

Easter Term 2018

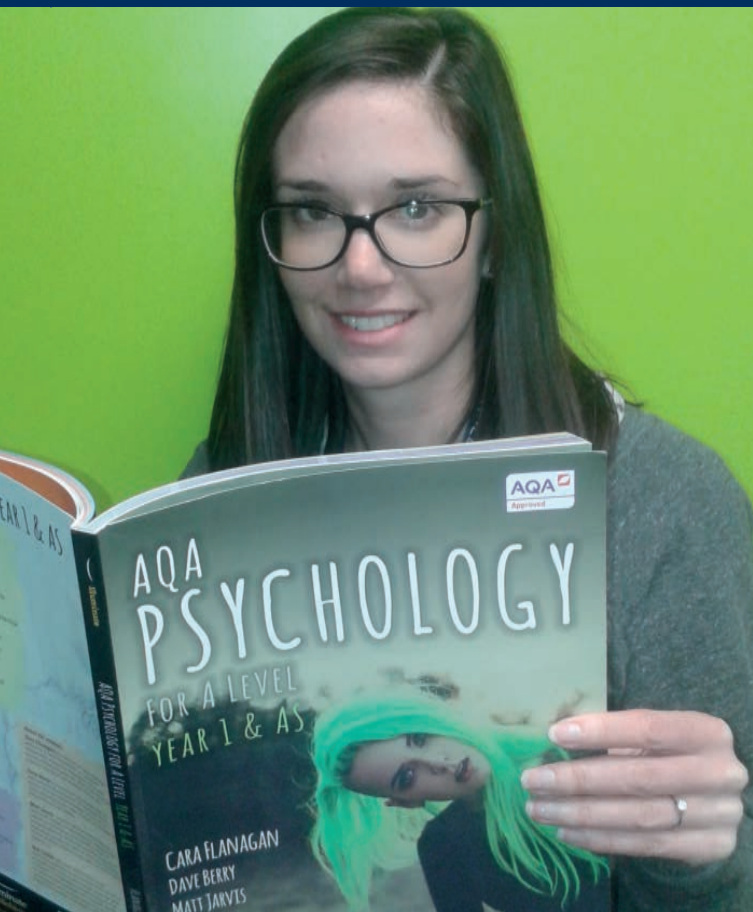
The Greyhound



SOLIHULL



This term we enjoyed five wonderful performances of *Joseph*, and on the rugby field, Will Rigg and Will Knight (Captain) played as part of the Midlands U18 team that were victorious over the South West.



The **Greyhound** Interviews... **Miss Collier, Psychology**

How long have you been teaching?

This is my 6th year of teaching.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Am I allowed to say the holidays? They are obviously great but I love that no two days are the same; there is always a new challenge, so it never gets boring!

What do you like most about teaching Psychology?

That I can read people's minds?! Unfortunately that misconception is not true. My favourite module to teach is Psychopathology, where we look at how the complex interaction of nature and nurture explains abnormal human behaviour. The students are always really enthused by this, meaning we get some great class debates.

What's the most enjoyable thing about being in charge of the Ski Team?

Seeing how much the racers have developed in such a short space of time is amazing. Taking them to compete in Switzerland was also a big highlight.

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

I originally wanted to do educational psychology, but I think probably now it would be something along the lines of human resource management. There is a lot of psychology in maximizing employee performance.

What hobbies or interests do you have?

Well, skiing is an obvious one, but generally just being outdoors when I am not at work!

Charity

It has been another highly successful term for our charity fund-raising. The following charities have benefited from our pupils' generosity: Macmillan; Children in Need; Fast Aid; UK Sepsis Trust. Thank you to everyone – pupils, parents, and staff – who have contributed to these many good causes.

Congratulations to Victoria Bak who has raised an amazing £1440.75 for Birmingham Children's Hospital and Charity. She spent a day playing music for patients and offering them an opportunity to join in. Well done Vicky!



Hats on for Charity!

The 1st XV rugby squad designed and sold Odd Ball Obble Hats to raise awareness of testicular cancer and money for St Giles Hospice, a charity close to the squad's heart. Sales have already raised over £600 for St Giles, with the hats being posted to alumni as far afield as the USA and Kent! Demand has outstripped supply, so the squad are looking forward to taking delivery of a new batch of hats in time for the Rugby tour to New Zealand in July. Tom Serle (Cpt) and the squad would like to thank all who have purchased hats and for everyone's support during a successful rugby season.



Condemned to Remember

Over 750 people attended the British premiere of *Condemned to Remember* – a powerful documentary film by Holocaust survivor Tomi Reichental – in our Bushell Hall. The screening was held to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, with Tomi and Emmy award-winning director Gerry Gregg visiting from Dublin. Dignitaries, schoolchildren, parents and members of faith communities from across the country saw Tomi embarking on a journey across Europe, visiting Germany, Poland, his native Slovakia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The premiere, held in partnership with the charity Remembering Srebrenica, shows Tomi witnessing the rise of the neo-fascist 'People's Party' in Slovakia and meeting Hasan Hasanović and Dr Fatima Dautbašić-Klempić, survivors of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre who also made the journey to Solihull for the screening and to take part in the question and answer session afterwards. It was a great privilege for the school to premiere the film and to welcome three of its remarkable subjects to Solihull.





