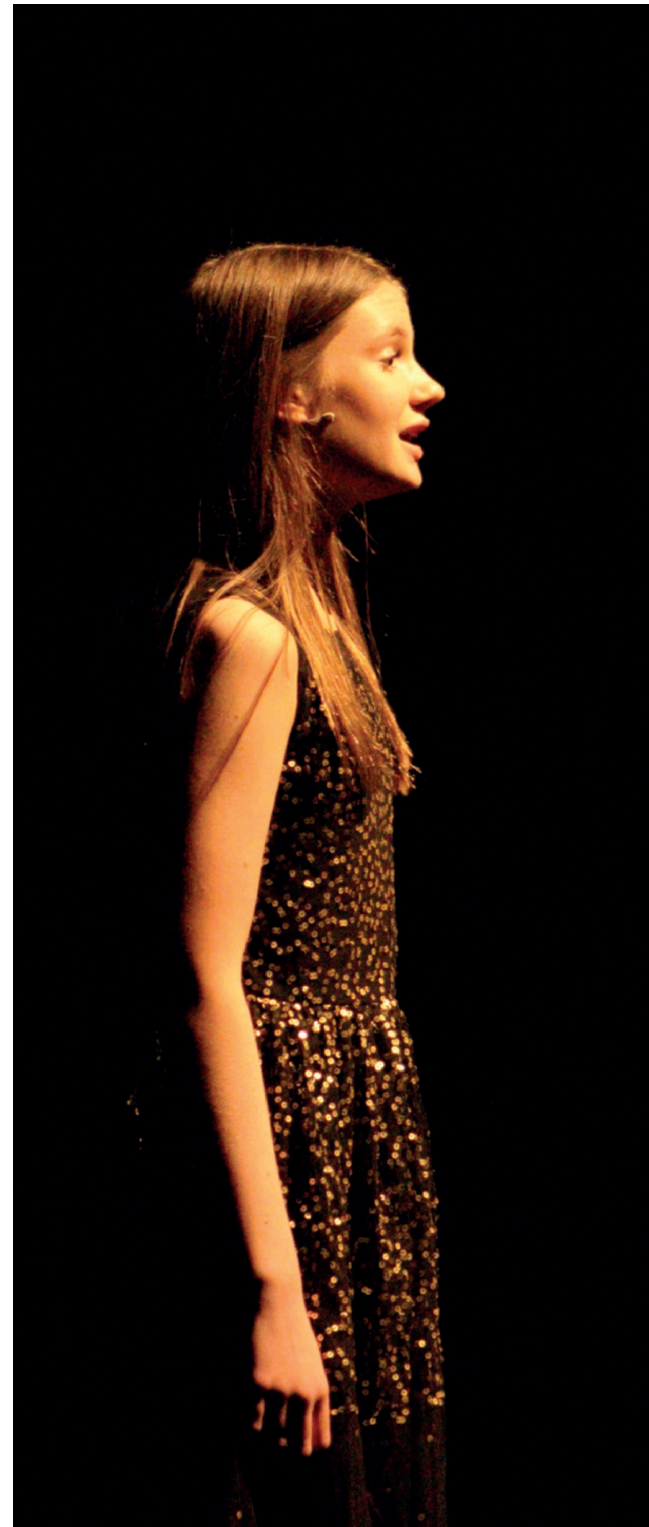
Mr James cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats for the @alzheimerssoc, cycling 1000 miles in 10 days! (10 October)

Fantastic performance from the 1st XV who overcame Rugby School in the Cup 30-19 in a great game of rugby. (11 October)



Arts Gala

The Arts Gala was a new departure for both the Music and the Drama Departments and came out of the desire to create an event which showcased some of our best musicians, dancers and actors in a programme of work designed to highlight the importance of the performing arts. It would be impossible to mention all of the enormously talented performers who made the evening so successful or the varied pieces that they performed, but they included a modernist piano piece about a Tsunami, a circus performance on the theme of leaves and an extract from 'Blood Wedding' in the original Spanish. The Arts Gala was a thought-provoking evening and provided an excellent start to the year's events in the performing arts.



