

# Shenstonian

## 2023-2024



SOLIHULL



THE  
GOOD  
SCHOOLS  
GUIDE





## SOLIHULL

“Town centre location, yet ‘in its own bubble’ where happy pupils ‘flourish’, say parents. Staff say, “Ability matters, but effort matters twice as much.” However, thanks to their approach, they seem to get both.”



“Academic, yes, but with a holistic approach to wellbeing, arts and enrichment to take some of the weight off pupil’s shoulders.”

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## Teaching Staff 2023 - 2024

1990	M J Covill	2016	T A Farnell; K C Hull; G James;
1991	S A Morgan		H Martens; O L Parsons; A Raza;
1992			J T Sixsmith; A Thacker; D J Whiting
1993		2017	M D Davies; P K Deu; C M Dignon;
1994	N W S Leonard; A C Roll		J C Francis; S Grove; A J Jennings;
1995	D H Parker		R A Jennings; G Lowe; V Patel;
1996	E Pimlott		J L Platt; A R J Poole; H Roberts;
1999	M P Babb; S A Hart		L E M Rooney; E A Shearing;
2000		2018	J A Spraggett; Z Zhou
2002	N J Atkins; C I Mayer		M H Briggs; D Brotherhood; A Y Burt;
2003	M Bishop; T J Bryan; J Johnson;		R S Chillcott; S L Chillcott; A V Coste;
	A R Lancaster; M P Penney; H Winn		H E Davidson; K Higginson;
2004	O W H Bate; P A Delaney; S D Watton		A J Macarthur; R Noon; D C Rice;
2005	G J Affleck; N E Corbett; G Cureton;	2019	R G Windmill
	S G Mitchell; S J Thompson		J Ashton; J C Clark; A C Eden;
2006	P G May		J L Elkington; C J Guy; N M Linehan;
2007	C Bednall; J E Humphreys;	2020	C J Ridout; K L Robinson; L J Webb;
	M van Alderwegen		A C Wilkie
2008	O R Anderton; E A M Campbell;		H L Grace; J C Hart; N C Leeson;
	T A Gallagher; E M Inglis;	2021	J S Litwinko; T A MacKenzie;
	J R Massarella; C M McArthur;		J D Walker
	H J Middleton; D G Morgan;		E Carne; R Hill-Brown;
	P E Morgan; R F Speirs		E Jansen van Rensburg; J Mohammed;
2009	H M Fair		E L Saunders; L Tat; S J Vaughan;
2010	L M Harper; L J Lynch; D E Penney;	2022	S D Waldron
	S R Phillips; P F Spratley		E M Baker; H E Coleman;
2011	C L Black; D J Brough; S L S Farnan		C B Fillingham; J W Henderson;
2012	R E Airdrie; J C Bernamont; N L Evans;	2023	B G A Richmond; J E Sainsbury;
	S E Foster; C H Goodman;		J M Smith; R L Taylor; M R Yates
	L J Rutherford; J L Mander; R Morgan;		W M Carroll; N Chamulewicz;
	K E Stafford; D Wana		B Cobden; K Cooke; A L Fallis;
2013	N J Dickerson; H K Hallworth;		M R Imison; A Jimenez Fuentes;
	I Igoe; M D Jones; D L Maddy;		K E McAlister; R Reed; D Shodipo;
	R Trainor		M Tibbitts; J Vaabel; Y Zimnowodzki
2014	M S Gledhill; S E Haley; J A Hands;		
	A T Kermode; W L Meigh;		
	C E Mollison; F S Ryland; R H Smith		
2015	C A Baden; L W Blackburn;		
	J M Brown; E L Jones; A R Parry;		
	A E Routledge; L E Spratley;		
	R C Whaley		

# From the Headmaster's Study



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

## **Welcome to The Shenstonian 2024!**

When books are being written about Solihull School, we will look back on the school year 2023/2024 as a golden moment in our shared history. The school bounced from one success to another as the pages of this volume attest. Right at the end of the academic year, our wonderful school was crowned as "Independent Senior School of the Year" by the Times Educational Supplement which is a powerful and coveted accolade in the world of education. But now, with the perspective of one who is looking back on the year which has just gone, a trail of breadcrumbs can be seen leading through sporting successes and countless other triumphs towards the best examination results in a decade this last summer.

I would like to heap praise upon the staff across the Prep School and Senior School who worked tirelessly for the benefit of the pupils last year at Solihull. I have enjoyed a teaching career of nearly 30 years and I have not come across a more dedicated workforce than my colleagues here in the Midlands. I am impressed by their generosity in offering their time to the pupils and their determination to challenge and stretch the pupils both within and beyond the classroom.

Elsewhere in this magazine, you will read about the Shakespeare Festival, the J3 and J4 field trips, the Engineering Fair, the most successful rugby 1st XV in a generation, the many achievements of the hockey, netball and cricket departments, the staging of Les Misérables and Shrek as well as the concert given by Solihull musicians at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

The visit from Dame Jane Goodall MBE is particularly memorable and stands alongside the work in Holocaust education and the engagement with political debate through two Question Time events. These guest speakers and thought leaders prompt us to lift our eyes above our day-to-day experiences and it is important to me that Solihull School throws open its doors to the world outside the gates. The purpose of school is, at least in part, to prepare pupils for a rewarding and varied life after their time here has come to an end – this is a role which Solihull School fulfils strongly.

It is a great pleasure to serve as the Headmaster at one of the great schools of England. There is no secret recipe here; we build our house on solid foundations – parents, pupils and staff all pulling together for success. A rope which is made of three cords is not easily broken.

Well done and thank you to everyone at Solihull School in 2023/2024. Perseverantia!

*C B Fillingham*  
Executive Headmaster

# Pupil Leaders



Hannah Greenwood,  
Head of School  
2023-24



## Heads of School

The Head of School for the 2023-2024 academic year was Hannah Greenwood and her deputies were Aisha Khan, Tom O'Connor, Jane Chanji, Daniel Youssef and Charlotte Atkins.

## House Captains

**Fetherston**

**Jago**

**Pole**

**Shenstone**

**Windsor**



Thomas O'Connor and Fabian Botterill



Oliver Baker and Daleen Sherkawi



George Finney and Ted Clarke



Robert Burnett and Bella Gaspar



Sophie Burtenshaw and Diya Parmer



*Christmas Term*

### Prep School Head Boys and Head Girls

Congratulations to the six J4 pupils who were chosen to represent the Prep School as Head Boy and Head Girl this academic year.

**Christmas Term** – Amelia Ridout and George Gallagher

**Easter Term** – Arty Plunkett and Anahita Sethi

**Summer Term** – Shravan Kaul and Lizzie Wood



*Easter Term*



*Summer Term*



### Prep School Prime Minister

In May, all J4s had the opportunity to stand for Prime Minister. May 16 marked election day, with the five elected candidates proudly canvassing for votes. Congratulations to Marielle Sherkwawi, Barnaby Ginn, Ryan Chandra, Finley Poulton and Beula Bick for presenting your pledges so passionately and well done to Barnaby for ruling victorious overall.

Barnaby's pledges were Hot Tuck, Sports Council and a Teacher Talent Show for charity. The Talent Show took place on the final day of the summer term and saw Prep School teachers performing a range of impressive acts including a Spice Girls tribute, Mr Grove's kick-ups and Mr Walker's amazing animal impressions!

### Junior School Council



This year, the Junior School Council has seen pupils bring forward thoughtful suggestions to enhance their experience at the Prep School. These include purchasing a new clock for the playground, establishing a J4 Basketball Club, and proposing new food options in the refectory. Additionally, pupils visited Birmingham Children's Hospital to see how the funds raised by the Megathlon are being used to provide art lessons. They also had the enriching experience of meeting with the whole school council at Solihull Council, gaining insight into how meetings are conducted at the Council House. It has been a fantastic year for pupil voice, with many exciting plans in store for the next academic year.

*Mrs S Farnan*

# Development and Alumni Relations Office

For friendship, for support, for connections for life

## Only Connect

Once a Silhillian always a Silhillian, and as such pupils are part of a huge, worldwide network of other former students prepared to offer help, advice, friendship and support as they go through life. We encourage all pupils to join Solihull Community <https://alumni.solsch.org.uk> as they leave. It's the best way of staying in touch with school and with contemporaries as well as a way of accessing excellent careers advice and mentoring.

We hold a variety of events throughout the year to help foster relationships with other Silhillians across the years. This year we held a number of decade reunions for those who left the school in the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. Its always a joy to see old friends reconnecting after years apart. While our alumni are excited and impressed to see the new facilities, they also greatly enjoy visiting old haunts.



*Leavers from the 1960s, The Cooper Building balcony*



*Leavers from the 1970s outside School House*



Our former students not only come back to the school for social occasions, but also to give help and support to current pupils. In October, we were delighted to invite back Tristan Stubbs (Fetherston 1991 - 1999) who gave a fascinating presentation about his career in the civil service that has now taken him to work in the House of Lords.



John Whiting (Windsor 1999 – 2010) once again returned to assist with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. He himself, a Gold Award holder (he achieved all three levels at Solihull, as did his sister Julie (2007 – 2013), is a superb group supervisor and has assisted with countless expeditions in Warwickshire, the Peak District and further afield. The staff are very grateful for John's ongoing involvement and commitment to Outdoor Education at Solihull.



## Giving Back

The impact the school has on its former pupils is never more striking than when they remember us in their wills. This spring, The Silhillian Fund for transformational bursaries received its largest gift ever when John Ashfield (Windsor 1967-1973) sadly died, leaving over £1million. This sum will provide free places for future Silhillians from the borough who would benefit from all that Solihull offers but do not have the means to do so. John himself had a free place and was keen to pass on his good fortune.

The school now has a legacy club, 'The 1560 Society', for all those leaving a gift in their will. Members are invited to dinner with the Headmaster every year. Over £2million has been raised through bequests in the last two years.



## Paul Hardman (Jago 1971-1978) is a member of The 1560 Society



"Not only did I receive an excellent academic education at Solihull, but I had the opportunity, encouragement and support to participate in a host of extra-curricular activities and spend my formative years in an environment that engendered self-confidence and fostered a belief in high standards in all aspects of life. I formed lifelong friendships with fellow pupils and learned a great deal that later helped me, not just in my career, but with life in general. This isn't simply a nostalgic look back into the past through a rose-coloured lens, but a pragmatic assessment of the benefits I have enjoyed as a consequence of my time at the school. None of this would have been possible were it not for the full scholarship I received from the local authority. It seems only right therefore, to hand on my good fortune to the next generation of Silhillians by leaving a gift in my will to The Silhillian Fund, allowing a young person, without the necessary means to be given the same transformational opportunity as I received."



The Alumni Office holds several reunions throughout the year both at Solihull and in London. A favourite is the 21st birthday party, now an annual event. This September the class of 2021 came back to celebrate three years since leaving school. All seemed delighted to reunite in the Refectory for drinks and birthday cake. The Headmaster, Charles Fillingham, welcomed them back, and Sean Morgan reminded the group of some of the highlights of their Solihull years. They all took a moment to raise a glass in memory of their very special classmate, Oscar Montgomery, who died at sea during their Lower Sixth year.

### More information

Everyone connected to the school is welcome to join Solihull Community <https://alumni.solsch.org.uk>

It's the best way to stay in touch with our news and events.

If you'd like to know more about the work of the Development and Alumni Relations Office, please do contact [moseleyl@solsch.org.uk](mailto:moseleyl@solsch.org.uk)

She'd be delighted to hear from you.

Ms L Lunt



## From the Archivist

By 1924 the school was recovering well from the impact of the Great War. Mr W F Bushell was Headmaster, and the key word was expansion. Bradford House had been purchased for £2,300 and served as boarding accommodation, music and geography classrooms, and a prefects' room ('Benchers' was not introduced until 1947). The building became the Bursary in 1934, which it still used for today.

Compulsory games were introduced after the war, and this required more field space so Hampton Lane fields were purchased in 1922. The number of pupils reached 300 so to alleviate the pressure of numbers the Old Grammar School (renamed Malvern House in 1882) was reopened as the Junior School. This area of the school had their own House names: Arden, Blythe, Malvern and Gaywood, until 1939 when Malvern House was sold. Sport was a very important feature of school life, as it is today, especially the inter House competition. The Houses were renamed in 1920 as Jago, Pole, Shenstone, Fetherston and School, the latter was for the ever-increasing boarding population and was subdivided into Nomads and Wanderers. Windsor doesn't come along until 1959. These new names replaced the old ones introduced in 1879 : Acocks Green, Solihull, Shirley and Knowle alongside School which was exclusively for boarders.

Cricket is our oldest recorded sport, and to celebrate being able to play on our expanded grounds any batsman who scored 50 in a school match (scores were low back then) could plant a tree and the line of trees that separates the first XV pitch from Bushell Fields today is testament to those 1920's cricketing exploits. Whilst on the subject of trees, the splendid horse chestnut trees that provide a border between the front of School House and the Warwick Road were planted by Mr Bushell's sister. Mr Bushell also purchased land from School House up to Union Road himself as the governors were reluctant to spend more money. He later sold it back to the school in 1931 (at the original purchase price) apart from three acres he had sold to the British Legion. This far sighted and generous act secured the Bushell Fields we enjoy today.

Football was the main winter sport until it was replaced by rugby in 1930 and hockey, not played since 1915 but revived in 1924. House football was described as.. "although keenly contested was a rather of the rough and tumble order" with Jago winning the competition in 1924. Cross country was organised as a paper chase around the local area and the House boxing competition which took place in the gym every March was popular, so too the House 'Tug of War' which was won by School House in 1924 beating Shenstone in the final.

Away from the games front, the Debating Society (founded in 1906) held a mock General Election debate in 1924, the arguments presented by each party would be very familiar to us today. Other activities included Radio, Photographic, Architectural and Poetry Societies, and the play performed in 1924 was The Magistrate.



*Library and Reading Room*



*Dining Hall*



*Big School*

The OTC (CCF) was a very important feature of school life, and Solihull School's Contingent proudly celebrated 'Empire Day' (24 May) in a march past with the salute taken by the Headmaster. Empire Day became Commonwealth Day in 1958.

The development and expansion of the school library enjoyed much coverage in the pages of the Shenstonian during the 1920s. It was housed in an old army hut before moving into a more suitable room in School House. The library was staffed by the pupils themselves, librarians were appointed each year to look after 3,000 books by 1924, 100 of which were borrowed every week. Appeals for books were successful and in 1930 the library was relocated into what is now the Conference Room, which was the Dining Room, until this moved into the area in School House now occupied by computers.

Alongside the collecting of books, Mr Bushell launched an appeal for more chairs, those who donated one had their names inscribed on the back. For many years these filled the new Big School, built in 1930, which is now our Kent Library.

*Mr J Loynton*

# Solihull School Parents' Association



The Solihull School Parents' Association enjoyed another successful year, with old-favourite events such as the Quiz Night and our wonderful Christmas celebrations, complementing our new Wreath Making Evening in December and Back to the 80s party in February. Our 'as new' uniform service remained as popular and needed as ever, with full sales each term as well as monthly shop-opening. Our inaugural 'Family Fun Friday' last year was such a success that we returned with a bigger and better event in June, bringing the whole school community together for an evening of fun, entertainment and good food. We were pleased to be able to raise funds towards the refurbishment of the kitchen in the David Fricke Mountain Cottage, a facility that all pupils will benefit from during their time at school, and continued to support our pupils with bursary and hardship support, through our SSPA Trust Fund.

*Julie Jones  
President, Solihull School Parents' Association*

## GET IN TOUCH

If you would like more information about the SSPA, please email: [prez.sspa@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:prez.sspa@hotmail.co.uk)

# University and College Entries 2023

## ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

Laylaa Ilahi Optometry

## ASTON UNIVERSITY

Ned Goodman Computer Science  
Rahul Parmar Psychology  
Sana Rehman Business Computing and IT

## BIMM UNIVERSITY

Emma Morgan Filmmaking

## BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

Freyja Browne Accounting and Finance

## CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Joseph Aston Sport Coaching  
Martyna Duzewska English and Creative Writing  
Nupur Kumar Fashion Design  
Sebastian Thompson Business and Management

## CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

Charlie Arbuthnot Medical Engineering  
Freya Salvin-Day Psychology  
Joe Pedley Applied Software Engineering  
Zara Johal Human Geography

## DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Alice Batterbee Geography  
Benjamin Raybould Philosophy, Politics and Economics  
Thomas Giddings Ancient History

## IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

Tatiana Chisholm Medical Biosciences with Management

## KEELE UNIVERSITY

Jacob Nicholl Philosophy and Psychology  
Rhyse Godhania Accounting and Finance

## KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

William Black Liberal Arts

## LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Alistair Tisdale Physics

## LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

Riya Panesar Biomedical Science

## LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Pierce Smythe Fashion Photography

## LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

Ben Stewart Commercial Management and Quantity Surveying  
Fynlee Hateley Sport Management  
Jack Kinder Business

## NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

Reece Nijran Electrical and Electronic Engineering

## NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

Grace Burke Psychology  
Iris Waters Property Development and Planning  
Jane Woodley Real Estate  
Lucy Lyndon Business Management and Marketing

## OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Jessica Richardson Business and Management  
Olivia Campbell Property Development and Planning

## QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Celina Onyeaka Oral Health

## SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

Amelia Orton Education with Autism, Disability and Special Educational Needs

## SWANSEA UNIVERSITY

Amelia Iqbal Law  
Daisy Batchelor Criminology and Criminal Justice

## THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Megan Barratt Jewellery and Silversmithing

## THE UNIVERSITY OF LAW

Kanchan Balkrishna Law

## UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

George Roe Psychology and Language Sciences

## UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Blake Adams Chemical Engineering  
James Cartwright Economics  
John Jennings Economics  
Lorna Brooks Scott Management  
Mark Pratt Economics  
Max Le Blevet Chemical Engineering  
Noah Rock Accounting and Management  
Sarah Gahan Accounting and Finance  
William Chater Integrated Mechanical and Electrical Engineering

## UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Constance Smith Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Freya Kehoe Human Neuroscience  
Harry Mann International Business  
Imogen Lee Geography  
Suna Ozsoy Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Talaal Farooqi Computer Science

## UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Daisy Bentley Psychology in Education  
Sophie Storey Geography

**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE**

Ben Pulley	History
Conor Collins	Mathematics
Paige Redfern	Natural Sciences

**UNIVERSITY OF EXETER**

India Koziol	English
Lauren Mitchell	Politics, Philosophy and Economics
Piers Kemp	Economics
William Holt	Geography

**UNIVERSITY OF KENT**

Anesu Mkwangwanya	Physics with a Year Abroad
Burcin Demiroglu	Marketing

**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

Amelia Penney	Psychology
Anton Deineka	Natural Sciences
Cian Morgan	Economics and History
Isabelle Vaughan	Geography
Jennifer Storey	Philosophy, Politics and Economics
Joshua Kermode	Economics and History
Thomas Burnett	Geography

**UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER**

Anushka Agarwalla	Accounting and Finance
Balaarka Cheekoti	Medicine
Edward Sears	Physics with Astrophysics

**UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL**

Carys Rowland	History and Politics
Mariella Scott	Medicine
Olivia Hurst	Criminology

**UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER**

Eva Burrell	Economics
Francisco Campino	Medicine
Kaitlin Pragnell Biggs	Music
Rachel Baumber	Biochemistry

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON**

Erin Troop	Psychology
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**UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM**

Anoushka Fisher	Chemistry
Benjamin Bednall	Engineering and Physical Sciences
Beth Morris	Nursing
Camile Abbotts	Modern Languages
Charlotte Seale	Liberal Arts
Dylan Boora	Pharmacy
Ellie-Mae Beeton	Geography with Business
Emaan Aamer	Medicine at Lincoln
George Sitch	Accountancy
Harvey Blackhurst	Geography with Business
Jonathon Maundrell	Medicine at Lincoln
Michael Gabriel	Natural Sciences
Niamh Trainer	Liberal Arts
Ravinder Sehmi	Finance, Accounting and Management
Roma Morris	Natural Sciences
Ryan McCourt	Accountancy

**UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM (CONT)**

Sidney Albrighton	Mechanical Engineering
Theodore Lill	Engineering and Physical Sciences

**UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

Jacob Perry	Philosophy, Politics and Economics
Phillipa Meigh	English Language and Literature

**UNIVERSITY OF READING**

Kitty O'Sullivan	Politics and International Relations
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**UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**

Benjamin Andrews	Materials Science and Engineering
Charlotte Pratt	Psychology
Ryan Stephens	Economics

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

Anna Whitmarsh	Law
Hana Ali	Biomedical Sciences
Lauren Hu	Medicine

**UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON**

Amy Goodworth	Advertising
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**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**

Annabel Bagshaw	Theatre and Performance Studies
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**UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER**

Moaiad Ababneh	Spanish and International Relations
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**UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER**

Lily-Mae Hodson	Criminology with Forensic Psychology
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# Sixth Form Leavers 2024





# A Level Results 2024



# Fifth Form Leavers and GCSE Results 2024









## Katie Baden

Catherine Baden (Katie) joined the school in 2015 as a netball coach. Initially assisting on games afternoons, her quality and expertise quickly became apparent and it was clear that she was a person that would be a huge asset to our sports department. As a result, Katie soon became a full time member of staff, teaching across the whole PE programme.

During her time here, Katie's contribution to the life of the school has been invaluable. Under her leadership, the netball programme has gone from strength to strength thanks to her driving force behind weekends away including pre-season trips to Brighton and PGL netball tournaments, additional training sessions, a highly competitive fixture programme and one to one support, as well as international sports tours. This has all helped to shape a thriving and nationally recognised netball programme. Guiding several teams to the national finals over the years is a testament to Katie's expertise and evidence of her 'above and beyond' approach. She has helped to create an outstanding reputation for netball within the schools' community and should be rightly proud of her achievements. She is a truly remarkable teacher and coach and leaves behind big boots to fill.

Off the courts, Katie has offered her time and services to numerous activities and events. Snowdonia School, QCSL, her role as a Form Tutor, Team Solihull, Athletics, Dance shows and countless others have all benefited from her presence. Katie is a 'doer' - her days are filled with helping others and I know both students and staff alike will miss her greatly.

In short, we will miss you so much Katie. Your kindness and good humour has seen so many of us through darker days. We thank you for all that you have done and wish you every happiness in your new adventure on the South Coast.

*Danni Wana*



## Laura Blackburn

Laura joined Saint Martin's in September 2015 as a Biology teacher and Assistant Head and fulfilled these roles superbly well, always enthusing pupils and planning lessons with meticulous detail and professionalism. She became Deputy Head in 2016, making many innovative changes with regard to teaching and learning and assessment. Laura has a great eye for detail and is an incredibly hard worker, meaning that any job she was tasked with was always extremely well thought through and executed.

Laura also involved herself in the wider life of the school, even participating in D of E which was out of her comfort zone! She participated in several teacher performances and her role as Sandy in *Grease* will live long in the memory!

After the merger, Laura became an Assistant Head at Solihull where she continued to strive to develop her role and the tracking of assessment and data in particular. Laura has always worked closely with staff, involving them in strategic development and the school has been fortunate to benefit from her skill and expertise in this area.

Laura has moved on to Harris Academy who are truly lucky to have her; I have no doubt Laura will flourish there - she will be missed.

*Rachael Speirs*



### Alexia Coste

Miss Coste answered the call at Saint Martin's for teacher capable of teaching A Level French, GCSE Spanish and Lower School Latin and Classics. How lucky we were to find someone able to fulfil such a varied role. Little did she know her wider duties would include performing the Charleston for Strictly Come Dancing, which she did with remarkable aplomb.

Post merger, she continued to teach across departments and assumed several positions of responsibility, mentoring a teacher trainee and leading our liaison with the Alliance Française. This put her in a great position to develop her career in a more senior role and opportunities presented themselves. Of course, she proved herself in competitive fields for MFL leadership roles but they didn't feel right for her. We were pleased to have kept her for as long as we did.

She was a great support to the pupils in her care and to her colleagues on trips. Of particular note was her mentoring of a student teacher of Spanish, who, of course, passed with flying colours and is now a full-time teacher in her own right.

She leaves for new adventures in sunnier climes in her native France. We hope she remembers her time in Solihull with fondness and uses the immense set of skills she has built up. We also hope to sample some of the organic wine from her parents' vineyard! Santé!

*Au revoir et bonne chance!*

*Paul Delaney*



### Rachel Flanagan

Rachel is a very bubbly person, and a proud Mum. She joined the school in 2018 as part of the in-house cleaning team. Rachel worked on the first floor of School House with Margaret Hammond and was well liked by everyone. Rachel spoke at length about her family life and managed to balance looking after her children and her elderly Dad, with her job here along with her other job as a Lunchtime Supervisor.

With her children now a little older and more independent, Rachel decided the time was right to move on. She left in January this year to take on an admin role at a school closer to her home.

*Chris McCall*



### Emma Jones

Emma began her time at Saint Martin's in 2015, appointed as a teacher of History and Assistant to the Assistant Head Years 7-11. Emma quickly established herself as a first-class teacher and pastoral leader, commanding respect in the classroom, whilst also exuding a warmth and genuine desire for her pupils to succeed. Emma is intelligent and eloquent, planning creative and interesting lessons, ensuring that pupils developed a love for history. Outside the classroom, her ability to really listen to pupils and staff in order to help them when the need arose was very evident and many owe her a great deal in terms of them overcoming problems or developing their social skills. Emma has always been instrumental in planning events beyond the classroom that made school a special place to be and the Saint Martin's Talent Shows, Saint Martin's does Strictly and many more were in no small measure down to her enthusiasm and hard work.

When the merger occurred, Emma became Assistant Head (Staff) at Solihull and threw herself into her work in this role, establishing firm friendships on the staff and relishing her role in the newly amalgamated History department. Her colleagues in History will miss her immensely. Emma has worked hard to establish staff support groups which have been both popular and gratefully received. She is also very keen on fitness and has ignited running groups at Solihull, the highlight being the school's participation in the Birmingham 10km, last year winning the Business Challenge and this year, raising money for The Matt Gallagher Foundation.

Emma has participated in many school trips, a welcome addition to a staff team, as her energy and pastoral knowledge always added so much value. Her visits to the Battlefields, India and Japan will live long in the memory of pupils and staff alike.

Emma leaves Solihull to take on a role as Assistant Head Pastoral/DSL at King Edward's VI Girls Grammar in Handsworth. She will be missed by many, but the role is one that Emma will thrive in and we all wish her the very best for the future.

*Rachael Speirs*



**Andrew Macarthur**

Andrew Macarthur joined the school in September 2018 from the King Edward's Consortium as a mathematics graduate from Oxford University and former Head Boy of King Edward's School, Birmingham. His credentials were impeccable: hyper-intelligent, incredibly conscientious and a real passion for education and pedagogy, but what we had not anticipated was the profound impact he would have within this community. Andrew is a brilliant mathematician in his own right, an excellent classroom practitioner and he inspired pupils in his care from day one. Whether guiding students to academic success in Olympiad competitions or supporting those who found the subject challenging Andrew was a dedicated and passionate teacher who cared deeply about the pupils and their welfare. Andrew was equally happy working with small groups of pupils outside of lesson time on intervention material or with our exceptionally gifted students on degree-level mathematics. His love of the subject and his passion for creative thinking certainly rubbed off on the pupils that he taught. Andrew was undoubtedly the driving force behind the growth of the department's enrichment programme, meeting weekly with pupils to discuss and solve demanding off-curriculum problems, and so much more besides. During the dark days of lockdown Andrew gave a fascinating enrichment lecture on the "Powers of Two" and he was a constant support for Dr Foster during the Oxbridge preparation calendar. Andrew arrived early to school every day and was usually the last to leave the maths office, writing emails to parents or preparing lessons long after 4:10pm.

However, Andrew's huge contribution at Solihull lies not only in his many accomplishments within the Maths Department but his willingness to pursue challenges in other areas. Andrew fully understood the ethos of this school and he immersed himself wholeheartedly in life outside of the classroom. He was the School Sustainability Coordinator, a role which he took very seriously raising awareness of issues on campus and globally, he took hockey teams during the week and at weekends in the autumn and winter months, he went on the hockey tour to Holland where his grasp of the Dutch language proved very useful, he helped with Duke of Edinburgh expedition and training days, he did mountain leader training, he took part in Snod Schools and staff charity bike rides and he ran an U12 cricket team in the Summer Term. He even stepped in at the last moment to help with an exchange trip to Germany providing him an opportunity to practise his (practically fluent) German at an Eintracht Frankfurt football match. Auf geht's ihr adler – FORZA SGE!

Andrew will be an enormous loss to the school – to the Maths Department, the Sports Department, outdoor education, the Diversity quiz team, Friday evening staff football, the Common Room crossword corner, the list goes on and on and on. I believe he will be especially missed by the pupils and particularly those he has inspired over the years to

embrace the challenge of reasoning and problem-solving. It is these pupils that I know will remember him very fondly in future years. In recognition of his impact at Solihull School within the sphere of enriching mathematical thinking we are introducing a new prize at Prizegiving from 2024. I hope The Macarthur Prize for Mathematical Enrichment will serve as a fitting tribute of his time here.

It is colleagues like Andrew that make this place so special and he will be sorely missed by everyone. He leaves us to pursue a master's degree at the University of Edinburgh, where he was awarded the maximum scholarship, and to begin the next chapter in his life. An intellectual powerhouse and all-round great person, he leaves with our sincere thanks and very best wishes for the future.

*Mark Bishop*



## David Morgan

David arrived at Solihull in 2008 and in short, has been without question, an exceptionally talented teacher of English and Deputy Head (Academic) of our school and incredible friend to many, throughout his time with us, providing our school with superb academic wisdom and guidance year after year.

David was always incredibly consistent, thoughtful and his approach always, calm, reassuring and authentic. Big issues became little issues when engaging with David and his powers of diplomacy and de-escalation are legendary.

On David's watch, curriculum change and design were ever-present issues. As a school, we were always safe and secure in the knowledge that with David at the academic helm, we were always in incredibly healthy shape in these regards and that our pupils were therefore in receipt of the best, most appropriate content via the most appropriate specifications.

David's deployment powers were also exceptional. An annual challenge that David rose too with aplomb; his appetite to ensure that the most appropriate colleagues were delivering the curriculum that he had a significant hand in designing was a thing of beauty that legions of pupils have benefited from over the years.

Our school was inspected by ISI a number of times during David's tenure and he was always a significant reason why each and every one proved to be an outstanding success. No surprise then that David is now an incredibly well-respected Lead ISI Inspector himself!

During his incredible career since graduating from Cambridge which took him from Bancroft's School to the International School of Rome before landing in Solihull he has sprinkled his magic dust wherever he has been to the benefit of all. His pastoral care, mentoring, counselling, guidance and coaching key features of a fabulously empathetic and compassionate colleague.

An incredible intellect, a voracious reader, very gifted musician and equally at home with words and numbers – an extraordinary talent (there are few languages he can't speak and few instruments he can't play!) and an even better human being, 'kindness' being his mantra.

The attendance at his goodbye speech to us and his final 'Take-Away Tips' lecture, the atmosphere in the Upper Common Room on his leaving day and the reaction to Katherine and Rachael's 'amended' version of 'We Know Him So Well' at the staff party, provided confirmation (not that we needed it) as to just how the school felt about David.

G.K. Chesterton once said: The great man is the man who makes others feel small. The truly great man is the man who makes others feel great. A sentiment easily attributable to David. Quite simply, you just left engagements with David, feeling that bit better about life. People like David and like being with him. It is that simple.

We will long remember David's fantastic friendship, company and professionalism incredibly fondly and wish him a long and happy retirement with Rachel and Barnaby.

*Sean Morgan*



## Sangeetha Raguram

Sangeetha Raguram, one of our amazing Chemistry laboratory technicians, left Solihull School to join the Technician's team at King Edward's Edgbaston. This change has enabled Sangeetha to support her son, Haresh, at KES and has significantly reduced the amount of time Sangeetha has to spend waiting after Haresh's school drop-off or before his collection from school. Solihull's loss is most definitely KES's gain as Sangeetha is one of the best Chemistry technicians I have had the pleasure to work with. She joined Solihull School in September 2019 and continued to drive forward the high standards within the Chemistry prep room. Sangeetha's attention to detail, superb work ethic and willingness to go the extra mile to ensure both staff and pupils received the best practical experience they could was much appreciated by the Chemistry team but, thankfully, Sangeetha still keeps in touch. I am sure Sangeetha will enjoy celebrating the end of Haresh's GCSE exams with her husband, Ragu, as the adventure through Norway this summer and the Chemistry department, and school, wish her every success in her new role.

*Corinne Goodman*



**David Rice**

David Rice joined Solihull in 2018 as our Head of Choral Music, having previously studied music at Selwyn College, Cambridge, first as a Choral Scholar, then picking up organ duties in his second and third year. This was followed by a year as Organ Scholar at Dean Close School – playing and conducting at Tewkesbury Abbey – before then undertaking a one-year MA in Choral Conducting at Birmingham University.

David is a musician of great depth – organist, pianist, accompanist, singer, conductor, pop-musician, and (to his colleagues in the Music Department) music tech guru. In addition, he is a keen cyclist and walker - often to be seen on the Park Run, on the hills for D of E or Snod School, as well as on the various staff sponsored cycles – not someone to stand still for long!

Being the polymath that he is, David was not satisfied with just (very successfully) teaching music in the Senior School – he has taught both Maths and Computing to Thirds and Shells, as well as doing a day of Prep School Music teaching each week.