A good discussion with The Benchers this morning about how we can reduce waste in the Cooper Building. Students, where possible please use reusable water bottles and coffee cups. (16 January)

In May, the Bushell Hall, in association with @coretheatresol and @ageuksolihull, will be hosting An Evening with 'Eddie the Eagle' Edwards! (18 January)



Peer Mentor Workshop

Our Sixth Form Peer Mentors were very pleased to receive listening skills training during their workshop with the Solihull Samaritans this term. The Peer Mentors do a great job supporting younger pupils in our school community.



Bar Mock Trial

This January, the Lower Sixth Introduction to Law students, together with five eager Lower Fifth pupils, competed in the Independent Schools Bar Mock Trial, held this year at Birmingham Crown Court. Competitors were charged with arguing for the prosecution or defence in two fictitious criminal cases about possession of a bladed weapon in public and an ABH charge. Playing the roles of barristers, witnesses, clerks and ushers, the team performed very well and got to experience first hand how a criminal trial works in a real court room in front of a real judge. A call to the Bar awaits!

Engineering Education Scheme – Loughborough University Workshop

A group of 11 Lower Sixth students from Solihull attended a workshop at the brand new STEMLab at Loughborough University in January, along with students from around 30 schools across the country. This is part of their Enrichment programme at Solihull School, and the students have to complete a project under the guidance of a group of Engineering mentors from Jaguar Land Rover. The two teams spent these days completing much of the practical work associated with their projects, with one team looking at a new design of proximity sensor and the second team re-designing an attachment system for vehicle doors when they are taken to the paint shop.



Debating Society

This has been another hectic, bubbly and successful term in the Debating world. Debaters from the Third Form to the Upper Sixth have been involved in a myriad of competitions from inter-house debating through to Oxford Regionals. Perhaps the icing on the cake was Cerys Stansfield and Oliver Rooney winning the third round of the The English Speaking Union's Senior Mace Debate, meaning that they are the first students in recent history to represent the school in the national finals. Well done all!



A group of our Lower Sixth EES students visited @lborouniversity's new STEMLab this week! (18 January)

Our 1st XV rugby team have sold over 100 @OddballsFDN hats already this week for @stgileshospice! #SolSchRugby #SolSchCharity (19 January)





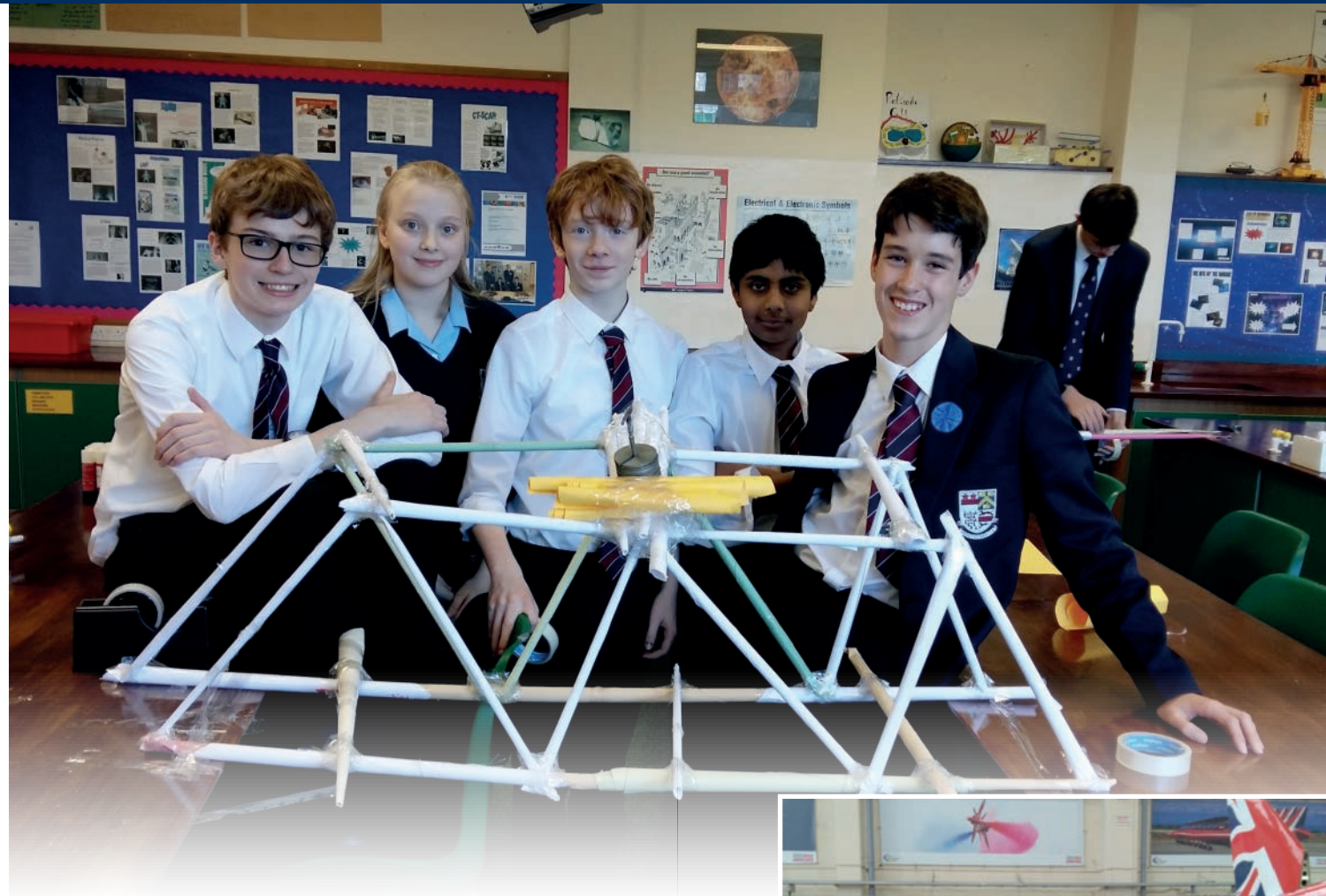
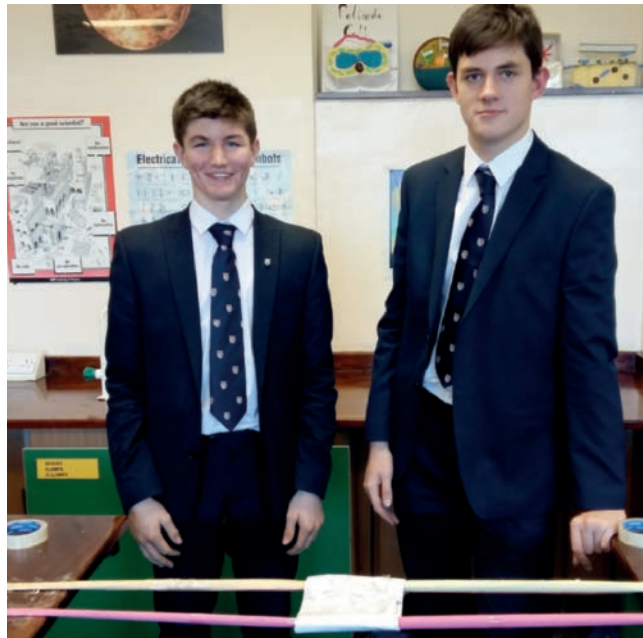
Our #Christingle factory was open for business yesterday, making stock for Sunday's #SolSchChapel service. (19 January)

