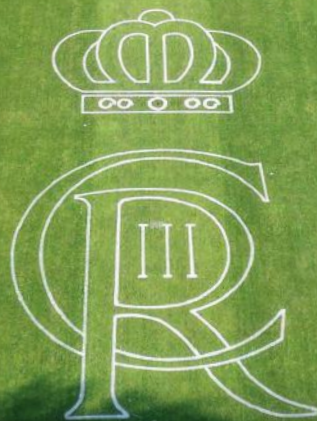


# Shenstonian

2022-2023



SOLIHULL



*One of the great schools of England*



**SOLIHULL**

# Contents

Shenstonian 2023

<b>Teaching Staff 2022 - 2023</b> .....	Page 2
<b>Executive Headmaster's Report</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Pupil Leaders</b> .....	Page 4
<b>Development and Alumni Relations Office</b> .....	Page 6
<b>From the Archivist</b> .....	Page 8
<b>SSPA</b> .....	Page 9
<b>University and College Entries 2022</b> .....	Page 10
<b>A Level and GCSE Results Days 2023</b> .....	Page 12
<b>Leavers 2023</b> .....	Page 16
<b>Valetes</b> .....	Page 21
<b>School Chapel</b> .....	Page 30
<b>Coronation Celebrations</b> .....	Page 31
<b>Remembrance 2022</b> .....	Page 34
<b>Community Relations</b> .....	Page 36
<b>Wellbeing and Personal Development</b> .....	Page 40
<b>Prep School Art</b> .....	Page 42
<b>Prep School</b> .....	Page 58
<b>Birthday Celebrations</b> .....	Page 82
<b>Food and Nutrition</b> .....	Page 83
<b>Academic Enrichment</b> .....	Page 84
<b>Music</b> .....	Page 92
<b>Performing Arts</b> .....	Page 104
<b>Outdoor Education</b> .....	Page 112
<b>House Report</b> .....	Page 120
<b>Senior School Art</b> .....	Page 122
<b>Prep School Sport</b> .....	Page 140
<b>Sport, Health and Fitness</b> .....	Page 146
<b>Sport Tours</b> .....	Page 174
<b>Trips</b> .....	Page 182
<b>Teams of the Week</b> .....	Page 192

## Teaching Staff 2022 - 2023

1990	M J Covill	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
1991	S A Morgan		
1992			
1993		2016	T A Farnell; K C Hull; G James; H Martens; O L Parsons; Z A Patching-Jones; A Raza; C A Rich; J T Sixsmith; A Thacker; D J Whiting
1994	N W S Leonard; A C Roll		
1995	D H Parker		
1996	E Pimlott	2017	M D Davies; P K Deu; C M Dignon; J C Francis; S Grove; A J Jennings; R A Jennings; G Lowe; V Patel; J L Platt; A R J Poole; H Roberts; L E M Rooney; E A Shearing; J A Spraggett; Z Zhou
1998	U Mynette		
1999	M P Babb; S A Hart		
2000			
2001	J S Brown		
2002	N J Atkins; C I Mayer	2018	M H Briggs; D Brotherhood; A Y Burt; R S Chillcott; S L Chillcott; A V Coste; H E Davidson; K Higginson; A J Macarthur; R Noon; D C Rice; A Rudge; R G Windmill
2003	M Bishop; T J Bryan; J Johnson; A R Lancaster; M P Penney; H Winn		
2004	O W H Bate; D L Buckle; P A Delaney; S D Watton		
2005	G J Affleck; N E Corbett; G Cureton; S G Mitchell; S J Thompson	2019	J Ashton; J C Clark; A C Eden; J L Elkington; J F E Everling; C J Guy; N M Linehan; C J Ridout; K L Robinson; L J Webb; A C Wilkie
2006	P G May		
2007	C Bednall; J E Humphreys; M van Alderwegen	2020	C J Dossett; H L Grace; J C Hart; N C Leeson; J S Litwinko; T A MacKenzie; S McGuire; H C Peat; S Stout; J D Walker
2008	O R Anderton; E A M Campbell; T A Gallagher; E M Inglis; J R Massarella; C M McArthur; H J Middleton; D G Morgan; P E Morgan; H E P Smith; R F Speirs	2021	E Carne; R Hill-Brown; E Jansen van Rensburg; J Mohammed; E L Saunders; L Tat; S J Vaughan; S D Waldron
2009	H M Fair		
2010	L M Harper; D E J J Lloyd; L J Lynch; D E Penney; S R Phillips; P F Spratley	2022	E M Baker; H E Coleman; C B Fillingham; J W Henderson; B G A Richmond; J E Sainsbury; J M Smith; R L Taylor; M R Yates
2011	C L Black; D J Brough; T B Emmet; S L S Farnan		
2012	R E Airdrie; J C Bernamont; N L Evans; S E Foster; C H Goodman; L J Rutherford; J L Mander; R Morgan; K E Stafford; D Wana		
2013	N J Dickerson; H K Hallworth; K M Harris; I Igoe; M D Jones; D L Maddy; R Trainor		
2014	M S Gledhill; S E Haley; J A Hands; A T Kermod; W L Meigh; C E Mollison; F S Ryland; R H Smith		



## From the Headmaster's Study

Dear Silhillians, Parents, Carers and Friends,

### Welcome to The Shenstonian 2023!

As we turn the pages of this magazine, we find ourselves not just flipping through images and text, but travelling back in time to revisit the moments which have shaped our shared journey at Solihull School over this last school year. This yearbook is a mosaic of memories, achievements, and growth – a testament to the collective spirit that defines us as a community.

I would like to begin by paying tribute to David Lloyd, my predecessor as Headmaster at this wonderful school. During his 12 years of distinguished service, the school grew in terms of number of pupils; it merged with Saint Martin's; it weathered a pandemic; new buildings were built, high academic achievements were cemented; and great sporting successes were seen. Mr Lloyd took particular pleasure in expanding the bursary provision at Solihull School and, under his leadership, a large number of pupils from less financially-advantaged backgrounds had the opportunity to study and learn at this prestigious school. On a personal note, David and his wife Debbie offered a warm welcome to me and my family for which I am grateful. The Lloyds are now living on the Isle of Wight and they are thriving in the next stage of their lives. I wish them every future joy.

As I reflect on my two terms as the new Headmaster of Solihull School, I am struck by the genuine sense of belonging which I have experienced and the warmth of welcome. The sense of community both within the school itself and in our wider circle of alumni and friends is unparalleled. It is a privilege to be part of this school and to welcome you to this year's edition of *The Shenstonian*.

The Shenstonian captures the essence of our experiences, both big and small. In its pages, you will see snapshots of laughter shared during breaks, the focussed determination in classrooms, and the exhilaration of victories on the sports field or stage. This publication is a mirror reflecting the myriad colours of our journey, from the challenges that tested us to the triumphs that rewarded our efforts.

The Shenstonian serves as a marker of growth and transformation. Those who have left Solihull School this year and who have now transitioned on to broader horizons, will see their stories, etched into these pages. Your school life is the foundation upon which you can build your future and we will follow your progress with great interest.

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I would like to extend my thanks to those who have worked so hard to compile and edit this year's Shenstonian. I should also like to thank the staff and volunteers who stand alongside and behind the many achievements which are shown in this magazine.

With all best wishes,

*Mr C B Fillingham*

# Pupil Leaders



## 2022 - 2023 Bench

Introducing some key members of our Sixth Form Community, our Heads of School, our Benchers and our House Captains.



## Heads of School

The Head of School for the 2022-2023 academic year was William Black and his deputies were Piers Kemp, Kaitlin Pragnell Biggs, Hana Ali and Harvey Blackhurst.



## House Captains

Fetherston: Jack Brennan and Anna Whitmarsh  
 Jago: Fynlee Hateley and Anesu Mkwangwanya  
 Pole: Tom King and Sarah Gahan  
 Shenstone: John Jennings and Pippa Meigh  
 Windsor: James Cartwright and Jennifer Storey



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 – George Green and Claudie Sadler
- Easter Term – Huw D’Arcy Ryan and Kenza Hamaoui
- Summer Term – Caleb Lobo and Layla Morris

**Prep School Prime Minister**

During the Summer term, five eager candidates were selected to compete to become Prep School Prime Minister. After presenting their pledges and canvassing for supporters in the lead up to election day on 17 May, votes were counted and the close fought contest saw Zara O’Neil victorious with a host of exciting ideas. Well done to Zara and the other four pupils; Rhea Pal, Husna Habib, Eva Shipley and Isla Maidment who were all very worthy candidates!



Easter Term



Summer Term

**Head of School Council**



Kitty O’Sullivan



# 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 their 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. Attendees at The OSA London Dinner, held at Caledonian Club this summer, ranged in age from 21- 81. It was a wonderful event, old friendships were rekindled and new ones made.



*Rachael Speirs (Senior School Deputy Head), Lucy Lunt (Director of Development and Alumni Relations), Ellie Ajao (Shenstone 2012-2018, Patron of The Silhillian Fund), Professor Albin Cofone (Friend of Solihull), Tom Serle (Shenstone 2007-2018), Kumbi Mkwangwanya (Fetherston 2015-2017) and Lili Mistry (Shenstone 2007-2017)*

We are delighted to have reconnected with Richard who came back to school to talk about his life and career with our Head of English, Dr Stuart Hart. Richard also took time to hold a seminar for our A Level English students on their set texts, and has generously agreed to play a central role in our Shakespeare Festival in 2024, which will include him in conversation with Dame Eileen Atkins.



One of the great joys of working at Solihull is reuniting old friends and colleagues – enabling them, after decades of silence, to reach out across the years and reconnect over shared happy memories of school life. A great example of this came after a fascinating visit to one of our most illustrious alumni, the theatre director and international professor and lecturer Richard Digby Day (Pole 1952-1958). Richard gave me this wonderful photograph of the school's 1954 production of *Pygmalion*, in which he played Eliza and Bradley Winterton (Shenstone 1948-1957) played Professor Higgins. They had had no contact since leaving Solihull, but through our database we were able to reach Bradley, now a freelance writer in Saigon, who instantly wrote back asking us to pass on his contact details to "Miss Doolittle".



We continue to hold events and reunions for former staff and pupils of Saint Martin's. The summer party proved as popular as ever and the sun shone.





*Sirius and donor and one of the patrons*

## Giving Back

Thanks to the generosity of former pupils, their parents, staff and former staff, over the last five years we are proud to announce that we have raised over £2.5 million for The Silhillian Fund for bursaries. The school is rightly proud of the opportunities it offers to young people who would benefit most from the education the school offers but without the means to do so. The Headmaster, in his first term here, held a reception for all our donors to thank them for their support and to announce that it's his intention to raise the same amount again by 2026. It gave donors and recipients of bursary awards the chance to talk about the positive impact the scheme has not only on individuals but also on the whole school community. We were delighted that three of The Silhillian Funds patrons were also present. Mark Hopton, Ben Perry and Jonathan Wearing are all major benefactors to the fund as well as ambassadors in spreading the word about this important part of school life.



## 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 The Director, Lucy Lunt [luntl@solsch.org.uk](mailto:luntl@solsch.org.uk)

She's be delighted to hear from you.

*Ms L Lunt*



*David Fricke Mountain Cottage*

## From the Archivist

The David Fricke Mountain Cottage celebrates 65 years' service to Solihull School (1958-2023).

"It is our hope that many generations of boys will find their true love of mountains, good companionship and a spirit of adventure." These were the sentiments that the Fricke family expressed when they made their wonderfully farsighted and generous gift to the School in 1958. The cottage was to be a memorial to David Fricke (Fetherston 1946-56) who died of leukaemia eight weeks before his 20th birthday. In considering David's memorial, his parents, sister and other members of his family, "wished for something of use to his fellow men, of gratitude to the school he served and who served him and as an expression of things eternal inspired by his indomitable spirit."