As Head of Choral Music, David has led music in the Chapel: playing organ; conducting choirs; directing services with music changing every week, including cathedral visits, the big Nine Lessons and Carols services and developing the link between school and St Alphege Church. During the restrictions of Covid terms, when we were restricted to year group activities, David kept choirs going by recording in the Chapel and subsequently editing all the video and audio to produce something we could all enjoy from home.

David has provided accomplished piano accompaniments for pupils in many exams and concerts and has continued the tradition of running the 'Solihull Sings!' choral outreach programme. He has been Musical Director for two musicals – 'Bugsy Malone' & and the specially commissioned '9 Teens', in addition to playing keyboard in the big February musicals, coping with ease both with the musical notes and the constant changing of instrumental sound.

David is not one to rest on his laurels: during most holidays he could be found giving organ recitals around the country, singing with the CBSO Chorus, attending music courses as a participant and developing his own conducting skills.

So, it is not entirely surprising that he is wishing to continue to grow. After six glorious years here, David leaves us to further develop his organ playing and choral conducting as a freelance musician. Next year he will be combining organ study at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire with the role of Acting Assistant Organist at Coventry Cathedral ... and probably a number of other things too! We are hugely grateful for all that David has contributed to life at Solihull and he leaves with our warmest wishes for all that the future holds.

*Tim Kermode*



**Alex Roll**

This year we said goodbye to an extraordinary individual who has left an indelible mark on our geography department and our school through 30 years of enthusiasm, commitment, devotion and professionalism.

Alex arrived in 1994 as an exceptional geographer and the school's first female Head of Department and her passion shone through whenever she was engaged with her subject. Legions of former pupils regularly comment on the happy memories of being taught geography during their time at Solihull as a result of the dedication and patience shown by Alex to all her classes over the years.

Alex's journey here began in the very aptly named teaching room, K2. To climb K2 of course, requires courage, resilience, and unwavering commitment, traits that are easily identifiable in Alex! Alex's passion for the outdoors and field trips elevated our students' understanding of the world around us and it was Alex who introduced the first foreign field trip to Iceland where she led the team through rugged terrains, across rivers, with ranging poles in hand, and into the heart of Icelandic nature. Whether Iceland, the Lake District or many stops in between, her enthusiasm for field trips was contagious, and her belief in experiential learning regularly transformed the classroom into an adventure hub, something remembered incredibly fondly by pupils young and old.

Alex was always at the forefront of new ideas and technologies and always had a keen eye for detail ensuring that the department kept up to speed with the nuances of the ever-changing educational landscape. She was always forensic and incredibly professional in her approach to preparation for lessons and the pupil experience. Alex's impeccable mark book and first class marking of pupils' books and folders being further examples of her impressive approach. Her excellent external examination results and a significant number of Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities geographers produced on her watch also speaks volumes.

Significant contributions were made beyond her subject too. Alex was an active and valued member of the Common Room, not least in ensuring that maternity and pay conditions were equitable for the ever-growing number of female staff and she played a significant contribution to the success of school netball over many years too. Alex was also an excellent Form Tutor, year after year – all pupils benefiting from her wise counsel and care.

Alex now embarks on her next expedition - having negotiated some extremely tough health challenges of late, her response to which being nothing short of remarkable - with trips planned to Majorca, Botswana and Tenerife, whilst keen to enjoy skiing and continuing her passion for running and playing the violin, too.

We wish Alex an incredibly happy retirement and many fabulous times ahead with Lawson, Lydia and Fergus!

*Martin Covill and Sean Morgan*



**Lizzie Shearing**

It is with great admiration and gratitude that we bid farewell to Lizzie Shearing, our remarkable Head of Learning Support. Lizzie joined Solihull School in January 2018, initially as a part-time Teacher of Learning Support. Her immediate impact and evident talent soon earned her a permanent role, and by 2021, Lizzie took on the responsibility of leading the Learning Support Department, where her dedication and passion have left an indelible mark on our school community.

From the beginning, Lizzie demonstrated an exceptional commitment to supporting pupils who face learning challenges. Her expertise in special educational needs and her profound understanding of specific learning difficulties, particularly in dyslexia, have made her an invaluable resource not only for pupils but also for the wider teaching staff. Lizzie is highly knowledgeable, deeply passionate about learning support, and creative in her approach.

Lizzie's incredible work behind the scenes managing access arrangements for exams is a testament to her attention to detail and her desire to make each pupil's exam experience as smooth and supported as possible. Her work often extended beyond the classroom, as she actively coordinated entrance exams, internal exams, and public assessments, meeting the needs of each cohort with unparalleled professionalism. Lizzie's energy and determination to advocate for pupils made a lasting impression on all, including the recent ISI inspection team, who were full of praise for the attention paid to tracking of each individual pupil.

Beyond her professional achievements, Lizzie has brought warmth, humour, and vitality to our community. With her infectious enthusiasm and trademark 'giggle', she has the rare gift of making those around her feel welcome and uplifted, even in challenging situations. Whether mentoring Sixth Form students, meeting with parents, or simply cheering on pupils in the Mark Hopton corridor, Lizzie's presence has been a constant source of positivity. Her dedication to her pupils, her team, and her role has been exemplified by her frequent exclamation, "I love this school!" – a sentiment that resonates with all who have worked with her.

Lizzie's love for the outdoors, her passion for horses and polocrosse, and her support for the school ski team reflect her vibrant and dynamic personality. Her dedication extends to her family, and we are grateful for her insight in reminding us of the privilege it is to be both a parent and a teacher within one's own school community.

As Lizzie embarks on her next chapter, we are confident that her drive, compassion, and expertise will continue to make a significant impact wherever she goes. Lizzie, we wish you all the best in your future endeavours. You leave behind a legacy of learning, laughter, and commitment to others. You will be missed dearly, but rest assured, your influence here will not be forgotten. We will also continue to look after Gracie and Ruby in your absence and look forward to seeing them thrive at Solihull, just as you have. With heartfelt thanks and our warmest wishes for the future.

*Katherine Robinson*



**Rammy Trainor**

Rammy started her teaching career in 1988 at Tile Hill Girls' School, after graduating from the University of Warwick with a BSc Hons in Chemistry. Rammy's teaching career encompassed a number of schools, eventually leading her to join Saint Martin's in 2013. We were then lucky enough for Rammy to join the Chemistry department at Solihull School in September 2020.

Rammy thoroughly enjoys teaching, with the pupil's progress and welfare being at the heart of everything she does. This is reflected by how much the pupils appreciate Rammy's support, and many continue to keep in touch with her long after they have left school. She is a consummate professional and a superb team member, and it has been an absolute pleasure to work alongside her during these past four years.

Rammy's skill base extends way beyond the laboratory as she played for Coventry City Ladies Club from 1989-1992. Many a pupil has been amazed by the number of her 'keepy-uppies' on the Level when a football has come her way during a break or lunchtime!

Rammy is now moving to pastures new in Nottingham with her husband, John. They are parents to four children and now have two gorgeous grandchildren, Phillipa and Sebastian. Being in Nottingham brings them all a little closer in a geographical sense! Rammy will continue to teach but certainly has an eye on some new adventures with John as retirement approaches.

Rammy's kindness, razor sharp wit, prowess with a dingbat and general loveliness will be hugely missed by the Chemistry department, as well as a school as a whole. We wish her health and happiness in her new adventures and thank her for all her support within the department and for her pupils.

*Corinne Goodman*



**Amanda Watkins**

Amanda joined the school in-house cleaning team in 2009 and stayed with us until late last year. She was responsible for cleaning the Art Department on the top floor of School House along with her cousin, Lynsey. Amanda is friendly and cheerful and was well liked by her colleagues and the Art Department staff. Being tucked away on the top of School House meant that she and Lynsey were not known to many of you. However, they were both hard working, valued members of the cleaning team. In September 2023 Amanda decided it was time for a change after 15 years of service to the school.

*Chris McCall*



**Zhe Zhou**

Amanda joined the school in-house cleaning team in 2009 Zhe is an incredibly capable and well-qualified Economist who joined Solihull School in 2017. Over her seven years with us, Zhe has taught the intricacies of economics—from supply and demand to the tantalizing concept of quantitative easing. Zhe has been more than an economics teacher; she's been a huge supporter and mentor for over 250 budding A-level economists throughout her tenure. Her classroom resonated with curiosity, and her explanations were clear and concise. Countless successful A-levels were achieved—a testament to her skill, tireless efforts, and ability to ignite minds.

As a form tutor, she has worked tirelessly to keep her tutees safe and on the right path—whether in sixth form or the lower school. Generous with her time, in all areas of her work, she has been a great asset to the students and the department alike.

In addition to her teaching, Zhe was actively involved in many aspects of the co-curricular life of the school. She regularly volunteered for Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh trips, attended Snod School, and established and ran a Mandarin Club at lunchtimes. She has also been a valued member of staff social activities, ranging from quiz teams to bike rides to Wales.

Zhe arrived here as a young, newly qualified teacher—a solitary figure in an unfamiliar landscape. But Solihull embraced her, and she embraced all that Solihull had to offer. She has become an accomplished educator and a seasoned professional—always striving for excellence in all that she does. She leaves us now to take up an Economics teaching position at Harrow School in Hong Kong. We wish her and her husband all the best in the next chapter of their lives.

*Wendy Meigh*





David Dresser

## A SAD GOODBYE

David Dresser joined the school grounds team in December 1978 and worked tirelessly in all weathers for the team until his unexpected passing in July of this year whilst on holiday in East Anglia. He had completed a truly remarkable 45 years' service, a figure that few people have matched or will do in the future. When he passed away, he was the longest serving member of staff at the school.

Whilst his general grounds maintenance role was not one of the highest profile within the team or across the school, the very high standards of appearance of the grounds and gardens at Warwick Road were in a large part down to his efforts. It would certainly be very hard to estimate the amount of hours he spent on the roller tending to the various school cricket squares.

His funeral was attended by family, friends and large number of current and former colleagues, remembering a quiet, unassuming man who had the school etched into his soul.

The garden adjacent to the new grounds accommodation has been dedicated to David's memory and a bench with a commemorative plaque installed.

*Richard Bate*



Lynsey Gozra

Lynsey joined the school in September 2019 as part of the in-house cleaning team, working with her cousin, Amanda, in the Art Department on the top floor of School House at the Warwick Road Campus.

Lynsey was well liked by those who knew her and was a friendly and chatty person. Always cheerful, Lynsey was a bright, fun lady and a devoted Wife and Mother. She would often talk about her busy family life and her extended family. Lynsey was also a very positive person and when diagnosed with cancer in 2022, faced her illness with courage and determination.

Sadly, Lynsey passed away in September 2023, following a lengthy battle.

Lynsey leaves her parents, Husband Kulkant, known as K and their two children, Regan and Kayson.

*Chris McCall*

# School Chapel



The rhythm of the school year is reflected in many of the events and moments that happen in the Chapel. This year started with a wonderful new initiative – the Third Form Welcome Service in early September, with the Chapel full of bright eyed, enthusiastic new starters and their parents. During the service our Heads of School officially welcomed pupils into their school Houses. This highly successful and enjoyable afternoon has become a regular feature of school life.

The Christmas term is always a busy one with Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas. This year we collected a significant amount of food which was sent to SIFA Fireside which we are assured made a huge difference to some of our wider community's most vulnerable people. Remembrance was marked by the whole school gathering on the Quad, and the weather held for our commemoration and act of Remembrance.

Early in December the informal nativity service took place in a Chapel filled with fairy lights and angels made by the Prep School pupils. And, as ever, the candle lit services of The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols were full of beautiful music. A treat for all who were able to attend.

During the Easter term we had our 'Pop-Up' Easter event where I1 children came over to explore the events of Easter through five interactive activities which were ably lead by some of our Lower Fifth Religious Studies pupils. The Third Form also participated in some reflective activities related to the themes of Easter Story. In early June J1 pupils came over for a 'Senses in Worship' workshop which was another engaging and interactive experience.

The summer term always comes round quickly and a significant part of it are the Upper Sixth Leaver's Service and the Moving On services for the Lower Fifth and J4 as

they prepare for transition into the next phase of their learning journey at Solihull School. These moments are always poignant and allow time for sharing memories and celebrating achievements.

The Chapel holds special memories for many of our alumni families and each year we see this reflected in special events and services. This year we have hosted two funerals and a baby blessing service. All being family events that mark significant beginnings and endings in a building packed with memories.

Each week during term time staff gather for prayers on a Tuesday morning and each term begins with an informal staff Holy Communion service. Our parents' prayer group meet each half term to pray for our school community. And over the year there have been over 150 Chapel assemblies across the Senior and Prep School!

As we approach the end of this academic year, there are some people leaving us who will be greatly missed. Mr Rice, our Head of Chapel and Choral Music is moving on to exciting new things. And, George Finney, our Organ Scholar is moving on to start his University Career as is Valya Pylypenko who has worked hard as our Chapel Assistant this year. Both have been awarded their full colours for their dedication to Chapel life.

In the autumn we will welcome our new head of Chapel and Choral Music and see new artwork and hangings on the walls of the Chapel. We are also looking forward to developing a closer relationship with St Alphege as we share worship services together.

*Reverend Rachel Hill-Brown*



# Remembrance 2023

On Friday 10 November, over 1,100 pupils, staff, governors and invited guests gathered in the school's Great Quadrangle to remember those who died in the World Wars and other conflicts.

Wreaths were laid at the War Memorial by the Head of School, Hannah Greenwood; CCF Cadet, Laavunya Arora; Flt Sgt Rob Reader, RAF (Jago 1992 - 2003) representing all past and current Old Silhillian serving officers; President of the Parents' Association, Julie Jones; President of the Old Silhillians' Association, Steve Urry; President of Saint Martin's Old Girls Association, Louise Cox; Governor, Paul Newby; the Bursar, Richard Bate and the Executive Headmaster, Charles Fillingham.

A rendition of the Last Post was played by Lower Sixth student Kieran Bown, followed by a two-minute silence, the Reveille played by Third Form pupil Izzy Olden, and a Roll of Honour, before Mr Fillingham recited the traditional tribute to The Fallen. The Act of Remembrance was live streamed to 450 Prep School pupils and staff on the Saint Martin's campus, and was followed by a Sixth Form Chapel Service led by Reverend Rachel.





# Community Relations

2023 - 2024 has again seen Solihull School look outwards to the wider community – supporting initiatives at a local, national and international level. Pupils, staff and parents have all made this possible and are, collectively, ensuring that community work continues to grow as an essential strand of school life.



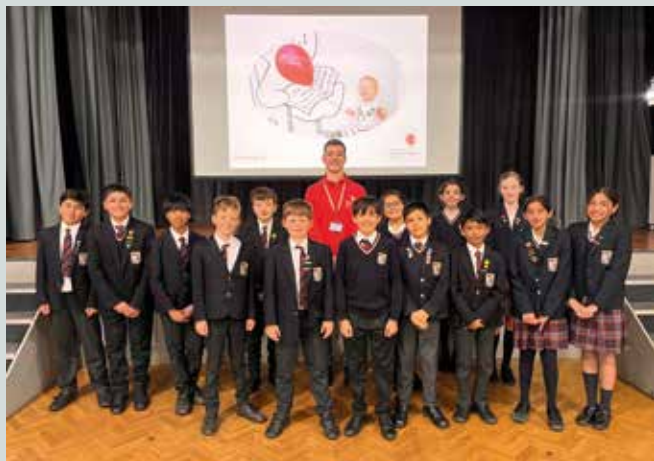
This year we have continued to develop our relationship with Marie Curie Hospice. As a neighbour to the school and a place that has provided support and comfort to those within our community, we are committed to this link in the long-term. We have been able to fundraise via a non-school uniform day as well as through the profits of our Christmas and Easter fairs. Penny Shyamalanc in the Fourth Form supports Marie Curie outside of school and really advocated for this cause. It was great to see a wide range of her friends and other Lower School pupils getting involved in the games organisation, baking and selling. Sam, Community Fundraising Lead at Marie Curie, presented in a Senior School assembly and was able to communicate to the pupils the impact that such fundraising has on their work. At Christmas, the Art Department enlisted pupils to make Christmas cards for Marie Curie patients, families and staff. This, alongside giving up time to transform a room at the hospice into ‘Santa’s Grotto’ for their Christmas party! Later in the year, our music staff concert raised more money and then, under Mrs Spragget’s lead, a small brass ensemble of pupils played a concert for one of Marie Curie’s weekly clubs. Finally, over several Wednesdays, Sixth Form student volunteers, overseen by our Deputy Head for Charity Aisha Khan, donned their daffodil hats and sashes and collected money for the Hospice at Morrisons.

Very close to home, a big focus for fundraising this year has been for The Matt Gallagher Foundation. Matt, an Old Silhillian, a parent and one of our popular rugby coaches, was given the devastating diagnosis of Motor Neurone disease. Matt and his family immediately seized on the opportunity to create something positive from this news by setting up a charitable foundation to support others with this condition. Pupils and colleagues have felt strongly about the school supporting the foundation as an ongoing cause. Alongside a non-uniform day, there has been fundraising at school sport fixtures and a group of staff ran the Great Birmingham 10km in May in aid of the charity. A large number of Sixth Form students also volunteered to help with the logistics of The Matt Gallagher Foundation Charity Ball. Matt’s ability to look outwards during his own times of difficulty make him a brilliant role model for us all.



Our link with Reynolds Cross remains as important as ever and one which our pupils whole heartedly support – particularly if they have had the chance to interact with the fantastic staff and pupils at this extraordinary school. This year saxophony – our jazz band that loves nothing better than performing in the community under the trusty lead of Mr Slade – has played at Reynolds Cross events, including the summer sports day. We have also run workshops for Reynolds Cross pupils here at school – Mrs Patel’s Lower Fifth pupils were absolutely brilliant in supporting during an ICT lesson and the Art Department ran a creative session enjoyed by absolutely everyone. Isobel Meads and Silver Sherwood in the Lower Sixth volunteered their time and talents to decorate the Reynolds Cross Memorial Tree Mural. Third Form pupils have undertaken a sponsored read to help raise funds for much-needed playground equipment. With volunteering part of the Lower Sixth Enrichment offer next year, we hope that many more of our pupils will get to experience the Reynolds Cross magic! Thanks to Miss Airdrie for coordinating these initiatives.





The Prep School continue to be spectacularly good at fundraising and had another successful Charity Week in October and Megathlon Week in May. The latter was in aid of Birmingham Children's Hospital. The former was in support of the building of a paediatric ward in Sri Lanka which is a continuation of the ongoing work in this part of the worlds by Mr and Mrs Penney. In addition to Charity Week, the whole school was on board with Team Solihull's Winter Challenge Walk in London with staff and former pupils from across both campuses participating in this tough marathon length route. To supplement this, and to draw attention to the Sri Lanka cause, we also set up a Virtual Mission which challenged Solihull School and 'friends' to participate in a 'virtual' 1,000 mile route around the perimeter of Sri Lanka, logging walking, running and cycling miles. We were delighted to have an update on the impact of this fundraising from Mr Penney in a Senior School aAssembly after his sabbatical in Sri Lanka.

These are but a few of the highlights of what has been a busy year! In addition, Jennifer Peng and Freya Cooke in the Lower Sixth have been fundraising for the British Skin Foundation and were invited to write a blog for the charity. Shell Form pupils delivered a mindfulness assembly to the infants at St Alphege School, Fourth Form pupils packed shopping bags in Morrisons to support the British Legion and our choir gave a Christmas lunchtime concert at Solihull Hospital.

So much support has come from pupils and their families in the form of donations for all kinds of causes this year – toiletry and Christmas gift donations for the Friends of St Chad's Sanctuary and Age UK Solihull; books, stationery and sports equipment for the Birmingham Diocese Malawi collection and Harvest Festival donations for SIFA Fireside. Money has also been given generously for the Save the Children Appeal, Morocco Earthquake, The Children's Society, Comic Relief, Odballs, Movember and Macmillan.

Thank you to every single pupil and member of staff who has given of their time this year and to our community partners who continue to inspire us with their work. Thank you also to the parents who are helping instil in our pupil body the importance of community and volunteering.

*Ms C Dignon*



## Wellbeing and Personal Development

We are so proud of the work we do in WPD (which for the novices out there is our name for all things RSE, PSHEE, Citizenship and Learning for Life) that it's hard to pick some of our highlights! This was noted in the recent inspection where one of the inspectors was stunned by the quality of provision in this part of school life. And we do it because we love it, we have a passion for this element of a child's education and enjoy collaborating with parents, family, and the wider community to make it relevant, important, and lastingly effective. For more information about lessons and content, please do contact Mrs Rooney at [RooneyL@solsch.org.uk](mailto:RooneyL@solsch.org.uk)

Libby Flenley from the Sex, Love and Life Project came to speak to our Sixth Form students with a practical and honest overview about post-RSE. It's important to note that 'future-readiness' includes knowing how things change as our ages change, and this was particularly important for our new Lower Sixth (now 16) and our Upper Sixth (many turning 18)! It was great for students to be able to hear about sensitive subjects but from new voices. The session was well-received.

Sixth Form Aspiring Medics again took part in essential learning to add to their portfolios by becoming Co-facilitating Trainers of certain relationships and sex education lessons to our Fourths each year. We do this every year, and it is an invaluable upskilling for young adults but supports evidence that suggests young people are more likely to listen to important safety lessons when taught by someone closer to their own age. This committed group of young adults then went on to help facilitate important lessons including consent and contraception, a great example of future leadership and passing on wisdom.

It's not just the older pupils who get involved in community wellbeing. A group of young people who had experienced the Mindfulness in Schools .b learning were able to go over to St. Alphege and lead younger pupils in some skills and breathing strategies for managing anxiety and worry.

Our Guardian Shield cohort are young adults who choose to engage in modular adult qualifications as opposed to EPQ. Pupils do a term learning about mental health first aid, then physical first aid including paediatric emergency, neurodiversity awareness and we were delighted to welcome back Jill and her team from Kissing it Better, a dementia awareness charity, to educate the students on caring for people affected by this health issue. Moving, realistic with great heart and warmth, it was wonderful to get a peak of Jill in action in person!

Spearheaded by one of our Upper Sixth students, Krish Maini, who is an ambassador for the Movember movement, another group of individuals raised money for male physical and mental health during November. Another serious amount of money was raised, running alongside lessons in WPD about self-care and checking and, as Krish moves on to a new chapter in his life, I know that he will continue to work in support of this important initiative.







**Global Empathy Week**

With a foot in both the camp of WPD and our DEI initiatives, a highlight from the whole year was our Heritage Week as part of Global Empathy Week. The idea came from Daleen Sherkwawi who wanted a ‘culture’ day but, working with key staff and across the school, we all enjoyed a wonderful week of events aimed at inclusion and empathy. From Lower School ‘passports’, refectory meals from around the world, specific lessons about heritage in many diverse departments, assemblies, *zoom* calls with India and Nepal, and our Heritage Fair itself, it was a huge success where the school came together to speak about our heritage and find common ground. It was so powerful that we are already planning next year’s event which we are hoping will be a regular feature in our school calendar. Tears were shed when moved by various stories and experiences, smiles and practicing different languages, new foods tasted, House points earned, and a few outstanding dance moves enjoyed by everyone. What was most moving was seeing how willing our community is when it comes to being together in our differences, an appreciation that our identities are inextricably linked to our wellbeing, and the mutual appetite for understanding and equity for all. As a result of this work, in conjunction with Mr Delaney and his International Dimension initiative, we will start the 2024-25 year with the exciting creation of a pupil-lead International Equity Group.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Our DEI work continues to go from strength to strength, thanks in part to the fact that we have an active Anti-discrimination Lead who is part of SLT, but mainly down to the pupils themselves, not least our Equity Group. For more information about our DEI Roadmap and plans, please do contact Mrs Rooney [RooneyL@solsch.org.uk](mailto:RooneyL@solsch.org.uk)

The Equity Group is a key force for good at Solihull and was created by pupils who feel passionately about anti-discrimination in all its forms, who believe in inclusive communities and who want to be part of a force for allyship in the school and beyond.

Their first job came about in September at the annual strategy meeting, with the first job of the year being marking Black History Month, focusing on inspirational women of colour. The Equity Group challenged every form to identify a contemporary woman who can be who they are as a direct result of the hard work from women in the past.

Our DEI work is whole school in its approach and in January, after some loving tending by Solihull’s Horticultural Professional, Mr Bailey, we were able to plan a sapling from the Anne Frank tree on the Warwick Road campus over at the Prep School to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. Our Executive Headmaster has had a hand in planting many trees this year around our school, this one is particularly historic and represents our commitment to peace for all.

And because of last year’s invitation to the FA to meet with some of the leaders of DEI at FA Education, this year, members of our Equity Group were invited to be the keynote speakers at their annual DEI Conference in March to honour International Women’s Day. The pupils spoke again about how understanding discrimination is not that complicated, our 5-steps towards anti-discrimination, our Inclusivity Charter and all the other work that they do as a team of young people. The gang were particularly humbled and moved to be given a standing ovation by all the adults in the room for their commitment to speaking up, their courage and their presenting skills!

Importantly in matters of DEI, after last-years Phase 1 of the Independent Flair Survey into Racism in School, the Equity Group reviewed the findings and gave some additional recommendations for the school to consider as we move towards the aspirational goal of being a totally inclusive school. Phase 2 starts in November 2024 where we hope to see what has improved over the year.

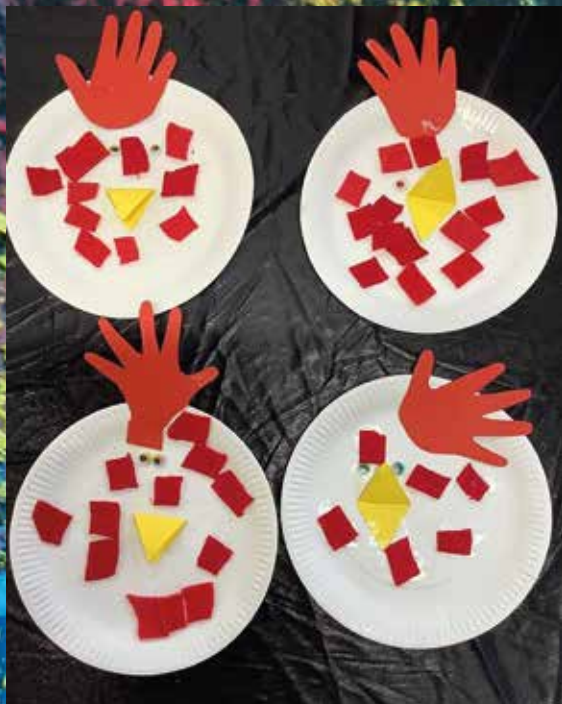
In both these worlds there is so much to talk about, but we hope that this gives you a further taster of the exciting things pupils can get involved in and enjoy.

*Mrs L Rooney*



# Prep School Art

## Alice House Art - Nursery



Reception



# Prep School Art

## Alice House Art – Infant 1



Alice House Art – Infant 2



# Prep School Art

## Junior School Art – J1



## Art – J1

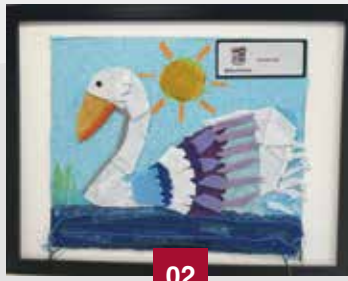
- 01 Alexander Skinner
- 02 Arniya Hoque
- 03 Aryaan Gill
- 04 Chloe Lowndes
- 05 Christian Phillips
- 06 Emily Thompson
- 07 Farris Ali
- 08 Florence Stewart
- 09 Gabriella Ibrahim
- 10 Jackson Kallu
- 11 Jasmine Ching
- 12 Jayden Saini
- 13 Martina Pinheiro de Lacerda Bautista
- 14 Matilda Jones
- 15 Navya Singla



Junior School  
Art – J2



01



02



03



04



05



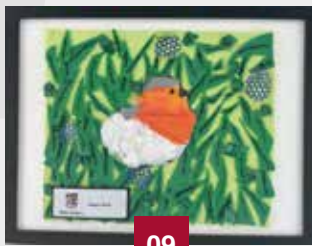
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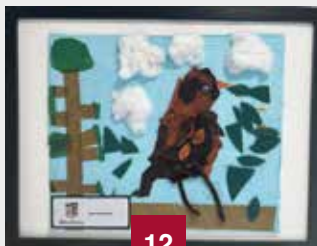
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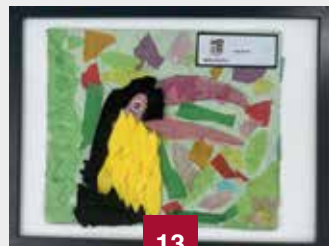
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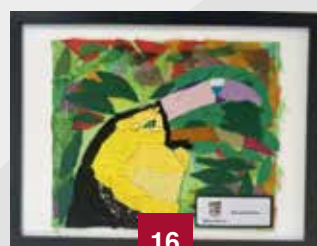
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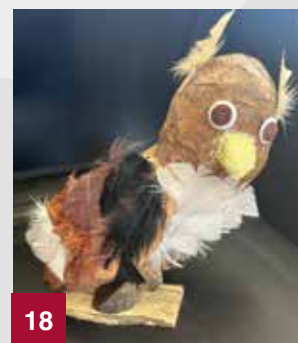
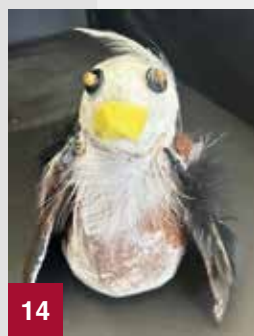
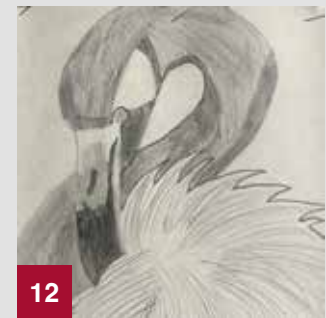
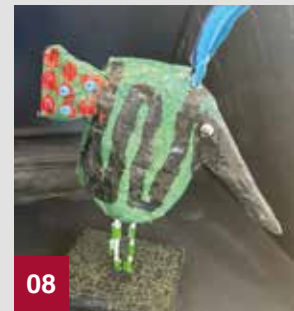
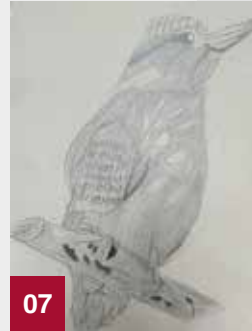
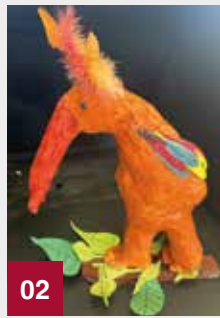
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Art – J2

- |    |                      |    |                  |
|----|----------------------|----|------------------|
| 01 | Aarav Rachakatla     | 10 | Isabella Powis   |
| 02 | Amelia Fair          | 11 | James Mackay     |
| 03 | Anastacia Thompson   | 12 | Leo Carpenter    |
| 04 | Bonnie Booth-Radford | 13 | Lily Shah        |
| 05 | Celeb Kallu          | 14 | Nimat Sooch      |
| 06 | Charlie Hacking      | 15 | Philippa Whalley |
| 07 | Cynthia Ye           | 16 | Riona Randhawa   |
| 08 | Esha Dhani           | 17 | Seth Babb        |
| 09 | Imogen Pond          | 18 | Simran Morris    |
|    |                      | 19 | Thea Morton      |
|    |                      | 20 | Virja Chudasama  |

# Prep School Art

## Junior School Art – J3







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**Art – J3**

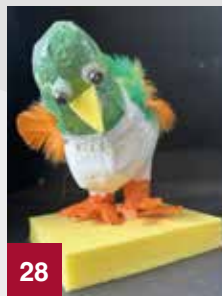
- 01 Aaran Khurana
- 02 Aaran Patel
- 03 Aarya Kalla
- 04 Anek Dhillon
- 05 Bethany Bayliss
- 06 Bobbie Ray – Barrett
- 07 Caleb Kallu
- 08 Cameron Thompson
- 09 Connor Wang
- 10 Daniel Friemagor
- 11 Diya Chumber
- 12 Evie Acton
- 13 Farah Khag
- 14 Francesca Ackroyd
- 15 George Hoey
- 16 Grace Shipley
- 17 Gurjot Ubee
- 18 Holly Connor
- 19 Inayah Akbar
- 20 Ishana Somani
- 21 Isobelle Turner
- 22 James Ferguson
- 23 Kiko Okura
- 24 Lily Inglis
- 25 Mario Makrides
- 26 Max Butler
- 27 Melissa Zhang
- 28 Mollie Davis
- 29 Tiffany Rui
- 30 Tilak Patel
- 31 Vidhat Surapaneni
- 32 William England



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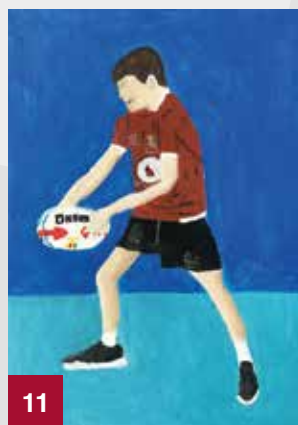
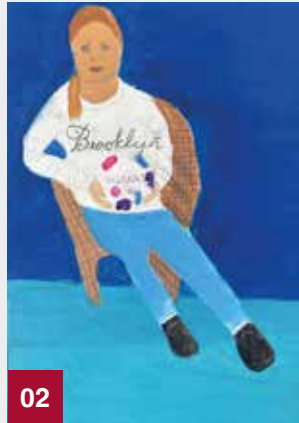
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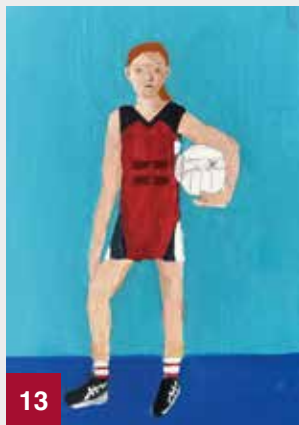


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# Prep School Art

## Junior School Art – J4





13



14



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18



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27

**Art – J4**

- 01 Alexandra Hogan
- 02 Amber Hughes
- 03 Amira Farooq
- 04 Amy Walsh
- 05 Anahita Sethi
- 06 Bella Fratila
- 07 Chloe Thompson
- 08 Edward Imison
- 09 Eliana Mills
- 10 Ella Vara
- 11 George Gallagher
- 12 George Withers
- 13 Grace Owens
- 14 Imogen Knight
- 15 India Glorney
- 16 Jack Brindley
- 17 Joban Sahota
- 18 Juju Basaran
- 19 Miaolu Jin
- 20 Ranulph Tan
- 21 Rhiyan Dhami
- 22 Rosie Fryer
- 23 Ruby Shearing
- 24 Tom Hill
- 25 William Gotts
- 26 Yukun Li
- 27 Zach Dovey

# Prep School Charity Week

In October, our annual Prep School Charity Week raised over £10,000 for the benefit of children from some of Sri Lanka's poorest families.