Well done to our U9 boys' hockey team who were the winners of the Foremarke Hall Hockey Festival over the weekend. The boys were unbeaten after playing 6 games! (22 January)



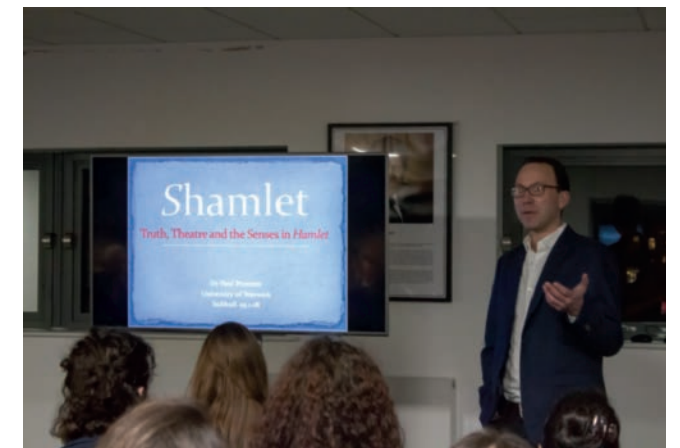
Engineering Club

The Engineering Club at Solihull is now back, and up and running on a Friday lunchtime. Most of our students are from the Lower School and we also have two members of the Sixth Form who come along to help. Up to now we have spent a few weeks building and then strength-testing bridges made from Lego and then paper; the latter being more dramatic when they fail! We have also looked at some simple electronics boards using logic gates. Our next projects will be using technical Lego to design and build our own motorised machines as well as building radio controlled racing cars from Meccano. Keep checking back to see our progress!



Shell Form Latin Trip to Cirencester

On Wednesday 7 February, Shell Form Latinists were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to visit Roman Corinium, known today as Cirencester. The day was split into two; half outside, where the pupils walked around the ancient town to learn about important sites and visit the towering amphitheatre, and half inside the museum with Roman artefacts and much more, to improve the pupils' general knowledge of life in AD 43. Overall, the trip to Roman Corinium was a great success, thoroughly enjoyed by all.



English Society

This has been an exciting term for the English Society, which has welcomed two external speakers. Dr Paul Prescott from the University of Warwick engaged students with a presentation on Hamlet, and Dr Sarah Macmillan from the University of Birmingham delivered an informative talk on Chaucer. Our A-Level English students also enjoyed two theatre trips this term, attending performances of Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* in London and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in Northampton.

Cadets with the Red Arrows

For Field Day this year, the CCF RAF cadets had the honour of being guests of the Red Arrows at RAF Scampton. The newly appointed No10, Sqn Ldr Adam Collins, is an Old Boy of the School and was invited to lay a wreath at last year's Remembrance Day service in the Great Quadrangle.

The Cadets were lucky to be part of a pre-flight briefing where they watched part of this year's new flying display practice. They got up close to one of the display aircraft (Hawk T1a) and also visited the Heritage Museum, where they had a private tour through the history of RAF Scampton.



Last week our Fourth Form French students presented their ideas on healthy living to the class! Très bien! (21 January)

This week in #SolSchJS STEM club, our pupils made their own cars powered by balloons! (23 January)





Our #SolSchJS grandparents had a fantastic time yesterday seeing the first showing of our J4 play, including afternoon tea & cake afterwards! (23 January)



Château de la Baudonnière 2018

During the February half term, 6 A-Level French students and 30 Shell Form pupils embarked on a trip to the Château de la Baudonnière in Normandy, France. The five days we spent in Normandy were filled with a wide range of activities such as rock climbing, 'aeroball', a mud obstacle course and archery to name but a few. We all enjoyed the activities while improving our French at the same time. For the Sixth Formers, as well as the array of activities we also had various classroom sessions to improve our French speaking ability. Every evening, we had another activity such as bowling, cheese and wine tasting for the Sixth Form, and a French-themed dressing up competition. We enjoyed the French immersion experience and we have returned with more confidence and many fun memories.