Jane Eyre

The current Sixth Form contains a real wealth of acting talent and it seemed important to choose something for this term's Sixth Form play that would give these actors the opportunity to create interesting and unique characters. We decided to ask two performers, Theatre Scholars Emma Hadley and Gwynneth Horbury, to prepare both the key parts of *Jane Eyre* and Bertha and perform them on alternate nights. Their achievement in doing this whilst attending Drama School auditions and doing it to such an outstanding level should make them both very proud. Excellent performances were given by all of the small cast, but particular mention must go to Joshua Newby who produced a brilliantly brooding Rochester and Ellie Ajao who created a sensitive and powerful original score. The production was performed in the Drama Studio on a stunning set designed by Holly McClenaghan which included a raised and threatening 'Red Room' and an almost life-sized tree made from the pages of books.



Mermaid

This term we had two fabulous nights of Polly Teale's play *Mermaid* in the Bushell Hall. My co-director, Elle Miles, and I, were tremendously proud of our cast for creating a re-imagining of the classic fairy-tale. *Mermaid* dealt with many relevant themes, such as the overarching idea that too often, self-image defines a girl and her beauty overrides her voice in the public eye. Noteworthy performances included Lola-Blue Sattar-O'Dwyer as a fantastic Little Mermaid and Mattie Sandford who played Blue superbly. We were delighted to have the opportunity of directing a great cast, and look forward to watching future student productions.

Kate Stumper, Upper Sixth



Fiona Payne Workshops

In November the Lower Fifth artists enjoyed their still-life workshop with Fiona Payne so much she is returning to continue the experimental drawing techniques with them in December! Fiona also held a workshop with the Lower Sixth artists, who spent the day exploring abstract painting and drawing techniques within the theme of architecture.



Well done to everyone who ran in the House Mile Run yesterday - especially our winners, Shenstone! (11 October)

Well done to Ella Giles who won the girls' title at @esskiainfo finals on Sunday! The girls' team qualified for the British Finals! (13 October)





We hope all our pupils had fun on CCF battle camp last weekend! #SolSchCCF. (18 October)



A Journey to the Stable

J1 visited St Alphege Church for 'A Journey to the Stable' at the end of November, where they learned about the true meaning of Christmas. This year they got a tour of the oldest parts of the church, and even saw where swords used to be sharpened on the church walls! They visited a shepherd, a king, the innkeeper's wife and Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, who all had their own part to play in the Christmas story. Each pupil also decorated a Christmas bookmark to remind them of their trip. It was an enjoyable and festive morning for everyone involved.



Lower School Diploma

Congratulations to the 24 Fourth Form pupils who completed their Lower School Diplomas this term with a presentation evening where they were able to talk about their extended projects and fundraising activities with parents, teachers and fellow pupils.

This weekend we have been hosting the South Midlands Area NAFAS Autumn Splendour Flower Show - what fantastic creations! (22 October)



Fire Service Visit

On Thursday 2 November, 'White Watch' from Solihull Fire Station came to talk to the J2 pupils about being Fire Smart. The children were made aware of the importance of using smoke detectors and discussed possible escapes routes during fires. They also were made aware of hoax calls and what to do in an emergency. Important tips for a safe bonfire night was also an importance feature of the afternoon. Luckily, the firemen and women were not needed on an emergency, so the pupils were able to go outside and explore the impressive fire engine and all the clever equipment that is used to put out fires and rescue people.



Charity Week in the Junior School

In early October the Junior School once again set about raising money for another worthwhile course, through the usual series of events. This included Staff v Monitors football (this year a narrow 2-1 victory for the staff), a book sale, a movie afternoon and of course the refectory tuck shop.

This year the specific aim was supporting a charity called the Child Brain Injury Trust. The charity is currently working with Courtney Holland, a former Junior School pupil, who is now in the Lower Fifth in the Senior School. She was involved in a fall from a horse during the summer holidays, which left her with serious brain and hip injuries. She has since made a remarkable recovery, is attending school and continues to make great progress with the help of the charity.