The annual event saw Prep pupils and staff participate in five days of fun activities including a staff dodgeball match, a book sale, a movie afternoon, a talent show, and a non-uniform day. A highlight was the tuckshop takeover where J4 pupils set up in the Warwick Road campus Refectory to sell breaktime treats to Senior School pupils.

This year's incredible total will go towards a paediatric wing off the coast of Jaffna and forms part of Solihull's wider support of two wonderful charities, Assist RR UK and IMHO USA, with whom we have implemented a wide array of projects over recent years.





# Prep School



## Gold Star Winners

Well done to all of our Junior School Gold Star Award winners, here are just a few with their badges!



## Reasons for Hope

In November, we were honoured to welcome Dr Jane Goodall DBE, UN Messenger of Peace, the world's foremost ethologist, globally renowned conservationist and author, to Solihull. Over 550 guests were privileged to hear from the global icon who spoke about her time studying animals in the wild and the work of the Jane Goodall Institute, before answering questions from the audience. The following day, Dr Goodall returned to our Bushell Hall to talk to more than 450 pupils and teachers from over 30 primary schools about her outstanding education programme for young eco minded activists - Roots & Shoots. J2 pupils from our Prep School Roots & Shoots Club, led by Mrs Penney and Mrs Harper, were delighted to meet Jane and tell her all about their eco after school activities.



## Wow Awards

Congratulations to our Alice House Wow Award winners. Here are just some of the many pupils who received certificates this academic year.



### Eco Council

Eco Council pupils have enjoyed an exciting final year in the Junior School before handing over to Roots & Shoots Club for the future of all things environmental!

We began our year considering how to make Charity Week more eco-friendly as well as a fun fundraiser. We researched which items sold in the big tuck shop could be recycled locally, and provided recycling bins for plastic and paper waste and cans. It was hugely successful and revealed how much recyclable waste we had been sending to landfill in previous years. Following that, we turned our hand to creating eco-friendly Christmas decorations using natural materials and biodegradable glitter.

In the New Year, we moved on to renewing how good the school pupils and staff are at switching off lights and Clevertouch boards. Our survey concluded that we were being much more eco aware than the previous year. We also looked into the issue of palm oil in ice cream served at lunchtime.

More recently, our Eco Council pupils took part in Lego's Red Nose Day competition called 'Build the Change.' Comic Relief supports people who are impacted by the effects of climate change, so our pupils thought about one of the big issues facing the planet - from drought and desertification, food waste, or sustainable building - and then used their imagination to design something that helps to deal with one of these issues.

Overall, it has been another fantastic year working with inspiring eco conscious pupils. Well done, Eco Council!

Mrs N Dickerson



### Planting 100 Trees

To mark the Coronation of King Charles III, the Headmaster pledged to plant 100 trees on both our Saint Martin's and Warwick Road campuses. A number of commemorative planting ceremonies have taken place including Deputy Lieutenant for the West Midlands, David Clarke's visit to our Warwick Road campus where governors, staff, guests and pupils enjoyed speeches and a brass band rendition of God Save the King. Departing J4 pupils presented Mr Penney with a beautiful Irish Oak sapling with a special plaque engraved with "Mighty oaks from little acorns grow!"



## Prep School



### J1 Stone Age Day

Bringing history to life! Stone Age Day fun with our J1 pupils. Our children never disappoint with their creative costumes!



### Public Speaking

In J1-J4 English lessons, pupils are taught public speaking skills and given the opportunity to reflect on what makes a good public speaker. This year, children were asked to prepare a talk centred around the three central tenets of Dame Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots programme, before delivering them to their classes. As is our tradition, pupils then voted for two in each form to go through to a year group final. Congratulations to all participants and to Saba Filobos who won the J4 final which was judged by Senior School teachers Mrs Spratley and Miss Waldron.



### J1 Bhangra Dancing

J1 pupils enjoyed an energetic Bhangra workshop, learning about different cultures, clothing and, of course, dance!





### Forest School

Whatever the weather, pupils have enjoyed being outdoors and taking part in a huge range of exciting activities including tree climbing, garlic bread making and even mud walking bare foot!



### J2 Inter Faith Week Workshop

As part of Inter Faith Week, J2 pupils visited the Warwick Road campus to participate in a carousel of activities including art, philosophical discussion, games and quizzes to explore the diversity of faiths represented at school and in our local community.



# Prep School



## Nursery Trip to Brueton Park

Nursery pupils spent a super morning at the Parkridge Centre in Brueton Park along with their bears! The children made fairy dens and magic potions, found story pictures to re tell Goldilocks and The Three Bears, did bark rubbings and played 'Wake up bear'!



## I2 Trip to Ryton Pools

I2 pupils enjoyed a day pond-dipping, den building and exploring! The children discovered lots of interesting underwater creatures and created cosy log structures.



## Reception Trip to All Things Wild

In June, Reception pupils enjoyed a fun packed visit to All Things Wild where they played tug of war, rode on a safari bus, handled lizards and even saw some dinosaurs!



## J1 Trip to Attwell Farm Park

Despite the very soggy weather, J1 pupils had a wonderful day at Attwell Farm Park where they climbed aboard a tractor and fed and handled lots of animals including goats, chickens, a stick insect and some very wet alpacas!

## I1 Trip to Kenilworth Castle

Towards the end of the summer term, I1 pupils had a brilliant day at Kenilworth Castle learning how to attack and defend a castle, and understanding the fascinating history of the building as an Elizabethan palace. Historians in the making!



### J2 Trip to Blists Hill

J2 pupils experienced a flavour of Victorian Britain during their trip to Blists Hill where they stepped back in time to the dawn of the modern age. They discovered what everyday life was like in the 1900s and saw how technological advances and industry changed people's lives.



### J3 Trip to Mary Arden's Farm

J3 pupils visited Mary Arden's Farm as part of their Tudors topic in History. The children had a wonderful time learning about Tudor pastimes including dancing, playing games, making butter and weaving baskets. They even got to wear Tudor inspired costumes!



### J2 Gurdwara

As part of their RS Sikhism topic, J2 pupils visited Guru Nanak Parkash in Coventry. The children enjoyed a tour of the Gurdwara, played traditional Sikh instruments and participated in a meditation exercise.



### J4 Trip to Coventry Cathedral

In February, J4 pupils had a wonderful time visiting Coventry Cathedral!



### J3 PGL Residential

On 17 May, J3 pupils set off to Boreatton Park for a weekend of adventure, teambuilding and resilience. The pupils were tested in many ways such as problem solving as a group in the puzzle park; lashing ropes around barrels and wooden beams to make rafts; and leaping from a tiny platform and trying to catch a trapeze after climbing up a tower. The comradery and support from the pupils towards each other was evident throughout the weekend and a joy to witness. A great time was had by all, with many memories to cherish and look back on in future years.





### J4 Hilltop Residential

What an adventure! On 10 May, coach loads of enthusiastic J4 pupils and staff headed to the Hilltop Outdoor Activity Centre on the beautiful north Norfolk coast. The action-packed weekend included zip wires, tree top trails, mountain biking and trips to the beach. Staff were incredibly proud of the pupils as they displayed bucket loads of teamwork, kindness, good manners and bravery. It was a memorable trip to mark the pupils' time at the Prep School and will be talked about amongst them all for years to come.



# Prep School Science Week

In March, the Prep School marked British Science Week with a variety of different activities, shows and competitions! At the start of the week, the children were invited by Miss Smith to show their curiosity in the world they live in by entering the 'Catch me being Curious' competition. There were a huge number of brilliant entries with children exploring the world around them, researching a particular topic of interest and conducting some marvellous at home investigations to try and answer a variety of questions such as 'How does orange peel affect an orange's ability to float?', 'How do birds fly?' and 'Why doesn't body lotion mix with water?'.

All pupils from Nursery to J4 enjoyed science shows delivered by the 'Explorer Dome' company who captured the children's interest in an amazing 'Science Tricks' show for KS2 and the 'Effects and Sources of Light' for KS1. J3 also took part in a space themed science afternoon which included an interactive dome experience, as well as taking part in space activities run by Sixth Form students. Throughout the week in their science lessons, pupils had fun solving science themed riddles and conducting stimulating experiments, such as making Oobleck slime in J2!

The main theme of 'Curiosity' was weaved into many different elements of the week and served as an important reminder to both pupils and staff to stay curious and ask questions to continue to learn and gain understanding of the world we live in!

*Miss R Smith*





### J4 Performing Arts

J4 pupils enthusiastically created a unique show called "The Chair," divided into four groups to complete the five-scene production. Each pupil took on a crucial role as either an actor or director within their group. They worked diligently to envision how their individual scenes would look and develop their characters, despite only knowing their specific part of the story. After recording their scenes, the pupils experienced the excitement of watching the full show for the first time in a cinema-style viewing, seeing how their work connected with the other groups' scenes. The project required significant effort and collaboration, resulting in a rewarding and memorable experience for everyone involved.

Mrs S Farnan



### J4 Production: Shrek

J4 had an incredible time preparing for their production of "Shrek Jr. The Musical," an adaptation of the animated film, Shrek. The musical follows the story of Shrek (Ruby Shearing and Anahita Sethi), a reclusive ogre, who embarks on a quest to rescue Princess Fiona (India Glorney and Alexandria Hogan) with the help of his loyal sidekick, Donkey (Sophie Bond and Grace Owens). Along the way, they encounter a host of colourful characters, including the villainous Lord Farquaad (Hugo Kelly). The journey from rehearsals to final performance was filled with fun and excitement as pupils immersed themselves in their roles, learning lines, songs, and dance routines. Countless hours of practice brought the cast together, fostering teamwork and camaraderie. The pupils enjoyed exploring their characters, wearing their vibrant costumes, and mastering the set pieces. Despite the hard work and dedication required, the process was filled with laughter, creative expression, and a shared sense of achievement. The culmination of their efforts resulted in a vibrant and entertaining set of matinee and evening performances, showcasing their talent and the joy they found in bringing the beloved story to life on stage. Well done, J4, you performed so well and created a show to remember!

Mrs S Farnan

# Roald Dahl Day

To celebrate Roald Dahl Day on 13 September, Prep School pupils were invited to come to school wearing a splash of yellow!



*"If you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like SUNBEAMS and you will always look LOVELY"*

*Roald Dahl*



# Prep School World Book Day



On Thursday 7 March, Prep School pupils celebrated a love of reading with the importance of 'reading for pleasure' promoted throughout the week. In English lessons and beyond, there was a whole raft of fun activities, events and competitions to enjoy including author visits from current parents Rachael Wong and Julie Cupitt, Junior School pupils were invited to bring in a book to share with reading buddies in Alice House and all pupils (and teachers!) were encouraged to come to school dressed as a fictional book character from their favourite story book. A special competition challenged pupils to 'map a story setting' and donations were collected for projects in Malawi. Bravo!



CELEBRATING

Thursday 7th MARCH 2024

# WORLD BOOK DAY

# Prep School

## Wraparound Care Club

Wraparound Care Club is very popular with pupils from Nursery through to J4, and special friendships are created between children who attend regularly. The purchase of a 4-in-1 pool / table tennis / table football / air hockey game has proved a big hit with the children. Pool is especially competitive and enjoyed by all. Equally competitive is the new magnetic dart board - great to play whilst waiting for a game of pool and for assisting with addition!

Outdoor activities are a favourite, with Junior pupils loving being outside in the Refectory quad and playing cricket and basketball on the playground, and children in Alice House taking advantage of their expansive playground. Grandma's footsteps and hide and seek are particular favourites of the younger children, as well as spending time being creative with chalk.

Colouring competitions are always a hit in with the European Cup competition creating some fabulous entries, no doubt inspired by the balls which were given as prizes. In addition to competitions, throughout the year, the EYFS curriculum inspires the colouring and craft ideas, and Junior pupils have a specially guided art and craft session each week to teach them new creative techniques.

*Mrs A O'Leary*



# Birthday Celebrations

As is tradition, Third Form pupils have been invited to enjoy celebratory cakes with the Headmaster in the month of their birthday. This year, the invitation was extended to teaching staff too and with the introduction of pass-the-parcel, it really has been a fun occasion!





## Academic Enrichment

### Oxbridge and Medics

This year, seven students secured places at Oxford and Cambridge. They were Frankie Deehan to read Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at Selwyn College, Cambridge; Laavunya Arora to read Natural Sciences at Newnham College, Cambridge; Valentyna Pylypenko to read Mathematics at Newnham College, Cambridge; Aishe Sidime to read Philosophy and Religion in a Foundation Year at Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge; George Finney, to read Music with an Organ Scholarship at Hertford College, Oxford; Phoebe Payne to read English at Jesus College, Oxford; Charlotte Atkins to read Law at Oriel College, Oxford. We wish them every success at Oxford and Cambridge.

#### Students have said:

*"The Oxbridge programme really opened my eyes to the world of academic challenge and the level of academic rigour and stimulation blew my mind. All that has prepared me for the style of teaching at Oxford and I know that, with all that experience under my belt, I will take full advantage of studying there. Thank you to Dr Foster and the team!"*

*"Being put in the hot seat was quite an experience for me but also being pushed and then feeling the urge to do my own academic research as I pursued my interest throughout the Oxbridge programme has added a hugely rewarding dimension to my life. I am looking forward to delving into my chosen subjects and have the confidence to hold my own and contribute in intellectual tutorial discussion. I cannot thank the Oxbridge team enough!"*

*"The dynamic and vibrant Oxbridge team operates with focus, academic rigour and genuine curiosity to transform the thinking of students at Solihull. With stimulating thought, forensic questioning and real dedication, the team, under the energetic leadership of Dr Foster, run events that promote flexibility of thought, intellectual enquiry, and active and engaged research supported by the wide range of specialist academic tutorials and extension sessions available. The expert one to one support and advice for each student is second to none, with each student provided with mentoring and ambitious challenge to extend their capacity and reach. Regular numerous Interview experiences and tutorial events are exciting, original and of the highest quality. There is no other place to be if the pinnacle of academic achievement beyond the Sixth Form is a student's goal!"*

### Medicine, Veterinary Science and Dentistry

What a year! An almost breathtaking number of interviews, with some candidates receiving four invitations each for interview and eight out of twelve candidates receiving offers to their preferred medical school with the remainder taking a gap year to enhance their experience. Congratulations to Olivia Kiffin, who secured a place to read Medicine at Manchester Medical School; Arvind Gowri Shanker, to read Medicine at Liverpool Medical School; Darcey Farr to read Veterinary Science at the Royal Veterinary College, London; Thomas McArthur to read Medicine at Birmingham Medical School; Daniel Youssef to read Medicine at Leicester Medical School; Grace Pimlott to read Medicine at Manchester Medical school; Daleen Sherkawi to read Medicine at UCL and Diya Parmer to read Dentistry at Seville Dental School, Spain.

The year has been an exceptionally busy one, with delivery of Solihull's gold standard 'Mini Mock Interviews', countless talks from professional Medics and Dentists, our quality six week interview preparation programme and stimulating thought provoked by the Medical Ethics group. Alumni have also contributed significantly to the comprehensive and stimulating support offered.

#### Students have said:

*"The early preparation with the involvement of a large number of medical disciplines really helped me to understand to what area of Medicine I wanted to aspire but the interview preparation was second to none! I felt thoroughly prepared and confident and received 4 interviews and 4 offers!"*

*"Medical ethics can be exceptionally tricky morally as well as ethically. We dissected every topic of interest thoroughly and examined it from every aspect, whilst having fun. Will I be part of a renewed National Health Service and one that continues to make a huge difference to so many people's lives! This preparation has really spearheaded by pathway to that! I could not be more excited."*

Dr S Foster



## Classical Greek goes from strength to strength!

It has now been over eight years since Classical Greek was introduced into the school by Dr Foster, and 50 or so candidates later, it has flourished and provided a pipeline for A Level Classical Greek in the school for the last six years. It is a highly academic subject and provides real stretch and challenge for students. The accelerated learning pace is exceptionally stimulating and all students, without exception, have learned a huge amount not merely in purely academic terms but also from the experience itself. A variety of students have studied and taken this qualification; many are exceptionally strong in Latin and languages but also in Mathematics and the Sciences too. The array of intellectual skills that the subject teaches complements the Sciences, Mathematics and Languages. The study of Classical Greek has contributed positively to some students' Oxbridge applications: one successful Medicine applicant who had studied Greek and Latin off timetable was the only student in a lecture theatre who could identify a specific disease, because it had its roots in Classical Greek!

Classical Greek is also superb fun – students learn the origin of words like gigantosaur, cryptic and gamete and learn a new alphabet. They will even compose sentences in Classical Greek. Students are also exposed to the poet Homer's works in the original and the Father of History, Herodotus. Homer's works are full of heroes, villains, gods and goddesses and classical concepts of courage, shame, guilt and obligations to strangers. Herodotus' works include stories of flying snakes, huge termites, the worship and decoration of crocodiles with anklets and earrings and the workings of fate and destiny. The course is truly wide ranging, covering classical concepts which are still being debated today.

A Level candidates have, in the past, enjoyed the playwrights, Sophocles and Euripides and the historians, Xenophon and Thucydides, and dissected and analysed language, which have prepared them for diverse university courses.

*This is what students of GCSE and A Level Classical Greek had to say:*

*"I never thought that I would enjoy such a huge challenge but Classical Greek GCSE really whetted my appetite and when I did A Level, I knew that I would fly. The style of teaching in Classical Greek prepared me for what was to come at university! There was nowhere to hide – I had to think, discuss, debate and analyse – and solve problems, all skills required for the future."*

*"I absolutely love Greek – it is one of the hardest GCSEs that I have done but it has been absolutely worthwhile and looking back, I am so glad that I did it. It has given me a springboard to tackle really difficult subjects and has showed me that hard work really pays off and is really fulfilling!"*

*"What, Greek? Love it! Come and join me! You will love it too!"*

*Dr S Foster*



## Academic Enrichment

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### Loynton Lectures

In December we relaunched the Academic Enrichment lunchtime talks, renaming them 'The Loynton Lectures', in honour of our School Archivist Mr John Loynton. The Loynton Lectures are designed to provide academic enrichment for all pupils: we believe that our pupils benefit enormously from engaging with more than the syllabuses of their chosen courses, and we hope that the variety of topics presented at the Loynton Lecture series will capture our pupils' imagination and inspire them in their own learning. This year's lecture series were appropriately christened with a lecture from Mr Loynton himself on 'The History of Christmas at Solihull'.

This year saw the introduction of the House Essay Competition, with a theme connected to a love of reading and Solihull School's hugely successful Shakespeare festival. Students were given a choice of essay title, with available titles varying according to their age group. The aim of the competition was to encourage pupils to further their learning in class, as well as to improve their knowledge beyond the confines of the standard curriculum. We received some very impressive responses, considering topics such as the relevance of Shakespeare to pupils in the 21st century, and the moral significance of performing good deeds. All entries received house points, and Waterstones book vouchers were awarded as prizes to winners from across the school.

*Mrs K McAlister*



### Prep School Five Things Easter Challenge

The Easter holidays will largely be remembered for the miserable weather and cold temperatures experienced in the UK during one of the wettest spring times on record! This did not deter large numbers of our Prep School pupils from deciding to keep busy and challenge themselves to make the most of the opportunities afforded by a break from school. Using the themes of 'Read, Create, Visit, Move and Help' a range of activities was suggested that our younger pupils might like to try to complete the inaugural Easter Five Things House Challenge.

Entries flooded in during the first week of the new term, and the range of stimulating, interesting things the children had completed was breath-taking! From exciting visits to amazing places, delicious meals cooked to share together, masterpieces created from Lego, paint and natural materials, fabulous books and stories read, the variety of tasks the children participated in seemed endless. To complete their 'help' challenge, many pupils did chores at home, looked after animals, helped their grandparents, supported neighbours and others in the community, donated clothes and toys to charity and reflected on how they could improve the lives of others, and feel good themselves, through their kindness and generosity.

When all the entries were counted, Shenstone emerged winners in a closely contested competition. A book voucher was also awarded in a lucky dip for each year group. Plans are already being made for the 2025 Easter Challenge - and we hope the weather will be kinder too!

*Mrs J Humphreys*

### The English Society

This year saw the reinvigoration of Solihull's English Society whereby our English Department hosted academics, writers, and other figures in the arts world to broaden the literary horizons of pupils and staff alike. From lectures on mythmaking in *The Great Gatsby* (Dr Fagg, University of Birmingham), representations of Islam in contemporary literature (Dr Catherine Rashid, independent) to parsing the beautifully disorientating world of collage and expression in the New York School (Dr Cran, University of Birmingham), all English Society talks this year have challenged pupils to think anew on texts both familiar and new, providing a fantastic foundation for the rigours of academia that await in Higher Education. So too has the English Society benefitted from the appointment of its inaugural President, Silver Sherwood, who has played a direct role in liaising with, and hosting, the speakers as well as developing plans for a school-wide creative writing competition. We look forward to hosting many more academics, writers, and cultural thinkers in the years to come and to keeping our pupils excited and engaged with all things literary.

*Dr W Carroll*





### Middle School Debating

It has been a busy and successful year for the Middle School Debating Club. There has been a core of around 15 members but some weeks we have had nearly double that.

We have listened to many different speakers talking intelligently on a wide variety of topics. There have been proper formal debates on some powerful topic areas including whether criminals should be forced to hear the impact statements of their victims and whether bullies should be held legally responsible if their actions result in the victim's death. There was great nuance and sensitivity in these debates and it was hard to decide where to stand. Other topics involved the banning of dangerous dogs, getting rid of ULEZ and deciding whether cultural artefacts should be returned to their country of origin. The Christmas balloon debate was popular again this year although after the success last year for the atheist turkey I can't quite recollect who survived this time.....perhaps it was the bauble.

We have also participated successfully in external competitions. Both ESU Public Speaking teams made it through the first round due to some excellent preparation and teamwork. The team of Aimee Binning, Giorgiana Bagshaw and Annah Miller got knocked out in round two but the other team of Dillon O'Connor, Amber Creasey and Olivia Haynes made it through to the regional final; a fine achievement.

The Rotary 'Youthspeaks' debating competition was represented by Bonnie Maugham, Maysa Hamood, Chloe Barry, Billy Clark, Raksha Kumar and Edward Harrison. They all spoke superbly, competing against much older pupils. There has also been involvement by Middle School debaters in Sixth Form university debates which should have accelerated the development of their skills.

Thank you to Miss Yates for helping run the sessions and for all those pupils who attended to make it such an enjoyable lunchtime activity.

*Mr N Linehan*

### 'Dead Poets Society'

Following the tireless work of our former Deputy Head (Academic) and literary scholar Mr David Morgan, I have had the pleasure of taking up the mantle of a weekly lunchtime English extension seminar for A Level students, where we have read a variety of challenging texts both canonical and experimental so as to foster continued curiosity with English literature and the arts. From the modernist poetry of T.S Eliot, the Gothic-Americana lyricism of Ethel Cain, to the poetry of Sylvia Plath, students have been pushed to hone their critical thinking and to apply their analytical skills to a number of forms, genres, and media. Hosted and ran much like a university-style seminar, the texts are regularly selected by the students themselves to ensure that their cultural interests remain at the seminar's heart.

*Dr W Carroll*



### Bar Mock Trial

For the first time since the pandemic, the Independent Schools Bar Mock Trial was hosted in person to bring the courtroom drama to life. In February, a team of Upper Fifth, Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth barristers, witnesses, clerks, ushers and jury members travelled to Nottingham High School to compete in the Midlands' heat.

Pupils were tasked with preparing two fictitious legal cases and arguing for either the defence or the prosecution, including opening speeches, examination-in-chief, cross examination and closing speeches in front of serving judges and barristers working in criminal law. Facing stiff competition from RGS Worcester, Sheffield High School for Girls GDST and King Henry VIII Coventry, the Solihull team argued their cases superbly and witnesses played their roles with aplomb in the face of detailed cross-examination. Winning each round on points and scoring higher than other schools present (eight schools competing overall) across the three rounds, the Solihull team were crowned the winners of the Midlands' heat and gained a place in the national final.

Finals day took place in June, at the home of English criminal justice, the Old Bailey. The spectacular surroundings did not overawe the team, winning all three of their fictitious legal cases with insightful advocacy, convincing witnesses and efficient court clerks and ushers. The team were narrowly beaten to being crowned national champions by less than 1% on scores by a superb Bradford Grammar School team. Lots of memories made at the home of Lady Justice with best wishes to our departing Upper Sixth who have so skilfully lead the team this year.

*Mr M Gledhill*

### LAMDA

LAMDA Public Speaking continues to flourish at Solihull with record numbers of pupils participating in the Bronze and Gold programmes. In August, the school achieved its best-ever results with 95% of Bronze pupils achieving a Distinction and 56% of Gold pupils achieving a Distinction with the remainder securing a Merit. Numbers have continued to grow this year and we are looking forward to celebrating similar success with the 2023/4 cohort.

LAMDA offers pupils a wonderful opportunity to develop their Public Speaking prowess. Pupils are required to research, write and execute two prepared speeches – one on a topic of the pupils' choosing and the other on a contemporary, topical issue. In addition, pupils are also required to deliver an impromptu speech as well as demonstrate their theoretical knowledge. Throughout the three speeches, the pupils must demonstrate an assured appreciation of audience, purpose and genre as well as draw upon a range of rhetorical devices to enrich the impact of their speeches.

Increasingly, in a world whereby the ability to communicate one's ideas with sophistication, flair and nuance is paramount, LAMDA offer the pupils a wonderful opportunity to shine.

*Dr S Hart*

# Academic Enrichment



## Argentinian Partner School

At the beginning of July, seven students from Colegio Yapeyú, our partner school in Argentina, made their annual visit to Solihull, and along with our colleagues and friends Patty and Jerónimo, they visited Stratford-upon-Avon and Birmingham and spent a great deal of time interacting with our whole community. Solihull students had the opportunity to practise their spoken Spanish and also to learn more about Argentina and its incredible diversity. As usual, there were plenty of opportunities for students from Yapeyú and Solihull to get to know each other and play sport together, and it was fantastic to see the interaction and bridge-building which are always such wonderful features of this very important partnership. I would very much like to thank the Solihull parents who hosted the pupils as, without their support, this experience would not be possible.

*Mr P Morgan*



## French Exchange

Having exchanged emails and video calls with their prospective partners, in March 11 pupils from Lower Fifth to Lower Sixth set out on the away leg of the French Exchange with our partner school in Bourg-en-Bresse. After a long journey via Geneva, they finally met up with their partners and went off on their adventures.

Excursions included the sights of Bourg-en-Bresse, a day in Lyon and the Olympic Museum in Lausanne. There were also group challenges and shared lessons. However, the main point of the trip was immersion in French life so the real learning took place in the evenings and weekends as pupils shared meals, activities and excursions with their host families.

We look forward to hosting in October and hope we can show them Solihull's hospitality.

*À bientôt!*

*Mr P Delaney*



## Spanish Immersion Weekend

In April, Mr Morgan, Ms Campbell and Mr Fernández Valverde spent a very enjoyable and educational weekend at the David Fricke Mountain Cottage in beautiful North Wales with eight Upper Sixth Spanish students.

Over the weekend, students had a chance to spend some quality time preparing for their A Level oral examination by practising their language skills and experiencing some authentic Spanish culture. Whilst in Snowdonia, we did some walking, spent a lovely day at the beach on Anglesey and learnt to dance a "Sevillana."

One of the highlights of the weekend was certainly the gastronomic aspect of the trip, so many thanks to Mr Fernández Valverde for the amazing Andalusian dishes he served up. A wonderful time was had by all concerned. ¡Fue un fin de semana inolvidable!

*Mr P Morgan*



## School Election

When the general election was announced in May, Sixth Form Politics students swung into action and organised a school election which also took place on Thursday 4 July. Representing each of the main parties, our candidates delivered a whole school assembly, campaigned to pupils at breaks and lunchtimes, explained their policies in a special edition of Marginal Gains, and produced some entertaining and informative campaign videos. Most impressively, they also took part in a live Question Time event where they delivered well-informed and persuasive answers to a packed room of all ages. Pupils throughout the school were enthused by their campaigns and it was great to hear pupils discussing who they were planning to vote for.

On 4 July, 521 pupils (a turnout of 68%) showed their photo ID, collected their ballot papers and cast their votes. It is fair to say that the Liberal Democrats ran an exceptionally good campaign and deserved their victory, winning 42% of the vote, but all the candidates were hugely impressive and the outcome was more eagerly anticipated than that of the real election!

The candidates were:

- Puja Srijothy for the Conservatives
- Mack Sadler for the Greens
- Ben Lee for Labour
- Max Battersby for the Liberal Democrats
- Fin McGrellis for Reform UK

*Mr G Affleck*







## Shakespeare Festival

On Saturday 16 March, more than 400 pupils and staff from across the country visited Solihull for a day of workshops, lectures and presentations from Shakespearean scholars including Professor Sir Jonathan Bate (University of Oxford/Arizona State University), Professor Rhodri Lewis (Princeton, U.S.A.), Professor Helen Hackett (UCL), Professor Tiffany Stern (Shakespeare Institute) and Dr Sophie Duncan (Magdalen College, University of Oxford).

There was also an impressive Solihull School Dance Company ballet production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

The day's schedule was followed by a festival finale which featured a production of *Titus Andronicus*, performed in the school chapel by The Players from Jesus College, Oxford's Shakespeare Project, a Shakespearean-themed concert from a City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra string quartet and finally, the actress, Dame Sián Phillips in conversation with Old Silhillian and theatre producer, Richard Digby Day.

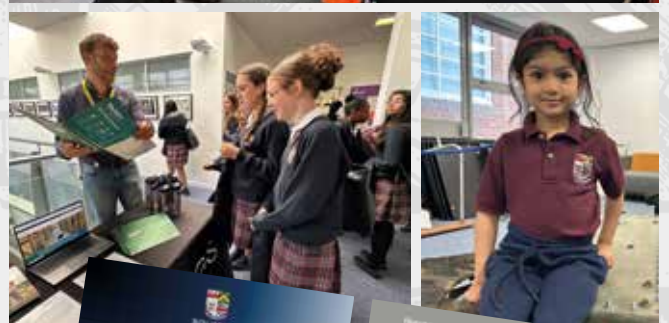
Head of English, Dr Stuart Hart, said: "...our festival offered a wonderful opportunity for students from around the country to gather together and think deeply upon the significance of the bard to Western civilisation."



## Engineering Fair

In June, we hosted our inaugural Engineering Fair, informative event for Solihull students, parents and other local schools.

An exciting line up of presenters and exhibitors inspired guests of all ages, it was wonderful to see the Bushell Hall full and the George Hill buzzing!



## A Level and GCSE Geography Field Trips

Fieldwork is an essential ingredient of geography because it provides a 'real-world' opportunity for our students to develop and extend their geographical thinking; it adds value to their classroom experiences.

In March, our Lower Sixth A Level geographers undertook a week's field trip to Slapton Ley Field Study Centre in Devon. Our programme enabled the students to undertake investigations into water flows in the River Gara's drainage basin, coastal processes and management in Start Bay, carbon storage and regeneration in the city of Plymouth. A range of primary data collection methods were taught and practiced, and students explored how to analyse data using the soils laboratory, statistical tests, and geographical information systems. The students experienced fieldwork which was very much 'hands on' and throughout the week all impressed us with their level of engagement. They proudly now hold the department record for the most primary data collected in Plymouth. At the end of the week, students worked in small groups to design a mini-investigation. Over a day they collected primary data, undertook analysis and presented their findings. Again, they impressed us with their focus and ability to apply prior classroom learning. Since returning to school, the students have applied their acquired skills and learning to begin to formulate ideas for their own individual NEA investigations. We are very much looking forward to seeing how their investigations develop over the summer.