Thank you so much to our #SolSchCareers Lunch speaker from @KuraAviation, who spoke to our students and parents about their development opportunities for newly qualified pilots. (24 January)



Bosnia

In February, three Lower Sixth students, along with Miss Lloyd and Miss Rutherford, were incredibly fortunate to be invited on a delegation to Bosnia-Herzegovina with Remembering Srebrenica, a charity that works to educate future generations about the Srebrenica genocide in 1995. We took part in the delegation with three other schools as part of the charity's Future Leaders in Schools programme.

We visited the key sites in Sarajevo such as the tunnel museum dating from the Sarajevo siege, the rebuilt City Hall and the deeply moving War Childhood museum. We were also treated to traditional Bosnian food, including delicious Bosnian pies and kebabs with sour cream. On the final full day of the delegation we visited Srebrenica itself, and toured the former Dutch UN base which is now a memorial. Hasan Hasanovic, whose father and twin brother were killed in the genocide, gave us a tour of the memorial and introduced us to Fadila, one of the mothers who lost her son and husband. We then spent some time in the cemetery at Potocari where thousands of victims are buried to reflect on a harrowing but very important experience.

Chrissie, Tom and Oliver were superb ambassadors for the school and will be leading some follow-up events later this year. Our thanks also go to Rebecca Heron from Remembering Srebrenica along with Resad Trbonja, our wonderful guide in Bosnia.



German Exchange

This year, eighteen of the pupils studying German for GCSE departed for Frankfurt in order to participate in the annual German exchange with the Elisabethenschule in the village of Hofheim. Having hosted in September, a group of our Lower Fifth pupils spent a week living with a German family where they took part in a busy programme of visits and excursions. We were given guided tours of the ZDF television studios and the network of catacombs under the city of Mainz, a day was organised for them at a local indoor climbing centre, and of course, no trip is complete without a healthy dose of shopping! The exchange has been running for a number of years now, and the pupils always return with improved language skills, a greater sense of self-esteem, and international friendships for life. The school in Hofheim is extremely proud of the link with Solihull and plans for the next visit are already underway!



Huge well done to our #SolSchJS pupils who have managed to gain a Senior School scholarship! (24 January)



Delighted to welcome acclaimed Criminal Barrister, Blondel Thompson, from @stphilips to mentor our @SolSchSixthForm law team ahead of the Bar Mock Trial Competition. (25 January)





We are truly honoured to have our guests here ready for the British premiere of
#CondemnedtoRemember #HolocaustMemorialDay (26 January)



Latin trip to Bath

This January, the Fourth Form pupils taking Latin, accompanied by Mrs Johnson, Miss Roberts, Dr Spratley, Mr Gledhill and Ms Lodge, embarked on an exciting trip to the Roman Baths, in, well, Bath. Some of us went into the museum, armed with questionnaires to complete, while others listened to an informative talk about the history of the Baths and some of the people who helped to build it. We also got to see some real life artefacts from the time when the Baths were actually used by the Romans, about 1600 years ago. After a quick break for lunch and a stroll around the city, we met back up to go and look at the Great Bath from ground level, and the more adventurous of us tried the water pumped in directly from the spring. I have it on good authority that it is not to be recommended! All the pupils involved would like to thank our teachers for organising the trip and especially Mrs Johnson, for telling us even more information than our audio guides! We had a fantastic time and learnt so much about the Ancient Romans' way of life.



Congratulations to Charlotte Rigg who has been selected to compete as part of a national swimming squad in France! (29 January)



New Hampshire Ski Trip

Traditionally, the Middle School ski trip enjoys sub-zero temperatures and classic North American powder, and as we landed in Boston this year we were greeted by falling snow all the way to our hotel. This meant superb snow conditions for our first two days in the Attitash Mountain Resort area, but as we moved over to Wildcat, something strange happened; the temperatures rocketed and we skied through heavy rain on day three, and on day four the sun came out and the highest February temperatures for sixty years meant we had waterfalls on the pistes! Our groups weren't deterred, enjoying every minute of their skiing, plus their evenings of tubing, swimming, cinema and outlet shopping! Our overnight stop in New York is always a highlight, marred only slightly this year by low cloud and rain! So, not a bumper year for the weather, but a fantastic experience for our students nonetheless.



Congratulations to all the boys involved in the rugby block fixtures against @LGSGrammar this morning, winning six matches and losing just one. (27 January)

We are very proud to have hosted the 5th Annual Dinner of Assist RR in our Refectory this weekend. 200 people came together to raise £14,200 through tickets, auctions, raffles and pledges! Congratulations & thank you to all involved! (31 January)





Last week we commemorated #HolocaustMemorialDay in our annual act of remembrance at the Anne Frank tree, and our Lower Fifth RS pupils visited Lichfield Cathedral to listen to Kindertransport survivor, Ruth Barnett. (1 February)

This Friday our #SolSchHouseComp Captains have organised a charity doughnut sale in the Refectory! (4 February)



Visit of Professor Cofone

Al Cofone – Professor of Sociology at Suffolk County College, Long Island, New York, and friend of Solihull School – returned for the 5th year in a row to inspire our pupils in their learning. Over the course of his 3-day visit in January, he delivered fascinating talks to many of our youngest and oldest students to complement their curriculum studies. Professor Cofone's talks, listed below, were as well-received as they always are and stimulated lots of questions and lively debate.