This year the Mountain Cottage celebrates 65 years as part of Solihull School. In the early years, alterations were made to make the cottage suitable for groups of up to 18; working parties of parents, pupils and teachers produced the infrastructure of the cottage that we know today. Over the years the cottage has been improved, re-equipped and extended by many volunteer workers including Mr and Mrs Fricke themselves, teachers, Old Sils and parents. In 1980, a new shower and toilet block was added and thanks to a generous donation of £1,000 from the Old Silhillians Association in 1981, a new study room was built and named the Old Silhillians Room. Today this room serves as a common room or overflow dormitory. Since the 1980s many improvements have been made, there are now three shower rooms, a garage, new gates and paths. Plans to install a new kitchen are in progress, and a tree planting programme in the area behind the cottage was started in 2017.

In 1971, the concept of Snowdonia School was created, whereby every pupil in Shell Form spends a week at the cottage in order to learn and enjoy the scenic beauty, the history, geography and culture of the region, as well as the benefits of being away from home! Since its inception over 365 Snowdonia Schools have taken place, with many more planned under the direction of the present Warden, Mr Martin Covill who co-ordinates all visits to the cottage because, besides Snowdonia School, the facility is used by the Mountain Club, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, the CCF and those members of the Solihull School community who love the tranquil beauty of North Wales.

One such enthusiast was teacher (1994-2018) Martyn Garner who sadly passed away in 2018. Martyn was only 50 years of age but throughout his teaching career he was a passionate believer in the benefits of outdoor education, and, in recognition of his dedicated service to Solihull School in the field of co-curricular outward activities, a memorial stone bearing the inscription: "A tribute to the memory of a dear and inspirational friend and colleague. Martyn Garner 1968-2018. A passionate believer in the value of outdoor education. Perseverantia." was placed outside the cottage facing the majestic scenery he loved so much.

To mark the 50th Anniversary in 2008 Liz Williamson (nee Fricke) David's sister wrote to Headmaster P J Griffiths, "I thought you would like to know how much we feel that the intention of the memorial gift to the school has been fulfilled. After all, it is one thing to give the property to the school, but another to make such a success of it. It is hard to put into words but we would like you to know how positively we feel about the project and the appreciation we have for the energy and commitment of so many people over so many years."

Long may this wonderful educational facility continue to enrich the lives of all the pupils yet to experience Snowdonia School.

*Mr J Loynton*



# Solihull School Parents' Association

This academic year has been a busy year for the SSPA, filled with a full complement of events and famous faces. Kicking off the year with our ever-popular Quiz Night, our usual quizmasters were joined by none other than BAFA award – winning 'Chaser' Anne Hegerty, resulting in a memorable evening of quizzing for all concerned.



We were busy in the Preparatory School in the run up to the festive season with events including the Christmas Disco, the Christmas Fair, our Christmas Shopping event, and helping the children turn their artwork into Christmas cards and gifts. In January, we held a sellout 'Evening with Nigel Owens MBE' when we were pleased to raise funds to support the SSPA as well as the Sean Morgan Sports Bursary.

Nigel was extremely entertaining and thought-provoking and we were delighted to welcome him to school. We held our first Easter Disco in the Preparatory School this year with three separate discos catering for all year groups.

Our 'As New' Uniform Sales remain as popular and needed as ever, with full sales each term as well as a monthly shop-opening. The summer term ended with our brand-new event, Family Fun Friday, in the grounds of the Saint Martin's campus. A thoroughly enjoyable evening of fun, music and great food.



This year we were delighted to welcome Mr Fillingham to the SSPA committee, and were pleased to hear his ideas for how our funds could be spent going forward. Amongst other things, we were honoured to join the school's Coronation celebrations by funding commemorative mugs for each member of the school community.

*Mrs J Jones  
President, Solihull School Parents' Association*

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 2022

## ARTS UNIVERSITY, BOURNEMOUTH

Ella Giles Graphic Design

## ASTON UNIVERSITY, BIRMINGHAM

Haris Ali Economics  
Malaika Khan Medicine  
Yuheng Tian Accounting and Finance

## BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

Anika Vairavaraja Primary Education (QTS) with a Foundation Year  
Daniel Slater Video Game Digital Art with a Foundation Year

## BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

Bethany Ostick Law with Politics  
Ella May Business and Management

## BRISTOL, UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND

Anusha Afridi Psychology with a Foundation Year  
Nina Harper Psychology  
Tallulah Armstrong Psychology  
Tegan Bristow Business and Management

## BRUNEL UNIVERSITY, LONDON

Dhilan Patel Games Design

## CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Charlie Billinge Sport and Exercise Science  
Marianne Mahoney Health and Social Care  
Thomas Berrow Sales and Marketing Management

## CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

Benjamin Drury Physics with Astronomy  
Daisy Rowe Religion and Theology  
Edward Knowles Ancient History  
Harry Higgins Mechanical Engineering with a Year in Industry  
Hassan Janjua Religion and Theology  
Jaya Chohan Law  
Joshua Golsby-Taylor Economics  
Thomas Bate Economics and Finance

## COVENTRY UNIVERSITY

Abigail Crampton Architecture  
Eleanor Woodward Paramedic Science  
Sean McHugh Computer Science  
Zoha Kabal Engineering with a Foundation Year

## DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Freddie Truman Law  
Georgia Kelly Geography  
Isabelle Hamilton Geography  
Miah Hampton Theology and Religion

## EDGE HILL UNIVERSITY

Charlotte McArthur Primary Education with QTS

## FALMOUTH UNIVERSITY

Hermione Hooper Fashion Design

## KEELE UNIVERSITY

Harsha Ramesh Kumar Biomedical Science with a Foundation Year

## LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Alexander Horne Geography with a Placement Year

## LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Luca Mazibrada International Relations and History

## LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

Pierce Ryan Sport Management  
Sarah Brown Industrial Design with a Placement Year

## MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Charlotte Watson Fashion Marketing

## NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

Ellena Gaspar Sport and Exercise Science  
Emma Wild Economics and Finance  
Isabella Gardner Psychology and Nutrition  
Louis Dale Economics and Finance

## NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

Aaron Townsend Business Management and Accounting & Finance  
Alexandra Jones Primary Education with QTS  
Benjamin Whitfield Business Management and Accounting & Finance  
Eesha Marwaha Business  
James Gardner Business Management and Accounting & Finance  
James Shakeshaft Sport and Exercise Science  
Jessica Toogood Psychology  
Louie Green Property Finance and Investment  
Luke Woodley Business Management and Entrepreneurship  
Maria Savage Digital Marketing  
Mimi Lovell Criminology  
Rhea Bagga Biomedical Sciences

## OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Matthew Moore Sport and Exercise Science

## QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

Grace Morgan Medicine

## SWANSEA UNIVERSITY

Alexander Morrison Mechanical Engineering

## UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Francesca Yeaman International Management  
Jennifer Hodge Politics and International Relations  
Naomi Horgan Economics with a Placement Year

## UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Kade Quakenbush Computer Science  
Yusuf Skinner Geography

## UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Wil Reeves Economics and Finance

**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE**

Oliver Palmer Mathematics  
Tara Warrington Modern and Medieval Languages

**UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER**

Olwyn Witts Sport and Exercise Psychology

**UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE**

Heidi Atkinson Fine Art

**UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA UEA**

Emma Gahan Paramedic Science

**UNIVERSITY OF EXETER**

Alexandra Warburton Liberal Arts  
Daniel Giles Computer Science  
Lauryn Leedham Law  
Lucia Eguiguren Wray History  
Thomas Currie Medical Sciences

**UNIVERSITY OF KENT**

Joanne Wu Human Biology and Behaviour

**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

Chloe Mander Food Science and Nutrition  
Daniel Empson Geography  
Hannah Scheiby Philosophy  
Isabella Williams Psychology

**UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER**

Alaric Lister Medicine  
Saarah Khan Medicine  
Shriya Sharma Psychology

**UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL**

Adhiraj Ahuja Philosophy and Politics  
Jack Pitchford Business Management  
Jacob Bate Physiotherapy  
Kieran Daly Business Management  
Megan McDonagh Communication and Media

**UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER**

Ciara Savage Philosophy and Politics  
Hiba Sandhu Music and Drama  
Rory Davies Politics and Modern History  
Thomas Garner Physics with Astrophysics

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON**

Harry Price Geography

**UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM**

Alexander Tolosa Mechanical Engineering  
Alexander Veloso Financial Mathematics  
Amy Wood Psychology  
Ashish Chakrapani Mathematics and Economics  
Bhuvan Chohan Architectural Environment  
Engineering  
Harvey Lyne Financial Mathematics  
Harvey Morrow Medicinal and Biological  
Chemistry  
Isabella Mo Pharmacy  
Kai Sidhu Industrial Economics  
Louis Campbell Management  
Oliver Baldey Cancer Sciences

Shrujal Kumbhar Medicine  
Soraya Johal Industrial Economics  
Tom Boake Aerospace Engineering with an  
Industrial Year

**UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

Daniel Batterbee Biology  
Emma Wilson Biochemistry  
Isabel Fennell Chemistry  
Katherine Thomas Biomedical Sciences

**UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH**

Isabelle Norman English Literature

**UNIVERSITY OF READING**

Mia Edge Consumer Behaviour and  
Marketing  
Omachi Achinivu Philosophy and International  
Relations

**UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD**

Aimee O'Malley Television and Radio Production

**UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**

Lainey Murphy Medicine  
Molly Wright Geography  
Yuvraj Gill Civil Engineering with a  
Foundation Year  
Psychology  
Zainab Haque

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

Elizabeth Lawley History  
Grace Regan-Elson Ancient History and Archaeology  
with a Year Abroad  
Heather Meadows Biology/Ecology/Zoology  
Huw Foster History  
Zak Chohan History

**UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS**

Ziying He Economics

**UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX**

Olivia Whitworth Psychology with a Professional  
Placement Year University of the  
Arts London  
Emma Lacote Photojournalism and Documentary  
Photography

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**

Alexander Starling Physics with Astrophysics  
Harry Kite Economics and Industrial  
Organisation  
Lola Bowron History of Art  
Rachel Chanji Biomedical Science with a  
Placement Year

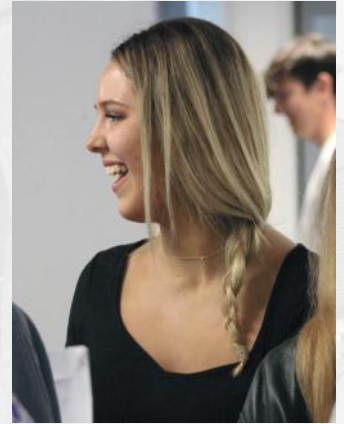
**UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER**

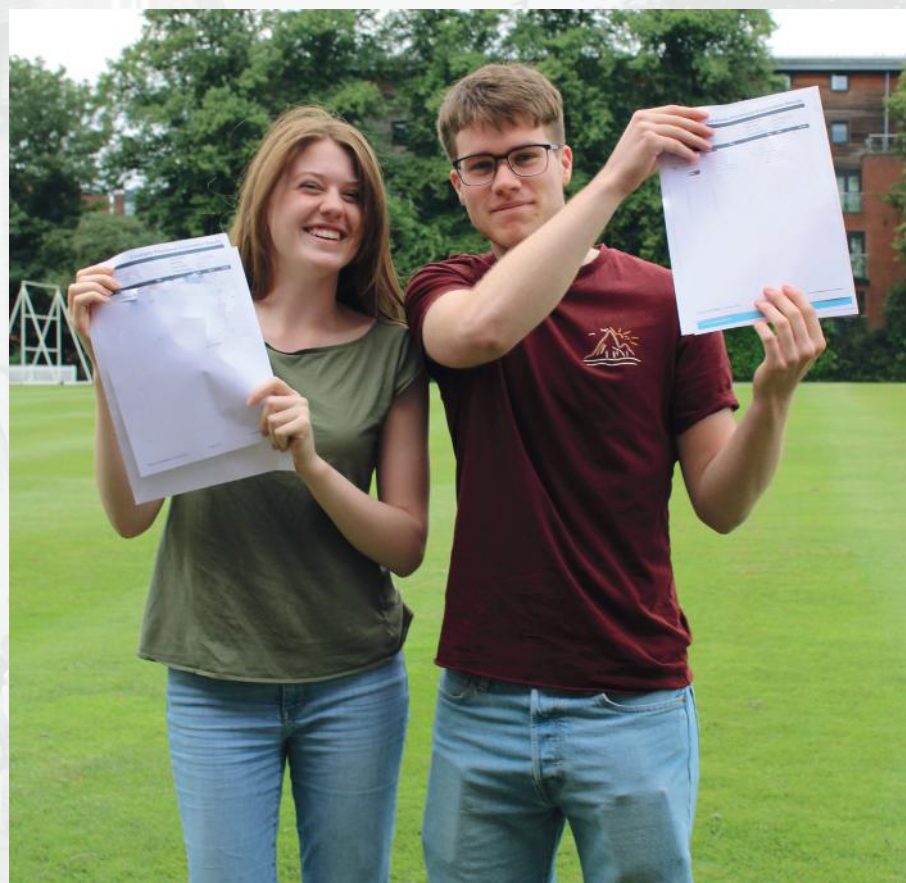
Adam Harris Game Art

**UNIVERSITY OF YORK**

Eve Busby English  
Melike Sparrow Law  
Rhys Foster Politics  
Zoe Ashwell Law and Criminology  
Loughborough