The GCSE geography field trip to FSC Nettlecombe was an outstanding success, enhanced by some dry and sunny weather that accompanied the pupils throughout their stay. This perfect backdrop allowed them to fully engage in activities crucial for their exams, particularly focusing on human geography and physical geography enquiries. One of the main highlights was their human geography enquiries into urban regeneration in Taunton. The pupils explored various regeneration projects, analysing their impacts on the local economy, community, and environment. This hands-on investigation included both quantitative methods such as

## Debating Society

This year has been another successful one for debating. We had great success in the Easter term, reaching the bronze, silver, and gold finals in the Nottingham University Schools National competition. Sophie Burtenshaw and Zain Iqbal won their final, debating the motion, 'this house prefers a world in which people are incapable of feeling patriotic to their nation, state or region'. We also had a great year in the English-Speaking Union competition, where teams made their way through regional rounds with confidence, narrowly missed out on reaching the final. Lower down the school, pupils got their first taste of competitive debating, entering the Solihull Rotary competition, where they unfortunately lost to speech arguing about the merits of whether pineapple should be on pizza!

I am pleased to say, the future looks bright. This March, four teams, all of whom were Lower Sixth or Upper Fifth pupils, attended a weekend in Durham. Even though they were debating against other Upper Sixth teams, we had multiple pairings narrowly missing out on reaching the knockout stages. Throughout the year we continue to see good numbers of pupils in attendance at our weekly sectional co-curricular offerings, meaning that debating is something pupils of all ages and abilities can enjoy at Solihull. My thanks to the team of staff who make all this possible and the pupils who give up time and energy, not just for themselves, but the society as a whole.

*Mr N Linehan*



environmental quality surveys and qualitative data collection techniques such as field sketches, allowing them to see urban geography theories in action and understand the complexities of urban renewal.

In addition, they conducted a rivers enquiry on the River Holford. Pupils enjoyed the practical elements of collecting depth, width and velocity measurements enhancing their understanding of fluvial processes, bringing to life theoretical concepts learned in class.

Overall, the visit to FSC Nettlecombe was an enriching educational experience. The combination of hands-on activities, and expert guidance not only made learning enjoyable but also deepened the pupils appreciation for geography, leaving them well-prepared their upcoming paper 3 exam.

The geography department would like to say a special thank you to Mrs Roll who accompanied both the A Level and GCSE geographers on her final field trips after many years of championing investigative fieldwork.

*Mrs C Bednall*



## Design Technology trip to Loughborough University

On a trip to Loughborough University, our Lower Fifth and Lower Sixth students had the opportunity to explore the annual Design and Creative Arts Degree Show. The exhibition featured over 500 students' creative works, including product and industrial design, sculptures, prototypes, textiles, animation, and fashion. By witnessing these diverse projects and speaking to undergraduates, our students gained inspiration for their own coursework and learned about various courses offered at the university. This experience will undoubtedly inform their future UCAS applications. A fantastic day of creativity and discovery!

*Mr N Corbett*



### EDT Gold Engineering Enrichment Group

The Engineering Enrichment group has completed two projects this academic year.

The first team were partnered up with Dennis Eagle, a local engineering company based in Warwick who manufacture refuse collection vehicles for clients across many countries, including the UK. The team were partnered with two mentors developing a prototype design of a device capable of lifting and rotating a valve block weighing 60 kilograms. The six students worked with Dennis Eagle through a number of designs before a final product was agreed. The students then spent two days at De Montfort University manufacturing a scale model prototype of this design. The final stages of their project involved preparing and presenting their project to a team of industry experts, via *Zoom*, which was no easy task, however they pulled off a well prepared, confident, and informative presentation and were a real credit to the school, receiving high levels of praise from the assessors.

The second team worked on an independent project of their own choosing. They decided to draw carefully on the skillset of their members as well as their own personal interests and developed a motorised skateboard that was remote controlled using hand gestures to give instructions via a small camera, motor and associated electronics mounted on a skateboard that they assembled. The team used their technical and programming expertise to write complex code using the Python programming language which would recognise and interpret hand movements and translate these into instructions which would enable the skateboard to move. They also drew on the practical skillset of their team to manufacture and assemble the prototype skateboard design. It is fair to say that they had to go through very many iterations and much frustration before they finally managed to get all the various components to work correctly together. Over the past few months, the team have re-defined perseverance, working during school holidays, lunchtimes and after school, and finally got the project working just 24 hours before their final assessed presentation! It goes without saying that the industry assessors were blown away by what they saw, not only by how impressive the project was, but also the fact that they have completed such an impressive project without the support of a mentor from industry.

*Mr M Davies*



*Top of the Bench pupils are Sophia Kumar, Mariangela Zochiou, Anna Chen, Jensen Jayaprabu, Thomas Baumber, Andrew Zhou and Oliver Cooper*

### Chemistry

It has been a busy year in chemistry. In November two teams of Fourth Form to Upper Fifth chemists entered the Top of the Bench competition at the University of Birmingham. The competition tested their knowledge of chemistry over a broad range of topics, with specific questions for the different year groups. Both teams enjoyed the challenge and performed admirably, with one of the teams qualifying for the regional final. The final added an extra dimension with students tasked with completing a practical challenge in the university's teaching laboratories. The team enjoyed the day and achieved a respectable position, well done to all the students involved.

In January, it was the turn of the Upper Sixth as they took part in the Chemistry Olympiad. The students were challenged with questions going well beyond the A Level syllabus on a range of topics from the chemistry of the Women's World Cup trophy to fuel producing bacteria. The team of four performed brilliantly to achieve three gold awards (Laavunya Arora, Noah Harrison and Tik Long Tam) and one silver award (Tom O'Connor).

A team of Sixth Form chemists recently sat the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge Lower Sixth (C3L6), a similarly challenging competition but for Lower Sixth students set by Cambridge University. In one of the most challenging papers of recent years, the students achieved five silver awards (Afonso Campino, Alexander Wong, Bhuvan Botchu, Kieran Bown, Luigi Li) and three copper awards (Euan Vale, Olivia Cooper, Shreya Ramanan) - if you are wondering why copper not bronze, it is a chemistry thing!

April saw the Lower Fifth chemists take part in the National Scientific Thinking Challenge; a quiz devised by university academics to test the student's ability to apply scientific thinking to a range of unfamiliar problems on topics as diverse as snow-mobile fuel to the more topical aerated concrete. This was the first year the school has entered the competition, and students can be rightly pleased with their performance with 16% achieving a gold award (top 10% nationally), 12% silver and 18% bronze. A special mention to Claire Delaney and Michael Demianenko who both scored over 90%, a fantastic achievement.

Throughout the year the Lower Sixth students have attended Chemistry Enrichment lectures at the University of Birmingham as well as the Chemistry in Action talks at Warwick University. These gave students an insight into the world beyond A Levels at the cutting edge of modern science, from the chemistry (and benefits) of snake venom to the more comforting chemistry of making the perfect chocolate!

*Dr R Jennings*

# Academic Enrichment

## Biology

Each year, the Biology departments across eight regional schools (Nottingham High School, Leicester Grammar School, King Henry V, Bablake, Warwick, Solihull, KES and Loughborough Grammar School) run an essay competition for Lower Sixth students. Students are encouraged to produce an essay on a topic of their choice which is beyond the specification. The top three essays from Solihull this year were:

- Gurneet Jheeta: "Are we at the beginning of a Psychedelic Renaissance?"
- Scarlett Collins: "How Does Horizontal Gene Transfer Shape the Evolutionary Trajectories and Adaptive Capacities of Microbial Communities?"
- Jennifer Peng: "What does the future of eczema treatment hold?"

Jennifer's essay was selected as the best essay from Solihull for the regional competition. We are delighted that Jennifer's essay was awarded 2nd place when judged by all the Heads of Biology. She won £100 for her efforts. Well done, Jennifer!

In May, all of our Lower Fifth biologists competed in the International Biology Challenge organised by the Royal Society of Biology. The competition consists of two, 25 minute multiple choice papers. Questions are based on the school curriculum, but also requires a wider knowledge of Biology including flora and fauna and other areas of biological interest that have been the news for example. This year 45,400 students participated from 621 schools across the UK. Those performing in the top 5% of the cohort gained a gold award, top 10% gained a silver award, top 15% a bronze award. Our Lower Fifth performed very well indeed gaining 3 gold awards, 15 silver awards, 23 bronze awards, 26 highly commended and 19 commended awards. A grand total of 86 awarded certificates from a Solihull entry of 112 students. Well done to all our award holders especially Alex Tozer, Claire Delaney and Max Evans in gaining a gold award!

Our Lower Sixth students participated in the UK Intermediate Biology Olympiad. The competition consists of a one-hour multiple choice paper. Questions are set on topics which students have covered at GCSE and in their first year of A Level teaching. Additional ideas are also introduced requiring participants to use their problem-solving skills and their ability to make synoptic links across different areas of biology. This year 15,000 students participated from over 300 schools across the UK. Those performing in the top 5% of the cohort gained a gold award, top 10% gained a silver award, top 15% a bronze award. Our Lower Sixth performed very well gaining 5 Silver awards (Isobel Meads, Ammarah Akhtar, Jennifer Peng, Mursal Hottak and Lola Adesanya), 5 bronze awards (Thomas Philips, Shreya Ramanan, Olivia Copper, Zachary Michael and Shaya Moeini), 3 highly commended and 4 commended awards. Well done to all!

*Mrs D Parker*



## Physics

Physics extension sessions have continued to run twice a week for various year groups, with the aim of entering an appropriate Physics Olympiad for the corresponding year group.

This year, the Upper Sixth challenge was an hour-long paper testing students' understanding of A Level material, as well as their ability to think on their feet. Questions included estimating the total volume of the COVID virus at the peak of the pandemic, the physics of an AC rectifier, and the role of friction in mining and the stopping distance of a car.

For the Upper Sixth Olympiad, it was a step up from the Challenge, with four and a half hours of very demanding physics, including topics such as hot air balloons, the Hope probe launched by the UAE, and cables that link sea-based wind turbines to land.

For the Lower Sixth, their challenge was an hour-long written paper testing students' A Level and general physics knowledge. Questions covered topics like Newton's Law of Universal Gravitation, the physics behind tobogganing, the Lorentz Factor, the spectral intensity of stars, lightning, the mass of an Egyptian pyramid, and the intriguing concept of drinking the same water molecules as Julius Caesar!

The Upper Fifth had two challenges. The first consisted of two online quizzes with 20 multiple-choice questions on GCSE content and general physics knowledge, such as recent developments in superconductors, the physics of skydiving, and the world's largest commercial wind turbine. We were particularly pleased as nearly 20% of the year group voluntarily chose to sit this paper.

The second competition was the Intermediate Challenge – a one-hour paper based initially on GCSE content but quickly moving onto much trickier concepts, such as how to deflect an incoming asteroid to Earth.

The Lower Fifth have started their physics extension sessions and will attempt the Junior Olympiad after the half-term break. The Lower Sixth will then start preparation for the British Physics Olympiad, entrance exams, and interviews.

All in all, another fantastic year in physics with record numbers of students attending sessions and competing in the Olympiads.

*Mr Eden and Miss Saunders*



### Girls in STEM

In January, a group of Fourth Form girls attended a Girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) day at the University of Birmingham where they completed two workshops and listened to a keynote speaker talk about his work with industry looking at reducing the environmental impact of their processes. The first workshop looked at the development of a system for reducing the amount of water used in a toilet flush. The second workshop considered how electrolysis can be used in the development of a hydrogen powered car and the pupils studied a model of such a vehicle.

*Mr M Davies*



### Science and Engineering Club

The Science and Engineering Club have had a very successful year with good numbers of children attending. The pupils have made electric motors, used light gates to measure speed, investigated invisible ink, extracted DNA from strawberries, studied how coloured sparklers work, calibrated thermometers, measured the temperature of a Bunsen flame, found out how lenses can correct eyesight and studied pH using beetroot!

*Mr M Davies*

### Higher Project Qualification

For the third year running, a group of pupils in the Upper Fifth completed their Solihull Diploma. Building on skills gained in the previous year when completing their LAMDA Public Speaking Award, they began the HPQ. Pupils chose an area of interest and much like the EPQ, developed research, analytical and written skills. They finally presented their findings alongside EPQ students and were praised by those in attendance for their engagement and passion on a range of topics on the ethics of horse racing, creating a website to support younger pupils learn maths and the development of women's football.

*Mrs A Thacker*

### Classics Society

This year the Classics Society has had two trips to the University of Birmingham to attend the BMCA lectures. In October we were very lucky to hear from Lindsey Davis, the historical novelist and President of the BMCA, who discussed her incredibly successful career as a novelist, in particular her crime novels set in 1st century Rome, featuring the private eye, Marcus Didius Falco, as well as her second series of crime novels, this time featuring Falco's daughter, Flavia Albia, which give us a view of late 1st century Rome through the eyes of a woman. Lindsey discussed how she researches her books, and how she interweaves historical events, archaeology and fiction all into one.

In January, we were back at the university, this time to find out all about Ancient Zoos with Dr Jessica Lightfoot, exploring the surprising world of zoological collecting in antiquity, from the famous zoo of Ptolemy in Alexandria to the exotic animals of the Roman amphitheatre, as well as considering the impact of these ancient zoological collections and ideas on the formation of modern zoos. Both talks were incredibly informative, and we are now looking forward to our next big trip abroad to Pompeii and the Bay of Naples in October.

*Mrs J Johnson*



### Extended Project Qualification

This has been another fantastic year for EPQ at Solihull with over 120 projects on such a wide range of topics. Titles included 'Is electrolysed hydrogen a viable fuel source for the future?', 'Does living in a more developed country guarantee a greater quality of living' and 'Why has slavery still not been eradicated in the 21st century?'. There were also a range of artefacts including a piece of artwork depicting the impact of dementia, and a stop motion animation of the story of Robert Burn's poem 'To a Mouse'. The final presentations were impressive in their variety and the enthusiasm and dedication of our students was a pleasure to see.

*Mrs A Thacker*



# Music

The quantity, joy, skill, and passion of music making throughout the year has been as high as ever this year. A large number of pupils have worked individually on their instruments, putting in hours of practice between lessons and, increasingly, taken up the opportunity to perform in our regular series of Informal Concerts and Recitals. Many have also engaged with the range of ensembles that meet each week to rehearse music in preparation for the ensemble concerts and Chapel services. Even after many years of teaching, I continue to be excited by seeing the positive impact that making music together can bring to young people. If you have joined us as an audience member – thank you, and I hope you have also experienced the joy of the sounds our pupils have created. The summaries that follow will, I hope, provide an insight into some of this activity.

*Mr T Kermode*



## Recitals

In addition to the Informal Concerts and Piano Department concert, we had various recitals across the year. These include a Music Scholars' & Award Holders' recital, a lunchtime concert at St Alphege Church as part of their Wednesday Lunchtime Recital series, a lunchtime concert at the Cheltenham Pump Rooms at which Lower Fifth pupil Eva Kulikova was specially invited to sing, a charity violin recital given by Old Silhillian Maisie Stewart, and three Diploma recitals - given by two outstandingly gifted Upper Sixth students George Finney (both ATCL Piano & ARCO Organ), and Gemma Winfield (ATCL Clarinet). All performances, whatever the repertoire or age of performer, displayed real musicianship, passion, and sensitivity. In addition, we also had our annual Chamber Music concert. 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 – with representatives from most instrumental and vocal families – proved, once again, that our pupils are really enjoying this form of making music, and all rose to the challenge with confidence and musicianship. Finally, some of our wonderful Instrumental and Music staff put on a Charity Recital to a packed Jill Godsall Recital Room, all showing their skill, passion, and musicianship through varied repertoire – a huge thank you to them all for giving up their time to prepare and perform. The concert raised nearly £300 for Marie Curie Hospice. If you missed this, do look out for their concert next year. Bravo!



## Informal Concerts

Our series of 24 Informal Concerts – aimed at providing opportunities for individuals and small groups to perform in a friendly, supportive environment – were filled with a wonderful range of performances, covering a wide spectrum of levels of experience, ranging from Infant 1 to Upper Sixth – all performed with real aplomb and enjoyment. In addition, the Piano Department held a concert in the Bushell Hall on the wonderful Steinway Model D Concert Grand piano for pupils from both Prep and Senior schools, covering grade 1 to diploma levels. A huge thank you to all who had the courage to stand up and perform in any of these events (about 650 performances across the year), and I hope that those of you who did will have taken some pride and joy in what you created and gave to the audience.

## The Year in Big Band

I am thrilled to have been part of the wonderful Big Band this year. I have thoroughly enjoyed performing such delightful and vibrant music and have been enlightened by those around me. It has been nothing but joy working with others to create such lively entertainment, not to mention the wonderful Mrs Spraggett who has not only been our conductor and guide, but also the real backbone to enhancing all our musical techniques. From playing the fun syncopated rhythm of 'Smooth', to backing our amazing singers Frankie Deehan and Daniel Youssef in 'Ain't No Sunshine' and 'Sweet Caroline,' it has been an absolute pleasure to have been given the opportunity to perform these and many other songs in the St Cecilia and Summer concerts. It will be a great loss to say goodbye to the Upper Sixth students who have played so passionately and energetically over the years, however I am looking forward to continuing to perform with my fellow friends and performers to bring new and even more exhilarating songs to Solihull School.

*Evie Walsh-Cooper, Upper Fifth*

## Instrumental Competitions

This year we began a rolling pattern of Instrumental Competitions in the various families of instruments. The aim of these competitions is to provide another performance forum and goal for pupils to aim for, with categories for Beginner (Class 1), Intermediate (Class 2) and Advanced (Class 3). They are both an individual and a House event: each pupil who performs in the preliminary round earns a House point; those that progress through to the final round earn extra points, as do those who go on to win their category. Each round is adjudicated by an external professional musician, and they provide feedback to all the performers. This year we had both the String and the Woodwind Competitions, and we were thrilled with the number and quality of entries. Special congratulations go to the following for winning their categories: Woodwind – Class 1: Emma Parker (Shenstone); Class 2: Thomas Baumber (Jago) and Class 3 (and overall winner): Isabella Piggott-Kwofie (Windsor). Strings – Class 1: Max Ibrahim (Pole); Class 2: Raphael Ibrahim (Pole); Class 3: Yichen Pan (Pole); overall winner: Katy Baker (Shenstone). Overall, the largest number of House points went to Windsor for the Woodwind Competition and to Pole for the String Competition. Next year will be the turn for Pianists, Brass & Percussion players, and Singers.



## St Cecilia Concert

As ever, as people took their seats in the sold-out Bushell Hall for this year's St Cecilia concert there was clearly an air of excitement and anticipation amongst the audience and performers alike.

The concert brought together over 100 pupils playing and singing in nine different ensembles. The programme, as usual, featured a wonderful breadth of musical periods, styles and genres ranging from instrumental music by Tchaikovsky ('Sleeping Beauty Waltz'), Mussorgsky ('Great Gate of Kiev'), Herold ('Clog Dance'), and Anderson ('The Syncopated Clock') to music from film (James Bond), pop ('Sweet Caroline' & 'Feeling Good'), and jazz ('Take 5', 'Take the A Train', 'Milestones' & 'It Don't mean a Thing') as well as gentle choral music ('Seal Lullaby' & 'Blue Moon').

These were presented by Brass Ensemble, Saxophony, Sinfonia, String Orchestra, Big Band, Chamber Orchestra, Concert Band, Jazz 793 and 'The Twelve' (a cappella vocal group). Throughout the concert, 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, especially this year; huge congratulations to all concerned – pupils and staff ensemble directors.

## Brass Ensemble

This year has been incredibly successful for the Brass Ensemble. In my seven years of playing brass for the Senior School, I don't think it has ever had more members, with over 25 players making up the ensemble. This quantity does not outweigh the quality, however, as both the Summer Concert and the St Cecilia Concert showcased the talent possessed by our musicians. Most notably we played 'Hawaii 5-0', composed by Morton Stevens and 'I know him so well', from the musical Chess. 'Hawaii 5-0' was a joy to play and really complemented the ensemble brilliantly, and I may be biased but 'I know him so well' sounded exceptional when played in the summer, especially the solo by the French horns. My proudest musical memory is actually from that piece when as we finished someone in the audience simply said "wow" just before the applause. The delight in me from hearing that at the end of our solo made the whole concert for me, and to me defines what makes music so satisfying to perform. I am sad to leave Brass Ensemble at the end of the year, but I look forward to watching next year's concerts from the audience instead of from the stage. I can't wait to see how the next generation of musicians develop and how far Brass Ensemble will go.

*Alex Rooney, Upper Sixth*



## Masterclasses

As part of our ongoing partnership with EPTA UK (the European Piano Teachers Association), we were delighted to host a Piano Duet Day in March, which included a pupil recital, masterclasses and a professional duet recital performed by Murray McLachlan and Kathryn Page. Pupils came from all over the West Midlands as well as from further afield, such as Cambridge and London - it was a wonderful day, demonstrating that piano playing doesn't have to be lonely! Here are a couple of comments from participants:

*"My child had a wonderful time and learnt so much. The standard of playing was incredible and Kathryn and Murray's recital a real treat."*

*"Good for teachers to see experts in action. I loved that both Kathryn and Murray clearly like children and teaching."*

*"What a treat to hear Murray and Kathryn play as a duet (previously, I've only heard Murray in a solo concert), as well as of course for their invaluable advice during the masterclasses."*

During this year, we also held a piano masterclass for our Diploma-level pianists in April, and a French horn masterclass in February.



## Senior School Summer ‘Classical’ Concert

This year, in a new venture, we held a classical music concert in the wonderful Bradshaw Hall at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. The hall is purpose built and has acoustics specially designed to give musicians the best performance platform – and we certainly were treated to some amazing performances! We heard from Sinfonia, Chamber Orchestra, String Orchestra, Chamber Choir and a combined orchestra and choir who created an incredible finale for the concert. Four of our Sixth Form Music Scholars performed solos during the concert, each accompanied by one of the orchestral groups. In the first half, we heard Gemma Winfield perform Sammartini’s Recorder Concerto accompanied by Chamber Orchestra, a virtuosic work showcasing the recorder’s versatility. We then heard a stunning performance by Yichen Pan, who played the first movement of Saint-Saëns’ Piano Concerto No 2, accompanied by Sinfonia. The movement opens with solo piano, then develops the interplay between soloist and orchestra, and has a dramatic ending. The audience loved Yichen’s performance, rewarding her with a well-deserved standing ovation. Chamber Choir opened the second half of the concert with two beautifully sung pieces, ‘Cantique de Jean Racine’ by Fauré and Morten Lauridsen’s ‘O Nata Lux’. This was followed by Katy Baker’s heart-warming rendition of the Adagio from Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto, accompanied by Chamber Orchestra. We then moved to a combined orchestra and choir finale with three movements from Karl Jenkins’ ‘The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace’, very pertinent in these troubled times on the world stage. George Finney gave a beautiful performance of the famous cello solo in the Benedictus to close the concert on a reflective note, leaving everyone inspired by what they had heard, and in awe of these young people – whose talents and years of hard work shone through throughout the concert, and whose support for one another and genuine appreciation of each other’s performances was heart-warming to see.



*Photo credit: Freya Thornton Baker, Lower Sixth*



## GCSE Composition Concert

In the first half of the Christmas term, we held the annual GCSE and A Level 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 high marks.





## Senior School Summer 'Jazz & Light Music' Concert

Four days later, we were back 'at home' in the Bushell Hall for our second Summer Concert, this time with a jazz and light music programme. Five ensembles took to the stage, as well as some solo vocalists and a solo pianist. The ensembles performed theme tunes, musical theatre numbers and jazz band favourites, such as the 'Hawaii 5-0' theme tune, 'I know him so Well' (from the musical 'Chess'), the overture from Mozart's 'The Magic Flute', 'Misty', and 'Symphonic Gershwin'. Thanks go to all the performers in Brass Ensemble, Saxophony, Jazz 793, Big Band & Concert Band. The soloists included wonderful vocal soloists singing: 'Agony' (from 'Into the Woods') with Liam Roden and Louis Baldwin; 'Cry me a River' with Izzy Burns; 'Wishing you were somehow here again' (from 'Phantom of the Opera') with Eva Kulikova; and 'Ain't that a Kick in the Head' with Frankie Deehan. Evie Walsh-Cooper (piano) performed Christopher Norton's gloriously jazzy piece, 'New Kid'. As a special treat we also had an insight into the composition element of academic music, hearing A Level composition projects from Sirius Oldfield and Ruby Edmonds in the Upper Sixth.

Well done to everyone involved in both summer concerts, and in particular to our Upper Sixth leavers. As has become tradition, we presented each of them with a rose at the end of the concerts to express our thanks for all they have contributed over the years to music at Solihull School.



## Music Exam Successes

After many terms of recorded instrumental and vocal exams, it has been good to have continued welcoming back visiting examiners during the year. In fact, by far the majority of pupils returned to the face-to-face exams. The amount of individual practice and motivation required to prepare for these should never be underestimated and our congratulations go to all who have taken exams. This is balanced by our thanks to all the instrumental staff for their encouragement and guidance, as well as the essential role played by Mrs Baumber, our indefatigable Music School Manager, who has managed the juggling act of exam entries, timetables and recordings. More pupils than ever, ranging from I1 to Upper Sixth and from Prep Exam level exam to Diploma, have taken exams this year. As ever, a significant proportion of pupils achieved either merit or distinction level – bravo! Special congratulations must also go to the Diploma candidates for gaining success at A Level well beyond grade 8: Gemma Winfield – ATCL clarinet (distinction) and George Finney - ATCL piano.

# Music



## Concert Trips

In addition to this wonderful array of performances by our pupils, this year we began a series of trips out of school to hear live music by professional musicians. Trips included performances of Verdi's huge choral Requiem and opera 'La Traviata', Grieg's Piano Concerto, saxophonist Jess Gillam, solo choral highlights in From Baroque to Broadway, and the musical Hamilton. We were thrilled with the take-up by so many pupils for these experiences. Another set of visits will appear next year, and we encourage even more to dip their toe in the wonderful water of live music.



## Brass Chamber Music

I have found Chamber Brass to be an extremely exciting experience. Thanks to Mrs Spraggett, who set up the Elite Brass team this year, we were fortunate to perform at the Prep School for Christmas, as well as in a more recent assembly in which we played Queen's 'Bohemian Rhapsody'. In addition, we also visited the Marie Curie Hospice for a mini concert, which was found to be very well received! It was lovely to reconnect with the hospice post lockdown, and hopefully this has sparked many more performances to come. Furthermore, a fun challenge this year with Chamber Brass was when we played in a Third form information evening, where we battled the cold while performing to parents and pupils. Another exciting group I have experienced is Brass Trio. We took a different turn from our jazz piece 'That's a Plenty' from last year, with 'Poulenc's Sonata Movement I - Allegro Moderato'. The piece was full of challenging harmonies and tempo changes, but we managed to grasp these well, performing in the chamber music concert and at St Alphege Church. Chamber Brass has really expanded this year including being part of the tour to Italy in the summer - where we played an array of styles from a march to a tarantella. It has been a real joy to play alongside the rest of the brass players throughout my years at Solihull - I've made some really close friends and amazing memories! I am excited to see how they progress in further years.

*Sirius Oldfield, Upper Sixth*



## National Youth Orchestra success

As if the musical life at school were not busy enough, some pupils often have the exciting opportunity to work and perform with nationally acclaimed youth orchestras. For the third year running, Gemma Winfield played with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain performing at a number of prestigious venues, including the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall – on her 18th birthday!



### Summer Music Tour to Italy

The seven-day Italy music tour, based near Verona and Lake Garda, had been eagerly awaited, with the previously planned trip (2020) cancelled due to Covid. For those of us in the Upper Sixth, in particular, we welcomed the opportunity to perform with our respective groups – Chamber Choir, Chamber Orchestra, Saxophony and Brass quintet – for a final time.

Our travel plans included flying – no mean feat with instruments. Smaller instruments went on board as hand luggage, but larger instruments (trombones, French horns, baritone and tenor saxophones) had to go in the hold – cases duly wrapped with industrial strength bubble wrap. Finally, the large and delicate cellos had pride of place – in their own seat on the plane, next to their player!

Taking advantage of the brilliant weather, we spent mornings by the pool enjoying some splendid ‘down time’, made better with the purchase of a pink rubber ring and some water guns. This really represented what I find so special about the music community at Solihull, with pupils from all year groups, as well as teachers, being able to both perform but also socialise together.

After enjoyable mornings by the pool, we typically visited a local town in the afternoon – always eating copious amount of gelato – prior to our performance venue for that evening. It was so rewarding to perform to large crowds, with frequent calls for encores being something new to many of us, and incredibly fulfilling. The venues themselves were stunning, with the churches in particular offering fabulous acoustics to bring our sound to life. For me, the final night's venue – in the ruins of a small castle in a town on Lake Garda – really stood out and is a core memory I have taken away with me.

Prior to our tour, Mr Fillingham spoke about how he had no doubt we would represent the school well abroad. Performing four fabulous concerts to rapturous applause really saw us fulfil his wish. Thank you to Mr Kermode, Mr Rice, Mrs Roberts, Mrs Baumber and Miss Bovill for helping make these memories.

*Hannah Greenwood, Upper Sixth*





What an exciting year it's been for music at the Prep School! We've had two informal concerts nearly every half term, delightful Christmas productions, Spring and Summer Ensemble concerts, the inspirational Young Voices Concert, and countless other performances in class. It feels like there's hardly a week without a musical event! Let me share a snapshot of our "Year of Music" at the Prep School.

*Miss J Sainsbury*

The musical year starts with our first 'Informal Concerts' in October, and this year these were as fantastic as ever. While we intentionally keep them informal to ease any nerves for the children, there's nothing casual about the effort that goes into these performances. Each child who learns an instrument puts in dedicated practice throughout the week, a commendable feat considering their other commitments like homework, clubs, schoolwork, and sports fixtures. From delightful renditions of 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' to impressive high level classical performances, every piece represents a tremendous amount of hard work. So many varied instruments are heard in these concerts and it's wonderful to hear everything from piano and violin to trombone and bassoon. We even had a rock band performance this year!

The second half of the Christmas term in any music department is all about concerts, carols and nativities! The Nursery and Reception Christmas Performance of 'Little Owl and the Star' delighted a packed audience in the SMARt Centre, with Nursery singing some Christmas favourites and Reception telling us the Christmas story from the perspective of an inquisitive owl. Our 'Scratch Nativity' in the Chapel was a lovely service, including many and varied costumes and carols. Meanwhile, J1 led us in a beautiful 'Christingle' Service, where Reverend Hill-Brown helped the children to deliver a message of bringing people together and spreading hope. We heard some beautiful performances from each year group, and when the whole school joined in a rousing performance of 'Shine Jesus, Shine' we nearly lifted the roof of the Malvern Hall! As usual, J2, J3 and J4 pupils



treated us to a beautiful Christmas Carol Service in Chapel, telling the story of Christmas through songs, poems and bible readings. Additionally, the Christmas Fair gave the 'Scuffle Singers' a chance to sing some fun festive songs to a packed Malvern Hall, and a group of J1 to J4 singers performed at the Symphony Hall in Birmingham in December as part of the 'British Police Symphony Orchestra's' celebration concert.

It has become traditional for our J3 and J4 Choir to take part in the Young Voices series of concerts in January and the children really enjoyed being part of this huge event. Singing with a choir of thousands of children in a huge arena at NEC Resorts World is a fantastic way to start the term. Taking place in the same week as Young Voices was the Junior School House Singing competition. This year's theme was 'duets' and the final was won by Shenstone with a fabulous performance of 'You're the One that I Want' from Grease.

Our Spring Concert took place in the Bushell Hall in March, featuring performances from all our larger instrumental groups and choirs, along with some beautiful chamber group performances. Also during this term we were lucky enough



to invite the 'Stringcredibles' group into school to engage the children in some wonderful string playing, fun and games.

The summer term started with I1 and I2 performing their 'Julia Donaldson' celebration performance in the SMART. The stories of 'The Gruffalo', 'Stick Man' and 'A Squash and a Squeeze' were brought to life by expressive reading, fun costumes and enthusiastic singing.

The Summer Concert in June featured all of our wonderful Prep School Instrumental Ensembles: Wind Band, Brass Ensemble, String Orchestra, Guitar Ensemble, as well as smaller chamber groups: Flute Quartet, Trumpet Ensemble, Piano Trio, String Quartet. Add to this the whole of J3 and J4 singing their hearts out, and the J1 and J2 choir joining in with lots of enthusiastic actions and you have a massively fun performance, enjoyed by a packed Bushell Hall audience.



# Performing Arts



## Musical: 9 Teens

'9 Teens' (a world premiere of a musical written for our school, about our school community) - Fourth Form to Upper Sixth

Being involved in the world premiere of a musical is very special, but being involved in the world premiere of a musical based on the school you attend is even more special! I loved being apart of 9 Teens, playing the role of Paul Ibbott. We only had a few weeks to rehearse with the full cast, however all the hard work was so worth it when opening night came around. Being able to meet the individuals who the musical was based on was extremely exciting and it made me appreciate even more the history that the school has. It was an amazing experience for my first production at Solihull.

*Ben Lee, Lower Sixth*

With Performing Arts at Solihull comes many amazing opportunities, '9 Teens' was one of these being the world premiere of the musical. This piece of verbatim theatre really unlocked a new element of challenge for the cast as we had to really understand the characters and people they were based around. Many of the principals were fortunate enough to meet the wonderful people they were playing and from there we watched the characters flourish and come to life. Playing the role Niamh was a challenge for me as it entailed covering many difficult topics, but the support and guidance of the staff enabled me to bring them to life and portray them to the audience as the strong character they are. On behalf of the cast I know I can pass my gratitude on to the whole crew and staff, especially Mrs Stafford who supported us, loved us and pushed us to be better. They are the driving force as to why school musicals and plays are something I will forever hold close to my heart and miss greatly. Thank you all for your effort and support.