J1 Comparison: America and Great Britain; *Different but Alike*

J2 Weather: *The Big Brawl*

J3 North America: *A comparison of New York and London*

J4 Natural Disasters: *The Changing Face of the Earth*

Lower Fifth & Lower Sixth History Talk: *Mr Khrushchev Comes to Iowa*

Lower Fifth & Lower Sixth Politics: *Guns, God, and Grammar: the Second Amendment and Rugged individualism*



Visit to Forest Green Rovers

This term, the Sixth Form Student Council visited Forest Green Rovers FC in Nailsworth, the 'greenest football club in the world', to explore sustainability and the green economy. Huge thanks to Helen Taylor, Forest Green's CEO for hosting us.



Art Workshop

The children of Springfield School joined the Sixth Form Artists and Photographers for their annual silk painting workshop.



Annual Staff Art Exhibition

A wide array of artwork created by ten members of staff from across the school community was included in this year's Staff Art Exhibition. Paintings, drawings, printmaking, photography, textiles and ceramics produced were exhibited by the following staff:

Jan Baker, Robin Bate, Tracy Bryan, Ruth Lancaster, Karen Perrins, Louise Rooney, Donna Trim, Ruth Whaley, Mark Worrall, Liam Worth.

Lazarillo de Tormes

In January, all Lower School pupils doing Spanish, along with A-Level Spanish students and pupils from other schools, were able to enjoy the Firewalk Theatre Company's staging of the Spanish play *Lazarillo de Tormes* in the Bushell Hall. Lazarillo is a young boy from Salamanca who finds employment with a number of different masters from whom he learns the art of survival in an unforgiving and often unpredictable world. The two actors brought the play wonderfully to life and I am sure the audience learnt plenty of new words as a result!



Middle School Play

This term saw the staging of the Middle School play, which was, in fact, two short plays, *Heritage* by Daffyd James and *Remote* by Stef Smith. Performing such modern and ensemble plays was a new experience for our talented cast of twenty, many of whom were performing large roles for the first time. Heritage also marked a continuation of our exciting series of plays entirely directed by members of the Sixth Form, following *Mermaid* from earlier in the year and *The Wardrobe* from 2016. Performing on a set almost entirely composed of freshly transported earth, the enthusiastic cast really captured the dark humour of *Heritage* and the poetic reflection of *Remote*, eliciting pleasing reactions from their audiences in a packed Drama Studio. There were many strong performances, but special mention must go to the enormously amusing comic performances of Olivia Hass and Beth Miles in *Heritage* and the emotional veracity of Alex Duckworth and Harrison Jones in *Remote*.



Dr Paul Prescott from the University of Warwick joined the English Society this week for a lecture exploring Hamlet. (2 February)

Thank you so much to everyone who joined us for the Parents' Association's Family Fun Night on Friday. We hope you enjoyed it! (5 February)





Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* was this year's colourful School Musical. Originally written as a short sequence of pop songs for a school choir in 1967, *Joseph* has evolved into the UK's longest running musical, selling over 15 million tickets. Retelling the Biblical story of Joseph and the coat of many colours, the musical is full of unforgettable songs including 'Those Canaan Days', 'Any Dream Will Do' and 'Close Every Door'.

The show was brought to life by the energy and enthusiasm of a young cast, for whom the music was originally intended. This year, there were over 100 performers involved, from the Third Form to the Upper Sixth, with James Spence playing the title role and the demanding Narrator songs shared between Zara Donaldson, Ellie Ajao and Saskia Freshwater.



World Book Day 2018

On Thursday 1 March, the Junior School celebrated reading by participating in the annual World Book Day initiative. The children surpassed themselves by dressing up as an array of characters from their favourite books and the staff's costumes were inspired by Dodie Smith's novel, *The Hundred and One Dalmatians*. Mrs Morgan made a formidable Cruella de Vil! We began the day with a House quiz where the children had to answer 20 questions on literature. All Houses performed very well but the overall winner with full marks was Jago. The children were also set a form reading challenge to complete at home. Some of these challenges included reading to a pet, reading a newspaper article and reading with a hat on! The first form where all children had completed their challenge were presented with a book for their classroom. The winners were J1W, J2HM, J3D and J4JEH. We are already looking forward to next year!



Snowdome Trip

While the rest of J4 were on their Sports Tour, the remaining pupils were treated to an action-packed day out at the Snowdome in Tamworth, accompanied by Mr Jones, Mrs Featherstone and Miss Hanlon. The day started with an ice skating session before a beginners ski lesson in the afternoon. More experienced skiers were able to hit the slope for some practice! Thankfully, no major injuries were sustained and we all made it back in one piece!

Junior School Science Week

Science Week got off to a dynamic start with the topic of 'Exploration and Discovery.' The pupils were set with a challenge of designing the best spaceship that they could to land on Mars. The best designs were put forward to a panel of judges in assembly and the worthy winners awarded. As well as that, the pupils in J1 and J2 experienced a 'show and tell' Science morning, where they learnt about Science professions from our very own J1 and J2 parents. On Thursday we were joined by a team from Birmingham Thinktank who performed an Electrifying Science Show and taught the J3 children about the star constellations in their portable space dome.