# A Level Results Day 2023

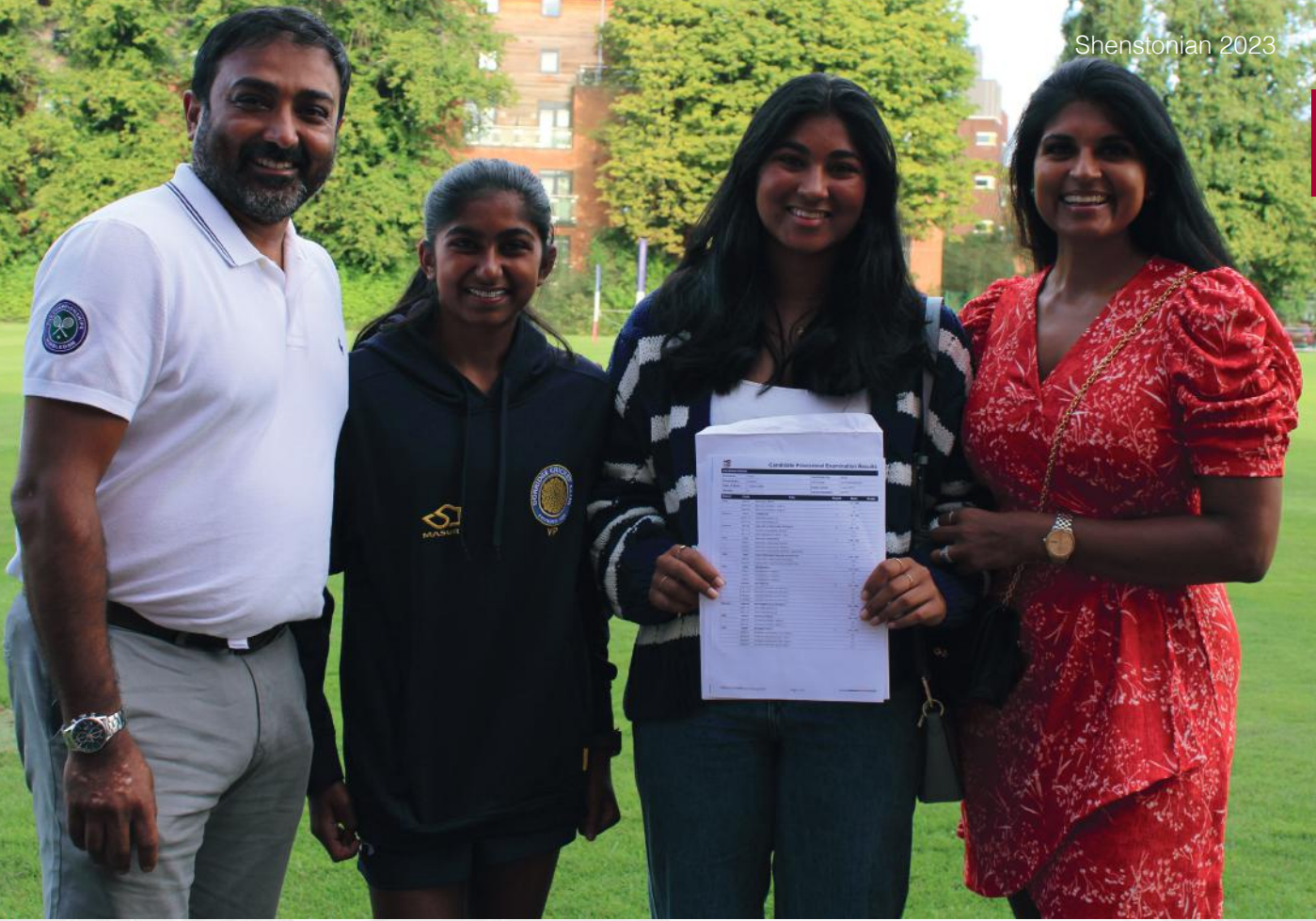




# GCSE Results Day 2023







# Sixth Form Leavers 2023





# Sixth Form Leavers 2023



## OUR FINAL BOW

After the years at Solihull,  
Each pupil has a clearer vision,  
and understanding of who they are,  
And what they are capable of achieving.

For we have had the greatest times,  
As autumn skies have bled into summer rays.  
All the seasons we have had,  
We celebrate today

The laughter that rang out of classrooms,  
The relief of opening those important exam grades,

Or the mix of the glitter and face paint  
As we chant on sports days.

Maybe we have found our joy,  
As the curtain rises as we take our final bow.

Or scoring that rugby try,  
When we never could have imagined how.

Persevering through social distancing in our GCSEs,  
We held onto our education  
through masks and computer screens.

We have had to adapt through the most unpredictable times.  
Step by step  
As we sometimes felt  
We were dealt with the steepest mountain to climb.

Yet now I write to reflect,  
As we say our thanks  
To our friends, our parents, and to our teachers-

Who will never truly understand the depths of our indebted praise.  
In the hard times,  
we may face ahead,  
We will lean on friends we can rely on-  
Reminding us of the significance  
of our school community.

For they hold our hands in the scariest moments  
that we feel may define us.  
And are always there to share in the joy of our victories.

Years ago,  
Most of us started as strangers,  
Yet now we share friendships we cherish to the strongest degree.

Today we are,  
Stronger; Kinder; Smarter.  
In the knowledge that we are more confident,  
Braver in who we are.

We may not know where we are headed,  
Yet one thing is for certain;

We are forever a Silhillian.  
A name that will always unite us.

A school engraved  
In our minds,  
In our memories,  
And in our hearts.

Charlotte Pratt, Upper Sixth  
Poet Laureate 2021-2023

(Charlotte read her poem in the Upper Sixth Leavers' Chapel Service)

# Fifth Form Leavers 2023







## David Lloyd

David Lloyd arrived, a youthful forty-two year-old, as the 39th Headmaster of Solihull School in 2010, leaving behind the Deputy Headship at Ryde School. A Liverpoolian by birth, he soon came to receive the inevitable jokes at the expense of Scousers with a smiling good heart. Our community was not entirely unfamiliar to him, given his previous spell as a Senior Master and economics teacher at Warwick School.

David inherited a school in good heart, as reflected in its 2011 inspection report description as “an outstandingly successful school” and “excellent”. He quickly articulated a compelling vision for the school he would lead, declaring: “Great schools are more than achievements, qualifications, or material wealth. This is a community, a community where innovation shares top billing with a respect for 451 years history and tradition, and my hope is that within each and every Old Silhillian beats a traditional heart, a heart which values a life of service to the community above personal gain.” Always respecting tradition, David was not frightened to break new ground. Over a twelve year stretch (the longest period of office since Alan Lee in the eighties and nineties), there is much on which to reflect, but perhaps two events stand out.

In September 2019, the merger with Saint Martin’s School was announced. Welcoming 3-7 year olds to our Prep School for the first time and adding the 20 acre site in the grounds of the historic Malvern Hall to our campus, Solihull School became the largest independent day school in the Midlands. David played an integral role in making this happen, leading from the front and dealing head-on with a variety of obstacles, all of which could have jeopardized the project but for his shrewd and sensitive handling.

It was not long after the merger, in March 2020, when possibly the biggest challenge of all during David’s tenure arrived – the COVID19 pandemic. With a steely focus, he led an impressive staff team in navigating the school through an educational and logistical minefield, all against the backdrop of a complex and fast changing regulatory environment. Having to send pupils and staff home from school on a regular basis is a task which no Head would relish. Whilst this responsibility fell on David many times, the response which he led spoke to his efforts in forging a School consistent with his stated vision.

The impact of enforced isolation on the mental health of many in the school community were at the forefront of David’s mind. Before, during and after the pandemic, the school’s commitment to mental health and wellbeing, personal development, diversity, equity and inclusion took several leaps forward under his leadership. His commitment to providing an enriching and stimulating School environment, promoting better outcomes for pupils both inside and outside the classroom, will be an enduring legacy.

David was a man of vision and achievement, leading the school during a period which lays claim to being one of the most transformative in our history. He arguably faced greater external pressures than any of his predecessors. He leaves Solihull School on a strong academic footing, with ever expanding waiting lists, having broken various admissions records along the way. Recognising its importance in building community and promoting bursaries and scholarships, he championed the development of a modernised Development and Alumni Office. The physical infrastructure of Solihull School evolved significantly on his watch, with a new Cooper Building, Sixth Form Centre and modernised Refectory all emerging.

A thoughtful and caring leader, he took a personal interest in staff and pupils alike. He showed kindness to others and loyalty in abundance. David helped me a great deal in my first twelve months as Chair of Governors. I also know that many of my Board colleagues, like me, enjoyed their dealings with David, finding him business-like, straightforward, courteous and inquisitive. David cared.

Whilst serious and diligent, those who know him recognise a playful and humorous side to David’s character which was never far away. As a keen football and music fan myself, I immediately warmed to him, spotting a book on Liverpool FC in his downstairs loo and learning of his love of ska and 2-Tone music. Along with his dogs, watches and clocks, these remain strong passions. Some may remember his impressive performance on keyboards playing Chariots of Fire at his last Saint Cecilia Concert. It’s certainly something I doubt David will forget!

David’s wife, Debbie, performed a number of roles at the school and provided unstinting and invaluable support. Daughters Megan and Jessie both passed through the Senior School. At times, they may have been less than enamored of their Dad being Headmaster, but I think they have forgiven him now!

Looking back on the Lloyd years, it’s clear that David’s 2010 vision for Solihull mirrored his own principles, values and character. He leaves behind a more progressive, compassionate and inclusive School, well placed to meet the challenges and exploit the opportunities which lie ahead.

David is now Head at The Priory School of Our Lady of Walsingham on his beloved Isle of Wight. Whilst he and his family will be much missed and fondly remembered at Solihull, they made many strong friendships here and will remain a core part of the Community about which David cared so passionately. We wish them every good wish for the future.

*Damian Kelly, Chair of Governors*



## Julie Brown

Julie Brown joined Solihull as Teacher of Geography in September 2001, serving under three headmasters. Julie brought with her a wealth of experience. Having begun her career of 42 years in Sudan, she then returned to England briefly. It was not long before wanderlust got the better of her and she subsequently taught in Australia, Mexico and Spain, before returning to England, having taught in ten schools during this time, and as Head of Department in a number. Not surprisingly, Julie has seen numerous changes during her long career: 24 education secretaries, the advent of League Tables, O' Levels becoming GCSEs, modular exams which have come and gone several times, numerous specification revisions dating back to when we referred to them as syllabuses. If that were not enough, she has worked through the invention of the world wide web, and has distant but fond memories of VHS, Betamax, CD-ROM, and DVDs. No matter what the challenge, she has always been at the forefront of embracing constant new developments in technology into her teaching.