*Alex Townsend, Upper Fifth*

Being a part of the world premiere of '9 Teens' was a brilliant opportunity. The musical allowed me to work with a variation of year groups and I really enjoyed my first singing role, as the show gave me more confidence to sing on stage. From singing about people's, 'Favourite Sweets' to reminiscing about the millennium bug, 9 Teens has been such a fun experience and I hope this musical will continue to be performed in the future!

*Aaryana Khurana, Upper Fifth*





### Musical: Les Misérables

Having the incredible opportunity to perform in a musical must be seized, especially if that musical is 'Les Misérables!' From the moment the school community found out that it would be performed, there was an air of excitement, with people signing up for auditions the second they could! Every rehearsal brought new opportunities, with such experiences leading to the making of lifelong friends, with similar interests and passions. This led to everyone spurring each other on, meaning we could all achieve our full potential and excel in the performing arts. When rehearsing and eventually performing, there was a buzzing atmosphere, which created an air of vibrancy and enjoyment within the whole cast. With this musical being my fourth and final whole school musical, I was delighted to play the role of Javert, singing 'Stars', one of my favourite musical theatre songs of all time on stage, with the most amazing live orchestra. Throughout the months, I could develop the character and really bring it to life. I also had the privilege of working alongside the other principles, who supported one another during the experience, meaning you are always surrounded by friendly faces, further excelling the experience. Aside from the cast, the crew never fail to do a tremendous job, sorting out props backstage, ensuring all microphones are working and at the correct volume level, as well as providing the brilliant lighting, bringing the whole performance to life from the moment you enter the auditorium. The musical is by far one of the best co-curricular activities to get involved in at school. It is something that has created many fond memories which I will cherish for many years.

*Daniel Youssef, Upper Sixth*

'Les Misérables', my last (and favourite) school production! Having the joy of playing Madame Thernardier alongside my friends and fellow cast members is definitely a memory I will cherish forever. I learned so many new skills and thoroughly enjoyed every moment, from auditions, to dress rehearsals and to opening night! This being my last school production was especially meaningful to me, and I can confidently say it was my favourite! I looked forward to every rehearsal, learning new skills from Mrs Stafford and my fellow cast members, while also having fun with my friends! The school musical has always been my favourite time of year, and I hope the younger years can appreciate it just as much as I have, and I look forward to seeing whatever fabulous things the Drama Department get up to now that I have left! Massive thank you to the entire Drama Department for making my school years so special with all your hard work - I can't wait to see what you do next!

*Ruby Flynn, Upper Sixth*





### Musical: Les Misérables

'Les Misérables' is an absolutely iconic musical and I was thrilled when it was announced as this year's main musical. Performing in the role of Thénardier was such a fun and enjoyable experience. I felt so much anticipation leading up to the production as the musical is such a big event in the school calendar. However, all of the hard work in the months of rehearsals leading up to the performances paid off and the production was a resounding success! What I think is so amazing about drama at Solihull is how involved students are in all aspects of the production, not just on stage. There were students operating the lights, doing hair and makeup, playing in the orchestra and keeping the show running backstage to name a few! I have made so many fond memories from performing in this production and I will cherish them for years to come.

*Ben Lee, Lower Sixth*



This year, I had the privilege of playing Little Cosette in the Middle and Upper School musical of 'Les Misérables'. As only a Third Form pupil, and the youngest cast member, it was an incredible opportunity and I felt so lucky to contribute to the production. All of the older performers, Mrs Stafford, and the brilliant crew made me feel that I was part of the team. It was an honour to be involved in such an amazing and prestigious musical and watching all of the other talented cast members perform has really inspired me. This has been one of the greatest experiences of my time at Solihull. I will never forget it, and I can't wait to watch the next performance!

*Claudie Sadler, Third Form*





## Alice – Shell Form and Fourth Form Production

Getting to play Alice in the Fourths and Shells production of 'Alice' by Laura Wade was a wonderful experience and something I will never forget. Everyone involved was so supportive and talented and I am so proud of the incredible show we managed to produce. I have really enjoyed developing my characterisation skills and making lots of new friends! The shows put on at Solihull are always of such a high standard and being in them is always a fun and rewarding experience. Drama is my favourite subject, and we are so lucky to have such an amazing Drama Department!

*Sophia Handford, Shell Form*

Being a part of 'Alice in Wonderland' was an amazing experience, especially to be playing a role as large as the white rabbit. At first I felt worried, as I wasn't expecting the role, but that was overridden by the want to prove I was good enough for it! I really enjoyed working with my friends and also getting to know people I would never have met otherwise, while rehearsing and performing the production. I also loved watching the other actors performing their scenes as many of them were very funny to watch!

*William Mansell, Shell Form*

This year, I had the wonderful opportunity to take part in the Shells and Fourths drama production of Alice – a modern take on Alice in Wonderland. With the help and guidance of teachers and older pupils, we were able to come together as a team and pull off something quite remarkable. I especially enjoyed watching it all come together so quickly; how one rehearsal could change the whole dynamic of the production and the group. I am now looking forward to this year's Shells and Fourths play, where I will be able to improve my performance skills even more.

*Beth Spratley, Shell Form*

The opportunity to perform in the Shells and Fourths production of 'Alice' by Laura Wade was a fantastic experience! Everyone gave it their all in every rehearsal, and our hard work paid off when we performed the show in front of an audience. Being a part of this show has enabled me to make new friends and learn new skills, such as improvisation and the importance of teamwork. I gained further insight into a performance set and the costume design aspect by participating in Theatre Design Club, which made me appreciate the hard work and dedication that goes into creating a production. Overall, I think drama is fun and can be enjoyed by anyone!

*Jeevan Bal, Shell Form*



I had the opportunity to play Alice in the modernised version of Alice in Wonderland and it was a fantastic experience. Being one of the older pupils in the production, I felt like it was my duty to help the younger pupils, like my friends in the year above helped me. However they were already so talented and keen to perform, there wasn't much I could help them with! I'm not surprised the performance was amazing! We had such little time to set, rehearse and learn yet after a few weeks of hard work we performed brilliantly to our audience. Overall, Alice was an amazing production to be in, and I hope everyone who participated in it continues to do so in the upcoming theatrical productions!

*Bella Frith, Fourth Form*

On Monday 18 June, our Shell and Fourth Form pupils performed Alice. Being in Middle School, meant we had the opportunity to not only perform in shows, but also learn what it is like to work backstage in theatre. This gave us the chance to experience being a part of the show away from the stage itself. It was a mixture of excitement and nerves as we were responsible for the technical side of the show. The backstage staff- Mr Balcam, Dr Jukes and Miss Lawley were all extremely helpful, teaching us how to: turn mics on and off, operate the lighting, sound and much more! Seeing as I've been in the cast of many school shows in the past, it was a completely new and exciting experience to see a production from the perspective of a crew member. It was incredible to see how much work is devoted to making our school shows possible.

*Mahira Rehman, Lower Fifth*

It was a privilege to be allowed to work on tech for the Shells and Fourths show 'Alice' as I was able to try a new skill that was previously foreign to me. Usually, when I am involved with drama, I am on stage acting and had very little idea of how lighting and sound worked. However, now that I have tried it out for myself, I have a deeper appreciation for the work that goes behind the stage to make a production come to life. The backstage staff were helpful in giving me advice and were patient with me as I made mistakes. It was also helpful that I tried tech on a slightly smaller production with a smaller audience, as there were fewer cues. I would love to work in tech again to further enhance this new skill.

*Eleanor Neary, Lower Fifth*



## Performing Arts

### The Witches - Third Form

This year's Thirds performance was 'The Witches' by Roald Dahl. Bringing this twisted and wonderfully wicked story to life on stage was such a great experience. Emma Cole and Sienna Shipley did an amazing job with portraying the character of the Grand High Witch, whilst the rest of the cast wowed the audience with their astonishing acting and comedy talents. I had the unique privilege of turning into a chicken and laying an egg in front of parents, which was both nerve racking and hilarious. We all had loads of fun bringing 'The Witches' to the Bushell Hall and we can't wait for the Shells and Fourths production next year! Thank you to Mr Brown, Mrs Stafford and all of the brilliant staff who helped us through the show.

*Claudie Sadler, Third Form*

Being a part of the Thirds drama production, The Witches, was such an amazing experience and a huge honour. I had the privilege of playing the Grand High Witch, and I loved it so much. I find the whole buzz of being on stage so exciting, with all the costumes, lights, and our cast. I would wholeheartedly recommend Solihull School drama! Thanks to the staff who put a lot of effort and time into creating and directing every performance. We all really appreciate their help and creative talent. We would not have learnt this much and had such a great time if it weren't for you!

*Emma Cole, Third Form*

The Witches was my first production at Solihull. It was a great experience, coming in on different days for rehearsals and being able to express yourself through a wonderful piece of drama. I was the Witch 2 (one of the Grand High Witches assistants) and I was able to have fun and I was honoured to take that role. From a young age I have loved drama and acting and it makes me happy to know that I have taken part in my first Solihull School performance!

*Jasmine Fearon, Third Form*

### Theatre Design Clubs

The amazing school productions like, '9 Teens', 'Les Miserables', 'Alice' and lots more give pupils a great opportunity to take part in helping behind the scenes, working with Mr Hunton in theatre design, Dr Jukes with lighting, Mr Balcarn with set design and Miss Lawley with costuming. Although theatre design can be challenging it is always a very enjoyable experience, teaching you more about designing and the work that has to be put into designing the sets.

Last academic year, I was able to take part in Theatre Design Club and was able to help create sets and costumes for these amazing productions!

'The Addams Family' was the first production I helped with and I really enjoyed working with Mr Hunton on this set. I felt helping with painting and costumes was my favourite part as it taught me new skills I did not know before. I really enjoyed working on 'Les Misérables' and 'Alice' as I like to be creative but I am also not the most naturally artistic person so doing theatre design really helped me develop my creativity as it is a learning experience that I found very helpful. This experience gave me the chance to see how much work is put into creating these amazing shows, and I felt a feeling of accomplishment as I took part in making this set. I am a person who is not the most confident performer amongst my peers, so I found theatre design a very nice thing to be part of as I have a passion for drama, so theatre design was perfect for me.

I am taking Drama for my GCSEs and I am pleased to find out the school offers Design Drama. I am very excited to be able to help backstage with set and costume and designing new ideas for sets. I feel theatre design teaches new skills that could be helpful in the future. Theatre design is something I feel lots of people will enjoy especially those who like drama, and also those who like drama but do not like performing as it gives them an opportunity to help with sets, costumes, lighting etc.

My experience last year working with the theatre design team was really enjoyable and I would definitely recommend to those who are creative and like the creativity behind the performance!

*Annabel Hobden, Fourth Form*

### Trinity Acting Lessons

*(All pupils Third Form – Upper Sixth have the opportunity to take these)*

I've been doing the Trinity lessons with my friend Charlie for two years now and I've enjoyed every minute! Charlie and I have been lucky enough to perform a wide variety of different pieces, from the serious plot of 'The Boy in The Striped Pyjamas' to the comedy of 'Blue Remembered Hills'. My Trinity lessons have helped me hone in on different acting skills while also being really enjoyable. In our lessons we usually focus on a piece that we choose and work towards our next grade with it. We also learn different skills and become more confident with our acting as well. I feel like I'm a much more confident and experienced actor thanks to Trinity which has really helped towards the school productions and clubs too!

*William Mansell, Shell Form*

I first enrolled in the Trinity acting lessons in Third Form. I have thoroughly enjoyed every session; it has been a great learning curve. Trinity lessons have helped enhance my creativity and self-expression because we write our own devised scenes based on the scene allocated to us by our Drama teacher. We perform our prepared scenes to an examiner, for which we receive tailored feedback to improve. I especially enjoy that Trinity lessons, are one-on-one or two-on-one with a Drama teacher. We cover many playwrights like Shakespeare, Jack Thorne and Harold Brighouse. Because of Trinity lessons, I have been able to audition for and perform in my school plays such as 'Les Misérables', 'Alice' and 'Arabian Nights'. I highly recommend participating in the Trinity programme, as it is hugely enjoyable.

*Jeevan Bal, Shell Form*



The Solihull School Dance Company was delighted to pilot parts of their Romeo & Juliet production for this year's Shakespeare Festival. It was so fitting that sections of the production were highlighted at this prestigious event, and it made the company extremely excited to work on, to complete and showcase the work. The company comprised of twenty dancers, including three new additions: Penelope Plunkett and Lucy Da Silva (Fourth Form), and Anoushka Kerr (Lower Fifth). We were also delighted to have Saint Martin's Old Girl, Emma Morgan to return as Dance Captain, as much to my delight, she is conveniently studying locally at the BIMM Screen and Film School (BA Hons).

After the success of Miriam last year, it was necessary to provide the Solihull School Dance Company with a larger venue and audience, so the decision was made to showcase the piece at the Bushell Hall and combine it with the Annual Dance Showcase. The performance was presented to a full audience on Wednesday 24 April. Romeo & Juliet was a huge success, and it felt different to Miriam because it was a play that I had recreated as a dance piece, so it had a narrative, including film, singing, speech, props, physical theatre, and mime; compared to Miriam that had an episodic structure. Both pieces still comprised of that magical moment of live music and dance, with compliments to the Solihull Music School.

The 2024 Dance Showcase was enjoyed by all, showcasing the diversity of style that is embraced by the dance department. The new Third Form pupils coped amazingly well on stage, and it was a heart-breaking moment to witness the perfect partnership of Alyssa Anderson and Aubrey Plunkett (Upper Fifth) for the very last time. Aubrey Plunkett is going to the prestigious Tring Park Classical Ballet School and Alyssa Anderson has received the Solihull School Performing Arts Scholarship 24/25. Boys' dance will be a priority for the Dance Department in 24/25, with the launch of an All-Boys Dance Group, the 11+ 24/25 scholarships and hopefully two new additions to Solihull School Dance Company.

The first cohort of the Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Music

and Performing Arts Learning was successful, with four students passing with Merits and Distinctions for the teaching strands of drama and dance. This coincided nicely with the International Day of Dance 2024, where we had Sharmans Cross Primary School visit us for the day to be taught by our student teachers and perform on the Bushell Hall stage in front of their parents. They were then joined by the Third Form to watch The Solihull School Dance Company's Production of Romeo & Juliet. Embracing the community through dance has been rich this year, with the Dance Department holding workshops at St Alphege Primary School and performing for the residents at the Arden Lea Care Home, as well as our annual sharing of dance with Nepal and India.

The culture of dance continues to grow at both the Preparatory School and the Senior School, with Fourth Form pupil William Cooper delivering a speech and a performance at a preparatory assembly, and through the delivery of weekly dance lessons and half termly performances provided by myself and the dance students, both designed to build skill and inspiring children through the art form of dance. We have performed in more assemblies and have been seen as a department and cohort of dancers who are motivated and passionate about what we do! It was as ever a joy to choreograph for 9 Teens and Les Misérables, and to work once again with a fabulous cast, director, and crew.

*Mrs J Hart*



## Outdoor Education

### CCF - Army

2023/24 was another successful year for the army section. A highlight of the year was the American Cadet Exchange programme which saw four of our cadets plus cadets from Tile Cross Academy fly to Boston and participate in an American Cadet Camp.

The Contingent was led by CSM Ben Wild and James Copping, who led from the front and both were a great example to all the cadets.

In October 2023, we held the Introduction to Fieldcraft Exercise. This took place in Stanford Training Area in Norfolk, over three nights. The cadets lived in improvised shelters (basha) every night come rain or shine - mostly the former. The cadets were given Skill at Arms training and basic field craft activities culminating in a Deliberate Assault on the Enemy Position. The cadets also had the opportunity to conduct live firing on Curlew range with targets appearing at distances from 100m – 300m. It was a very enjoyable experience for all concerned.

In November, the contingent provided the Guard of Honour for the Wreath Laying party during the Remembrance Service and were inspected by Flt Sgt Robin Reader.

In February, we held an adventure training weekend in Snowdonia where we were accommodated in Capel Curig Camp. The cadets spent Saturday walking on various routes around Ogwen Cottage and in the evening were able to improve their climbing skills on the indoor wall at Indy Climbing Centre. It was a great experience for the cadets and the weather was surprisingly kind with blue sky and snow on the ground.

The last weekend was in May and again the cadets spent two nights in their improvised shelters and fed themselves using ORP. Fieldcraft skills were honed in readiness for the Summer Camp in Dartmoor.

The Summer Camp at Dartmoor was organised by the contingent and the cadets were based at Okehampton Camp. We were joined by Warwick School and King Edward's School Birmingham. The camp culminated in a 72 hour exercise which included two nights in the field and a deliberate assault on the enemy position at Bearwalls Farm Complex. On the range day cadets were again able to fire at targets appearing at 100m, 200m and 300m.

Once again all the activities offered by the army section can only happen due to the commitment of the staff involved. All the training we provide could not happen without the administration and organisation of Capt P G Dean MBE and all the other officers.

*Lt Col N W S Leonard, Contingent Commander*





### RAF Flying Day

When I was asked to fly for the RAF in January with an actual RAF pilot I was ecstatic, it would be a new experience that I could have under my belt. When the day came we went to RAF Cosford and we all had to wear overalls which would have a map and a sick bag (which thankfully no one had to use). Before we could fly we had a safety briefing on practising jumping out of the plane. We first had to learn the situation in which we would have to jump out of the tutor plane, then we had to learn how to open the canopy of the plane (all of this was done on the ground in a plane seat that would have been in the plane). When out of the hypothetical plane we were taught how to operate our parachute and how to land it safely, this included jumping out of the plane with your hands on the buckle and not opening it until you were clear of the plane. Before flying I would have never known what the canopy or the engine cowl was but going on this trip allowed me to widen my knowledge of planes and what RAF pilots do every day. When it was time to go into the sky it was better than I imagined- the roar of the starting engine before we took off; the amount of buttons needed for a simple motion made it all the more thrilling. When we were up in the air, the line joining the sky and the mountains was spectacular – it was even more exhilarating when we were able to fly the plane ourselves, having control of the plane and soaring over the cities and rivers below made the day even more memorable. It was an amazing experience that allowed us to show off our knowledge. Anyone who goes would love it as much as we did.

*Venaya Patel, Lower Fifth*



### RAF Cosford

In March this year, all RAF cadets enjoyed a field day at RAF Cosford to learn more about the different areas of the RAF. We had great fun doing various activities inside the training area, ranging from leadership and team building exercises on a rope swing to having a go in the flight simulator, sitting inside a typhoon shell! We were taught all about the dynamics of the plane and how it worked, while having a go at 'flying' it! We then toured where different sections, and learnt more about the engineering side of the RAF whilst sitting inside a real SEPCAT Jaguar jet. Overall it was a great day, and we can't wait to go back!

*Anna Tisdale, Shell Form*



# Outdoor Education



## The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award continued to flourish last year at Solihull with many pupils from the Fourth to Sixth Form involved. Pupils who signed up in September committed to meeting deadlines and taking responsibility for regularly uploading their evidence for all of the activities which they chose to do. It involved a great deal of motivation and self reliance / independence which is one of the reasons, of course, that the award is so highly regarded.

The expeditions can be very tough, but provide young people with great memories and can really be character changing. There is nothing quite like it! The expedition season, as usual, began in the autumn.

Over October half term, four Upper Sixth Gold walking expedition teams (who had already completed their training in the Lower Sixth), took part in their four-day assessment which traversed the Lake District from west to east. All groups wild camped on the first night near Conistone Old Man and although cold, the weather fortunately stayed dry. Students then trekked for three more days to complete their expeditions at the northern end of Ullswater; a truly epic journey!

Our Lower Sixth Gold candidates were less fortunate a few weeks later when they participated in a Malvern Hills training day in early December, (along with several direct Lower Sixth Silver candidates). It proved to be very cold and wet all day. These are great conditions to learn about how suitable and waterproof their kit was, however, and as Mr Dean often says... 'if it is not raining, it is not training!'

In the New Year, towards the end of January, many leaders' participated in a leader's weekend to the Yorkshire Dales. Easter is when expedition season really got going again with back-to-back Gold and then Silver ventures. The Lower Sixth undertook a practice expedition to Snowdonia. This was a challenging few days for these four Gold groups which involved camping high up the mountain and having to learn and put in to practice new skills such as safe sanitation in remote settings.



The day after returning from the Easter expedition, five groups of Lower Fifth pupils set forth on a three-day Silver practice around the Wyre Forest area or Worcestershire. It was an absolute mud bath and the pupils coped really well in difficult circumstances, sometimes arriving at camp quite late on and having to show great resilience.

The first weekend back after Easter involved another leader training weekend which focused on expedition first aid / rescue and was led by former member of Llanberis Mountain rescue team. We received some very strange looks from passers-by when seen wearing blizzard protection suits on the lawn in front of School House!

Either side of May half term, 100 of our Fourth Form pupils took part in their Bronze practice and then Assessment expeditions. They were part of one of 16 groups this time who ended up scattered far and wide across Warwickshire. Our Bronze candidates had all completed expedition training earlier in the year on Monday evenings in January and which



involved first aid training, knowledge of the country code, the safe use of stoves, tents, rucksack packing and expedition kit and a great deal of time on map and compass work for route planning.

In late June, five Silver groups completed their assessment in the Peak District alongside two more groups of Silver Award candidates who completed their practice. Summer had finally arrived by this point and on returning to school on the Monday morning we were delighted to receive three emails from various external people. These concerned one of the groups who had come to the aid of a boy who was out with his family and who had slipped and fallen, injuring himself. This is what was written:

*Members of this group (Group 7) provided us with first aid equipment and dressings. They were exceptionally kind, helpful, patient and courteous. I was particularly impressed to see one of the group offering their chocolate bar to the injured party! They stayed with us for a protracted spell, ensuring that he was ok to make his way back to camp..... On behalf of our group, I wanted to drop you a line to commend your students for their exceptional and generous kindness and care. The members of Group 7 truly are a credit to your institution.*

What an amazing report to receive. It says a great deal of how Outdoor Education can really bring out the best in people of times of adversity.

The Skill, Physical, Volunteering and Residential sections all require pupils to show commitment, resilience and determination to progress, which are all fundamental life skills of course.

Gold residential have included students attending various centres by themselves and across the UK. These are either personal development course such as kayaking the Great Glen of Scotland, conservation in the Hebrides focusing on whale and dolphins or assisting with community type ventures such as supporting young disadvantaged people on the outskirts of London on their summer residential camp. Through the other sections of the award, many pupils have learned new skills or taken up new sports helping them to develop in to well-rounded young people. For the volunteering section a great deal of good work has been done in the local community such as helping to support Park Run for example, assisting in old people's homes, in animal shelters or via working with younger pupils. The contribution made is fantastic! It is great that our DofE candidates often keep assisting even when their six, nine or twelve month time period has lapsed.

We are once again indebted to the huge number of school staff and external volunteers who guide and assess our pupils in all areas of their award. They provide the opportunity for our young people and without these kind and generous souls, it would be an absolutely impossible task. The reason why we have so many staff who wish to volunteer and assist our young people with their award; because they get to see some inspirational individuals who show huge resilience and great determination to succeed when the going gets tough. Thank you to you all!

Well done then to all our pupils who have completed their award at any of the three levels; you have challenged yourselves in so many different ways and achieved some fabulous things.

*Mr O Bate and Mr P Dean MBE*

# Outdoor Education



## Snowdonia School

Snowdonia School, a special time creating the backdrop for an epic Shell Form trip to take shape, continued with aplomb once again creating memories for all the attending pupils as highlighted by the pictures.

A trailblazing group of six staff attended, with each teaching set embarking upon a fun-filled week basing themselves at the school's David Fricke Mountain Cottage and the nearby Coetmoor Mill. Canoeing and sailing, coasteering, zip-wiring, visits to the National Slate Museum and castles, rounders on the beach plus a walk up to the summit of Snowdon, were all bathed in perfect weather (mostly)!

Seven teaching groups, seven weeks and seven weeks-worth of memories created. Many thanks to all my colleagues who helped run, staff and participate too!

*Mr M Covill*







# Outdoor Education

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## Terriers

Terriers has had another very busy and productive year! We have had 14 Terriers groups this year with a winter and summer rotation of activities, with pupils switching around February half term.

Autumn activities included first aid, cycle maintenance (where pupils learn to change a wheel and fix a puncture), knots, the outdoors, emergencies, water safety, communication, mountain craft and Safe Cycling. Navigation is a two-week block where immediately afterwards they put in to practice with Mission which is a mini DofE route that Terriers complete in the countryside around Barston and Eastcote. This year, Terriers were also involved in a climbing session at a nearby centre which was very well received by all the pupils.

Terriers badges and certificates are awarded mid-way through the year and then after this followed the summer rotation. This involves camp cooking, building shelters, making campfires, targets (which includes archery, darts and shooting), orienteering around the campus, tents, command tasks, circus skills, a low ropes course, team challenge, 'Solihull 999 rescue!' and a new activity called 'Terriers Repair Shop'. This involves pupils repairing and making items and many learn to sew for the first time.

None of these activities would be possible without a fantastic staff team and also a dedicated group of Lower Sixth Form instructors. These Lower Sixth students plan lessons which they then teach, manage the Terriers, act as role models for the younger pupils and also have fun! They benefit a great deal themselves and often choose Terriers for their Enrichment Option as they want 'to give back'. A really big thank you goes to all the staff and instructors.

Pupils have tried new things, pushed themselves out of their comfort zone and discovered new possibilities and capabilities! They have also had a 'big load of fun' too! Terriers is the start of the great 'outdoor education' journey for our pupils at Solihull and prepares them for other outdoor activities in the future such as Snowdonia School in Shell Form, CCF and / or DofE in Fourth Form, climbing and ultimately the big school overseas expedition for the Upper Fifth and above which this year, was to Morocco.

I look forward to seeing this year's Terriers on expedition and climbing a mountain in a far flung corner of the world in a few years time!

A huge well done to all involved.

*Mr O Bate*



# Trips

## Berlin



Once we had arrived safely in Berlin and eaten dinner, we took in the first of many Christmas markets before heading to the Brandenburg Gate to see it illuminated at night.

Three pupils started the following day with a phone call from Mr Morgan to tell them they had received School colours. Then it was off to Checkpoint Charlie and its' remote fascinating museum followed by a visit to Topography of Terror to learn about Nazi rule. We had a retro moment checking out the famous Trabi cars and then headed to Potsdamer Platz for a little Christmas market and dinner. The evening's entertainment was an improv comedy show at the Comedy Cafe. Wunderbar!

On Sunday we enjoyed an impressive visit to the Museum of Jewish Life where guides from the Jewish community helped us understand the Holocaust in the wider history of anti-semitism. Understanding the architectural symbolism of the building really added to the visit. In the afternoon we had a walk along Eastside gallery to see some of the famous street art murals and continued our walk across the river under the setting sun. It was back to the hotel for movie night for Mr Delaney's favourite film - Goodbye Lenin - which depicts the era of the Berlin Wall coming down.

Our final day was spent at the Life in the DDR museum. It was really interactive - including virtual fashion shows of 80s fashion! We then had an hour-long interview with a guide who had lived in the DDR and witnessed reunification. After a few more Christmas markets we went to the Cold War museum where some of the students tried VR and flight simulation activities.

A fantastic trip and a big thanks to Mr Delaney for organising and his knowledge of the city.

*Ms C Dignon*



# Trips

## Château de la Baudonnière

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We arrived in France after a fairly smooth ferry crossing and were introduced to the château. The château, which was built in 1850, is very pretty and surrounded by a woodland, lake, orchard, farm and stables.

To immerse ourselves in the experience, we were encouraged to speak and practise our French from the moment we arrived!

On our first full day, we split up into our activity groups and started the enjoyment of the week ahead.

The activities included: archery, a parkour course, climbing, fencing, baking, aero ball, and French lessons. All the activities were enjoyable! But the best part was the assault course, where we all got really muddy. Even the teachers got involved!

On following day, we went to a nearby town called Villedieu. This was fun because we were set different activities throughout the morning and then had some free time to explore and buy some local food!

After a quick picnic stop, we continued to a pretty island called Mont-Saint-Michel. The sun was shining as we walked around the market and all the different shops. From caps to postcards, you name it, there was everything there! It was easily the best day!

On the last day we went to the Bayeux Tapestry. This was cool as we were able to listen to a little phone, whilst walking around and observing the amazing art pieces.

The food at the château was superb, every night we would enjoy something different. One night we even got to try the local delicacy of escargots (snails)!

We visited a local creperie, where we sampled both savoury and sweet pancakes for dinner - from ham and cheese to rich chocolate sauce! The food that night was amazing and if I were to go back to France, I would definitely go back there!

Each morning, we also woke up to croissants and Coco Pops with orange juice and hot chocolate!

Whilst we were doing all these fun activities and trying all the local foods, we were also learning French in ways you couldn't imagine. This trip has boosted my confidence and knowledge of French, whilst increasing my understanding of culture and heritage.

Bon voyage!

*Sebastian Hemmings, Shell Form*





## Washington

During Easter 2024 a group of History and Politics students visited Washington and New York. The trip got off to a rocky start with a two hour delay at immigration resulting in the restaurant being closed when we arrived! But things soon improved: the sun shone and we had an amazing day in Washington, starting with the White House, breakfast at the Hard Rock Café, a visit to the incredible Museum of African American History, followed by an afternoon visiting the national monuments. Our visit coincided with the Cherry Blossom Festival making the tidal basin even more scenic (and packed!). We visited the Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Martin Luther King memorials as well as those to the Korean and Vietnam War, before finishing our day at Ben's Chilli Bowl, a landmark Washington restaurant.

The next day we were fortunate to have a tour of Congress by some Congressional aides who gave us the inside story of current events in US politics and even took us onto the floor of the House! Then we drove to Philadelphia where we visited Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, the birthplace of the American nation. Finally, we went to New York, where we had a fascinating tour by a local guide, and visited the Empire State Building, Trump Tower, the Statue of Liberty and the 9/11 monument. We finished the trip with an eagerly anticipated afternoon's shopping on 5th Avenue!

*Mr G Affleck*



# Trips

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## Skiing in Kitzbühel, Austria



A fantastic week skiing in the Austrian Alps! Our second visit to Kitzbühel, Austria, at the start of the Easter break didn't disappoint. Our journey this year was straightforward. We once again had an excellent coach company, a ferry crossing that was on time paired with a calm and smooth sea, and minimal traffic throughout France, Germany and Austria which meant we made it to the hotel well ahead of schedule.

The cosy and welcoming Hotel Wiesenegg was a great base, nestled just 3km from the picturesque village of Jochberg and a mere 6.5km from the renowned slopes of Kitzbühel, this provided the perfect location for our snowy adventures.

With the hotel's close proximity to the skiing action, we could quickly access the slopes and make the most of our time on the snow. Austria, renowned for its exceptional skiing opportunities, proved to be an excellent destination this year.

Beyond the fantastic skiing, our evenings were filled with entertaining activities. We went ten pin bowling, allowing everyone to unwind and enjoy some friendly competition. One of our evenings was dedicated to a pizza night in a local restaurant in Kitzbühel, where we savoured delicious flavours and reflected on the day's adventures. As a special treat, we had the opportunity to attend a local ice hockey match in the charming town of Zell am See and not forgetting Ms Rutherford's famous quiz night.

This trip proved that late season skiing is a great time to go away and enjoy the slopes. Snow conditions were fantastic, the weather was clear and made for easy skiing for all. It was lovely to see so many beginner skiers making rapid progress throughout the week, and successfully making it down a number of blue runs by the middle of the week.

A big thanks to Mr Brough, Mr Macarthur, and Ms Rutherford for all their help and support, without them, such a trip wouldn't have taken place. Planning for next year's trip is already well underway.

*Mr G James*



## CCF to Boston

In June four lucky cadets accompanied Mrs Parker and our friends from Tile Cross Academy to conduct a cadet leadership course in Massachusetts, USA. Arriving at Boston Airport, our first order of business was to check into the youth hostel where we would be spending the next three nights. After a classic American breakfast, we embarked on our journey via the subway system, bound for Fanuel Hall. This is one of the oldest buildings in Boston and home to the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, one of the oldest military organisations in North America. We were given an exclusive tour of their museum before taking a bus to another historic site, the Napoleonic era Fort Independence. After lunch in the surrounding seaside park we returned by bus to Quincey Market where we were able to explore the wide variety of street food on offer for dinner. The next day we marched through Charlestown in the annual Bunker Hill Day Parade. The Battle of Bunker Hill took place on June 17, 1775, during the American Revolutionary War and, although a British Victory, was seen as a turning point in the conflict. The parade was amazing and a bit like the Lord Mayor's Show. A quarter of a million people lined the streets, and we had a great reception from all the spectators who were very surprised and pleased to see cadets from the UK, although we had to endure a fair amount of jokes about losing the war! After the parade we were invited back for lunch by the local branch of the American Legion. Our next stop was the USS Constitution, the world's oldest warship still afloat, where we admired its history. After returning to the youth hostel to get changed out of our uniform, we set off to visit MIT and Harvard Universities. That night, we retired early in preparation for the five-day Junior Cadet Leadership Challenge at Fort Devens. This began with an hour-long journey in an iconic yellow American school bus! Once we arrived we joined all the other American schools in sitting under trees to try and keep cool whilst the in processing procedures took place. In due course we all drew bedding and equipment and were split up into our different platoons and companies and shown how to make our beds and begin to make new friends. There are 300 cadets on camp from 19 schools. We were split into three companies and rotated through three days of activities including watersports, air rifle shooting, a battlefield tour of the ignition point of the American War of Independence, abseiling and command tasks.

The whole experience of being on camp with the Americans was amazing, we had to learn all their drill and the way they sing and chant on parade. All the Americans loved us being on camp and made us very welcome. After saying goodbye to all our new friends our final stop at Fort Devens was the PX to buy souvenirs and gifts, before a short stop at East Boston High School to pass some time in advance of check in at the airport. As we prepared to depart for the UK, we paused for a moment to contemplate our journey. It was a truly incredible experience to immerse ourselves in a new city and confront new challenges during our time at the camp.