Yesterday our Third Form enjoyed giving sweets with a message of friendship to members of their Form on 'Friendship Day'. They paid 50p for a bag or lolly and all proceeds will go to @LAFFCharity! #SolSchCharity (13 February)

Huge well done to our #SolSchJS Spelling Bee winners. Windsor were triumphant! (15 February)



Trip to Handsworth Gurdwara

As part of their Religious Studies topic 'Working Together,' J2 visited Handsworth Gurdwara where they learned about the importance of the building and how the local community is served by its volunteers. They learned that an average of 30,000 meals are served free of charge to visitors each week, all of which are made and served by Sikhs who choose to give a portion of their time to the Gurdwara. In addition to learning about the day-to-day running of the building, the children got to visit two prayer halls to hear the Guru Granth Sahib being read. Some children even tried prashad, or blessed food. J2 enjoyed putting their learning from the classroom into context.

Junior School Concert

Junior School pupils from J1 to J4 performed wonderfully in this term's concert. The audience enjoyed a range of performances, including vocal and instrumental solos, small ensembles and larger groups, such as Wind Band, String Group, J2 Trumpets, Scuffle Singers and Junior Singers. The pupils took to the stage with remarkable confidence and were deservedly proud of their performances. We now look forward eagerly to next term's concert.



The Pirates of the Curry Bean

This year's J4 production, *The Pirates of the Curry Bean*, was a swashbuckling adventure which entertained its audiences and made them laugh out loud. The story began when a pair of mischievous twins found a real treasure map, left for them by their meddling uncle Deadeye. But when the infamous Redbeard and the pungent pirates of the Curry Bean stole the map and kidnapped their mother, the race was on to rescue her, reclaim the map and find the treasure! Accompanied by their faithful cat Fiddlesticks, the twins joined Admiral Hornhonker, Captain Cod and their crazy crew on a voyage of adventure that took them from Old London Docks to the mysterious island of Lumbago in the sea of Sciatica! As well as a great deal of talent, a sense of camaraderie was shown during the rehearsals and performances, as the children worked together to put on an excellent show.



Christingle!

On Sunday 21 January, the annual Christingle service took place in the Chapel. Many of the Junior School pupils had spent their lunchtimes in the preceding week in the 'Christingle Factory' in the Junior School Art Room, attending to the creation of 150 sweet-laden treats for the congregation to enjoy. In addition, the two Junior School choirs – Scuffle Singers and Junior Singers – treated everyone to some beautiful, harmonious singing. At the end of the service, a special cheque was presented to the Children's Society.



All GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition practical exams now complete. Fantastic effort by all pupils. (14 February)

Well done to Annabel Dalby who has been selected to represent West Midlands Schools at the English Schools Cross Country Championships in March! (16 February)





Good luck to Annabella James and James Shakeshaft who are training in Norway this week having been selected for the English Schools Squad after their performance in the school's ski team! (26 February)

There are 4 red boxes around school. Donate packs of pads and tampons to support local charities and reach girls in crisis. (28 February)



Junior School Sport

2018 has, so far, been a monumental year for Junior School sport, with the School competing at their first ever Gymnastics competition. In September, Mr Super, in partnership with Stardust Dance Academy, started Gymnastics squad training before school on Mondays. The squad of 16 girls worked hard on their routines, and competed in Floor and Vault against over 30 other schools, at the Regional competition.

Junior School Boys' Sport

Another successful term for the Junior School boys! The J1 boys had some great football fixtures against Eversfield and Balsall Common, the J3 boys dominated against Bablake, and the J4 boys showed some excellent team performances in multiple hockey tournaments. The definite highlight, however, has to be the J2 boys: at the Foremarke Hall Hockey Festival, in terrible weather conditions, they finished as overall winners, unbeaten in all 6 games! Great work, boys!



Junior School Girls' Sport

As I write this, there are a couple of weeks of the term to go, It has just turned to Spring.. but yet 5ft of snow!

It has been a busy term with a lot fitted in,

A highlight for me being a trip to EHS for a competitive swim (gala)

32 girls, from J1 to J4

Joined forces and succeeded in securing a draw (1st for A team, 2nd for Bs)

The J2s have been busy with netball matches for all, Blue Coat were conquered, next King Henry's... I hope they're not tall!

The J4 netball team competed at the IAPS netball contest, Achieving a win and a narrow loss to the eventual semi-finalists no less.

With swimming sports, the J4 sports tour and the J2 netball festival to come,

The remaining weeks will be busy; busy but fun.

Roll on summer term, nicer weather, athletics and rounders action,

Girls, your enthusiasm is unwavering, not even by a fraction.

Keep it going, strive onwards and keep improving,

Sometimes it is defeat or non-selection, but get back up – keep moving.



Our Upper Fifth scientists were at @gcsesciencelive 2018 yesterday! They heard lectures on nuclear fusion, genetics and developments in IVF. (27 February)

Solihull School Parents' Association's Ladies' Supper is on Friday 9 March at 7:30pm. (2 March)





EPTA competition

Once again, the European Piano Teachers Association (EPTA) selected Solihull School as the venue for this year's first and regional final rounds, as well as the national final round, of their annual Piano Competition. The standard of the pianists competing in the first round in February was extremely high and the participating pianists from Solihull school (Ziying He, Kaia Berry and Claire Delaney) were all delighted to be invited to the regional finals in their various categories, which take place on 17 March. A huge well done to our pianists!