Throughout her career, Julie has been an excellent role model for youngsters. She has raised two wonderfully grounded sons, both Silhillians. Julie's kindness to others has no limits. She has looked out for countless new Third Formers in her previous role as Head of Transition and more recently as Deputy Head of Lower School. Julie has also raised around £28,000 over the past 14 years for the LAFF Foundation, which is especially close to her heart, and which supports disadvantaged children in Peru. She was even raising money for this charity in her last few days before she retired. Julie has taken 14 Solihull pupils to volunteer for LAFF in schools and other charities in Peru, Chile and Argentina. She has also given 14 Chilean students the opportunity to volunteer as gap students at Solihull and organised two adventure trips to Chile involving a further 16 students. She is fondly remembered by so many ex-pupils who keep in touch with her, and she loves to hear about their encounters since leaving school. The Spanish Department are immensely grateful for all the enthusiasm Julie has brought to staff and pupils that she has worked with closely and with whom she has formed lifelong friendships.

Julie's kindness stretches beyond the classroom and includes her colleagues and their families, and on many occasions, she is known to have quietly gone the extra mile to make home, and even hospital visits if necessary to help out in any way that she can. Those touched by her care will always be forever grateful to Julie.

Julie will be missed in the Geography Department for all that she has accomplished both in the classroom upholding academic rigour and traditional values, on many field courses both in the UK and, of course, in Iceland, and for helping so many Solihull pupils to successfully navigate through challenges and successes during their time at Solihull.

We wish Julie well in all her new endeavours, which naturally include much travel.

*Alex Roll*



## Denise Buckle

Denise joined Solihull in 2004 after beginning her teaching career in 1984. As an experienced and dedicated classroom teacher she quickly made her mark. It became clear that Denise cared deeply about her pupils and their progress. Denise is popular with the pupils and her enthusiasm and open and encouraging manner ensured she quickly established excellent relationships with all. Denise's meticulous planning and passion for teaching go hand in hand. Her commitment to her own professional development through many, many years of working for an examination awarding body saw her develop new assistant examiners in her role as team leader on several panels over the years. Typical of her dedication to our pupils, Denise actually tried (and thankfully failed) to retire in December 2021 returning in January 2022 until Easter 2023 to cover two consecutive maternity leave posts to ensure our pupils were not disadvantaged in any way.

Outside the classroom Denise also made an impressive contribution to the co-curricular life of the school. As an assistant leader on numerous Snowdonia School trips she took those younger pupils who were less confident about being away from home under her wing, developing their confidence (and no doubt sharing one of her many jokes!). Ski-trips are another area of co-curricular life where Denise gave her time annually for many years. She thoroughly enjoyed spending time with our pupils outside of the classroom be that on the slopes or on the sand dunes of Wales on the Sixth Form Biology field trips. The pupils have appreciated Denise's pastoral care on these trips as well as her willingness to get stuck in.

Denise has seen many changes in her time at Solihull, not insignificantly the recent merger and through them all she has been a rock for both pupils and her colleagues. She is supportive, caring and loyal and would often be found giving 1-2-1 support to pupils at breaktimes and after school.

Denise has seen both her children, Charlotte and James, pass through the school and after so many years of dedicated service, Denise now has many exciting plans for the next stage of her life. This includes travel to Alaska, Canada and the Galapagos Islands with her husband Stephen as well as completing her puppy raiser and border training for the Guide Dogs for the Blind, so she can welcome her first of no doubt many future Guide Dogs. As a department, we will miss Denise incredibly; her professionalism, meticulous attention to detail, collaborative support, camaraderie and (dare we say it) her jokes mean she will leave a very noticeable gap in the Biology Department. Denise, we wish you an incredibly happy and healthy retirement and you leave with our thanks for all you have done for our pupils, the department and your colleagues.

*Dawn Parker*





### Jane Crowton

Jane started at Saint Martin's in September 2014 as Lead EYFS Teacher and left us at the end of October 2021. She was also the Designated Safeguarding Lead for EYFS and a member of the Saint Martin's Extended Leadership Team. When the Prep School opened, Jane became a member of the Prep Management Group, sharing her ideas and expertise.

Jane's passion for teaching our youngest pupils enabled them to achieve their very best through the Early Years curriculum. She documented a pupil's progress and achievements through personalised learning journals, which contained many photographs and observations of pupils' day to day learning. In Forest School, Jane enjoyed teaching pupils how to light a fire and toast marshmallows, how to use tools, whilst encouraging them to explore the natural environment and helping them build interesting dens.

Amongst Jane's other passions are music, her dogs and fast cars! She attended many residential visits with girls across the school, working collaboratively with them to produce a performance at the end of an action packed and fun filled performing arts based weekend away. Her dogs also came to school when any EYFS topic focused on being a vet or caring for animals.

When Jane wasn't relaxing at weekends in her caravan overlooking the beautiful Malvern Hills, she could often be found behind the wheel of a fast car; driving at events and shows where sometimes she would be Lightning McQueen!

Having introduced and pioneered the Read, Write, Inc. phonic teaching scheme at Saint Martin's, last summer Jane was offered the opportunity to become one of their consultants and to share her expertise and passion for teaching reading with schools across the region. We wish Jane many happy hours with her family and dogs, spending time walking and relaxing, and enjoying the challenges and opportunities her new role will bring.

*Janet Humphreys*



### Karen Duffy

Karen joined Saint Martin's in September 2012 in Year 2 and has worked in many, if not all year groups, in Alice House since then. She quickly settled into her new role with a positive attitude and flexibility that took her into different year groups, very successfully.

Karen has been a truly valuable member of our team; her knowledge and sympathetic nature have helped and supported an incredible number of children over the years. She has had a real affinity with the children that have passed through her care; she instantly knows who needs a kind word to help them through the day and has mopped up countless bloody knees, scratches and tears. Karen will always 'have a go' - from showing the children how to dance the Macarena and teaching them 'Sweet Caroline', to playing 'tig' in Forest School and tripping over a log and nearly breaking both ankles! She has also attempted to learn different languages such as her latest, Chinese, to support the pupils in Early Years.

It is clear to see that Karen adores teaching children to read. She is patient and knowledgeable, giving children just enough support but encouraging independence – it is lovely to watch. Through the years, Karen has supported many teachers and teaching assistant colleagues. Most recently Karen has taken the changes to Early Years Foundation Stage in her stride and quickly got to grips with the new Early Years Framework. She played a pivotal part in the development of the children's journals including collating and organising the observations and evidence.

As we wish Karen happiness in this next stage of her life, we hope she will have a wonderful retirement and take the opportunity to continue to cruise the world in style!

*Julie Litwinko*



### Tom Emmet

Tom arrived at Solihull in September 2011 as Head of Psychology. His passion for the subject always shone through and his lessons have been exciting, discursive and current, constantly striving to stretch and challenge A Level students. He was the instigator of the annual Brain day with Dr Guy Sutton and established many other links with external speakers. It is testament to Tom that so many Sixth Formers have gone on to study Psychology at university.

Tom became Head of Sixth Form and subsequently Assistant Head Pastoral and the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. He cares deeply about pupils and staff and the school will be forever indebted to him for managing the school's COVID19 plan so skilfully and with such empathy. Tom led the Health Centre and the Safeguarding teams superbly well, always offering excellent advice and support, but in turn, encouraging others to develop their own skills set and strive to meet their personal goals. Life is not always easy for some pupils, but with Tom in their corner, pupils have always known they have someone to turn to for help and to thus achieve the best they can on their journey through school.

In addition to his whole school responsibilities, Tom has been an incredible asset to the Sport, Health & Fitness Department, coaching rugby for the 12 years he has been at Solihull. He could equally motivate a 1st XV side as well as encouraging an U13B side starting on their rugby journey. His input and inspirational coaching is remembered fondly by many past and current pupils. Tom loves the outdoors, so was never more at home than on Snowdonia School, encouraging pupils to climb Snowdon and push their boundaries. He has always been actively involved in charity initiatives at the school; a keen cyclist, Tom has taken part in many of the staff cycling challenges and is ultimately a great teammate to have in your corner.

Albert Schweitzer, an eminent philosopher said, "At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." This sums Tom up and the school will miss him greatly. We wish him well as he embarks on his new role as Deputy Head Pastoral at Loughborough Grammar – they are very fortunate to have such a fabulous colleague.

*Rachael Speirs*



### Jake Everling

At the end of the summer term, the school bid farewell to Jake Everling, a talented Drama and English teacher who joined the school in 2019. During his time at Solihull, Jake played a key role in a number of productions helping to direct *Bugsy Malone* and *My Brother's Gift*. A keen sportsman, Jake also coached the U12 and U14 rugby teams in addition to the U13 hockey and U14 cricket teams. Jake was a much respected teacher, and a wonderfully caring form tutor. His departure will be particularly felt by his colleagues; his humour, generosity of spirit and compassion will be much missed by those who worked closely with him. We wish him well as he moves to Oxford with his family to pursue to new challenges.

*Stuart Hart*



### Richard Hackett

Richard Hackett, fondly known as 'Big Rich' joined the ICT Services Team at Solihull School on January 2018 as an ICT Technician, having previously worked in Worcestershire for IBS. He quickly became embedded into the team as a hard-working, caring and friendly colleague who brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to the team.

Richard naturally built relationships between colleagues and pupils effortlessly who always had a cheerful smile and approachable demeanour to anyone who needed assistance at the ICT Helpdesk. He often went out of his way to help members of the school community and would enjoy a good-humoured chat along the way. His dedication has been invaluable to the school, and he will be greatly missed.

Outside of work, Richard was a keen follower of Formula 1, and during the season kept the team updated with all the latest news. He was very much the 'Murray Walker' of the ICT Team!

We wish him all the best in his future endeavours with his wife, Zoe!

*Martin Moseley*



### Katherine Harris

Katherine joined Saint Martin's in 2013 as we looked to grow the Spanish Department and sensing that we needed someone to take it beyond where our qualifications would stretch. She joined us on a part-time basis but little did we know that how transformational her presence would be. Of course, Spanish went on to be a favourite amongst the pupils and it wasn't long before that fed through into A Level groups, university applicants and now graduates. None of that would have happened were it not for Katherine's wholehearted commitment to languages. We had struck gold. We had found a colleague whose enthusiasm was infectious. Pupils were encouraged to take risks, experiment with language and actually get out of their seats. "Running translations", amongst other innovative games, became a feature of our practice. It wasn't just Spanish either. She led examination groups in French with conspicuous success. Her flexibility and dynamic teaching were greatly appreciated. I also know from colleagues that her powers of persuasion when speaking to Spanish waiters on the school trip to Andalucía led to particularly favourable service! Since joining the merged school, Katherine has worked across campuses and embraced the full age range of Spanish learners. She is very well regarded in Prep School, where her boundless energy and love of a song always hit the mark. She leaves with our best wishes as she embarks on new adventures. We'll miss her chat, her spark and, of course, that winning smile. Take care, Katherine. We'll miss you!

*Paul Morgan*



### Ally Houghton

Ally joined us in September 2017 as a new role of Junior School Receptionist was created. She wasted no time in becoming the face of the Junior School, always the first point of contact for any visitor, child or parent. When the Prep School moved to the Saint Martin's campus, Ally became the face of Alice House, supporting the staff with the day-to-day running of our Infant School. She supported the wider administrative function at the school, particularly through attendance monitoring, sending of communications as well as providing a wide range of reprographic support. Throughout her time with us, nothing was ever too much trouble and she exuded warmth in all of her engagements. Her service was always with a smile, often comforting an upset child, listening to a parent or staff member with an empathetic ear and endlessly helping to reunite pupils with their belongings! Ally would always put the child's best interests first and listen with patience and kindness. I know that she is looking forward to spending more time with her grandchildren and her mum. Everyone at the Prep School will miss her dearly and we wish her all the best for the future. Ally will always be welcome at Solihull School and in particular at Alice House, which we know holds a special place in her heart. Thank you for everything, Ally!