The week was rounded off with a non-uniform day across the whole school and the annual Solihull's Got Talent contest, with a representative from the charity, Fiona Perkins, attending and Courtney acting as a guest judge. Thank you to everyone in the community who played their part in helping us to raise a grand total of £7869.66!



Huge congratulations to the whole Gold #DofE team who braved #Ophelia this weekend! What an achievement! (19 October)

Thanks Paul Milton from @sra_solicitors for talking to our Lower Sixth ASpire students about routes into the legal profession. #SolSchASpire. (23 October)





Mindfulness in the Junior School

To help develop pupils' understanding of mindfulness and its many benefits, pupils from a primary school in Birmingham visited Solihull to share their experiences of mindfulness with pupils who attend Mindfulness Club in the Junior School. Pupils reflected upon how being mindful helps them in different aspects of their lives, and took part in a range of activities together, including mindful eating, mindful movement, and some focus and relaxation meditations. New friends were made and a lovely morning was had by all who took part, adults and children alike!

Dentist Visit

The J2 pupils had another exciting visitor on Friday 3 November, in the form of a dentist from Orthodontic Excellence. This reinforced their topic in Science of Moving and Growing and as well as learning about teeth hygiene, they saw some fascinating x-ray images of the side of the skull. The pupils were delighted to see what happens when they use a disclosing tablet and couldn't wait to go home to try this out! They might be drinking less flavoured water and coke too as a result of some alarming facts regarding their sugar content.



Junior School Sport

Sporting opportunities are endless this year at Solihull Junior School, from the 53 competitive fixtures provided in hockey, rugby, netball, football, swimming & biathlon to the early morning Gymnastics Squad training to compete at a competition in January. Every boy and girl from J1 through to J4 should feel proud of their efforts and achievements this term. The highlight of the term has to be the Junior School J3/4 Boys & Girls Biathlon Team who qualified and then won Gold at the Level 3 School Games Biathlon, swimming and running against all primary schools in the Midlands.



Junior School Boys' Sport

Every boy in the Junior School has played in competitive rugby fixtures already this term! A great start to the year, with all boys training hard and doing their utmost to get into the school rugby, hockey and football teams. The U11 boys have had an excellent season so far. They took their rugby revenge over Bablake, turning around last year's narrow defeat, with a 12-2 victory. They also remain unbeaten at football, with convincing wins over The Crescent, Formarke and Hallfield. The U10 boys started with a 7-3 win over Balsall Common in rugby, and a 5-3 win against King Henry's in hockey, demonstrating just how much potential they have as a year group. The U9s have dominated in football fixtures against Hallfield and The Crescent, showing great progress from J1. The highlight of the term has to be their outstanding rugby performance away at Blue Coat. The U8 boys have battled hard in their three rugby fixtures this term against Balsall Common, Bablake and Eversfield, achieving mixed results, but definitely enjoying themselves whilst developing their skills as a team.

Junior School Girls' Sport

C is for Crikey, have you seen the new astros, not one but two?!

H is for Hockey goals scored, there have been more than a few.

R is for Resilience, not giving up, improving and wanting more,

I is for If you are counting: 17 wins and 142 goals scored.

S is for Superb attendance at sports clubs at lunch time and after school, getting changed first and leading the warm up are seen as 'cool'.

T is for Trying hard, working with energy and being keen to learn,

M is for the U10A hockey team, the Most improved of the term.

A is for fostering the Attitude of 'I'll give it a go',

S is for Super GKs in hockey, no fear do they show.

T is for Turn out on a Friday after school on the pitch and in the swimming baths,

E is for Even in cold, wet December, numbers total more than a half (of the entire JS!).

R is for Ready for more fun, challenge and competition next term,

M is for have a Merry (and active) Christmas... those extra calories burn!