*Mr N Leonard*



## Trips

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### Colorado Horse Ranch

In July, 13 pupils from Shell Form to Lower Fifth, accompanied by Ms Campbell and Mr Corbett, set off to Denver International Airport and then on to the tranquil idyll that is Drowsy Water Ranch, Colorado. There, they put on their cowboy/cowgirl boots and riding hats, saddled up for the week and explored the stunning Rocky Mountains on horseback. Some were already experienced riders; others had never sat on a horse before. All experienced the thrill of loping through mountain trails and bonding with their four-legged partner, heading out on day long adventures, eating packed lunches at the top of a mountain before heading back to the ranch to cool off in the pool.

It wasn't only equestrian fun; pupils also enjoyed a day whitewater rafting down the Colorado River, did the huge zip line over the valley, took hikes into the mountains for campfires and s'mores, fished for trout in the lakes at the ranch, and tried their hand (or feet!) at line dancing. They had fun and games at the Carnival evening, took turns herding cattle against the clock in the team penning event, and on the final night, joined the locals spectating at the Granby rodeo, watching bull riders and barrel racers, among many others, showcasing their skills. An atmospheric and exciting end to the week.

This is the fifth time that Solihull has been to Drowsy Water Ranch, following a seven year break due to the pandemic. This year, as always, we had wonderful weather and the pupils learned a lot about a different way of life. They were fantastic ambassadors for their school, and mixed brilliantly with the other families who were holidaying there. Without fail they were complimented on their good manners and enthusiasm, and thanks to their impeccable conduct the ranch is very much looking forward to hosting Solihull again in 2026.

*Ms L Campbell*



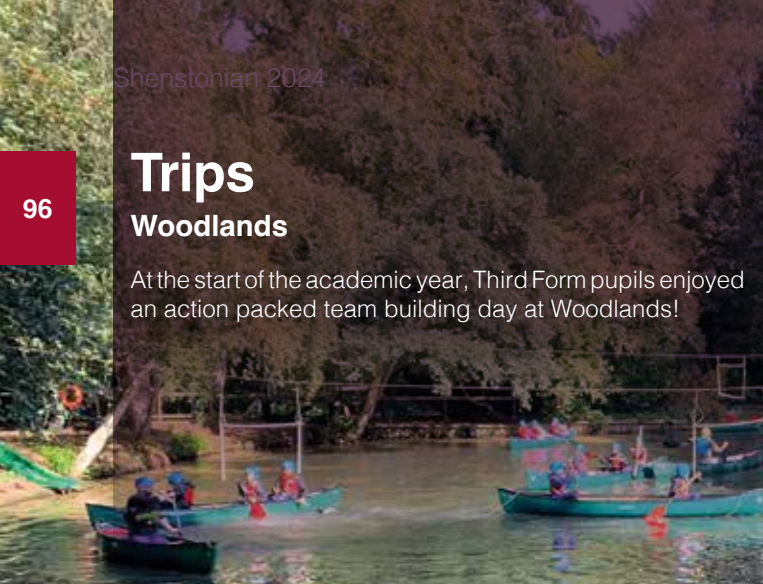




# Trips

## Woodlands

At the start of the academic year, Third Form pupils enjoyed an action packed team building day at Woodlands!





# House Report



The year has been a busy one, with a great deal of fun being had by all involved!

House Singing, the One Mile Run, photography competitions and more took place in the Christmas term. Christmas quizzes, decorating of trees and tremendously successful fair also took place. With House pancake races, music competitions and recitals also taking place the Easter and summer term also saw plenty of inter-House action. Our final House Competition of the year was due to be Sports Day, however sadly the weather and the end of term happened all too quickly!





Congratulations to Windsor who were victorious for the year 2023 - 20224. the final standings are as follows:

Senior School Final Standings	
Windsor	1494
Jago	1395
Pole	1394
Shenstone	1359
Fetherston	1264



# Art

Lower School



01



02



04



03



06



07



05



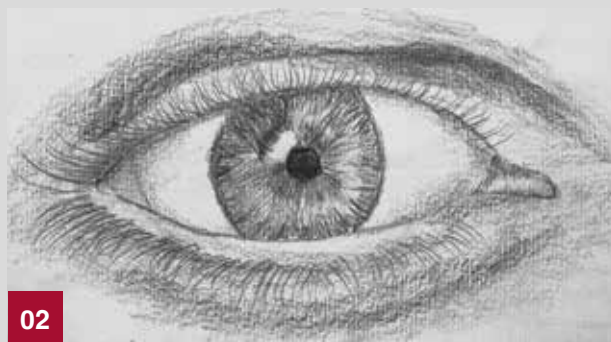
08

## Third Form

- 01 Aana Haque
- 02 Caleb Lobo
- 03 Claudie Sadler
- 04 Daisy Lloyd
- 05 Daniel Fogg
- 06 Giselle Chow
- 07 Lily Chidwick
- 08 Phoebe Thomas



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



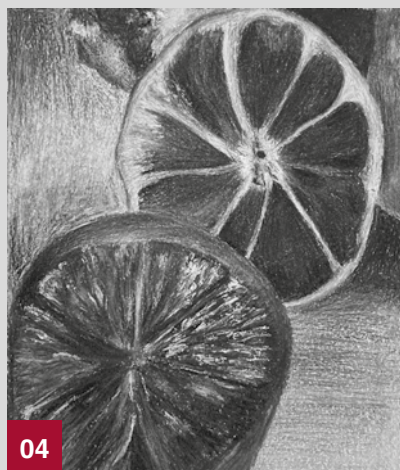
08

### Shell Form

- 01 Aurelia Stringer
- 02 Beth Gotts
- 03 Beth Spratley
- 04 Harshini Raman
- 05 Petra Saggi
- 06 Will Mansell
- 07 William Phillips
- 08 Zahrah Hussain

# Art

Lower School



## Fourth Form

- 01 Bella Frith
- 02 Charlie Walker
- 03 Constance Lo
- 04 Mariangela Zochiou
- 05 Masha Afanasova
- 06 Penelope Shyamalan
- 07 Ria Sutha
- 08 Scarlett Watkiss



# GCSE Art

Upper Fifth



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08

## GCSE

- 01 Bella Taylor
- 02 Bonnie Maughan
- 03 Chloe Harrison
- 04 Jessica Knight
- 05 Martina Green
- 06 Samuel Christopher
- 07 Scarlett Pugh
- 08 Sophie Round

# GCSE Photography

Upper Fifth



## GCSE Photography

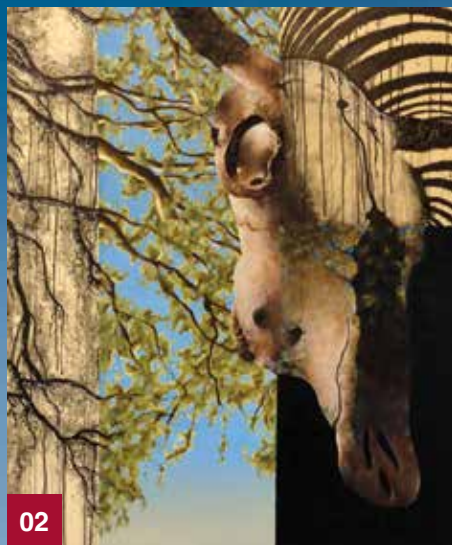
- 01 Amar Gill
- 02 Arjo Cheema
- 03 Isaac Maddy
- 04 Lily Atkinson
- 05 Luca Romano
- 06 Maddy Brown
- 07 Martina Green
- 08 Phao Taylor

# A Level Art

Upper Sixth



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08

## A Level Art

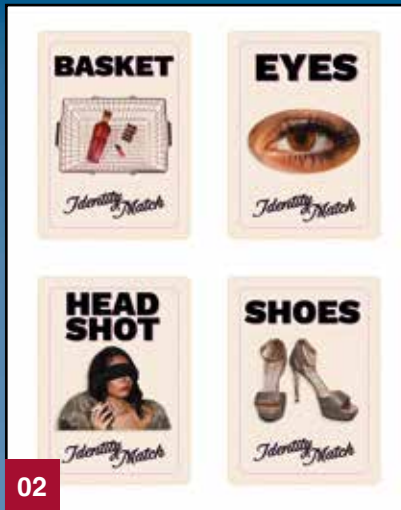
- 01 Aimee Burgin
- 02 Emma Roberts
- 03 Florence Pugh
- 04 Isaac Tanner
- 05 Kezia Hartle
- 06 Lottie Giles
- 07 Orissa Mistry
- 08 Ruby Tahir

# A Level Photography

Upper Sixth



01



02



03



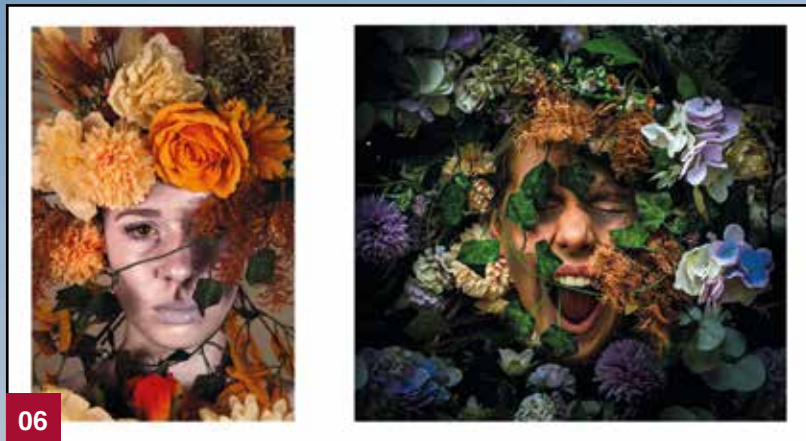
04



05



06



06



08

## A Level Photography

- 01 Emma Roberts
- 02 Fabian Botterill
- 03 Giorgia Dalley
- 04 Jayvyn Yagnik
- 05 Josh Bould
- 06 Katie Smallwood
- 07 Sophie Beer
- 08 Vlad Kovalenko

# Art Exhibition



# Prep School Sport

108



## Solihull Borough Athletics

On Thursday 22 June, 12 boys and 12 girls selected from J4 attended the Solihull Borough Athletics. All schools across the borough visited Tudor Grange athletics track for a full day of field and track events. Each pupil competed in one throwing event; either shot putt or javelin, one jumping event; either long jump or standing triple jump and one running event; either 75m or 600m. There were some great individual successes throughout the day. After a tense wait as they calculated the scores the final results were read out and we were pleased to here that Solihull were overall team winners for the day by a huge 113 points!



## J4 Boys' Cricket

The cricket team had an impressive start to the season, winning all their inter-school fixtures. They went on to defeat Eversfield in the first round of the County Cricket tournament, securing their place in the County Final at Warwick School. Despite a slow start, losing to Bluecoat, they pushed on with good determination, beating all other opponents, finishing second overall.

The IAPS School Cricket Tournament at Oundle was initially cancelled and later rearranged. In the group stage, the boys faced tough competition, losing to The Perse but winning against the rest of the group. They finished second in their group, which qualified them for the plate competition. The team won in the plate competition, securing victory and finishing 5th in the tournament.

Overall, the cricket season was marked by some strong performances with the ball and the bat and the strength in depth in the whole year group is fantastic. The future is bright!



## J4 Boys' Hockey IAPS Regionals

The J4 boys' hockey team attended the re-arranged hockey IAPS regional round at Oundle School. After three wins a loss and a draw in the group, Solihull had qualified for the quarter finals where they managed to beat Laxton Junior School. In the semifinals Bishop's Stortford were the opponents and, after a lot of possession and territory, it took a tense win on penalty flicks to get to the final. A strong St Faith's team were the opposition in the final and a 2-0 win saw the team crowned Regional Champions and qualification for National Finals was assured.

## IAPS Finals

The finals were hosted at Cheltenham College. In the group stages Solihull managed to sneak through in a very competitive group with 3 wins and 3 draws. The team moved onto the quarter finals and beat Feltonfleet School 2-0 to set up a semi-final against St George's Weybridge. Solihull took an early advantage going 1-0 up but a superb St George's team managed to get themselves back in the game and as both teams searched for a winner the game opened up and St George's managed to sneak a late goal to seal a place in the final leaving Solihull to play the third/fourth place match against Hoebridge School, Hoebridge emerged victorious, meaning Solihull J4 boys' hockey finished fourth nationally. This was a fantastic achievement and one that demonstrates our hockey potential, this was the second year in a row we have been in the top four with last year group finishing third.



## J4 Boys' Hockey, In2Hockey Tournament

The U11 boys participated in the In2Hockey County Tournament held at Bilton Grange. They continued their successful streak by going unbeaten, only drawing one game. Consequently, they emerged as winners of the county round, which led them to the Regional Finals at Rugby School. In the In2Hockey Regional Finals, the boys topped their group, scoring 12 goals and conceding only 1 across 4 games. They defeated tough competition in the semi-final to advance to a three-way final against The Elms and Bromsgrove School. In this final, the boys emerged victorious, concluding their winning streak on the day, and securing another trophy as Midlands Champions.



### J3 & J4 Girls' Cross Country

On Tuesday 3 October the girls' cross country team went to Old Sils to take part in the borough schools event. The girls competed in teams and both the J3 and J4 girls were overall winners which is a fantastic result. The highlight of the event was Sophia Wood from J3 winning as an individual with an amazing run, leading right from the start. Congratulations, Sophia!



### J4 Boys' Football

The J4 boys' football A team enjoyed an outstanding season and achieved the tremendous feat of managing to qualify for not only IAPS National Finals but also ISFA National Finals too.

In the IAPS regional tournament, the team bounced back from a defeat in their first match to win or draw all their other group games sending them through to the quarter finals where a penalty shootout win against a strong Perse School was needed to decide who goes through. Up next was The Beacon School and another penalty shootout win meant the team had qualified for IAPS Nationals and would play Repton Prep in the final, the final is always a lot less tense when both teams have already qualified for Nationals and Repton took an early lead which the Solihull team couldn't quite manage to get back and despite throwing everything at them Repton secured the match with a goal to make it 2-0 in the last seconds as the Solihull team including the goalkeeper all went up for a corner at the other end!

IAPS National Finals was held at Millfield Prep at the end of November and in the group the team lost one game to the eventual winners and managed to draw their other games with some resolute defending and goalkeeping meaning they qualified for the Plate Competition. After a win against Ardingly College in the quarter finals it took another penalty shootout to secure a place in the final after a good game against Crossfield's. In the plate final a 3-2 on penalties win against Danes Hill meant Solihull returned as plate champions.



### Independent Schools Football Association

The ISFA regionals were held at Repton School in March and, after drawing or winning the games in the group, Solihull knew that only one team automatically qualified for National Finals meaning they had to be at their best to achieve qualification. In the semi final The Elms were the opposition who are a very strong team and had managed to win in Solihull's previous game against them however Solihull were on it from the start and pressed them well and secured a brilliant 2-0 win setting up a final against Fairfield Prep. In the final Solihull enjoyed a huge amount of territory and possession but just couldn't manage to score and extra time couldn't separate the teams meaning a penalty shootout, which the team were becoming very experienced in! Some great saves by both goalkeepers Solihull eventually got the winning penalty in sudden death meaning qualification for Nationals at St George's Park.

The team met up early in the morning on the day of the finals at the wonderful facilities of St George's Park, Solihull managed to remain undefeated with one win and four draws during the group, unfortunately this meant a third place finish in the group which didn't qualify the team for the quarter finals, despite the boys disappointment at the time they reflected on what had been a tremendous season.

# Prep School Sport



### J4 Girls' Cricket

On Thursday 20 June, 10 girls went to Nottingham to play in the IAPS cricket tournament.

The day was played in a festival style with the girls playing three pairs games. First up was Stamford School and the girls narrowly lost out. They regrouped and went on to win against Ratcliffe School then finished the day with another narrow defeat against Richard Pate School. Well done to all the girls involved and to Mrs Ginn for supporting the team through the day.



### J4 Girls' Hockey

The J4 girls' hockey team represented Solihull at the IAPS regional rounds on Wednesday 4 October at Fairfield Prep. They played three tough games in the first round versus The Elms, Bluecoat and Wakefield High. Close defeats in each game saw the girls move into the plate competition and in the quarter finals they came up against Bromsgrove. Unfortunately, Bromsgrove were too strong on this occasion and despite a hard fought game, we didn't make it through to the semi-finals.



### J4 Boys' IAPS Finals Olympic Park

We had great individual and team performances at this year's IAPS National Swimming Finals at the Olympic pool in June. The children swam superbly and represented the school impeccably. The results were as follows: 8th Lewis-Oliver Nykamp 50m Backstroke, 11th George Mansell 50m Breaststroke, 12th Lewis-Oliver Nykamp, George Mansell, George Gallagher & Charlie France, 4 x 25m Medley relay, 13th Lewis-Oliver Nykamp, George Mansell, Hugo Kelly & Charlie France, 4 x 25m Freestyle relay, 20th Charlie France 50m Freestyle



### J4 Girls' Hockey, In2Hockey Midlands Final

On Wednesday 20 March, the girls played in the In2Hockey Midlands Finals at Rugby School. They played in several matches throughout the day with mixed results but had a great time!

### House Swimming

House Swimming Galas are always great fun and very competitive, and all the children from Infants to J4 practised really hard and swum superbly in their galas. All the children performed outstandingly, and we couldn't be prouder of their enthusiasm and effort. As always, we had a great turnout with fervent support from parents, carers and family members who were in fine voice, enthusiastically cheering all the races.

### House Gala Overall Results

	Fetherston	Jago	Pole	Shenstone	Windsor
Infant 1	2	7	8	7	6
Infant 2	4	2	7	10	7
J1	38	81	63	73	64
J2	93	90	76	93	77
J3	168	167	103	111	159
J4	172	195	217	204	127
	<b>477</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>440</b>
	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>







**Solihull Borough Netball Skills Competition**

On Wednesday 28 February, two teams took part in the Solihull Borough Netball Skills competition at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre. As reigning champions, the J4 girls had a lot to live up to and they didn't disappoint. Both teams had to follow a set routine of passing skills and finishing with shooting 10 goals to record the fastest time to reach the finals. Both teams performed extremely well under the pressure with one team being crowned overall winners.



**Solihull Borough Rounders Tournament**

On Tuesday 11 June, ten J4 pupils attended the Solihull Rounders Tournament held at Lode Heath School. Nine schools had been split into 3 groups of 3 to play a round robin. Solihull made an amazing start and adapted quickly to playing on the astro turf instead of the field, winning both their games. The teams were then regrouped with all the top placed teams coming together to play the finals. Solihull as winners joined Balsall Common and St. Alphege to play off for first, second and third place medals. A close game with Balsall Common saw some calm fielding from the team and some sneaky half rounders scored to finish up with a 3 1/2 - 1 1/2 win to Solihull. One more game to play to be crowned champions and they saved the best until last. Some huge strikes to score full rounders and excellent fielding to stop the opposition scoring meant a 7 - 2 win to Solihull and finishing off the tournament undefeated.



**Solihull Borough Netball Tournament**

After a cancellation the week before, a team of seven took part in the Solihull Borough Netball tournament at Lode Heath School on Tuesday 23 April. The team performed extremely well in the group stages without losing a single game with all the girls having to rotate around every position in a 5-a-side format. In the semi-finals the team came up against a very strong Shirley Heath team but came out in the end with a narrow victory to progress to the final. The Solihull girls were back to their dominant form for the final coming out convincing winners. A great achievement and showing the strength in depth in Netball from the J4 girls this year.



**J4 Boys' Rugby**

The J4 boys enjoyed a good rugby season with lots of action for the touch and contact teams. In September, 14 boys went to Warwick School for their festival and enjoyed a good morning of coaching sessions before playing 5 matches. Solihull used the favourable conditions and a lovely surface to play some thrilling rugby, entertaining those who had come to watch. There were lots of offloads, crossfield kicks and grubbers for the crowd to enjoy, the team also worked very hard in defence, making some excellent tackles.



**IAPS Netball Tournament**

On Thursday 1 February, a group of J4 netballers attended the regional qualifying event for the IAPS Netball tournament at Uppingham School. This event was played in the 5-a-side format and all the girls had to rotate positions therefore playing in all 5 positions at some point during the day. After an intense day of competition, the girls found themselves in the quarter-finals and up against local rivals Warwick Prep. The game didn't go our way and they lost out to a strong Warwick team who won this regional round and went onto the National Finals and came 2nd! Well done to all of the girls who took part.

# Sports Days

## Nursery and Reception

After weeks of preparation and hard work from the Nursery and Reception children we were glad the weather was kind to us so the children could enjoy competing in all their races. The pupils arrived at the field with the music playing and the anticipation and excitement building.

All Nursery children competed in one sprint race, one novelty fun race and their house relay and the reception children competed in one sprint race, two novelty fun races and their house relay. In total 39 races were contested, and all children were rewarded with their positional rosette stickers.

Congratulations to all the pupils who participated. The PE department are proud of the children's hard work and determination to all compete to their own very personal best.



Thanks to all our J4 helpers on the day setting up, clearing equipment from the track and handing out the stickers to the younger pupils.

## Infant 1 and Infant 2

Following on from the EYFS Sports Day the Infant children were very excited to see their family and friends ready and waiting for them when they entered the field. The temperature was rising as they arrived all well prepared in sun hats and carrying their water ready to show everyone what they could do.

Every child competed in one sprint race, two novelty fun races and their house relay with a total of 61 races contested and everyone receiving their positional rosette or 'well done' stickers on the finish line.

Congratulations to all the pupils who participated. The PE department are extremely proud of the children's perseverance and determination to demonstrate their personal best in front of all their peers and teachers.

## Overall Alice House Results

	Fetherston	Jago	Pole	Shenstone	Windsor
Nursery	1	4	5	2	3
Reception	5	3	2	1	4
Infant 1	3	4	2	5	1
Infant 2	1	3	2	5	4
	<b>10pts</b>	<b>14pts</b>	<b>11pts</b>	<b>13pts</b>	<b>12pts</b>
	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>





### Junior School

On possibly the hottest day of the year so far, the Juniors took to the field for their Sports Day with a great turn out from parents and spectators. All races were competitive (especially the final parents/spectator's egg and spoon race!)

Field event medals were presented throughout the morning by Mr Penney and all race winners collected their medals on the finish line.

The House results were extremely close with double points on the relays making the difference.

### Victor and Victrix Ludorum Winners

- J1: Spencer Furtado & Simran Toor
- J2: Bryan Lin & Eva Tabari
- J3: Sophia Wood & Divij Hullur
- J4: Lizzie Wood & Jack Brindley

### New School Records 2024

	Race	Old Record	New Record
J1	80m Girls Race	13.56	Simran Toor 13.39
J1	80m Boys Race	13.19	Spencer Furtado 12.62
J1	600m Boys Race	2.25.63	Noah Pfeiffer 2.17.36
J1	4 x 50m Relay	40.00	Jago 39.56
J2	80m Boys Race	12.69	Bryan Lin 12.24
J3	80m Girls Race	12.37	Sophia Wood 12.02
J3	80m Boys Race	11.94	Louis Monk 11.94 equalled
J3	600m Girls Race		Sophia Wood 2.07.45
J3	600m Boys Race		Divij Hullur 2.06.36
J3	4 x 50m Relay	35.50	Fetherston 35.24
J4	800m Girls Race	3.00.38	Lizzie Wood 2.58.16
J4	800m Boys Race	2.48.31	Andre Albarel 2.46.90
J4	4 x 50m Relay		Shenstone 34.78

### Overall Junior School Results

	Fetherston	Jago	Pole	Shenstone	Windsor
J1 & J2	3	5	2	4	1
J3 & J4	3	5	2	4	2
	6	10	4	8	3
	3rd	1st	4th	2nd	5th



# Sport

## Head of Boys' Cricket Report

Despite a wet and miserable start to the summer term, a total of 51 teams represented the school this year, playing a total of 256 matches between them. As records and trophies compiled, a huge congratulations must go to all pupils who participated in these fixtures and of course to all members of staff who helped to facilitate such a busy summer of cricket.

Between the rain and the showers, the U17 Girls defended their National Plate trophy admirably by defeating Seaford College to retain it again this year. The U12 Boys were winners of the Gladstone Small County Cup trophy, beating King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys in the final and the 1st XI won the Hugh Cherry County Cup final by beating Solihull Sixth Form and were Regional Semi Finalists. Finally, the U17 Boys had an incredible season culminating in reaching the National Cup Final which is to be played in September against Epsom College at Loughborough University. To reach the final they had to beat Repton School, Rugby School, Norwich School and St Peters York; all were impressive victories and a remarkable achievement.

I would like to congratulate Isaac Maddy on scoring a 1000 runs for the school for the second consecutive season during his GCSE year and to Samuel Sitch (2), James Hawkins (2), Isaac (2), Josh Reynolds and Archie Willox who all scored centuries for the school.

With the ball I would like to congratulate Ansh Sutariya, Eleanor Lyman-Smith, Archie Willox, Arya Kale, Salaar Kayani and Will Turner who all took 5 wickets in an innings whilst Ethan Howe and Macy Ranson both took a hat-trick for the school.

This season would not have been possible if it wasn't for the tireless work from Karl Brotherhood and his grounds team and also to Simon and his catering staff. I would like to thank everyone who helped to making this year another huge success.

In closing, I would like to thank all of the Upper Sixth players for their contributions to Solihull cricket and in particular to the five boys who represented the 1st XI this year; Joshua Reynolds who captained and led the team successfully, Ted Clarke who was outstanding behind the wickets, Jimmy Hawkins who had an outstanding year with both bat and ball, Ben Blakemore who has developed into a classy top order batsman and to Will Turner for his all-round contributions in the field and with bat and ball. I am proud of them all as they have developed into fine young cricketers and have achieved so much for the school during their time at Solihull. Their commitment will be unrivalled and their legacy will always be remembered. I hope that they will look back with fond memories and continue to play and enjoy cricket. I wish them all well in the future.

*Mr D Maddy*



## Boys' Cricket 1st XI Captain's Report

Since starting at the school in Third Form, I have always wanted to be the senior 1st XI Captain and I am extremely proud to have achieved this.

Solihull School has a proud cricketing history that dates back many years. Our senior cricket team has consistently demonstrated excellence, both on and off the field. The dedication of our players, the expertise of our coaches, and the unwavering support from our community have all contributed to making our cricket programme one of the finest in the region.

This year, the school has fielded no less than 51 boys' and girls' teams and despite the wet weather, have still managed to play well over 250 games.

The first eleven have once again had another successful season with some impressive victories over all of our local rivals and reaching the semi-final of the regional cup, losing out to a strong Malvern team. There have been many notable and impressive victories as well as some impressive individual performances. Isaac, Jimmy, and Sam all scored two centuries this season with Isaac going on to score over 1000 runs in the season.

The spin trio of Ansh (38), Arya (25) and Sohail (24) took 87 wickets between them and put most of the schools we played in a spin, whilst Alex was forever reliable taking 27 wickets with his pace. All were backed up and well supported by Jimmy and Sam making this one of the best all-round bowling attacks the school has seen.

However, it was the achievements as a team that I was most pleased with and the brand of cricket that we played. Almost unbeatable at home, we have grown together and improved through the season, playing some outstanding cricket.

There were some impressive victories over the MCC, the Imps, Warwick, Bromsgrove, Kings and RGS Worcester.



Denstone and Monmouth, but it was the ones that got away against Magdalen and Trent that will motivate the team to want to get better next year; both were winnable games, but we just couldn't get over the line.

A few notable achievements were notched up during the season; 421 is now the highest team score ever made (Vs Monmouth) and a total of 1635 runs were scored by the 1st XI in cricket week this year; both are now new school records.

The 2nd XI have also had an outstanding season and achieved a remarkable feat, by remaining unbeaten throughout the whole season. Archie scored a century and took five wickets during the season and there were other notable contributions made by Akos, Yuvi and Ruthvik. I believe this speaks volumes about the depth of talent and commitment within our school.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Sam Sitch and the U17 cricket team who have had an exceptional year by reaching the National Cup Final which will be played in September. It has been an all-round team effort with everyone contributing to the success. Most of them have been instrumental in the success of the 1st XI and I would like to wish them the best of luck.

All of this success would not be possible if it wasn't for our amazing facilities, offering our players the best environment to hone their skills, from meticulously maintained pitches to outstanding training facilities. Playing at Solihull on the first eleven pitch is extremely special and I know that Karl Brotherhood and his team ensure that our cricketers have everything they need to succeed.

But beyond the physical resources, it is the culture of cricket at our school that truly sets us apart. We emphasize not only technical proficiency but also the importance of character, resilience, and leadership.

Over the years, our senior cricket team has achieved numerous accolades, competing fiercely in regional and



national tournaments. These victories are a testament to the hard work and perseverance of each of our players. Each match, whether a win or a loss, was an opportunity for growth, learning, and camaraderie.

During my time here at Solihull, I will look back fondly at the many opportunities I have experienced, for example; touring Sri Lanka, which was a truly amazing trip and one that I will always remember, playing in front of the whole school on the first eleven pitch at a Friday Night Lights match against Bromsgrove and of course whenever we beat Warwick!

Mr Maddy has repeatedly talked to us about legacy and how we want to be remembered, not only as cricketers but people as well. We are all aware that we are just custodians of the first eleven cap and like those before us have worn our colours with pride.

The legacy of Solihull School Senior Cricket is built on the stories of countless Alumni who have been successful both in cricket and in their professional lives. They always speak fondly of their time on the cricket field here and their successes inspire our current players to strive for excellence and to uphold the traditions of our esteemed programme. I hope that I have represented myself as well as others before me.

I would like to thank Mr Maddy and David Smith for all of their support, guidance and inspiration this year. I know that I speak on behalf of the whole team when I say that we appreciate everything you do for the cricket programme.

As we look to the future, I feel an enormous amount of pride and satisfaction at my time here at school. I believe that we are committed to fostering a love for cricket in our students. We aim to continue a platform for young cricketers to develop their talents, pursue their dreams, and create lifelong memories such as mine.

The spirit of Solihull School Senior Cricket is alive and well, and with the continued support of our community, it will flourish for many years to come.

*Joshua Reynolds, 1st XI Captain, Upper Sixth*



## 2nd XI Boys' Cricket

The boys' 2nd XI enjoyed a successful season by winning all their matches. Availability from week to week was an issue due to exams, so the team differed every time we played.

Some of the victories were resounding, some were comfortable, and others were tight. In the first of two fixtures with KES Birmingham, the match went to the final ball, with Solihull coming out on top by 2 runs. The victory over Princethorpe 1st XI was probably the highlight of the season. Set 147 to win, the openers for Solihull went early which brought into bat Caspar Lea. In his first knock of the season, he took the game away from Princethorpe scoring 60 off 35 balls. However, once he was out the run rate slowed and wickets fell; it looked like we might lose the game. Will Turner batted sensibly by scoring 26 off 27 and Archie Willox came in at number 10 to score 20 off 8, to bring home the win. The highest scoring game of the season saw Solihull reach 237-1, with QMGS 1st XI replying with 206-2.

Individual milestones saw Archie Willox score 100\* in the match with QMGS, and with the ball a 5-wicket haul, again by Archie Willox, in the win over Princethorpe; he ended with figures of 4-0-33-5.

Thank you to all the players that made themselves available to play and for making it fun and enjoyable for all involved.

*Mr C Mayer*

## U15B Boys' Cricket Player Report

Throughout the season, even through tough losses, as a team we have shown great determination and resilience week in, week out. We kicked off our season with a comprehensive victory over Bloxham, by 47 runs. This was a brilliant all-round performance, with us being excellent with the ball in hand. We continued this form at KES Stratford, with a few 30s during the batting innings and a well-rounded bowling performance which was backed up in the field. After a few missed players the next week, we had a tough loss against Wolverhampton Grammar's A team. This was good for our resilience and character. This was followed by a dip in form as we had two tough games against Bablake A and Magdalen College. A lapse in our fielding was the issue to blame. We quickly got back on track with a dominating win against Princethorpe College A, where a 64 from Paul Savage was the highlight. We then came up against a tough Manchester Grammar School on tour. We fought very well during the match but sadly didn't have enough to win. The year has been a pleasure to be part of and the help and guidance of Mr Mayer, Mr Maddy, Mr Bishop and Mr Smith have been a great asset for us.

*Harry Tomlin, Lower Fifth*



## U15A Boys' Cricket Player Report

Cricket in 2024 for the whole of the U15s has been a positive experience, with many improvements being noticeable. The A and B team's record wasn't truly reflecting on the positive season we've had, especially the A team feeling that we have been close in many games in which we've lost, but played well in. Despite the record not being great across the whole season, all teams have had good games, in which A-D teams have all had fixtures this year. Many good games in particular consist of: the D team having a convincing 8 wicket win against Trent College, the B team winning by 47 runs against Bloxham, and the A team having many convincing wins, but in particular beating Bloxham by 9 wickets, beating Warwick by 7 wickets, and also beating RGS Worcester by 78 runs, in which the boys put up a very impressive 236-5 off 30 overs, with a very impressive first wicket partnership from James Lister and Solomon Graham, with both reaching the half-century mark, and Solomon scoring an impressive 86. There have also been many individual highlights this season, with Salaar Kayani picking up the only 5fer across the whole year for the C team. Also, Paul Savage was the only player to reach the half-century mark for the Bs, scoring 63, as well as Matty Gardner scoring 56\* against Warwick, with his partnership with Dan Graham leading us to one of our best wins all season. Some of the most exciting moments in the year for the A's have come from Joe Rushton, from taking 2 catches in one game (one of which was a screamer) as well as taking a diving caught and bowled in the same game as him bowling an 11 ball over, showing what an exciting player he is to play with. Furthermore, his encouragement in the field is always there, always wanting more energy from the lads. He really is a truly great teammate to have. Overall, the season for the whole year hasn't been perfect, with a few more losses than we would've hoped for, however across all teams some great cricket has been played, and there have been lots of positive results to take from the season, as well as lots of brilliant team displays and special individual moments.