*Michael Jones*



### Ulrike Mynette

Ulrike joined Solihull School as German Language Assistant in September 1998, and since then she has prepared countless pupils for success in their GCSE and A Level German examinations. We have all been very fortunate indeed to have worked with such a friendly, approachable and superbly well qualified colleague, and having worked very closely with Ulrike for a period of 15 years, I know very well just how much all her efforts and professionalism have been appreciated both by teachers and pupils alike. I know for a fact that a phenomenal number of pupils who have studied German at Solihull have appreciated Ulrike's expertise and unstinting encouragement, and her enduring legacy as she leaves us this year must surely be the fact that German at Solihull has continued to be a popular, successful foreign language that has benefitted enormously from the contribution of a colleague who will be sorely missed. Danke schön und Auf Wiedersehen, Ulrike!

*Paul Morgan*



### Jessica Newton

Jess joined Saint Martin's in 2017 as a newly qualified teacher. She taught Latin and Classical Civilisation throughout the school, writing and resourcing schemes of work for GCSE and A Level Classical Civilisation course. On many occasions she helped to organise and run the Year 7 residential trip to Bath, and was part of an International fieldtrip to Berlin. Jess was instrumental in supporting DofE at Saint Martin's, leading groups and building excellent relationships with pupils. Beyond the classroom, she was a smiling face in the Staff Room, always around for a coffee and a catch up, and, possibly most importantly, Jess was a key member of the Be\*Witched supergroup with Miss Windmill, Mrs Blackburn and Mrs Jones, for Saint Martin's Got Talent, singing C'est La Vie to the school in double denim!

When Jess came across to Solihull School she quickly settled into the department. She has thrown herself into every aspect of Classics – teaching both Latin and Classical Civilisation to all year groups, running a weekly Lower School Latin Clinic and getting involved with Classics Society. She has been instrumental in developing and resourcing the Fourth Form Classical Civilisation Scheme of Work, and organised the Fourth Form Latin trip to Bath, both very successfully. She has supported me on many different Classics Society trips: the Ancient Drama Day at Warwick University, Classics Society day out at the British Museum and, of course, the trip to Rome, Easter 2023. She has developed excellent relationships within the department, with other members of staff, and, most importantly, with the pupils, who I know will miss her enthusiasm and passion enormously.

Thank you, Jess, for all your hard work, cheerfulness and good humour. We will really miss you, but remember, you will always be a part of the Classics Department at Solihull School.

*Rebecca Windmill and Joanna Johnson*



## Jamesalley

James joined Solihull School as the Reprographics Administrator in 2011. He was hard working, diligent and committed to this role, providing a reprographics service to the whole school and later solely for the Senior School, which included photocopying, laminating, collating, producing booklets and binding. We were grateful for his experience and assistance in producing creative and attractive booklets. James took great pride in his work and had good ideas for making a piece of work look smarter or easier to use. He also provided a range of printed items such as name badges, bus passes and exam candidate ID cards.

James cared about the pupils and always ensured they had the resources they needed. He was responsible for stock control in relation to reprographics work and ensuring all photocopiers were in good working order, liaising with engineers for maintenance and repair. James implemented various procedures such as a worklog to ensure deadlines were met and often took the initiative, for example after a particularly busy term he arranged for the copiers to be serviced.

Outside of school James gained IT qualifications and regularly helped teaching staff with issues such as printing problems and formatting of documents. His greatest joy was spending time with his wife and children and performing with his local amateur dramatics society. James left Solihull for a role as an IT Technician at a school closer to his home.

*Lisa McGann*



## Carol Rich

In 2016, Carol joined Saint Martin's to work in the Junior School, quickly establishing herself as a thoughtful, fun, and kind colleague to all. Her classrooms were always filled with energy, adorned with Lego people and a prominent "Boss Lady" sign on her desk, which showcased her sense of humour to both colleagues and pupils in her form. The pupils in her form adored her witty one-liners and appreciated how she cared for each and every one of them, instilling the belief that they could achieve anything with perseverance.

Carol's involvement in various co-curricular activities underscored her multi-faceted talents and significant contributions to the school. Pupils eagerly attended her Book and Biscuit Club, learned sign language in her BSL Club, showcased their designs from the Cross-stitching Club, and performed their J3 Drama Club show to the Prep School.

As RS Subject Coordinator, Carol passionately shared her love for Religious Studies, leading the way in the Prep School by imparting valuable lessons and wisdom to numerous young minds. She even shared her own religious experiences with the Infant pupils and organised trips to synagogues, fostering a deeper understanding of diverse beliefs across the Prep School.

Beyond being a colleague, Carol served as a confidant and friend to many, always ready to offer help or a sympathetic ear. Her Easter egg staffroom hunt became a beloved tradition that brought joy and laughter to her colleagues, highlighting the significance of fun and camaraderie in the workplace, along with a dash of friendly competition.

Carol's adventurous spirit and dedication to the Prep School will leave a lasting impression on many. Whether it was her daring jump from Hilltop's 10-meter air drop, going the extra mile in dressing up for World Book Day, or winning the teacher dance-off competition during the J4 Moving On Disco, she showcased unwavering enthusiasm and sportsmanship—always eager to participate and fully engage in the experience.

As Carol embarks on her new career journey, we wish her the very best. May she continue to inspire and impact the lives of others, just as she has done with us.

*Suz Farnan*



### Abi Rudge

Mrs Rudge took over from Mrs Felix at Saint Martin's, continuing the legacy of providing Dance for all, as an inclusive and valuable part of the curriculum. Mrs Rudge and Mrs Stafford successfully produced many musicals and events together at the school, until the merger in 2020 when dance within the curriculum was established as a new subject at Solihull Senior School.

After Mrs Rudge returned from her maternity leave in 2021, she then enabled the Dance Department to breathe, as restrictions were lifted; we were able to perform to live audiences, have workshops, go on trips, and merge the year groups for co-curricular. Mrs Rudge had many achievements at Solihull School, including initiating the Solihull Dance Company, starting Dance for Third Form pupils, and starting the Dance Scholarship. Some pupils have been taught by Mrs Rudge for a very long time, and they were very tearful to see her leave, but ultimately knew that she had made the decision based on having a very young family and travelling a long distance to work. She will be greatly missed by all, and will be remembered at Solihull for her beautiful smile, long dancer's limbs and her passion and enthusiasm for all things dance!

*Jen Hart*



### Fred Sampson

Fred Sampson first joined the Maintenance Team at Saint Martin's School in 2000. He moved on to further his career a couple of years later before joining Solihull School as Deputy Head of Maintenance in 2016.

In 2020, he returned to his roots as Site Manager of the Saint Martin's campus in its new guise of Solihull Prep School.

Fred was a man of many talents including qualifying as a helicopter pilot and also volunteering as a paramedic, a role for which in 2018 he received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, along with his colleagues in FastAid, a local organisation of community first aid responders.

Not only a talented multi-faceted maintenance operator, Fred brought a calm and measured approach to all of his school roles, regularly providing a logical and pragmatic solution to challenges, whether related to the school infrastructure or the many logistical challenges posed by the busy school operation. He is also a man with a "cheeky grin" and an eye for a practical joke, a trait we will all miss.

He leaves us having moved home to Stratford-upon-Avon to a role closer to home with the Warwickshire Council Leisure operations team. We wish him well and thank him for his dedicated service and friendship.

*Richard Bate*



### Helen Smith

Mrs Smith joined Solihull School as a netball coach in 2008 having been in banking as a development training officer. She represented England U21s 1994, 1995 seasons and senior development 1996 along with playing for club and prem teams.

Mrs Smith remembers fondly the old PE staff's office where she was interviewed by Mr Thompson and Mrs Gill. Mrs Smith remembers making a call that the courts were unplayable, causing quite a huge cost on resurfacing. Netball was in its infancy at the time and she remembers seeing more and more girls become interested.

In her time at Solihull School, Mrs Smith organised trips to watch England, Team Bath and Loughborough play, this opened the girls eyes to the world of netball. She also lead trips to watch Wasps masterclasses and the Solihull School girls became ball girls at the Wasps fixtures.

As success and interest grew, along with outside club links, the girls have gone from strength to strength and Mrs Smith has lead the girls in to regional and national competitions, her particular interest has been with the senior age group where she has influenced lots of players who have now gone on to achieve great things. The girls will all look back fondly at their time in senior netball squads with Mrs Smith at the helm.

The annual Red Nose Day has been a particular highlight where Mrs Smith has organised staff versus pupils, something the girls have really enjoyed playing. Mrs Smith's dedication to the teams and relationships developed in the borough and beyond, has been brilliant. Mrs Smith will look back on her years fondly, she will be sorely missed in the world of school netball. She will now look forward to some valuable family time. We wish her the best in everything she does. Thank you for being such a huge part of Solihull School netball.

*Katie Baden*



### Shirley Stout

Shirley Stout is an outstanding teacher, linguist, leader and colleague who joined Solihull School for the first time in September 2008. On taking up her post here, Shirley already had a wealth of experience gained from teaching in other schools in the Midlands, and it was obvious to everyone in the Languages Department that she was going to bring incredible value to the delivery of our subject at Solihull. After a very productive three year spell with us, Shirley decided to move on, accepting a post as Head of Modern Foreign Languages at Leicester Grammar School. This was not to be the end of her relationship with Solihull, however, as she decided to return to us as Acting Head of German in September 2020. I have had the privilege to work very closely with Shirley over a period of 15 years, and she genuinely stands out as one of the most impressive teachers I have ever collaborated with. Shirley is insightful, sensible, talented and dedicated, and all these qualities are very much to the fore whether she is teaching her classes, working with colleagues or leading trips and exchanges. Shirley is an inspirational figure who transmits her passion for the German language to others, but most of all, she is unfailingly kind and always looks to help everyone around her. Shirley has left a deep impression on all of us at Solihull and we all wish her a very happy retirement.

*Paul Morgan*

## School Chapel

It has been a full year in the life of the Chapel. Each Sunday during term time we have held a morning said Eucharist Service at 9am and a vast array of evening services which have varied in time and style as we have marked and celebrated events that have shaped the year.

Shortly after we returned to school in September, we heard that the Queen had died. On both school campuses we held special assemblies and opened books of condolence. A Sunday Commemoration Service concluded with a poignant gathering and flower laying moment of silence at the tree outside the chapel that commemorates the visit of the Queen in 1962.



During the autumn we had our Harvest Celebration with a fantastic display of harvest goods and the chapel was decorated with beautiful autumn themed 'thankfulness' wreaths made by children in the Prep School. We planted spring bulbs in tubs and gave them to Solihull Hospital and the Marie Curie Hospice for them to enjoy.

Remembrance Services saw the entire school gather on the Quad for a whole school act of Remembrance and on the Sunday, a Eucharist for Remembrance. Christmas celebrations included a 'scratch nativity' service where many of our younger pupils enjoyed dressing up as their favourite nativity characters and retelling the Christmas story. In addition, we were able to hold our traditional Nine Lessons and Carols services for the first time since before the pandemic and the Chapel was filled with superb choral music on two evenings.

On our return to school in January we welcomed the new Executive Headmaster, and our first service of the year was a special Ukrainian Christmas celebration complete with beautiful stars, traditional Ukrainian music, Bible reading and prayers. The service was planned and lead by our Ukrainian pupils who also worked with the catering team to prepare some traditional Ukrainian food to enjoy after the service. It was a very moving evening and was attended by many in the wider school and Ukrainian community.



The Christingle service took place at the end of January, at Candlemas, and without doubt the pupils who constructed the Christingles had a wonderful time, just as those of us who gathered for the service did.

Later in the Easter term I1 came over to the Chapel for 'Pop Up Easter', an interactive exploration of the Easter story. The younger pupils loved getting hands on and using their senses to think about Easter and were ably supported by a very competent group of Lower Fifth RS pupils who led the five interactive areas that explored the events of Holy Week and Easter.