In yesterday's Remembrance Day assembly, pupils were told about the students from school who fought and died in World War I. (8 November)



St Cecilia Concert

On 22 November musicians celebrate the life of St Cecilia – the patron saint of musicians. It was apt, therefore, that our St Cecilia Concert this year fell on her name day. The concert brought together nearly 125 pupils playing and singing in ten different ensembles. The programme, as usual, featured a wonderful breadth of musical periods, styles and genres ranging from music by Corelli (*Christmas Concerto*), Lully (*Chaconne*) Grieg (*Homage March*) and Sousa (*Stars & Stripes Forever*) for orchestral and string groups, through to Shostakovich (*Tahiti-Trot*) and Hazell (*Hallelujah*) for small ensembles, and on to jazz (*Africa, Yakety Sax & Fly me to the Moon*) and popular (*James Bond Theme, Game of Thrones, The River Kwai March & Camino del Sol*). These were presented by Symphony Orchestra, Advanced and Intermediate String Ensembles, Senior & Intermediate Wind Bands, Big Band, Saxophony, Brass Ensemble, Flute Choir and 'The Twelve' (Sixth Form close harmony group). Not only were all the performers fabulously committed, effective and wonderfully musical on stage, they were all tremendous listeners – really supporting each other throughout. It is always a privilege to see such joy in all the performances; huge congratulations to all concerned.



International Viola Festival

Seven of our strong violists and violinists were invited to participate in a workshop at the new Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, led by the Absolute Zero Viola Quartet as part of the Conservatoire's International Viola Festival. The players were all inspired by the workshop, especially the creative compositional aspect in which they had to experiment with creating new and rather unusual sounds from their instrument. A few of the pupils then stayed for an amazing evening recital given by the young, but astonishingly accomplished, 22-year-old violist Timothy Ridout.

GCSE Composition Concert

Not long after returning from the summer holiday, we held the second annual GCSE Composition Concert. One composition from each student was presented using the technology of computer and music notation software. Mr Phillips guided us through each piece, highlighting the main features and strengths. We are used to hearing so many of our pupils perform pieces by other (often established) composers, but it was a special treat to see and hear the creative side of their musicianship. Those who were able to attend were not at all surprised to hear that a very high proportion of the students were awarded an A* grade. Bravo!

Music Festival Successes

As ever, our musicians have been out and about performing in various local music festivals. Singers have been particularly busy at the Lichfield Festival. The number of our pupils awarded 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes has been particularly impressive this year, so huge congratulations to them all, both for their successes and for their courage in performing in an event where their performances will be critiqued by an adjudicator. Special mention goes to Lydia Stephens, Hannah Greenwood, Ella Furber, Lauren Raybould, Ned Tennet, Ellie Ajao, Anna Higgins and Richard Loughran for gaining at least one 1st prize each.

Some of our pupils were given a lunchtime talk from the School Archivist last week about the history of the school as part of their 'Solihull - Past, Present and Future' project. (15 November)



International Pianists come to Solihull

We are very excited to announce that next term (Saturday 13 January) we will have two international pianists with us in school for a day, Kathryn Page and Murray McLachlan. They will be working with pupils during the afternoon in a workshop on piano duets and then giving a public recital in the Bushell Hall in the evening. Both pianists are remarkable musicians and to have them perform on our own doorstep is an opportunity not to be missed. Details and tickets can be found on the Events page of the School's Facebook page.



Recitals

Once again, many pupils have taken up the opportunity and challenge of performing solo pieces in our Informal Concerts – all with great aplomb and enjoyment. Do remember that these concerts are open to all pupils, whether they have their instrumental lessons in or out of school. In addition, our termly Recital given by Music Scholars and Instrumental Award Holders was a real delight; all performances, whatever the repertoire or age of performer, displayed real musicianship, passion and sensitivity. The next Recital (in April) is the domain of just the Upper Sixth and will be well worth a visit.

Masterclasses - clarinet, string & voice

Opportunities for pupils to perform under the scrutiny of professional musicians have been plentiful this term. Luan Shaw (clarinet), Peter Martens (cello) and Roderick Williams (voice) are all wonderful practitioners in their own right and they skilfully guided, encouraged and challenged our instrumentalists and singers in aspects of technique, interpretation and performance skills. It is always great to see how all our pupils respond and interact; they all took away some great advice and realised that learning and performing need not be daunting. Later in the year there will be similar opportunities for our pianists, saxophonists and chamber musicians.