Chamber Music and Soloist Instrumental Concerts

Chamber music holds a very important place in any pupil's musical experience. In effect it provides a step up from the demands of large-ensemble performing in that each member of a chamber music group is alone on their particular part. Initially this can be a little scary but, with extended experience, it can become wonderfully exhilarating. This year's Chamber Music concert proved, once again, that our pupils are really enjoying this form of making music, and all rose to the challenge with confidence and musicianship. Bravo!

Our pupils have many opportunities to perform as soloists, and this term has been no exception. In addition to the Junior School Concert, the two Informal Concerts provided wonderful experiences for pupils to perform solo items in public. For some, these will have been the first outings in public; for others it has been the other end of their musical journey as soloists here at school. In every concert, all performers – young and old, beginner and experienced – acquitted themselves with confidence, musicality and panache.



Diploma, competition and National Children's Orchestra successes

Huge congratulations to all those pupils who took instrumental exams at the very end of last term (December). In addition to their individual successes, the combined set of results was one of the best we have ever had: 30% were distinctions and 75% were either merit or distinction. All that practice must have paid off. Keep up the good work!

Three pupils, in particular, have been busy with extending their music beyond the confines of the Music School and we extend our congratulations to the following:

- Ellie Ajao (Upper Sixth) for recently gaining her Performer's Diploma on the violin – with distinction, notably scoring particularly highly on the viva voce part of the exam.
- Ziying He (Fourth Form), who competed in the Bromsgrove Young Musicians' Platform and, in a very strong field, was the overall winner of the Junior Section (children aged 9 to 13).
- In addition to having recently passed grade 8 on the cello, Katharine Baker (Third Form) has successfully auditioned for, and gained a place in, the U12 National Children's Orchestra on her other instrument – the clarinet. She has been part of the orchestra for the past five years.

Young Organists play at St Alphege Church

On Wednesday 24 January, the weekly lunchtime recital at St Alphege Church was given by our three student organists, Jim Bate, Max Dormon and Richard Loughran, playing to a warm and appreciative audience of 80 in a wide range of repertoire that included music by Buxtehude, Bach, Leighton, Thiman, Boellmann and Philip Moore. We are incredibly grateful to St Alphege for offering such a lovely performance platform for the students. The playing throughout was of a high standard of artistry, all the more impressive in that all three students were adapting on the morning of the concert to an unfamiliar instrument and acoustic.

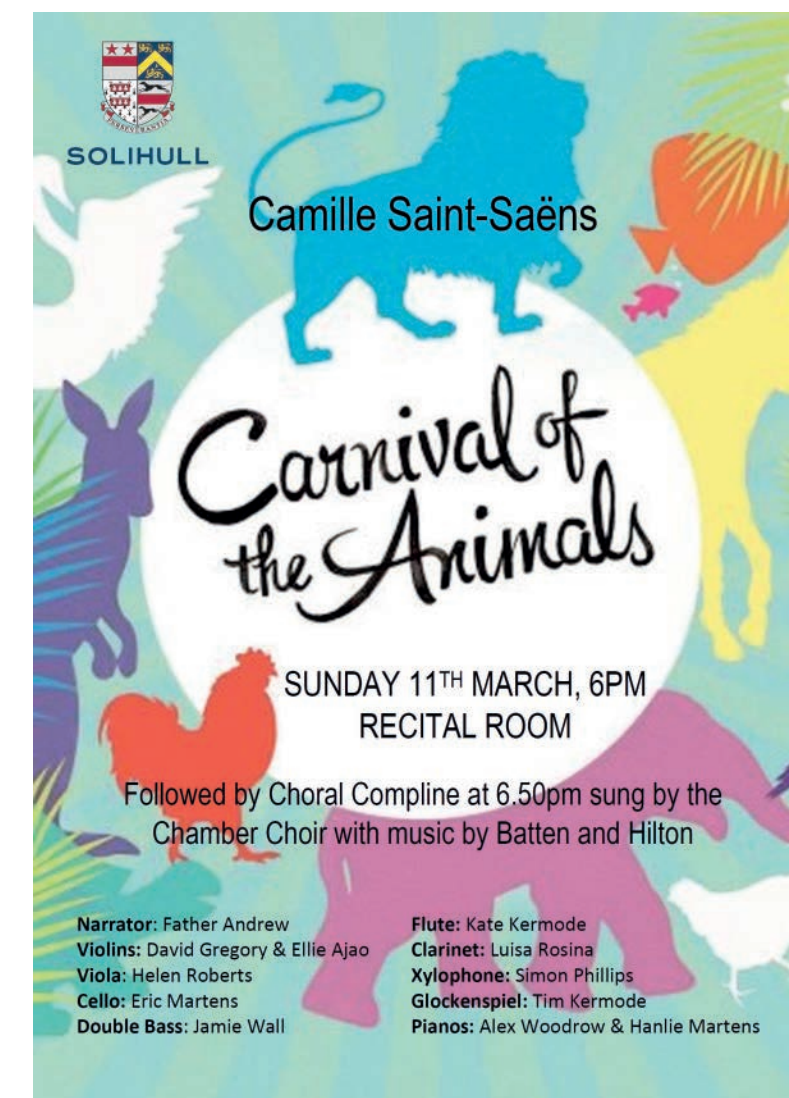


Carnival of the Animals

As part of the small recital series that Mr Woodrow set up to take place on one Sunday in each term, eleven music staff and local professional musicians came together as a small chamber group to present the engaging work by the French composer Saint-Saëns, *Carnival of the Animals*. In the work Saint-Saëns sets out to depict key characteristics of 13 different animals, such as a tortoise, elephant, lion, donkey, an aquarium, an aviary and (perhaps most well-known musically) a swan. In each movement a certain instrument will have the main focus and so the work has become an effective way to introduce different instruments, especially to young children. So, the following day, the performers presented the work to all the Junior School children. Inevitably they loved it and it was great to see their complete engagement with the sounds and the array of instruments.