*Finlay Davies, Lower Fifth*



### U14 Boys' Cricket Player Report

This year, our U14s had 7 teams, all playing matches internally and externally.

Starting with our A team, we had a disrupted season with 4 games postponed or cancelled due to rain. Despite a rocky start with a loss against our local rivals Warwick School, we came back strong comfortably beating KES Stratford. Another loss followed to KES Birmingham, but then we picked up momentum winning four games on the bounce against RGS Worcester, Loughborough Grammar School, Arden School and Magdalen College. Having beaten Arden in the Cup, we progressed to the semi-final against KES Camp Hill, which we won with strong performances with the bat and ball. This win meant meeting Warwick in the final. Sadly, they got a well-deserved victory, leaving us 2nd place in the cup. In our final game against Trent College, they batted first and set a solid 215, which could have been more if it wasn't for Harrison and Yusuf getting identical statistics of 2-29 off their 6 overs. Isa also hit his first boundary of the season and celebrated by raising his bat!

Throughout the year, we've had some great performances with the bat and the ball, including Jamie's quick 85 against Loughborough, which set us up well, Isa's 4 wickets against Magdalen College, Toby W's 4 wickets against KES Camp Hill, and Jamie and Gus's 100-run partnership in the same game.

Moving on to the B team, they started strong, winning four consecutive wins against Warwick, KES Stratford, KES Birmingham and Magdalen College, but that streak ended with a tough losses to Queen Mary's, Princethorpe and Bishop Vesey's.

Overall, everyone has had a great season and we look forward to coming back even stronger next year. Many thanks to Mr Richmond, Mr Maddy and David Smith for all your help and guidance throughout the season.

*Gus Lea, Fourth Form*

### U13A Boys' Cricket Report

Our Under 13A team enjoyed a great season in 2023, the team was committed and together throughout the season and we recorded some impressive results. Impressive numbers turned up at training so there were many players to choose from but eventually we had a solid team ready for the season. There were many special moments but one of the most memorable games was our first fixture at Warwick where our team started with a solid stand with the bat and the bowlers performed strictly and brilliantly leading to a tight win in the last over. There were a few bumps on the way, but the team stayed strong. We eventually made it to the 3rd round of the plate but were knocked out because of circumstances we could not control. The team struggled with chasing throughout the season and is something that we need to address going into the next season, however the team learnt many valuable lessons which are going to make us a stronger team in the future. Thank you for the commitment from all the players and a big thank you to all the coaches who persevered with us.

### U13B Boys' Cricket Report

The 13B team have enjoyed a successful season winning more games than they have lost. They have created a good team spirit and played with great style. There have also been some excellent individual performances which have contributed to some exciting wins. Mohammad Zain's electric pace yielded 5 wickets against Bablake, with the win being completed due to a composed 25\* from Viron Jindal and a solid 22 from Oscar Smith. Veer Naga's excellent 52 and Henry Cook's match winning spell set up an easy win against Stratford which made up for heavy losses against Warwick and Loughborough. The highlight of the season was a brilliant win against KES Birmingham; a disciplined bowling performance restricted KES to 119 which seemed a distant possibility until Sam Raybould's swashbuckling unbeaten 38 brought home the victory in a violent flurry of boundaries. Max Brown also batted well for 32 in a 5 wicket loss against Bishop Vesey. There have been many representatives of the U13Bs and they have all contributed to the success of the team.

*Mr N Linehan*



### Girls' Cricket U17 Player Report

This season has been a very successful one for the U17 Girls Cricket Team with us reaching the National Plate Final and only losing one match all season. We have trained hard and developed significantly as individuals and as a team on the whole, with many younger players stepping up and playing at a higher standard and still performing exceptionally well. The development of girls' cricket at Solihull has been demonstrated extremely well through the success of our team this year and it has been an extremely enjoyable team to be a part of this season and hopefully in the coming seasons we can develop further and progress in the cup competition next year. Overall, this season has been enjoyable and successful for our girls U17s cricket team!

*Katie Skinner, Upper Fifth*



### Girls' Cricket U15 Player Report

As girls' cricket is on a rise at Solihull, the U15 girls' team have become even stronger proving themselves, as they are on their journey to becoming the future of Solihull school girls cricket. Taking each game with a confident mindset and navigating wins and losses and learning from each game, as their cricket skills and knowledge is constantly evolving.

From the indoor team who made the school proud making top 5 in the country at the national final at Lords, training hard and playing even harder since the winter. To the outdoor team who have played each match with everything they have and gained massive wins because of this, showing the array of talent, although facing some tough challenges and hard losses, the team has made the school and the coaches very proud.

*Emily Bergin, Lower Fifth*

### Girls' Cricket U14 Player Report

The U14s team this year has had an incredible season, with lots of outstanding performances and achievements. The A team have won four matches but sadly many have been cancelled due to the weather. We have played extremely well, and players should be very proud of their performance. Everyone has contributed whether it's with the bat, the ball or in the field. As well as this, some of our players have achieved five wicket hauls, hat-tricks and have stayed at the crease for entire innings. Thank you to our coaches; Sarah Ginn and Jamie Hughes-we would not have had such an enjoyable season without them and thank you for all the effort you have put in to making us the strongest side possible. Well done to everybody who has helped the U14s to have such a great season. We look forward to improving even more next year.

*Eleanor Lyman Smith, Fourth Form*



### Girls' Cricket U13 Player Report

During this cricket season all teams have progressed massively. In many of the teams, we were all playing our first year properly together. However, the determination and commitment of our teams resulted in the winning of many games.

The training we put in during the winter prepared us for the cricket season ahead. As well as this, the A team took part in a Warwickshire indoor tournament, defeating Kings High Warwick and Tudor Grange in the group stage, meaning we qualified for the indoor final. We played extremely well and made it all the way to the last stage in the final, however we lost to KEHS.

In the A team, our first hard ball match of the season was against Bloxham, in which with an astonishing effort from the team we won the match by 10 wickets. Our next match against Royal Grammar School Worcester (although it was close) we unfortunately lost. We were all out for 100 off 15 overs, and they were 102 after 20 overs. Losing by 2 runs was extremely frustrating, however this only made us more determined to carry on working with our coaches to become better. Through the hard work of the A team and the coaches we have walked away with 8 wins and only one loss this season. This is a truly outstanding performance! Across all the squads the players have been enjoying the game of cricket and truly embracing the opportunities at Solihull School!

*Megan Brindley, Shell Form*





### Girls' Cricket U12 Player Report

This season girls' cricket has improved greatly from playing wind ball matches to hardball due to many net sessions. We bonded well as a team that led us to success in many of our matches. We especially enjoyed playing T20s and T15s. Our progress is also mainly due to the excellent coaching of our teachers. We look forward to playing many matches in the future!

*Gurleen Ubee, Third Form*



### 2nd XI Girls' Hockey Player Report

The girls' 2nd XI started the season strong with a 6-0 win against Shrewsbury in their first match.

Although there were a few losses throughout the season, the girls showed utmost perseverance and determination – having some notable wins against King's Worcester, Wrekin, Bromsgrove and Newcastle-under-Lyme.

The season highlighted the talent within the squad with all of them contributing a lot of time and effort towards training and matches.

The successful season would not have been possible without the hard work from both the players and the coaches - I look forward to seeing their success continue next year!

*Dani Ellard, Lower Sixth*



### 1st XI Girls' Hockey Player Report

The girls' 1st XI have had a tremendous season, entering the National Tier 1, north league we evidently had to step up our game to compete in this notoriously difficult league, which we did.

As a warm up, we played Shrewsbury which set the scene for what was to come later on in the season with a 9-0 whitewash. Our tier 1 campaign started off by beating Denstone in a 7-2 thriller. Alongside tier 1, we entered the Independent Schools Cup and in round 1 we reunited with our previous opponents King's Macclesfield and progressed into round 4 of the cup. Unfortunately, our second tier 1 game was a 2-1 loss to Oakham, this was closely followed by Repton, who gave us a lesson in how to play excellent hockey we fought hard in the rain but couldn't contain them.

We then went on a complete winning streak beating local opponent Rugby 3-2, Kirkham 7-1, Sedbergh 4-2 in the cup and Stowe 4-1 at their very own Buckingham Palace. We then hit the road on a coach with more living conditions than you could ask for to travel up to play RGS Newcastle. After stopping at glorious Wetherby and lots of interesting sleeping positions, we left feeling high on life after a well-earned 3-2 victory with some early goals only to realise we'd be meeting them again in the cup. They had to endure the four hour journey down to our home ground where we won 1-0 in a very closely fought battle in the cup sending us through to the National Finals of the ISHC. We continued our tour of the north, stopped again at fabulous Wetherby and journeyed up to delightful Scarborough enduring some terrible tackles which landed them on top with a 3-1 victory, this meant we were out of tier 1 but gave us focus for the National Finals.

Finals day: lucky us as we were only local to Nottingham so in the minibus we travelled up for our big day. We faced Alleyn's in the semi-final and despite pummeling them for 60 minutes we came out on the back foot. In the 3rd/4th play off, we faced Brighton College who put away their chances but not without a hard fight displayed by each and every single player and also the third opponent of mother nature - it did not stop raining. Overall, 4th in the country- is a fantastic achievement and the first time in Solihull history that the girls have made it that far, an achievement we can all be proud of.

The girls have worked exceptionally hard all season and it's a season to remember!

*Leila Scott, Upper Sixth*



### U16 Girls' Hockey Player Report

This season has brought the U16s many successes. At the start of the season we played a friendly match against Denstone College, Solihull fought hard and came away with a 2-1 win. Taking the learnings from this performance to the first round of the National Cup, we faced Rugby School. Despite our best efforts, Rugby managed to take the lead and eventually won the fixture 2-1. This loss meant that we were eliminated from the cup, however, we still had the U16s Tier 2 Plate matches to look forward to.

On several occasions the U16 squad was rather depleted of players. Luckily, we could rely on several outstanding girls from the year below who stepped up and helped us through those difficult patches. With the help and benefit of these players from the U15s squad, the first game of the plate saw us go up against Stockport Grammar School away. Our determination and focus meant that we won this fixture 2-1.

The next round of the Tier 2 Plate saw us face St Peter's School, York. We used our strong connections and communication to score first, however, St Peter's fought back but a determined Solihull team managed to win 3-2 in this very closely fought match.

The exciting win against St Peter's saw us rewarded with a trip to the quarter finals at Denstone College. We combined well and managed to string together some great passes. Our perseverance and strong work ethic saw us score two well deserved goals. After the final whistle below we spent time reflecting on our performance. We were pleased with our strong performance but also identified areas we would improve upon.

Our semi-final match was against Gresham's School away which meant a long trek to Norfolk. The three-hour journey provided us with the opportunity to talk tactics and more importantly develop our team spirit even further.

With the home advantage Greshams were more prepared at the start of the match and managed to score two goals within the first ten minutes. We fought back quickly and managed to get a goal just before the half time whistle. An encouraging and motivating half time speech from Mrs Gallagher meant we were ready to overcome the one goal deficit. At the start of the first half, we pushed forward to to the attacking half. Greshams conceded multiple penalty corners, unfortunately we were unable to convert any of these. The final whistle was blown, and Greshams had scraped through to the final. It was a win that Solihull deserved to have claimed, as stated by the opponent's Headmaster and parents. It was an emotional end to a wonderful season which saw all players make a huge amount of progress.

*Frankie Gallagher and Erin Stanton, Lower Fifth*

### U15 Girls' Hockey Player Report

This season has brought the U15s many exciting opportunities. Overall, we played 21 fixtures across the A and B teams and scored a grand total of 66 goals! To start of the season, we faced St Alban's College who travelled 6,916 miles (!) from Argentina on tour to play us. We played a tight game however St Albans were victorious winning 2-1, which didn't reflect our dominance in the game. In our first game in the Independent Schools' Hockey Cup (IHSC), we started strongly and did well throughout, leaving the final score as a 4-1 win against Princethorpe College. Going through to the next round of the knockout cup we faced a strong Clifton College side. The game was very even with Solihull never on the backfoot and the girls fought till the final whistle, resulting in a 5-4 win taking us through to the next round. Later in the season and after playing two more friendlies and winning both we had the next round of the knock-out ISHC. Despite a well fought battle, unfortunately Sedbergh School took the lead and prevailed in a tough game with a 3-2 win, knocking Solihull out of the cup.

As the season progressed, the connections got stronger between the teammates. We played several other A and B team games and attendance at training was excellent throughout the season, whatever the weather! We finished the season with some great B team matches and the U15As went on to dominate and win the County Tournament, winning all three matches and scoring 15 goals and only conceding one!

Overall, it has been an excellent season with many thrilling games that won't be forgotten. We are all excited about next year and moving up into playing in the senior teams.

*Frankie Gallagher and Mollie Beeton, Lower Fifth*



### U14 Girls' Hockey Player Report

We have had a great season! We have achieved so much as a team and enjoyed ourselves. The highlight of the season has got to be making it all the way through to the semi-finals of the National Cup, unfortunately losing narrowly to Ipswich School. We faced a lot of strong teams throughout our run in the cup and everyone should be so proud for making it so far.

We have won a total of 7 games this year, drawn 1 and lost 4. None of this would have been possible without Mrs Sixsmith and Mr Raza. If we didn't have these amazing coaches, we would not have gone this far as a team and we all thank you for how much you have done to support and run our team throughout the year.

We are all extremely excited to play together again next year and can't wait for more opportunities.

*Hannah Dovey, Fourth Form*



### U13 Girls' Hockey Report

Over the past year, all our U13 girls' hockey teams A-C have progressed massively. All three teams have come on leaps and bounds this season, thanks to hard work and dedication of both pupils and staff.

The C team lost their first match of the season against Bloxham 1-0; however, this only drove them to push themselves through training. Their hard work paid off when they won convincingly against Old Swinford Hospital 8-0. They carried themselves highly throughout the season, only losing one other match, proving that the effort they put in was rewarded.

Similarly, the B team have pushed themselves to the limit and have developed hugely throughout the season. With only 1 loss against The King's High School for Girls they have proven the kind of team they are. Not only have the B lead themselves so well, but they have shown that they have the potential to represent the school next year for the A team in 11 aside.

The A team may have not had the best start off to the season, losing to Repton 7-3 in their first match, but this did not determine the rest of their season. At training, they put in their all and with the help of the coaches were able to make it to the quarter finals of the National Cup. They also went on to place runner up in the county tournament losing to Kings High Warwick in the final.

*Danni Wana*



### U12 Girls' Hockey Player Report

The season started with an amazing 2-0 victory against King's High School. From then we have worked on our passing and accuracy as well as our strength and agility. Our defence was strong, and our goalkeeper made some amazing saves. We were able to delay or stop the opposition from getting to the goal. Our attack was powerful and by using our skills to dodge the players on the opposing team, we were allowed to make our way towards our goal. At the start of the hockey season, we were all finding our positions and once we did, we could work fluently down the line and pass straight into the D. In a tournament against teams from the county, we started off with a loss against a Bablake but managed to pull our position back against Princethorpe with a draw and ended up coming third out of all the teams we had faced. Throughout the year we had lost a few matches but were able to bounce back from them all and learn from our previous mistakes. Towards the end of the year, we had learnt so much from our amazing coaches, Mrs Gallagher and Mrs Sixsmith, about working well as a team and new passes and shots. Overall, we have loved playing in this amazing team all year. We can't wait for the hockey season to come again!

*Layla Callow and Claudie Sadler, Third Form*



### U12 Netball Player Report

Our U12 girls have made a brilliant start to their netball future in the Senior School.

The season began with a bang, beating King's School, Worcester 27-3. Later on, we faced a gruelling match against KEHS starting Sisters 'n' Sport tournament, we won 27-24 and progressed to the next level. In December we faced Kings High Warwick in the semi finals, but sadly lost 25-13. They were a strong team but this will give us something to aim for next season. We played a brilliant game against OSH where our defence and shooters were on fire, we won 36-7, which was one of our best matches yet! Towards the end of the netball season, we faced Bromsgrove drawing to them 27-27. A great achievement.

The season was rounded off with a trip to Boreatton Hall for a PGL weekend. We had such a brilliant time taking part in all the outdoor activities, the A and B team ended up playing one another in the final which was a great way to end the weekend.

We would like to say thank you to our amazing coach Mrs Baden, who helped us all through the year. We will miss you greatly. Thank you for helping us improve, we cannot wait for next season when we are U13s!

*Mia Seargent and Sabreena Townsend, Third Form*



### U13 Netball Player Report

Over the past year both our A and B U13 netball teams have come on leaps and bounds. We have grown, both as a team and personally. We started the Easter term with two losses against Kings High, but this only encouraged us to be determined to improve and take the teams to greater heights.

The B team walked away this season with only one other loss against King Henry VIII with a tight score of 21-19. This not only shows the dedication of both the team and the coaches, but it reveals our true determination. The last game of the season for the B was a well-earned victory against Bromsgrove with a score of 13-10.

The A team used their losses at the beginning of the season to learn how to improve and work well as a team. They too ended the season on a high note, winning against Princethorpe (32-13), illustrating just how far this team has progressed thanks to our amazing coaches. We are so grateful for the day-in day-out effort they put in.

*Megan Brindley and Bethan D'Arcy Ryan, Shell Form*

## Sport



### U14 Netball Player Report

U14 netball started off strong with a pre-season trip to Brighton, winning both matches and learning a lot in the process. We really enjoyed going away with our team mates and bonding as a team ready for the new season.

In the first round of Sisters n Sport we produced a convincing 49-5 win, with everyone getting involved and playing different positions. In round 3, we had a great start but struggled to hold on, and in the end it resulted in a loss. We used this as a learning curve, and began to find our rhythm in our friendlies.

Our U14 Sisters n Sport round match was a brilliant game, we narrowly lost to St Katherine's and St Helens but showed great grit and determination.

During the term, we won each of our matches convincingly beating many of our rivals and developing our play throughout. The team finished the season on a high at the Bromsgrove tournament, and despite missing two of our defence we managed to perform very well and finish in second place. Thank you to Mrs Wana for all your support and Mrs Baden for your work this year, the team won't be the same without you.

*Macy Ranson and Alex Souter, Fourth Form*



### U15 Netball Player Report

The U15 netball team has been really successful this season and have worked really hard and that hard work has paid off. Our team won all of their matches locally and Mrs Baden had to look further afield to get some good competition.

In the Sisters 'n' Sport competition, we ended beating a Manchester and a Nottingham team to qualify for a place in the final four in the country. We were a little nervous to start with, the occasion was special and was held at Loughborough University which was a great experience. We had a tour of the campus and saw some brilliant athletes including Katerina Johnson Thompson. Our last game was fantastic, we narrowly lost out to gain third place in the country, the team really pulled together and enjoyed every minute of this brilliant experience.

Thank you for all your hard work Mrs Baden and Miss Cobden, we have enjoyed a great season and can't wait until our U16 year.

*Abigail O'Neil and Aimee Hanley, Lower Fifth*



### U16 Netball Report

The U16 netball team has had a highly successful year which began with a brilliant trip to Brighton for some pre-season matches, a great way to start the season. The year was also marked by impressive achievements in national competitions. The girls reached the quarter finals of the Sisters n Sport competition, losing out to a strong St Katherine's and Helen's side. However, they took great learnings from this loss and worked hard to fix up their play in preparation for the national finals. During this competition they showcased their skill and determination winning eight out of eight of their matches in the rounds. Unfortunately, they narrowly lost the semi final to Putney High, finishing with their highest ever placing of third. The team has grown from strength to strength this season, and we look forward to continuing this form with high aspirations for next year.

*Miss B Cobden*



### Senior Netball Player Report

This year has been successful for our first team netball girls. We started off with our pre-season netball tour to Brighton, winning against Brighton College and an unfortunate narrow loss to Hurstpierpoint college. Nevertheless this experience helped integrate the team in order to move forward into a successful season. A convincing win against Bishop Vesey, 68-8, in the first round of the Sisters n Sport National Cup, put our team in good stead. Progressing through to the second round, defying all odds, we played Rugby School and came out with an impressive win. However, our place in the competition was cut short due to our unfortunate loss against Wrekin college, losing by just two goals.

Our focus for the season then turned to nationals. Coming first in the borough and county tournaments, meant our biggest challenge was progressing through regionals. We were placed in a tough group, including RGS Worcester and Wrekin, two competitors we always knew would put up a fight. After pure grit and determination, our team couldn't quite make it to the semi-finals, leaving us placing fifth in the Regional Tournament. This was a gutting end to the season, however we finished the year on a high with a strong win against Wrekin, 33-23, our toughest opponent of the year. Overall, we won 14 out of the 18 matches we played across the season and are going into next year feeling confident in our abilities, willing to build on relationships and connections and do Solihull School proud.

*Scarlett Collins and Angel Dhadwal, Lower Sixth*



## 1st XV Rugby

The 2023-24 1st XV season started at the annual Kings Macclesfield Festival. After a long and productive pre-season training block, the players were eager to showcase their talents on the pitch. The 1st XV remained unbeaten at the festival, which featured some of the strongest rugby schools in the country. Several Schools had commented on the skill level of the Solihull squad throughout the tournament, and two players who epitomised the fast and free nature of how the team wanted to play this season were Joshua Litwinko and Noah McClean. Confidence was high going into the first game of the season, which resulted in a 29 – 16 victory away at Kings Worcester in sweltering conditions; Upper Fifth pupil Seb Smith celebrated his debut with a brace of tries. September was a successful month, with victories over King Henry VIII School and King Edward's School, Birmingham, maintaining momentum. In October the 1st XV recorded an impressive 43-26 win over Old Swinford Hospital; although the team was playing some very creative and expansive rugby, it was the defence on the day which gave the team plenty of possession to open up and score some great tries. In particular, Captain Harry Pemberton and Sean Conway showcased some fantastic defensive work. Before the half term break, we hosted Sir Thomas Rich's School in the National Plate. The horrendous conditions meant the game was a real dogfight from start to finish, with each team struggling to use the ball well when in possession. However, the character of team really came through and they battled to an impressive 18-15 victory. Straight after the half term break, we hosted Oakham School in the last 16 of the National Plate. Although a Solihull 1st XV hadn't achieved a win against Oakham in some 23 years, hopes were high and the team had prepared well going into the game. Trailing 21-7 at half time, the game was on a knife edge going into the final minutes. Inside centre Joshua Reynolds ran a superb line to crash over under the posts to secure a famous win. Through his accurate kicking game, fly half Jack Gallagher controlled the game extremely well, and gave us the platform of which to set up our attacks. November saw the 1st XV play its best rugby; some of the tries scored and attacking play was outstanding, with both forwards and backs being extremely comfortable with the ball in hand. Vice-Captain Ted Clarke showed how powerful and dynamic he is with the ball in a 31 - 7 victory away at RGS Worcester. The annual Warwick School fixture was another titanic battle. Sadly, the 1st XV lost 31 – 36 but the players should be very proud of their efforts and applications on the pitch. The 1st XV achieved notable success in the National Plate after a 40 – 14 victory over Cheadle Hulme School, meaning the team would continue in the tournament after the Christmas break. Robert Burnett had an outstanding game and continued to show how strong he is over the ball and in the loose with the ball in hand. The last fixture of the term coincided with the annual Old Boys fixture, of which the school won 26 – 21 in a very competitive game played in the right spirit. It was great to see so many Old Silhillians attend the game and enjoy the post-match hospitality in the Refectory.

With the mocks finishing in January, it was time for the annual Covill Cup, held at Bournville RFC against a combined King Edwards Schools Foundation team. The game was extremely competitive, and it took till the dying seconds of the game for Solihull to take the lead, with Joshua Reynolds diving over in the corner to silence the large and boisterous crowd, taking the win 22 – 19. Sean Conway and Robert Burnett both had great games, with Upper Fifth pupil Billy Clark making his 1st XV debut at scrum half. At this time of the year we were made aware of the Semi Final opponent, Uppingham School, away at the end of February. With many schools only playing 7s in the spring term there was a need for the squad to remain match fit and prepared for the next six weeks. Luckily, we were able to arrange a 'friendly' vs Bromsgrove School at Stourbridge RFC. In a fast, action-packed game, the lead changed hands several times, and Solihull were looking to camp in the Bromsgrove 22 for the last five minutes and work to get a penalty or try. However, Bromsgrove scored a breakaway try to win the game 26-19. Both Sam Harding and Harry Pemberton put in excellent performances and the game was exactly the preparation needed for the National Semi Final. The team travelled to Uppingham on 29 February, well rested and prepared for what would be a tough task in front of bagpipes and what seemed the whole school on the touchline. The 1st XV managed to weather the strong Uppingham scrum and lineout, and gained an advantage in these areas as the game progressed. Throughout the game Jake Evans made several important tackles on the wing, one of which saved a certain try. Joshua Reynolds used his strength and power to gain many metres with the ball in hand, and yet again Harry Pemberton and Sam Harding were making significant impacts whenever they had the ball. At 12-12 going into the final minutes, the 1st XV knew that a draw would take them through to the final as they were the away team. However, an Uppingham turnover and break down the left touchline led to a try for Uppingham in the last play of the game. In what was an extremely emotional and heartbreaking defeat, the 1st XV should be proud of how they conducted themselves at the final whistle and shortly afterwards when sitting with the opposition for tea - a credit to the school and the badge.

In what was a highly successful and enjoyable season, it is always difficult to highlight individuals for praise as 29 players represented the 1st XV this season. However, the tremendous efforts of the Upper Sixth to create a strong culture of hard work, commitment and ambition has to be highlighted and applauded. In particular, I would like to thank Harry Pemberton, Ted Clarke, Joshua Reynolds, Jack Gallagher and Sean Conway for their work as a senior leadership group. Lastly, I would like to pay a personal thanks to Matt Gallagher. As a player, parent and coach Matt has given a hugely significant contribution to Solihull School rugby over the years and has played a large part in the development of the current UV1th. Matt is a source of great inspiration for all the players in the Senior Division, and I will forever be thankful for his support, camaraderie, and friendship this season.

*Mr B Richmond*



## Sport

### 2nd Rugby XV

What a year! A really spirited season resulted in some very pleasing performances led from the front by the UVI and in particular captain Oli Rees, before he succumbed to injury and leadership duties were handed over to Harry France, both captains engineered a never say die, which saw the best qualities drawn not only from their immediate peers but also from the new Lower Sixth as they passed on the baton and the spirit associated with second team rugby.

The first half term saw the team go undefeated with lots of the players pushing hard for first team places. Harry France, Charles Anthony and Josh Bould leading the charge ably supported by Jack Croft, Archie Willox and Ben Barclay-Jones. This resulted in some fine wins against King Henry VII, KES Birmingham, Trent College and Queen Mary's Grammer School but perhaps the best performance was the fantastic 31-0 victory over Old Swinford Hospital which was not only a bruising encounter but saw some fine passages of play as the forwards and back linked together to good effect. This game also saw the emergence of Billy Clarke to senior rugby to good effect.

The second half of term resulted in some very pleasing performances from the omnipresent Theo Gallagher, Alfie Ellis, Ollie Ackroyd, Fin McGrellis and Nicky Ahuja, in our battles against Nottingham High School, Denstone College and RGS Worcester to name but a few games. The evident camaraderie also resulted in Zach Michael, Kieran Bown Yuvi Kanda, Akos Kog and Afonso Campino expressing themselves to good effect and further contributing to the team's success.

The measure of a good second team is measured by the number of boys, including Gus Clarke who went on to represent the 1st XV during their memorable season too.

Finally, it is only right to acknowledge the attitude, skill and commitment to all those players who represented the 2nd XV with such passion and dedication this year. Thank you for all your hard work and perseverance and good luck to everyone next year.

*Mr M Covill*

### U16 Rugby Player Report

Our final season of rugby as a year group has come to an end, and it was one of the most successful and enjoyable years we have spent as a squad. The team showed character and fight through difficult moments, turning losses into victories and making lasting memories that we can look back on and be proud of.

The season started with a trip to Bloxham in pre-season against a talented side with many of their boys also playing for their first team. On a hot day with tough conditions, the game went down to the wire, narrowly losing by 5 points against a team that had progressed far into the National Cup the season prior, pulling off victories against high level sides. The team showed discipline, spending lots of the game without the ball and defending well, whilst being direct and clinical in attack. It was a result that showed the team's solid defensive capabilities and was a promising sign of how the squad would develop through the season.

Following this was a 5-game unbeaten streak, against KES Birmingham (64-3), Camp Hill (47-12), Trent College (50-12), Queen Mary's second team (50-0) and Wrekin College (38-7). Through these games, it was clear to see the capability of the team with the ball in hand, using the squad's ability to create our own chances, but also capitalising on the opposition's defensive errors. The resounding victory against Trent Collage clearly conveys this, as we beat them 50-12 despite the result being a hard fought 15-15 draw a year prior to this. A standout player in this game was Dan Ryan, taking home 3 tries and a man of the match performance.

The introduction to senior rugby has allowed the team to develop and adapt to the physical nature and fast pace of rugby in the 1st XV. This showed as a number of under 16s represented the first team throughout the season. One of these players was Seb Smith, who cemented his place in the first XV from the beginning of the season and became one of their leading try scorers. Other players representing the first team were Dan Ryan, Billy Clark and Seb Bristow, demonstrating the quality the year group has to offer to senior rugby at Solihull.

Finally, a huge thank you to Mr Adams for coaching us this year, along with Mr Rigg, Mr Thompson, Mr Richmond, Mr Gallagher, Mr Joyce for all your help during training to make this such a successful season. As well as this, thank you to vice captains Charlie Fiest, Billy Clark and Seb Bristow, who displayed brilliant leadership, guiding the team through difficult moments with their support and performances.

It has been a pleasure to captain the boys during the XV's season. I look forward to seeing the boys in August to pick up where we left off, as well as introducing new additions to the side. I'm very excited for what the future holds for this group of players.

*Sam Stockdale, Lower Fifth*



### U15 Rugby Player Report

The first match we played was against Bloxham in pre-season, we played extremely well and we didn't concede. We won 50-0 with Josh Ackroyd player of the match; Solomon Graham and Isaac Stringer also performed really well. Another early highlight was our game against King Henry VIII School. We put out a strong team which resulted in a 50-0 win, Kelechi Achinivu and Max Evans both scoring hat tricks. In the next game against Old Swinford Hospital we had to shuffle the backline around with Harry Tomlin, our 10, injured, so Harry Bell stepped up and showed a fantastic performance at 10 displaying great control of the game and we won away; something which is notoriously very hard to do at OSH. We went into our first cup game against Princethorpe as the underdogs and battled the game out, Paul Savage scored a brilliant try by running relentlessly at the opposing team. We showed outstanding fitness by putting 100% effort to get to the ball when it was loose. The cup run lasted 5 games, which meant we played The Leys School in January in the last 16. James Lister had a great performance with his kicking a 100% success rate off the tee. Throughout the season, Matty Gardner was an integral player on and off the pitch, our most consistent performer, giving his all every single game. Overall, we had a very good season which gives us a great platform for next season as we progress to senior rugby. There are many other key players who I haven't mentioned who are the reason our team has done so well, and many thanks to Mr Thompson for being a great mentor and coach.

*Caiden Rees, Lower Fifth*

### U13 Rugby Player Report

The U13 rugby teams had a very successful season with many competitive fixtures being played in the A-F teams. The F team managed to play three fixtures in which they achieved victories in two out of the three games played against KES Stratford and Princethorpe. The U13 E team started off with a 13-7 loss but had a strong victory against KES Stratford. They ended the season with a loss against Princethorpe but put up a good fight. The U13D team had a difficult season as they lost four and won one. The game against KES Stratford was a challenge but the team showed their strength by managing to score a try to secure the win. The C team started off positively with a win against King's Worcester but then their skills were tested when they faced schools who were stronger in areas. They ended the season with 5 losses and two wins. The B team had a great season with a lot of fixtures. Captain Sam Raybould led his team to the end of the season with five losses, two draws and four victories. The team's strong defence played a big part especially against Bloxham where they won 50-30. Everyone played a role in this team. Patrick O'Brien played a big part in winning many scrums throughout the season. One U13B game in particular that stands out was the game against Nottingham High School. We won the game with a thrilling last minute try and were only able to do so because we persevered and were committed to each other and getting a win. That was our best performance and most enjoyable match of the season and we were rewarded by winning the 'Team of the Week' award. The A team also had a great season. It started off with an extremely hot day resulting in a disappointing loss to King's Worcester. We worked on key areas where we needed improvement and used that to achieve a 35-20 victory against KES Birmingham which we were very happy with as we lost to them in recent seasons. Veer Naga and Gethin Ruddock were key players in the defence for the team. Nick Hewett applied his pace on the wings to run around players and Bob Neary used his tactical mind to win many scrums for the team.

*Jacob Byrne, Shell Form*

# Sport

## U14 Rugby Player Report

During the season, all of our U14 teams experienced ups and downs as they progressed through the year: facing some challenging teams; suffering some difficult losses, and working hard for each other.