Chapel Choirs

The Chapel Choirs have remained characteristically lively and hard-working ensembles this term and an especial highlight was a visit to Hertfordshire, undertaken by the Boys' and Girls' Choirs in October, in order to sing Choral Evensong at St Albans Cathedral. The choristers navigated the generous acoustics well, although some may have been daunted by the sheer scale of the cathedral, which boasts the longest nave of any in the country. Music by contemporary English composers Malcolm Archer and Peter Aston was sung with a lovely sense of pacing, blend and ensemble. It is always a privilege to be able to visit such magnificent buildings and to be able to contribute, even in a small way, to the daily choral worship offered in such historic foundations. Meanwhile, at home, the Chamber Choir was delighted to welcome the newly-formed Chamber Choir from Lichfield Cathedral School for a successful joint service in Chapel earlier this term, with our choristers assimilating a complex anthem by Herbert Howells with startling rapidity and conviction.



Well done to some of our former pupils who received their Gold #DofE Award from Prince Edward at St James's Palace. (13 November)

Thank you so much to the Institute for Economic Affairs for hosting their student conference at Solihull this week! #SolSchEcon. (17 November)





Thank you so much to Resad Trbonja from @SrebrenicaUK for talking to our Fourth Form and Lower Fifth about his experiences of Sarajevo and the Bosnian War. (18 November)

Well done to Harvey Blackhurst for winning the 50m breaststroke, and to all the other students who competed in the Warwick Swimming Gala today. (23 November)



Sailing

September and October were incredibly kind to Saturday sailing and we had some glorious days on the water. Last year's hard work and perseverance clearly paid off. We were delighted to watch sailors across the age groups sailing with confidence, competence and enthusiasm. We were even able to swap helm and crew and watch students interchange roles with ease. Our last session of the year saw us sailing an Inter-House competition with the now traditional group jump off the pontoon followed by hot chocolate and doughnuts in the clubhouse. Well done to Windsor! Sailing now pauses for the cold weather and recommences after February half term. Do come and join us.



U18 Hockey - Midlands Zone

Having won the Birmingham and West Midlands County Round in fine style winning all four matches scoring 12 goals and conceding none, spirits were high. We travelled to Rugby to face Malvern, Shrewsbury High and Rugby. Against Rugby, we sustained some early pressure and gradually got into the game, creating scoring chances but failing to convert. Rugby scored on the brink of half time and then followed this up just after half time to lead 2-0. Solihull continued to press high to score a goal and then got caught in the last minute as Rugby scored a third.

In the second game against Malvern College, we had the greater possession and controlled the game for large periods of time, playing some good attacking hockey but unfortunately we failed to convert our chances. Malvern, however, made the most of their few attacking chances and were 1-0 up midway through the second half. Solihull again pressed in search of an equaliser but unfortunately Malvern scored a late goal to make the final score 2-0.

In our final game, we eventually found the net twice with some excellent attacking play down the right and Gwynneth Horbury was at the far post for two tap ins! Overall, the team played some terrific hockey, working the ball out of defence and into midfield, and on another day we may have converted some more chances.



Skiing

This year we entered both a Boys' and Girls' team into The English Schools' Ski Association Championships. This started with a qualifier round in Gloucester, which led to qualification for the girls to compete in the English Final in Norwich. Ella Giles won the overall girls' title at the English Final, and was presented with a very large cup with names dating back to the 1970s, including three wins for former Olympian Chemmy Alcott! The girls' team then qualified to compete at the British finals in Pontypool. It was a challenging day in Wales with two squad members falling. Although this did not result in the victory they were hoping for, the girls were very happy to have progressed through the regional and national qualifiers to earn their invitation. In addition, November brought us the first in a series of four Winter Race Leagues, where many of our pupils competed against other students from around the Midlands. This league is a fantastic opportunity for those who are new to racing, and out of 16 pupils who raced, 10 pupils ended up on the podium! Congratulations to all involved!