In May the Acting Bishop of Birmingham, Bishop Anne, joined us for a Baptism and Confirmation Service where six of our pupils were Confirmed. This was a very special day for the pupils and their families, and the choir were on top form. The Summer term has raced by and, as ever, has been dominated by the Leavers' Services and the J4 Moving on Service. The annual cycle of events to mark transitions are an important part of school and chapel life.

Our Chapel choirs go from strength to strength and there have been some beautiful spine-tingling moments as they have led us in our worship. Joining them on a trip to Hereford Cathedral for Choral Evensong was a particular highlight for me.

This year we have also held our first parents' prayer meetings where we have gathered over tea and coffee to pray for our pupils and wider school community. These exciting and important meetings will continue to happen each half term.

Looking ahead to September and the new school year, we will be commissioning the Chapel Choir and our new Chapel Assistant, welcoming our Thirds pupils to the Senior School in a special welcome service and then marking the transition to the new year and sections of the school for our older pupils too.

*Rev Rachel Hill-Brown*







## Coronation Celebrations at Solihull

Our School has been connected directly and indirectly with the House of Windsor since representatives of Solihull Grammar School joined the grand procession in Solihull to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897, just a few years after the school had moved from Malvern House to School House on the Warwick Road.

There was great excitement for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 which was celebrated with great enthusiasm at school, or as the *Shenstonian* recorded, "Coronation Fever hit the school as hard as anywhere". Four CCF Cadets proudly attended the Coronation procession as guests of the War Office. Three days holiday was awarded in order to celebrate, and a trip to Solihull Cinema was organised to watch "Queen is Crowned." Solihull Council presented every pupil with souvenir Coronation propelling pencils 'suitably inscribed'. A telegram was sent to Buckingham Palace by the Headmaster on the 11 June:

"With humble duty boys and masters of Solihull School send loyal greetings on the occasion of Your Majesty's royal coronation." A reply was received the following day, "Please convey the Queen's sincere thanks to all those associated with you in your kind message." 60 years later Queen Elizabeth wrote again to the pupils of Solihull School thanking them for their kind words and gift of the School's History on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

The first member of the Royal Family to actually set foot in our School was Princess Marina, Duchess of Kent who visited on the 27 October 1960 to mark the school's 400th Anniversary. She opened a new Library (now the Lower Common Room) which was named the Kent Library, and the school library still bears that name.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II visited on the 25 May 1962 to view the newly built Chapel and planted a tree in the forecourt area, thereafter known as the Queen's Court. It was great moment in the school's history duly celebrated with pomp and ceremony. The tree is still there and is a black mulberry of a type frequently planted in the reign of Elizabeth I in whose reign our school was founded. Windsor House was created in 1959 in honour of these two Royal visits which were planned well in advance.

Finally, in 2013 eight boys and girls from Solihull School were invited to the official opening of the new Marie Curie Hospice in Solihull by Prince Charles. The future King Charles III greeted each one in turn and congratulated them and their fellow pupils for raising more than £5,000 for the Marie Curie Big Build Appeal. As Senior teacher, the late Martyn Garner remarked: "Our boys and girls were thrilled to meet Prince Charles." Perhaps the Coronation will bring back fond memories for those who were lucky enough to meet our future King.

*Mr J Loynton*

# Celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III



To mark the coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla on Saturday 6 May 2023, the Solihull School community enjoyed a number of special events. We welcomed the Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street to our Saint Martin's campus where he planted a Quercus robur English Oak. The Prep and Senior School held special themed lunches where pupils enjoyed classic British culinary treats under red, white and blue bunting and the SSPA generously funded the gift of a commemorative mug to every pupil and member of staff, with moments of use shared via social media over the extended Bank Holiday weekend. A visual highlight was our Big Side cricket pitch, which was carefully line marked with the King's Cypher, impressive work from the Grounds team and 'Xavier'.



# Remembrance 2022

Over 1,100 pupils, staff, governors and invited guests gathered in the school's Great Quadrangle on Friday 11 November to remember those who died in the World Wars and other conflicts.

Wreaths were laid at the War Memorial by the Head of School, Will Black; CCF Cadet, Anna Whitmarsh; Captain Oliver Watkins (Windsor 2022-2011) and Flight Lieutenant Oliver Daniels (Jago 2005-2017) representing all past and current Old Silhillian serving officers; President of the Parents' Association, Julie Jones; President of Saint Martin's Old Girls Association, Louise Cox; President of the Old Silhillians' Association, Peter Earl; Chairman of the Governors, Damian Kelly; The Bursar, Richard Bate and Headmaster, David EJJ Lloyd.

A rendition of the Last Post was played by Upper Fifth pupil Kieran Bown, followed by a two-minute silence, the Reveille, and a Roll of Honour, before the Headmaster recited the traditional tribute to The Fallen. The Act of Remembrance was live streamed to 400 Prep School pupils on the Saint Martin's campus and was followed by a Sixth Form Chapel Service led by Chaplain, Reverend Rachel Hill-Brown.





During October half term, Fourth Form, Lower and Upper Fifth pupils took part in a History trip to northern France and Belgium. The group took time to remember Old Sils and individuals linked to our school community who were lost at War. Current pupils Sam and Will Hughes were able to visit the war grave of their great, great, great uncle. Will shares the experience with us here.

"On the way back from Belgium my brother Sam and I were extremely lucky when we had the opportunity to stop off at the Merville Communal Cemetery in France. In this cemetery is the war grave of our great, great, great uncle, Private Arthur Lowe. He served in the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, and he died on the 12 April 1915 age 31. Arthur was the husband of Maggie Lowe and they lived on Sumner Lane, Birmingham and his grave is located in section 2, row N, grave 2 and on it is inscribed 'with the lord.' Being the first members of our family to visit this grave since it was placed really is a moment we will never forget, and we are extremely grateful the opportunity to lay a wreath and pay our respects."

*Will Hughes, Lower Fifth*



## Community Relations

2022-23 has seen yet another amazing effort from pupils, parents, staff and the wider community in supporting a range of local, national and international charities. The funds we raise and donate are, without doubt, an important and essential ongoing aspect of our community relations work. This year alone through a variety of activities, including some that have attracted matched funding, Solihull School has donated in excess of £100,000. Recipient charities this year have included:

- SIFA Fireside
- DEC Fund for Pakistan
- WWF
- The Movember Campaign
- Solihull Mind
- Turkey & Syria Earthquake Appeal
- The Ruth Strauss Foundation
- Assist RR UK for Sri Lanka
- Reynalds Cross School
- Newlands Bishops Farm
- Macmillan
- The Children's Society
- LAFF
- NICE
- Marie Curie
- Birmingham Children's Hospital
- Fat Fluffs Rabbit Rescue
- Remembering Srebrenica

Fundraising has resulted from stalls at the Christmas Fair, donut sales, moustache growing, charity sports games, the Prep School Charity Week and Megathon, Chapel donations and, of course, non-uniform days. A particular mention this year to the Fourth Form pupils who slept out in the Quad overnight while learning about issues relating to homelessness. A superb effort on their part with some impressive fundraising for SIFA Fireside. It was also great to see such a strong school community presence at the Knowle Fun Run – in impressive fancy dress attire – in aid of Birmingham Children's Hospital. Team Solihull dusted off their hiking boots once again for the formidable 50km Ultra Challenge raising over £60,000 for charities in Sri Lanka.

Another way Solihull School has helped this year is via the donations of items for a range of campaigns. This year to mark World Book Day pupils – and particularly those in Lower School English – were invited to donate a children's book or stationery to send to schools in Malawi as part of the Birmingham Diocese annual container shipment. We have been able to also send uniform and PPE equipment as part of this campaign. Earlier in the year we collected Harvest food items for SIFA Fireside and Be Kind as well as new Christmas gifts and decorated trees for the Birmingham Crisis campaign.



Most important of all, however, has been the willingness of our pupils to give up their time, push their boundaries and 'act' as community ambassadors. Volunteering is, of course, a large part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and hundreds of our pupils are giving of their time in charity shops, animal shelters or through coaching or mentoring. Outside of this programme, however, we are seeing an increasing appetite to get involved and this has been especially exemplified by our Reynalds Cross volunteers who have shown tremendous commitment and enthusiasm in their teaching assistant roles. Music students like those in Saxophony have also given concerts at the school and others have welcomed Reynalds Cross pupils here to Solihull for an art workshop.

We are really proud of our pupils who have braved the Bushell Hall stage to advocate for community work, who have stepped up to run an event, given time to sort through donations, make the cakes or wander the corridors selling charity pin badges. This is the essence of community relations and we hope that the opportunities for pupil involvement will continue to grow.

*Ms C Dignon*



Over the past seven years I have assisted the school in the charity initiatives we have carried out and I am very proud of the work we have accomplished and the people we have been able to help. The way in which the school assists our local, national and international communities is extraordinary. I introduced the school to SIFA Fireside when I was in Fourth Form after completing my Lower School diploma on the homeless crisis in Birmingham. I am proud to have been a part in the ongoing relationship the school has with the charity as I finish Upper Sixth.

*Kitty O'Sullivan, Upper Sixth*



# Prep School Charity Week

Our annual Prep School Charity Week raised almost £10,000 for Newlands Bishop Farm. The five day event was packed with fun activities including a dog agility display, 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 Refectory on the Warwick Road campus to sell breake-time treats to Senior School pupils. Throughout the week, pupils were invited to donate to take part or make a purchase at one of the sale sessions.

This year, funds raised went to local charity, Newlands Bishop Farm which gives people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions the opportunity to learn work-based skills through unique work experiences in horticulture, woodwork, gardening, horse care, catering and retail and animal husbandry. Support was inspired by Prep School Maintenance Operative Tony Quinney, whose daughter Leanne is a regular visitor to the centre. Ahead of Charity Week, Leanne presented an assembly where she shared her experiences and then members of the Prep School Council visited the farm to understand more about the opportunities provided.







# Wellbeing and Personal Development

Aside from another full and comprehensive curriculum of learning in Wellbeing and Personal Development, there have been some wonderful highlights this year. WPD is the name at Solihull School for all things PSHE/RSE/Citizenship/Learning for Life and is much loved and enjoyed by pupils across all years. It is a core subject with impact and connections in other key pastoral areas and initiatives, a small sample of which you can see here!

## RESTORE / RETRACE

September started off on a real high when our RESTORE/RETRACE Behaviour Management Programme, born out of wellbeing for everyone, was nominated as a finalist in the Independent Schools of the Year Awards. Designed to support people who are affected by someone else's harmful behaviour, and to guide and educate individuals who may have lost their way a little, the programme is a highly sought-after model that clearly resonated with the judges. Mrs Speirs, Deputy Head Pastoral and Mrs Rooney, Head of WPD and the Anti-discrimination Lead and the creator of the programme, went to the awards ceremony in London and, whilst we didn't win in the category, it was heartening to realise that this is a great collaborative, non-shame-based tool that the community has come to rely on.



## Stand up to Sexism

Our Stand up to Sexism Online Conference was a unique opportunity for members of the Sixth Form to engage with hundreds of other pupils in an online conference looking at this very contemporary concern. In conjunction with Stand Up/Free and Equal Conferences, young adults were asked to reflect on the reality of sexism, both in terms of their lives now and in relation to later life environments, such as universities and the workplace.



## Sixth Form Trainers

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 Fourth Form pupils each year. As always information is provided to all parents and consent sought for both the Sixth Form Medics and the pupils to engage in this learning, which has its roots in evidence to suggest that young people are more likely to listen to important safety lessons when taught by someone closer to their age.

## Mental Health Awareness

Mental Health Awareness continues not only in WPD lessons which include understanding the science of mental health issues, self-care and supporting others. This year the theme was understanding anxiety and all years explored this in more detail, sharing and collaborating with strategies that will help and how to look out for people that may be struggling.

Male mental health and wellbeing is of national concern. A team of influential and supportive young men attended a male conference called 'Being Good at Being Me' on a fact-finding mission to create a new male support initiative to be launched soon.



## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Solihull School has a strong and clear Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy that is in line with current Government Guidance and the law, but our aim is to create an environment where everyone and anyone can thrive and have a strong sense of belonging.

The Equity Group 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.

The Equity Group were delighted to welcome our first members of the Alumni Equity Group to the school. The members came to this by invitation after expressing interest and support in the work of the pupil Equity Group. They offer and insight, wisdom and guidance to the school community that helps us pitch our DEI initiatives and work appropriately in classes and the wider world. Our AEG will be meeting with pupils again in September to look at the 2023-24 DEI strategy.



### Prep School Connections

J4 pupils were pleased to welcome members of the Senior School Equity Group to the Prep School. As a result, new Prep School representatives joined up with the older pupils and are now part of the force for inclusion and allyship for all.



### Show Racism the Red Card

Show Racism the Red Card training happened again for older years and the school continues with its strong links to the work that SRIRC does to combat racism and discrimination. Aside from targeted WPD lessons, the annual creative arts competition that the organisation runs took place again and we have always had pupils that are finalists since getting involved. This year, J3 pupil Sophie Bond was the national overall winner for her multimedia entry. The family enjoyed a day at Anfield celebrating with elite sports people.



### Visit to St. George's Park

The Equity Group was fortunate to be invited to the FA's St. George's Park Training Group in Burton to meet with a former Solihull teacher, Lucy Pearson, now Head of FA Education, to discuss the FA EDI strategy. Such a unique opportunity to find out more about the work the FA is doing to deal with discrimination in sports, and afterwards to be invited to get involved in some of their research with young people, using their resources.

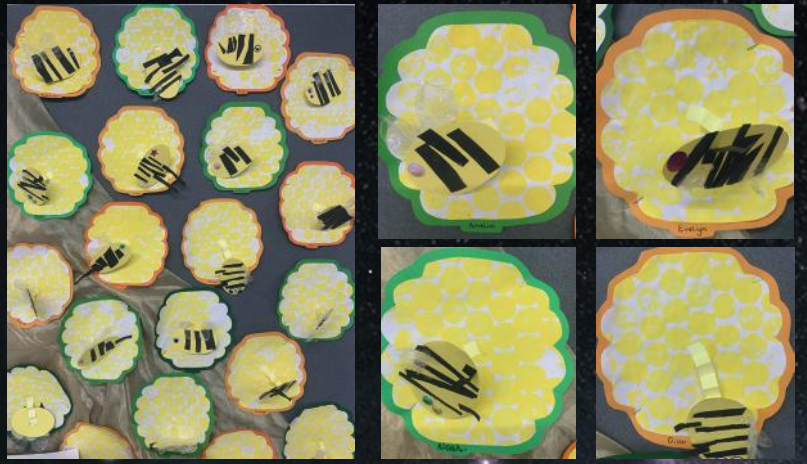


### Pride

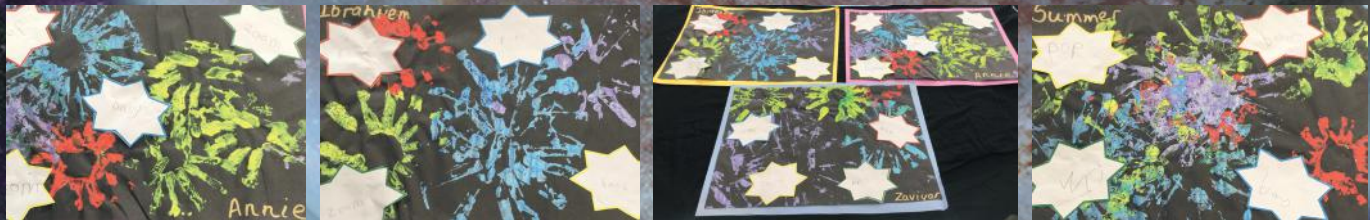
This year's Pride celebration was a gentle affair, focusing on a simple message of 'do no harm', and reminding people to be kind to everyone, not matter who they are. This is not just for Pride, but is an important message every day that includes all members of our community.

*Mrs L Rooney*





Alice House Art - Reception

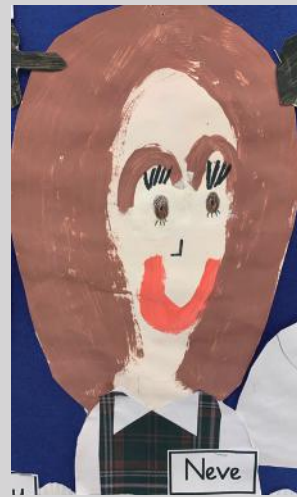


# Prep School Art

Alice House Art – Infant 1



Isaac



Neve



Henry

Arjun

Lily

Thomas

Ronak

Camilla

Isabelle

Eva

Kefan

Evie

Michael

Stanley

Ishan

Georgia

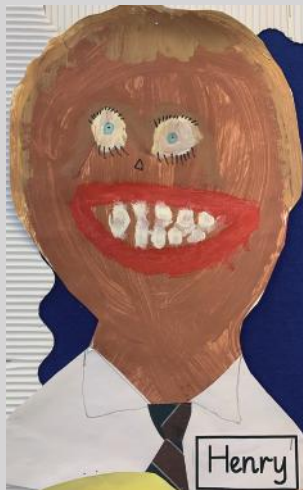
Rafay

Neve

Dhruv

Mart

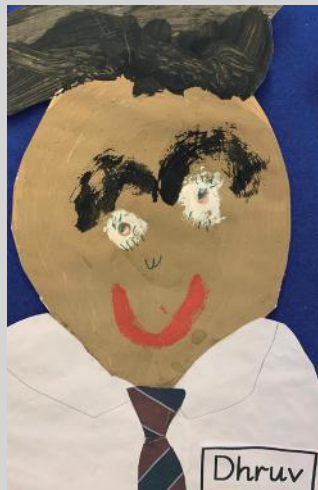
Anouk



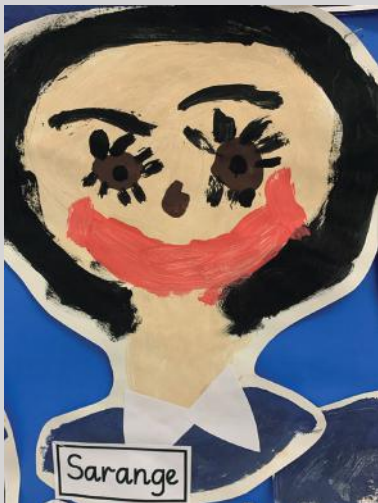
Henry



Evie

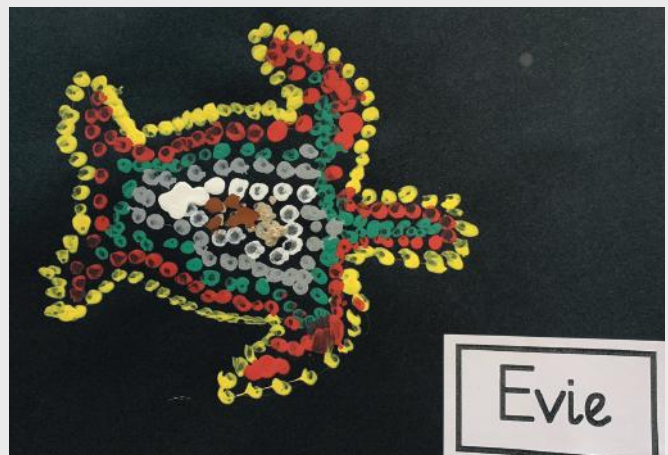
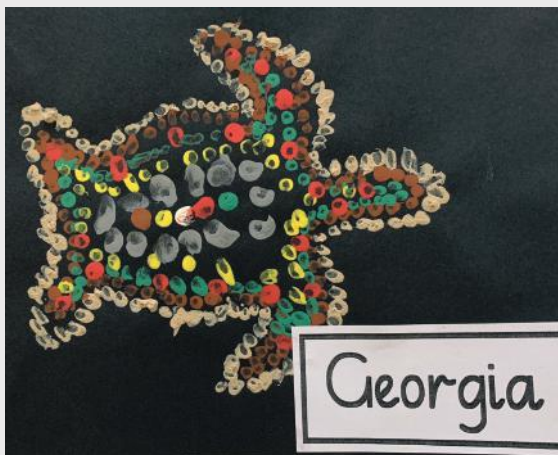
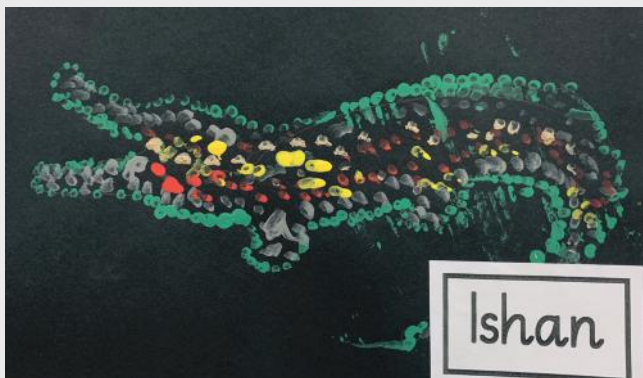
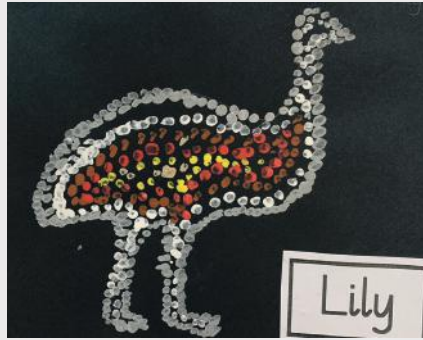
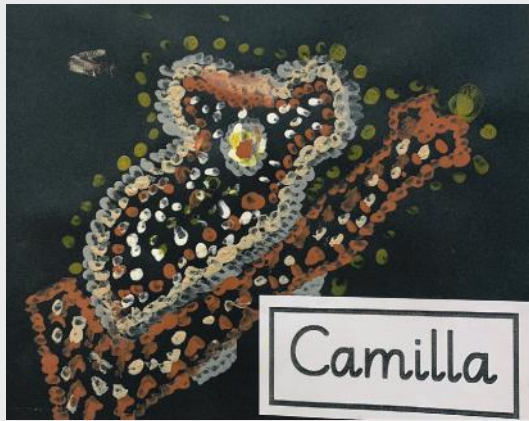


Dhruv



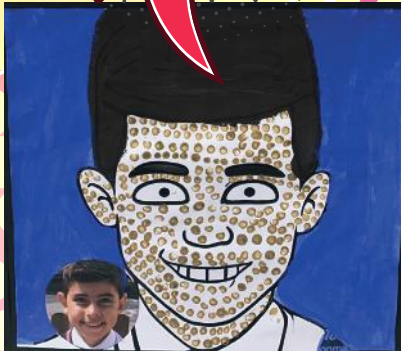
# Prep School Art

## Alice House Art – Infant 1





Alice House Art – Infant 2



# Prep School Art

## Junior School Art – J1



### Art – J1

- 01 Aadhya Botchu
- 02 Aarav Rachakatia
- 03 Amelia Fair
- 04 Arvin Thind
- 05 Bryan Lin
- 06 Francesca Harding
- 07 Grace Hemmings
- 08 Hamza Akbar
- 09 Imogen Pond
- 10 James Mackay





11



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### Art – J1

- 11 Kayan Sander
- 12 Maxwell Bhagrath
- 13 Mia McDermott
- 14 Philippa Whalley
- 15 Rory Gledhill
- 16 Sofia Benatia
- 17 Sofia Kolodynska
- 18 Tanvi Galaiya
- 19 Thomas Sephton
- 20 Ziven Gaddamanugu