The A team started the season strong, ensuring a well fought victory over Bloxham during their pre-season fixture, after working hard in pre-season training sessions. As the season continued, our A team lost some difficult fixtures but managed to win most of their games overall, finishing the season with a 63%-win rate. A notable win for the team was against Old Swinford Hospital, against whom we previously lost to, where Solihull returned to take a 31-15 victory.

Our B team faced a challenging set of fixtures this season, suffering some difficult losses towards the start of the year. The team picked up from this however, managing to beat both Trent College and King Edward's School Birmingham; strong sides that even our As unfortunately lost to.

Despite there being fewer fixtures for our C team this year, the team played well, winning 2 of their 3 games and scoring 48 points against King Edward's Stratford: a strong result for the school.

*Reuben Beale-Burchell, Fourth Form*



## U12 Rugby Player Report

The A team kicked off the season against King's School Worcester where we played in 30-degree heat; we started well but drifted away. However, we came back, and it ended in a 30-30 draw. Our next game was against KES Birmingham where we had the honour to play the curtain raiser for the 1st XV and we won 25-10. Early October we met Old Swinford Hospital, which was a disappointing result, 40-35 to them. However, we were guilty of a slow start being as we were 30-5 down at half time. But we got back into the game by scoring six tries.

The B team put in an impressive performance against King Henry VIII and eventually won 35-30. Next, they played against Nottingham High School where they won 50-0 but didn't stop working right till the final whistle. Their penultimate game was against Denstone College where they drew 20-20 but the conditions were extremely muddy and had to get into the showers right away!

The C team travelled to Old Swinford Hospital and pulled off a wonderful performance eventually winning 30-20. The D team won against King Henry VIII 20-15. However, the E team didn't lose a game and the F team lost their only game.

Key players throughout the season were Timi Babajide, Joe Quantrill, William Dovey and Josh Sturdy.

*Tom Harding, Third Form*







## Rugby 7s Report

### 1st VII

Due to the successful Cup run of the 1st XV this season, the 7s season didn't get underway until the Solihull 7s at the start of March. However, although the squad had very little 7s preparation the boys got better in each game and ended up winning the title for the first time in 10 years! A nervous 10-5 win over Princethorpe College opened the campaign; with the team building momentum with victories over King Edward VI School, Stratford, and Loughborough Grammar in the group stages, meaning we would play Sandbach School in the quarter final. Although the team were very confident with the ball in hand, it was the defence that was starting to be the point of difference between the teams we were playing; Joshua Reynolds, Matthew Hemming and Jake Evans were all applying pressure in defence through either intercepting the ball or stealing it in contact. A very competitive semi final vs King Edwards Birmingham resulted in a 26 – 21 win; Captain Harry Pemberton and 7s specialist Robert Burnett were at this point in the tournament on fire and were making significant impact with the ball in hand and were showcasing their class and quality. In the final against Stamford, we came out of the blocks firing and scored 3 first half tries, blowing Stamford away with our pace and intensity; Sam Harding made a couple of game changing runs down the left wing and used his hand off and size to break through several defenders. Stamford came back well in the second half, but a try saving tackle by Sam Harding in the dying seconds of the game meant Solihull won the game 17 – 14 and thus the Solihull U18 7s title.

There was only one last opportunity to compete before the National Schools 7s and this was a 4 way round robin over at King's Worcester. Due to the amount of rain the annual King's Worcester 7s could not run as normal, so Solihull joined King's Worcester, KES Birmingham and Kings Gloucester for an informal hit out. Solihull picked up 2 wins out of 3, with Noah Maclean and Jack Gallagher setting up several tries with their breaks and awareness of space. The team travelled down to London on the Sunday night for the National Schools 7s at Rosslyn Park with a strong squad. Despite our best efforts we didn't progress through to the second day of the tournament; a comfortable win against Reading Blue Coat School was then followed by two tight losses, which was a dejecting and disappointing end to the short 7s season. Although a very short 7s campaign the squad should be very proud of their efforts, especially with winning the Solihull 7s title. To win 6 games on the day shows how much depth the squad had as it was a real team effort to get through to the final and eventually win it.

*Mr B Richmond*



## Sport

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### U16 Rugby VII Player Report

The U16 7s season got off to a slow start. We began our season at the Warwick 7s where the weather proved difficult and certainly made for a challenging tournament. In the group stage we showed some signs of promise, most notably in our final group game against Sedbergh School. We qualified for the plate competition, comfortably beating Warwick B 26-7 in the semi-final before losing narrowly to RGS Worcester in the final.

Our next major tournament was at King's Macclesfield, and it was here where we began to show some real potential. Our most impressive performance came against Stonyhurst College who we beat 29 – 12 with Billy Clark scoring a hat trick and Olly Bentley scoring an excellent break away try from the 40 yard line. We qualified from our group in second place and then played Queen Ethelburga's school in the plate semi-final. In our semi-final we lost 33-31 with the final kick of the game. Despite the disappointment of our semi-final loss, this tournament showed us the potential we had as a team and gave us some confidence heading into the Roslyn Park 7s

Going into Roslyn Park energy and excitement was high off the back of the King's Macclesfield tournament. Our opening game proved to be difficult as we went toe to toe with Sevenoaks School. We managed to win the game with the last move of the game. Zach Nijran, as he does so often, created a decisive turn over leading to the winning try. Following this narrow victory, we went on to face Reeds School on the stadium pitch live on NextGenXV. We scored early with a great team try finished by Charlie Feist's 'rapid change of pace' as dubbed by the commentators. We kept this momentum going throughout the rest of the game and put together our best 7s performance of the season. Seb Bristow showed the skill of the day with an excellent break and out the back pass to set Billy Clark up for his hat trick try. We won the Game 38-12. After beating Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet, the team finished unbeaten in the group stage and we were then drawn against last year's National Cup Winners Northampton School for Boys. The team's play in this game was testament to the growing sense of team spirit. A notable performance from Olly Byrne in defence encouraged a spirited match where we unfortunately fell just short losing by one try 28-21 and therefore missing out on day 2 of the tournament.

The U16 7s season started slowly but, throughout the season, hard work ensured that some very impressive results were achieved. We finished the season leaving our mark on the largest 7s tournament in the UK and can't wait to see what can be achieved next season.

*Billy Clark, Upper Fifth*



### U15 Rugby VII Player Report

The season began with a warm up match against Warwick School, resulting in two wins and two losses. The King's Worcester tournament was cancelled, leading the team to the KES Stratford 7s, where they won all three matches comfortably. The Warwick Sevens was also cancelled, with Kelechi Achinivu, Paul Savage and Matty Gardner stepping up to play for the U16s. At the Leicester Grammar tournament, the team persevered despite several key players missing out due to hockey commitments. Reuben Beale-Burchell and Harry Bould joined the U15s for the Macclesfield tournament, which started slowly with missed tackles and poor defence, resulting in a third-place finish in the group stage. However, the team were through to the plate, defeating Queen Mary's and avenging an earlier loss to Sandbach. In the final against Stonyhurst, they narrowly lost after a strong performance. The Solihull 7s was cancelled, but the season ended on a high at the Sibford 7s. The team advanced through the group stages on point difference winning the quarter-finals, but suffered a disappointing defeat in the last play of the semi-final. Overall, it has been a great 7s season for the U15s, who are all very grateful to their coach, Mr Thompson, for developing the team on and off the pitch.

*Paul Savage, Lower Fifth*





### U14 Rugby VII Player Report

The 7s season was a great challenge for the players selected, as the team took on some very challenging sides, winning many games and developing their overall skillset in the process. The first tournament for our A team took place at the King's School Worcester 7s, where the team won 2 of the 3 group games they played. They won their semi-final but ultimately drew in the final versus Dean Close, finishing a great 19-19 match. At the Warwick 7s the squad enjoyed a successful day, winning 3 out of the 5 games. A notable win was our first group game against Wellington College, of which we won 31 – 7. Harrison Middleton, Harry Bould and Joshua Gooderidge all had very good performances at the tournament.

Our most notable effort this year was the National 7s tournament at Rosslyn Park, where the team remained unbeaten in the group phase and progressed from there into the plate, therefore staying another night and participating in the second day before going home, proud of their success. The performances of Ben Blanco, Toby Smoldon and Michael O'Brien provided a strong base for the team to excel over the two days.

*Reuben Beale-Burchell, Fourth Form*

### U12 Rugby VII Player Report

Our first tournament was at Bishop Veseys where we played a tough couple of sides that included Bablake and KES Birmingham. We were guilty of poor defence, and this reflected in a couple of losses although we did manage grab a win against Bishop Veseys. Our next tournament was at Sibford School and this time we had a lot more confidence. We won all but one game in the group stages and went on to win our quarter final and semi final matches. Unfortunately, we lost 28-21 against a strong Winchester House in the finals, but we were happy to take second place. Some key players in Rugby Sevens were JP Dunleavy, Sam Atcheson and George Green.

*Tom Harding, Third Form*



### U13 Rugby VII Player Report

The U13 7s season started off with a comfortable training game win against Arden. Warwick 7s was a great representation of the team's skills and strengths as we came first in our group which led to us playing Warwick. This was the game that meant the most to us. George Cobb used his strength and pace to keep players away from our try line but also breaking through their defensive line. It was the last play, and we were winning 10-5. The ref announced that there was 2 minutes left. We were very tired resulting in Warwick scoring in the last play to draw. We were very disappointed but still had a game left, so we kept our hopes high. We ended up losing 25-10 to Ysgol Dyffryn Aman but we were happy with our performances as we came third in the whole tournament. Our 7s season culminated at the national tournament at Rosslyn Park. Max Brown used his true strength in our defensive lines, and Ethan Mills used his pace on the wings to score many tries. With only one narrow loss, we managed to top our group, which was a fantastic achievement for the team and a fitting end to a progressive season of rugby as we look to build on this next season. All players are grateful for the time and effort that Mr Leaney, Mr Richmond and the coaching staff have put in this year.

*Jacob Byrne, Shell Form*



## 1st XI Boys' Hockey

The initial target for the season was to qualify for the knock out phase of the England Hockey U18 Tier 1 National Competition, after having come so close to doing this the previous season. The competition is run on a league format comprising of 3 leagues; the top 2 from each league qualified automatically for the quarter-finals, along with the two best third placed teams. We had 7 opponents to play; 3 at home and 4 away. We started the campaign with a home match versus Oakham School, which we won comfortably 6-0. Our next fixture took us on the road to Ipswich. We knew that this was going to be a tough task against a top hockey school. In atrocious conditions, we played superbly well but found it hard to put the finishing touch onto the end of some fantastic play. With a minute left, Jacob Lee pounced on a rebound to score from close range to seal a 2-1 win. This was a tremendous win and gave the team plenty of confidence moving forwards. Next up was an away fixture at Rugby; this proved to be a tough match that saw us come through as 3-1 winners. The final Tier 1 fixture of the first half of the season was away at Repton; this proved to be a very high level of school sport. We had the better of the 1st half and went into the break 2-0 up. The second half saw Repton come back into the match, pulling one back soon after half time. With not long left and against the run of play, we squandered 2 fantastic opportunities to put the game to bed. This came back to hurt us, with Repton equalising with 45 seconds left on the clock. The final score was a 2-2 draw. After Christmas, we travelled to Gresham's School; this was a tense affair and was a match that we dominated but struggled to take the game away from the opposition. We held our nerve and came out on top by 2-0. Our final 2 matches in the league were to be played at home. To qualify for the last 8, we needed 4 points from the 2 fixtures which we managed after a 0-0 draw with Norwich and a 4-0 win over Denstone College. This meant that we finished 2nd in our league.

The knock out stage of the Tier 1 saw us get a home quarter-final draw against last season's finalists, St. George's Weybridge. There was a tremendous atmosphere for the match, with a good-sized crowd gathered to see if Solihull could make it through to the Tier 1 finals day at the Olympic Park. Solihull had much the better of the 1st half, but trailed 1-0 at the break. It was felt that we had been a little safe in possession and that we needed to 'throw caution to the wind' during the second half. The team played extremely well and deserved to take a 2-1 lead, only to concede against the run of play with ten to go. Despite this, the team continued to push, but couldn't beat the inspired St. George's goalkeeper. The score remained at 2-2 and the game ended a draw. This took the match into penalty shuffles. We felt confident going into this, as we had spent time practising for this eventuality. Sadly for us, St. George's came out on top winning the shoot out 5-4. This was a tough pill to swallow, as the team has performed so well on the day.

This left the team with the ISHC U19 cup to play for. Up to this point of the season we had enjoyed victories over Ratcliffe College and Bishop Vesey GS. The next round saw us play Calday Grange GS from the Wirral; we dominated the match and came through as 2-0 victors. This took us through to the quarter-final with a home tie against Yarm School. They were a tough opponent and some very good goalkeeping by Thomas Bavin kept them at bay. At the other end, Solihull took chances and won the match 4-1. This took us through to



finals day at Nottingham Hockey Centre. We were drawn to play Whitgift School in the semi-final, who had recently won the final of Tier 1. We took the lead early on with a Caspar Lea drag flick, only to be pegged back by the very efficient and well drilled Whitgift. We lost the game 1-4, having seen at first hand the level we need to get to if we wish to win a national competition in the future. All of the fixtures outside of Tier 1 and the ISHC cup were won.

As ever, the Bath Hockey Festival was a fitting way to end the season. For the first time, we took 2 teams to this, which definitely added to the occasion. The team played superbly well, winning all 4 matches, including a tough battle on the Friday afternoon at KES Bath in front of the whole of their school.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the UVI leavers that have played for the 1st XI at some stage this season – Ryan Bates, Thomas Bavin, Benjamin Blakemore, Samuel Broome, James Hawkins, William Hodge, Sebastian Jones, Caspar Lea, Noah Lea, Jacob Lee, Louis Taylor - for their dedication to the hockey programme during their time at the school; they have certainly set the standard for future year groups to live up to. I am truly grateful for all that you have done to improve the level of hockey being played at the school. You have been a tremendous year group to work with and I wish you all the best for the future.

Caspar Lea captained the team; he set the example for the rest to follow both on and off the field of play. Caspar was ably supported by Jacob Lee in his role as vice-captain. The pair were outstanding performers throughout the season. William Hodge and Louis Taylor were awarded full sports colours, Samuel Broome received half sports colours.

Over the course of the season 27 players were used, with 12 of those getting on the score sheet. The team scored 131 goals and conceded 27; Caspar Lea top scored with 43 goals, Ryan Bennett 25, James Hawkins 19, Jacob Lee 14, Louis Taylor 9 and Ruthvik Morajkar 8.

We have had two players achieve international honours this season: Caspar Lea with England U18 and Ryan Bennett with England U16. Congratulations to the both of you; we are proud of your achievements.

Thank you to Mr Leonard and Mr Brotherhood for their very able assistance in running the team, to Mr Maddy for the athletic development sessions, to Jon Cloke and Stephen Tabb for umpiring and to William Evans for his help running the team on match days. I would like to give a special mention to Samuel Broome for continuing to support the team at both training and matches, despite his season being cut short due to injury. To those players that will be with us again, let's build on what we achieved this season.

This team proved themselves to be the best we have had in my time here at the school. Congratulations and thank you for a truly memorable season.

*Mr C Mayer*



## 2nd XI Boys' Hockey Player Report

The 2nd XI carried their unstoppable momentum from the 2022/23 season into 2023/24, playing a total of 23 matches and achieving an impressive record of 19 wins, 2 draws, and 2 losses, with a remarkable goal difference of 67. We opened the season with a commanding 7-0 victory against The Manchester Grammar School, followed by a resounding 7-1 win over Warwick School, setting a high benchmark for the standard of hockey expected throughout the season.

The team played high tempo, controlled and structured hockey, anchored by goalkeepers Zak Shareef and James Scurlock. Adil Uddin skilfully navigated the back line, while Archie Willox and Tom O'Connor worked seamlessly in midfield providing structure for the team. Leading the very clinical front line was the ever-reliable Dan Palmer and Ryan Bates.

Throughout the season, the team demonstrated significant development displaying extraordinary character, chemistry, and individual excellence against some challenging opponents. The highlight of the season was the match against Tier 1 Princethorpe College, where Solihull found themselves 1-0 down in the game despite early domination of possession and chances. The game quickly became heated, but after a spirited half time team talk led by Mr Brotherhood and Mr Raza Solihull's anger turned into determination which resulted in an enthralling comeback, winning the game 3-1 and showcasing outstanding composure and teamwork.

This resilience was echoed in the final game of the season (before the Bath Festival) against King Edward's School, Birmingham, where Solihull, trailing 3-0 at half time, displayed exceptional energy and perseverance to secure a 4-3 win, highlighting the team's talent and skills. To end a riveting season, the team participated in the Bath Festival where after a slow start, drawing 1-1 to Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Solihull picked themselves up and won the remaining games on tour. It has been a very impressive and successful season with many moments of magic and the boys should be very proud of themselves but it wouldn't have been possible without the expert guidance of Mr Raza and Mr Brotherhood. Well done to everyone involved!

*Muhammad Ali, Upper Sixth*

## 3rd XI Boys' Hockey Player Report

It has been a very successful season for the 3rd XI with an unbeaten record with only 1 draw. This year the team has put in great effort and the drive was unstoppable. The draw came when we played KES Birmingham towards the start of the season when the team was still in the making. The first half started a bit wobbly where we conceded but after an encouraging half time talk given to us by Mr Babb and Mr Brough we brought the game back in the second half to equalise ending in a 1-1 draw. When we visited local rivals Warwick after Christmas, due to a previous cancelled match it was sure to be a tough and exciting match. Mr Babb and Mr Brough's half time talks seemed to be a regular occurrence at this point boosting the team back into action in the second half which resulted in us achieving a well-deserved 2-1 win. It has been a pleasure being able to captain the team this year and I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

*Dominic Higgins, Lower Sixth*



## 4th XI Boys' Hockey

This year, the Boys 4th XI Hockey team have further improved on last year's excellent season, resulting in twelve wins from fifteen games. This is particularly impressive given matches were often against other schools' 1st or 2nd XI teams. Some highlights were a 9-1 victory over Warwick School and a 12-2 win against King Edward's School, Birmingham.

The pupils demonstrated unfailing enthusiasm and a respectful attitude whether winning or losing, whilst Thomas Evans' continued captaincy helped bring the team together. Armaan's powerful shooting proved to be the deciding factors on numerous occasions, and Dillon's goalkeeping was consistently effective, leading to multiple clean sheets across the season. Alex Rooney completed his final season for the 4th XI and his calmness in defence has been undisputedly important throughout this season. Whilst every pupil involved can't be listed, this year has been one where every team member has made major contributions and proved valuable in a variety of matches.

It was pleasing to see the pupils' development throughout the season, with some players making the move up to the 3rd XI thanks to their efforts. The squad had many Upper Fifth pupils, which bodes well for the future, both in terms of the 4th XI becoming stronger, and those pupils feeding into the higher teams in the next year or two.

Overall, it has been a season to be proud of, with one of the most impressive set of results, but also strength of squad to my memory.

*Mr C Mayer*

## 5th XI Boys' Hockey

The fifth team were mainly made up of Upper Fifth and on many occasions played fourth and third XIs and on some occasions, 2nd team XIs. Over the season, individuals worked hard to improve their skills and the team work improved greatly with match practice.

Many of the teams we played were quite surprised by the competitiveness of the team.

We played Warwick School Fifts, in a four match series, winning all 4 games, which is always very satisfying! There were some excellent goals scored throughout the season by many of the players. The most memorable was the only goal we scored against Bablake Thirds in the first 5 minutes, we moved the ball with five quick accurate passes, using the full width of the pitch from a 16 yard restart, culminating in a slap shot on the run by Will Hughes, beating the goalkeeper in the air. The opposition were left stranded. A goal worthy of the First XI. I thoroughly enjoyed the season and must thank Matthew Parker for his excellent captaincy and leadership. I am sure the majority of the team will be playing at a higher level next year.

*Mr N Leaney*

### U15A Boys' Hockey Player Report

With many different teams playing this year, it meant that there was a chance for lots of players to play hockey, no matter the ability, and clear improvement was shown throughout the season from all teams. This was clear when comparing statistics from this year and last year, in which the C team won 8 and drew 2 out of 13 games this year, a massive improvement from the 4 wins and 1 draw from 5 games last season. Also, the B team's improvement was clearly on display when facing tough opponents, such as filling in for the A team in the county cup when they were resting for a national cup game the day after, and rose to the higher standards very well, with some tight results against A teams from other schools. Furthermore, with some of the boys from the A team missing some of the fixtures, this meant that some of the more usual B team players such as Dan Graham and Isaac Stringer played some games in the A team, in which they both impressed, with Dan having an impressive goalscoring record of scoring in every game but one he played in, as well as Isaac having a significant contribution to the defence. The U15A again had a very impressive record, losing only 2 games with the full-strength side, and the national cup was back after not entering in U14, in which we had a good run, reaching the quarter finals. Our first game was a comprehensive 5-0 victory at home over Trent College, and then followed with an impressive 7-3 victory over KES Birmingham, a special mention to Paul, James and Matty, all three strikers who were on great form that day, helping us move to the next round. Round 3 saw us travel to Sandbach, and despite scarily going down 1-0, the lads worked very hard and got a goal back quickly through a penalty flick scored by Toby Bavin. Once we were back in the game, we played around their defence playing excellent passing hockey, as well as being tight in defence, leading to a comfortable 6-1 win. However, just like in u13s, our cup run ended in the quarter finals, this time due to a 5-2 loss against Whitgift away from home. Although the boys will all feel like we didn't take enough from the game, two well worked goals finished by Jake and Paul left us something to take from the loss, as well as an excellent performance by Flynn Bayliss, battling well at the back and staying calm and skilful on the ball. Although the A team felt like more could've come from the season, for all U15 boys' hockey teams there was huge improvement and success, and overall, it was a season to be proud of.

*Finlay Davies, Lower Fifth*

### U15B Boys' Hockey Player Report

It was fun and rewarding playing for the hockey U15B squad this year. We had plenty of ups and downs and we overcame many challenges.

The main challenge was the county tournament A team tournament where we played against KES Birmingham and Princethorpe. With an unfortunate loss against KES Birmingham, we tried to stay in the tournament, but due to a 0-0 draw we got knocked out.

As disappointing as this was, as a B team we maintained our enthusiasm and improved as team. In total, over 40 players represented the U15B team this year and by the end of the season we were playing some good hockey.

Impressive victories against Warwick on three separate occasions, KES Birmingham and Trent being the highlights of the year.

As we transition into senior hockey next year, we will look back at this season with fond memories.

Thank you to Mr Maddy and Mr Raza for their continued support, help and advice.

*Marcus Groutage, Lower Fifth*

### U14 Boys' Hockey Player Report

This year, our A team played 18 games, winning 9, losing 5, and drawing 4.

We started the year with a hard-fought 4-3 victory over KES Birmingham, then faced Warwick school in the national cup, sadly losing to the better team on the day 8-2. However, we came back strong beating Malvern college 9-1, with their only goal coming from our own keeper Will S heading it in.

After a bye for the plate round of 16, we went to Ratcliffe College for the north quarter-final and secured a 3-0 win, progressing to the north semis.

We then faced Repton school, losing 5-3, followed by a 2-1 win against Loughborough, and losses to Warwick (6-1), Bishop Vesey's (6-2) as well as a 1-1 draw with Dean Close. In the north semi-final, we had another strong performance, winning 6-0 against Altrincham Grammar School, sending us through to the north final, where we won a close game against Manchester Grammar School, 2-1, with goals from Henry T and Gus. Moving on to the national plate semi-final, we came up against a tough side from Felsted School, losing 4-2, which on the day could've gone either way, sending us out of the plate. Overall, we've had a great year and hope to improve even more next year.

Our B team also had a great year playing 16 games with only 2 losses, 4 draws, and 10 wins. A highlight of the season for us all was the pre-season Holland tour, which set us off in great stead for the year and filled us with confidence as we won two and lost one against the Dutch sides. Thank you to all the coaches who have helped and guided us through the season. We hope to do even better next year.

*Gus Lea, Fourth Form*



### Junior Boys' Hockey Tour to Holland

The annual hockey tour to the Netherlands took place during the first week of the October half term. This year, the touring party comprised three playing squads of U13 and U14 boys (44 boys altogether).

Upon arrival, the boys soon immersed themselves into Dutch hockey culture when they joined with the girls' touring party to watch a top-flight Hoofdklasse Hockey match - Amsterdam Ladies took on HDM Dames at Wagener Stadium.



### U13 Boys' Hockey Player Report

Over the hockey season, the A-team has been highly successful with getting to the 3rd round of the plate, maintaining a 2D-7W-7L Record in Hockey 7s and a 1D-1L-4W in Hockey 11s. We started off with a few losses yet we stayed composed, improving in the middle of the season with a mix of wins, losses and draws then prevailed at the end of the season with 4 wins. In 11s we had a triumphant win against Trent College who we had previously drawn 0-0 ultimately showing that we have improved considerably over the season.

As a team, we have improved on our quick passes working the ball out wide and on our work rate. As the season progressed, our players have progressed with it for example Nick and Toby have been exceptional in attack, scoring many goals and providing chances on goal. We have also seen our back row defend the goal with great success and Seb Hemmings has been dominant in Goal. Furthermore, our Midfielders carried out great distribution of the ball keeping morale high and sometimes assisting with the Goal Scoring.

However, for next season we need to work on our attitude and focus on the pitch, we need to be more organized in attack and when we receive the ball, we need to have pre-scanned to make our play smoother.

*George Cobb, Shell Form*

From that point forward, the boys made the most of a hockey intensive week, which included several training sessions, one of which was run by HC Bloemendaal coaches who introduced some good, varied drills. Each of the squads played four matches against some well-matched opposition; leading to some keenly fought contests. As ever, the Dutch clubs were extremely welcoming and, as well as enjoying the hockey, the boys socialised well with their hosts during post-match meals.

Between matches, the touring party enjoyed itself during visits to Amsterdam City Centre, a tour of the Johan Cruyff Arena and the annual visit to Duinrell Amusement Park and the 'Tikibad' water park – another chance for the boys to meet up with the girls' touring party. Additionally, the boys had the opportunity to spend a few Euros in the Jumbo Hockey Store – an 'Aladdin's Cave' of hockey equipment - located at the FC Utrecht stadium.

As with previous years, the tour was enjoyed by all, with the boys' hockey displaying great progress over the week. Well done to all the boys who played and represented the school admirably.

Lastly, a massive thanks to all the staff for giving up their time and, in particular, to Mr Mayer for organising another successful trip.

*Mr S Mitchell*



### U12 Boys' Hockey Player Report

The 23/24 season was an extremely successful one for the U12 boys' hockey teams. We kicked off our campaign against our rivals, Warwick School. After a convincing victory and a goal-fest, we went home the happier of the sides with a 9-0 win. Unfortunately, the B and C teams lost in competitive fixtures that could have gone either way. It was a positive start to the season for all teams involved.

We carried this momentum into our upcoming fixtures which would be a round-robin tournament against KES, Warwick, and Bishop Vesey's. We were once again victorious and looked forward to our clash against Bromsgrove. The B team got their revenge on Warwick with an exhilarating 10-0 win. Bromsgrove were an organized team with many talented individuals, but we came out on top with a thrilling 5-1 win. The B team were once again winners and so was the C team.

The A team advanced past Trent College and Bablake remaining unbeaten. We then faced our toughest challenge to date, the Solihull U13's. We went behind early before scoring 2 goals to take the lead. However, due to a piece of individual brilliance, the U13's got a late equalizer, and we would have to settle for a draw. What a game!

This was to be an important step in our stride as we won back-to-back games. We then faced Dean Close U12 A team. This was a highly anticipated fixture due to our incredibly competitive meetings last year in the Midlands IAPS and the National IAPS. It was another thrilling game with brilliant hockey on display from both sides. Thankfully, we got the better of them in a very close 3-1 win.

After another win against Newcastle Under Lyme, both the A and the B teams were to play in their county tournaments. We did the school justice as the B team won theirs beating numerous A teams and our A team also won securing them a spot in the Midlands' finals.

The A team just kept winning as we dominated Nottingham High School in a 9-0 victory. We used this as motivation towards our upcoming regional competition. After playing some wonderful hockey, we took home gold beating Denstone 4-0 in the final.

This brought to a close our hockey sevens season, but we still had one more game to play. This was an 11 a side tie against Trent College which we won 4-0.

This was a season all the boys should be very proud of. After every game, no matter the result, we gained strength and improved. The A team went unbeaten all season which is a remarkable achievement. The teams representing the Solihull U12s were very successful and gave a good representation of our school. The A team played 17; drew 1; won 16 and scored an incredible 78 goals. The B's played 17; won 13; drew 2; and lost 2; scoring an even better total of 83 goals. The C team played 12; won 6; drew 2; and lost 4. What a season! Many thanks to Mr Brotherhood, Mr Mayer, Mr Guy and Mr Macarthur for your coaching and support.

*William Dovey, Third Form*

# Teams of the Week 2023-2024

## Christmas Term

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. U13B Boys' Rugby Team                 | Excellent team performance in their victory against King Henry VIII School, Coventry                |
| 2. U12A & B Girls' Netball Teams         | Excellent team performance against strong opposition from King's School, Worcester                  |
| 3. Solihull Ski Team                     | A great team effort at the ESSKIA Regional Finals   |
| 4. U16 Netball Team                      | A fantastic performance at the Sisters n Sport Pre-season Tournament                                |
| 5. U12 Cross Country Team                | A terrific team performance in the first Solihull Race League                                       |
| 6. Shell Form Mindfulness Skills Team    | Delivering an amazing mindfulness training assembly at St Alphege Infant School                     |
| 7. The Recital Team                      | An exceptional lunchtime concert at St Alphege Church   |
| 8. Cast & Crew of 9 Teens                | Four fantastic nights of drama, dance and music   |
| 9. Saxophony Team                        | A fantastic performance at the Jericho Foundation Event   |
| 10. Fourth Form & CCF Charity Teams      | A fantastic team effort bag-packing and selling poppies for Remembrance                             |
| 11. CCF Cadets                           | Excellent conduct during the Remembrance Day Service  |
| 12. The Design Team                      | Excellent teamwork by in the RC Memorial Tree Design Competition                                    |
| 13. The Ski Team                         | Fantastic team performance in the British Finals of the SSSA Dryslope Championships                 |
| 14. The Chemists                         | A terrific team performance in the Top of the Bench Chemistry Competition                           |
| 15. Faith Ambassadors                    | Great role models of interfaith dialogue during Inter Faith Week                                    |
| 16. Chapel Choristers, Readers & Helpers | A fantastic service of Nine Lessons & Carols  |
| 17. Running Club                         | A fantastic team effort showing great perseverance throughout the term                              |
| 18. Girls' 1st XI Hockey Team            | A terrific team performance in the Independent Schools' Cup Competition                             |
| 19. U14 Girls' Hockey Team               | Excellent team performance in the England Hockey T1 Cup Competition                                 |
| 20. U15A Boys' Rugby Team                | A fantastic team effort and victory against OSH in the National Vase Competition                    |
| 21. 1st XV Boys' Rugby Team              | An excellent team effort and victory against Cheadle Hulme School in the National Plate Competition |

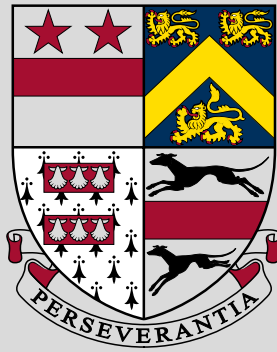
## Easter Term

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|------------------------------------|---|
| 22. Sixth Form Medics              | For their maturity, community spirit and modelling responsible citizenship whilst co-facilitating important RSE lessons to younger pupils |
| 23. Lower Sixth Form Team          | Excellent team effort showing enthusiasm and a mature approach in the Ethics Cup competition  |
| 24. Fourth Form Helpers            | Excellent role models assisting with the J3 History and English Workshop  |
| 25. Switch Newspaper Team          | A fantastic team effort editing & publishing the first edition of the Solihull Switch Newspaper   |
| 26. Lower Sixth Form House Singers | Excellent role models assisting with the Prep School House Singing Competition  |
| 27. Engineering Enrichment Team    | For their engagement and excellent project work at the EDT Engineering  |
| 28. Debaters                       | Fantastic team effort in their Debating Competitions  |
| 29. Cast & Crew of Les Misérables  | Four fantastic nights of drama, music and dance   |
| 30. Heritage Week Helpers          | An excellent team effort setting up the Heritage Week Fair  |
| 31. U12 Boys' Hockey Team          | A great team performance at the County Championships  |
| 32. Food & Nutrition Team          | For creating and preparing an amazing three course dinner   |
| 33. U16 Netball Team               | A brilliant team performance at the Nationals   |

## Summer Term

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|--|---|
| 34. Lower School Maths Team                  | A brilliant team effort at the Regional Finals of the Team Maths Challenge 2024   |
| 35. The Senior Bench                         | A fantastic team effort for 2023-2024   |
| 36. Cast & Crew of The Senior Dance Showcase | A fantastic evening showcasing Dance Society pieces   |
| 37. Girls' U15 Cricket Team                  | Winners of the Midlands Girls' U15 Indoor Championships   |
| 38. The Diana Award Volunteers               | A remarkable achievement receiving their Anti-Bullying Ambassador Community Badge   |
| 39. Lower Fifth Helpers                      | For their teamwork, initiative and leadership skills and acting as excellent role models at the J1 Senses in Worship workshop |
| 40. U17 XI Cricket Team                      | A fantastic team performance in their victory against St Peter's School, York   |
| 41. Boys' Ski Team                           | A fantastic team performance at the ESSKIA Indoor Championships   |
| 42. Girls' U17 Cricket Team                  | A terrific team performance, retaining their position as National Plate Champions   |





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