Piano duet masterclass and professional recital

In conjunction with EPTA (the European Piano Teachers' Association), on the second Saturday of term we were delighted to welcome international pianists Kathryn Page and Murray McLachlan to school. Between them they guided over 35 pianists (25 of our own and 10 from local schools) in different piano duet and trio combinations in wonderfully engaging, entertaining and thought-provoking masterclasses. After an impressive pupil concert, giving the students a chance to build on what they had worked on in the masterclasses, Kathryn and Murray gave a professional piano duet recital in the Bushell Hall to an audience of over 200. The standing ovation they received at the end spoke volumes and reflected the quality and sheer musicianship of their performance. The whole day had a tremendous buzz about it and huge thanks should go to all the pupils who took part, to the wonderful audience, and to Mrs Martens for spearheading the event.





Chapel Choirs CD recording

On a snowy Sunday in January, the Boys', Girls' and Chamber Choirs were all involved in recording a CD of liturgical repertoire spanning Advent through to Candlemas, including many of the festive favourites that had formed part of the Nine Lessons and Carols service in December. Adrian Lucas was our very excellent professional recording engineer and producer, and he was remarkably adept at keeping us all on track and motivated to give of our best throughout the long, but exhilarating, recording sessions. Sixth Former Jim Bate contributed an organ voluntary by J. S. Bach, alongside organ solos from Mr Woodrow and Mr Irving. Initial drafts of the recording sound most promising, so do watch out for the release in a few months' time!



Chamber Choir visit to St Paul's Cathedral

The 46-strong Chamber Choir was delighted to visit St Paul's Cathedral on a chilly February day to sing Choral Evensong. This is the sixth annual service that the choir has been privileged to sing at St Paul's. Music by Ayleward, Thomas Tertius Noble and Elgar's sometime haunting, sometime majestic 'The Spirit of the Lord' from his oratorio 'The Apostles' was all sung with real passion and precision, the voices blending so well in the glorious acoustic. We were grateful, as ever, to School Organist Mr Irving for his sympathetic and colourful accompaniments. It was a great delight and honour for us to be able to contribute to the daily worshipping life of St Paul's in this way.

Following Choral Evensong, guests including former pupils, governors, parents and staff came together for drinks and canapés at The Happenstance. Here they were able to meet old friends and make new acquaintances in a warm and welcoming setting. The Choir has been invited to sing at St Paul's again next year and we would be delighted to see our Old Silhillians there.



U12 Netball

Interest and participation in netball this year has been extremely high, with a high proportion of the Third Form attending netball practice and playing in matches. As a result, we have had a successful netball season so far with some notable successes including: A team winning 9/12 matches, B team winning 11/12 matches, C team winning 6/7, D team 3/5, E team 2/3, and F team 2/3. It has also been an opportunity for some girls who have never played netball before to learn the basics and play in competitive matches against other schools. Students have also had the opportunity to captain their team, where they have had to lead warm-ups and organise their teams in their matches; a great chance to develop their leadership and communication skills. The effort and enthusiasm shown by all has made it a pleasure to coach them this season.

A 'first time ever' for our Netballers!

Our U14 netball squad qualified for the National Finals following their victory in the recent regional tournament held at Bromsgrove School. The girls faced tough opposition against some difficult sides including Bromsgrove and Wrekin College. However, after months of hard work and preparation, we qualified for the finals for the first time ever! We wish the girls luck as they prepare for this exciting venture on Saturday 17 March at Stanborough School. The team on the day consisted of Alex Warburton, Izzy O'Malley, Claudia Reda, Abi Crampton, Rachel Chanji, Jenny Hodge, Aimee O'Malley, Izzy Gardner and Mattie Sandford. Huge congratulations and well done on a remarkable achievement.





Ski Team

On the back of their racing successes, congratulations to George Daly, James Shakeshaft and Bella James for being selected to attend training camps in the Alps. These students were selected as a result of good performances in the ESSKIA championship races, as well as other race results. Bella and James both had a successful week training in Norway over February half term.

This term our skiers also competed in the final three races of the Winter Race League. When performance was averaged over the four races in total, Solihull pupils were on the podium nine times over the four age categories! A very well done to all involved!

Easter Term Teams of the Week

U12A Boys' Hockey Team

Excellent team spirit and victory against Bromsgrove School

Lower & Middle School Debating Team

Superb performance in the ESU Competition

Sixth Form Debating Team

Winners of the West Midlands Mace English Speaking Union Regional Finals

U14 Netball Team

Excellent performance in the Regional Championships

U13 Rugby Team

Impressive team performance against King's, Macclesfield

The Chess Team

Excellent victory against King Edward's School, Birmingham

Cast & Crew of *Heritage & Remote*

Three fabulous nights of Drama

Maths Team

Excellent performance at the Regional Final of the UKMT Team Maths Challenge

U13 Rugby Team

Outstanding performance at the Berkhamsted 7's Tournament

Cast and Crew of *Joseph*

Five fabulous performances of music and drama

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