Two hockey pitches at Solihull School!

Solihull School is now the proud owner of two state-of-the-art hockey pitches. The Gordon Wilcox pitch has been refurbished and a new pitch has been laid alongside it. Both pitches look resplendent and the surfaces are fantastic to play on. This is a big boost for hockey at the school and we are hopeful that it will enhance the skills and the levels of play for all players. I would like to thank the Bursar, Richard Bate, and the Board of Governors for making this possible. A special mention must go to Karl Brotherhood, Head Groundsman, as he has worked tirelessly over several years on this project. The visual effect of the facilities, coupled with the quality of the surfaces will hopefully inspire pupils in their hockey.



Thank you to all the Headteachers and teachers from local primary schools who visited us to see how their former pupils were getting on! (20 November)

Today our Lower Sixth Biologists are at @warwickuni attending #biologyinaction! (27 November)





U14 Netball - County Tournament Success

Our U14 netballers were victorious in their recent County Tournament held at King's High School, Warwick on Wednesday 22 November. The team came up against Princethorpe College, King Henry VIII School, Stratford Girls School, Finham Park School and Saint Martin's School. Our girls won all matches in convincing style, scoring 70+ goals and conceding only 10. The team consisted of Alex Warburton, Isabel O'Malley, Claudia Reda, Abi Crampton, Rachel Chanji, Jenny Hodge, Aimee O'Malley, Izzy Gardner and Mattie Sandford. They will go on to the Regional Tournament at the end of January. Last stop before Nationals! Well done to all involved.



U19 Netball Squad

The U19 Netball squad travelled to King's High, Warwick to play in the County Tournament on Wednesday 15 November having previously come first in the Solihull Borough Tournament to gain entry. The first game against Tudor Grange resulted in a loss, and our next opposition was Higham Lane. We started to become more confident in the second game but Higham were a superb team and the eventual winners. King Henry's was the next match and Solihull stepped up a gear. Phoebe Harland had to play out of position backed up by Tiegan Pound. They played brilliantly together in defence, resulting in their first win. Having gained confidence, the girls faced Bablake. Sofia Cusack and Lily Evans both shot brilliantly, and we had our second win of the day. The last game was against Rugby. Ella Gardner, Katie Phillips and Phoebe Harland worked together well and created an interception on the first passage of play. Solihull went 2-0 up! The U19s continued to play some great netball but unfortunately Rugby stepped it up a gear and dug deep to get back in the game and win. At the end of the tournament we were placed fourth. The future of senior netball is looking strong as we had representatives from the Lower Fifth in the squad.

Christmas Term Teams of the Week

U13A Rugby Team

Excellent victory v King's School, Worcester

U13B Rugby Team

Superb win v King's School, Worcester

Edinburgh Fringe Team

Fantastic performance at the 2017 Fringe

U13 Netball Team

Excellent victory v King's School, Worcester

European Languages Team

Winners of the European Languages Day Challenge

Upper Sixth Biologists

Wonderful teamwork on the Biology Field Trip

1st XI Girls' Hockey Team

Winners of the Birmingham & West Midlands County Round

Junior Chess Team

Excellent victory against Queen Mary's Grammar School

Cast & Crew of Mermaid

Two fantastic nights of drama ably led by our team of Sixth Form directors

U14 Netball Team

Winners of the County Championships, showing great team spirit and enthusiasm

1st XV Rugby Team

Excellent performance v Oakham School

Chapel Choir

Two wonderful services of Nine Lessons and Carols

Follow Solihull School on twitter: @solsch1560. facebook: www.facebook.com/SolihullSchool

Solihull School, Warwick Road, Solihull West Midlands B91 3DJ

Telephone Numbers: School Office: 0121 705 0958 Admissions Registrar: 0121 705 4273 Bursar: 0121 705 0883

Fax: 0121 711 4439 Email: admin@solsch.org.uk Web: www.solsch.org.uk