# Prep School Art

## Junior School Art – J2



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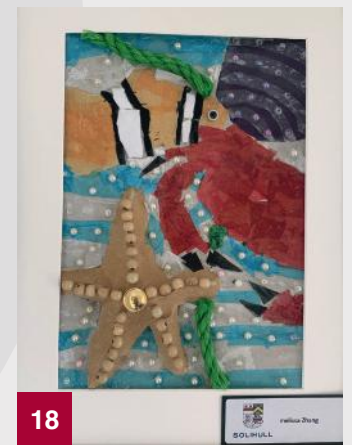
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**Art – J2**

- 01 Amaal Ahmad
- 02 Areesha Akbar
- 03 Ava Imison
- 04 Bobbie Ray – Barrett
- 05 Diya Chumber
- 06 Eva Ali
- 07 Evie Acton
- 08 Freddie Bayliss
- 09 Grace Shipley
- 10 Gurjot Ubee
- 11 India Kang
- 12 Ishana Somani
- 13 Kiko Okura
- 14 Kristina Kulikova
- 15 Lara Abdelmottaleb
- 16 Lauren Armstrong
- 17 Max Butler
- 18 Melissa Zhang
- 19 Sebastian Lawrence
- 20 Sophia Hothi
- 21 Srishti Kumar
- 22 William England



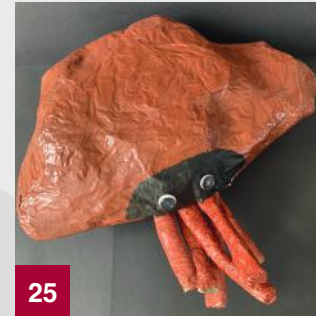
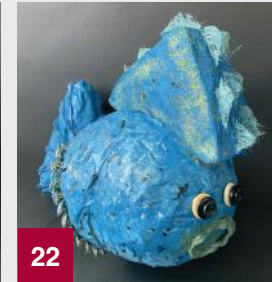
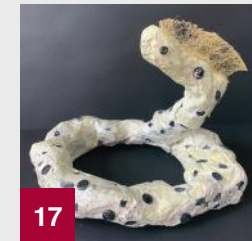
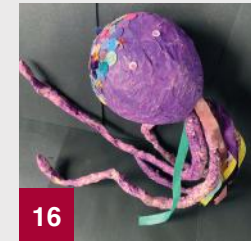
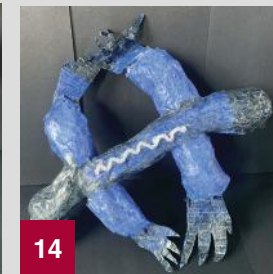
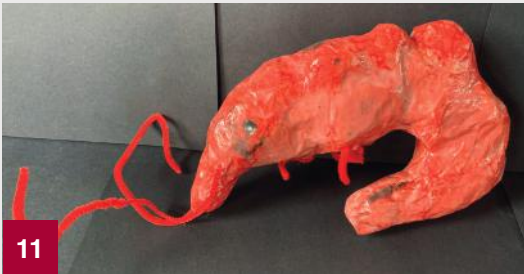
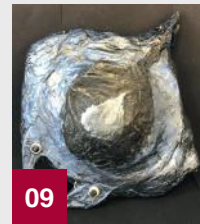
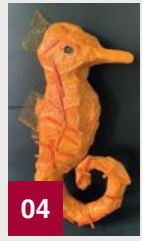
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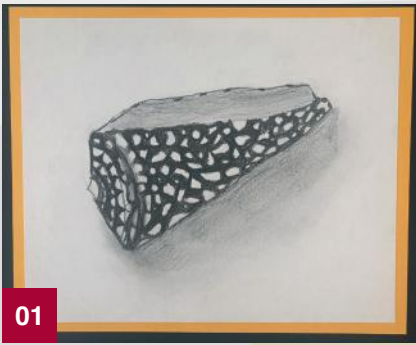
# Prep School Art

## Junior School Art – J3

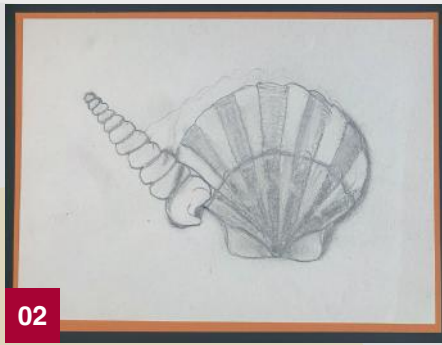


### Art – J3

- 01 Arty Plunkett
- 02 Avani Thind
- 03 Benji Tabari
- 04 Chloe Thompson
- 05 Elliot Costes
- 06 Finley Poulton
- 07 Freddie Fletcher
- 08 George Withers
- 09 Hugo Kelly
- 10 Jessica Keogh
- 11 Joseph Bell
- 12 Juju Basaran
- 13 Junior Dhadwal
- 14 Liam Bengough
- 15 Lizzie Wood
- 16 Marie Bohachuk
- 17 Marielle Sherkawi
- 18 Miaolu Jin
- 19 Ranulph Tan
- 20 Rosie Fryer
- 21 Ruben Saini
- 22 Sachin Raizada
- 23 Sophia Lister
- 24 Sophie Bond
- 25 Yukun Li



01



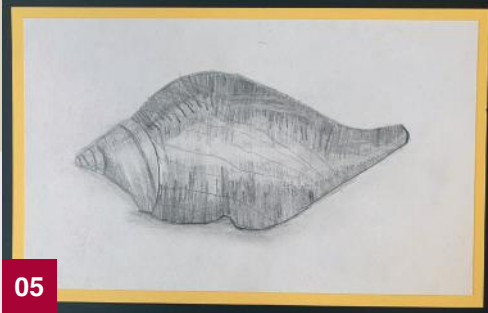
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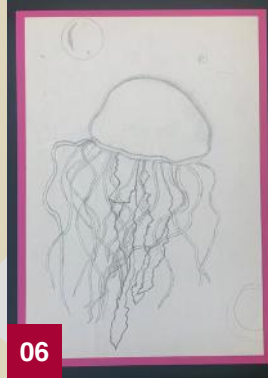
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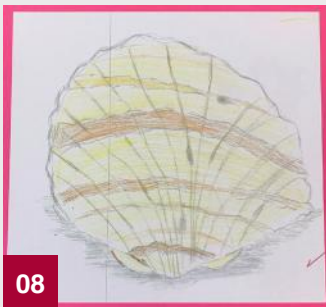
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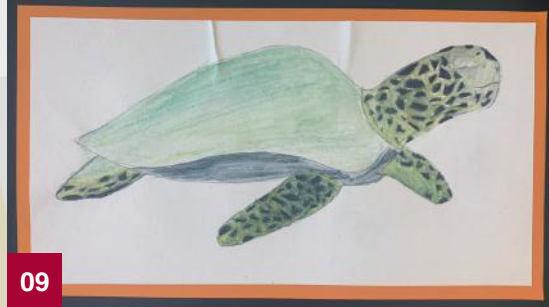
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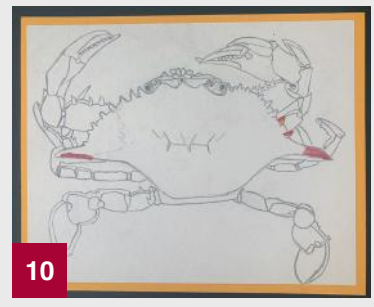
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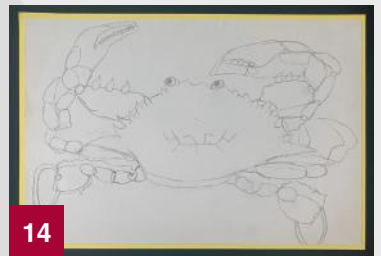
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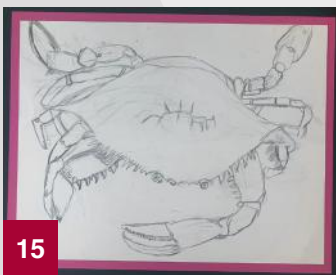
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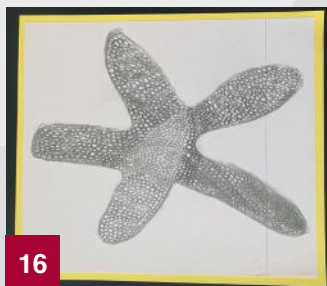
14

**Art – J3**

- 01 Amira Farooq
- 02 Amy Walsh
- 03 Avani Thind
- 04 Chloe Thompson
- 05 Eliana Mills
- 06 Ella Vara
- 07 Freddie Fletcher
- 08 Grace Owens
- 09 India Glorney
- 10 Joban Sohota
- 11 Juju Basaran
- 12 Miaolu Jin
- 13 Molly Mukherjee
- 14 Ruben Saini
- 15 Ryan Chandra
- 16 Sophia Lister
- 17 Sophie Bond



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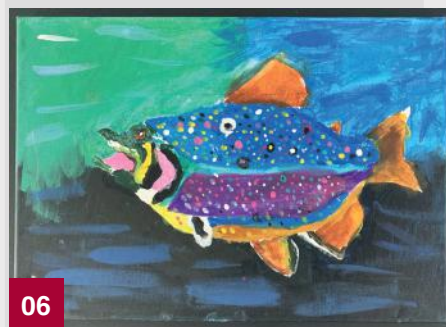
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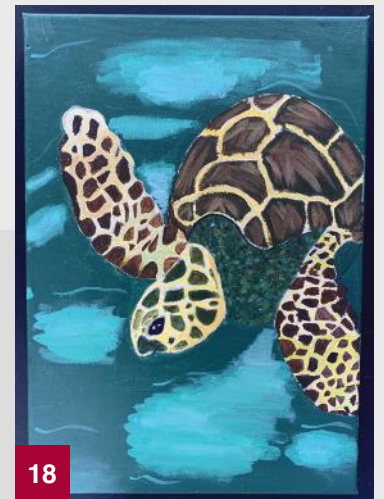
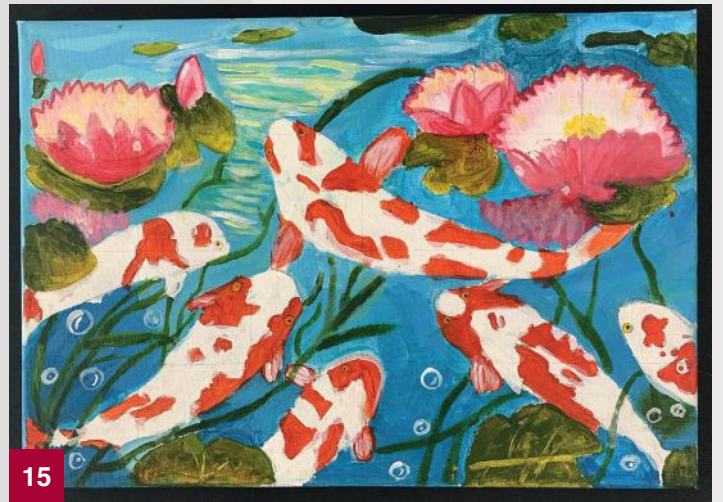
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# Prep School Art

## Junior School Art – J4







# Prep School Art

## Junior School Art – J4



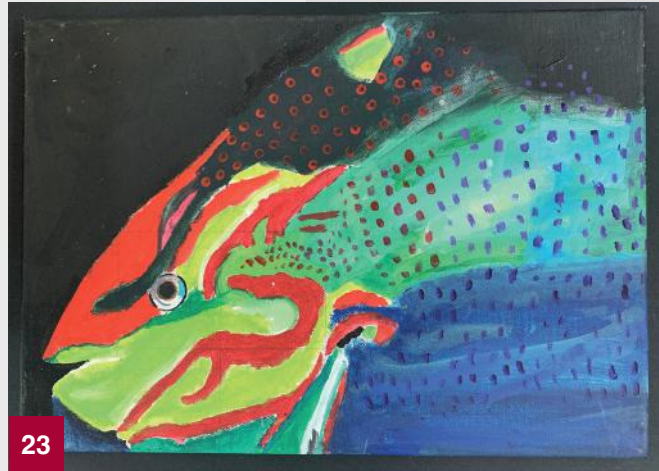
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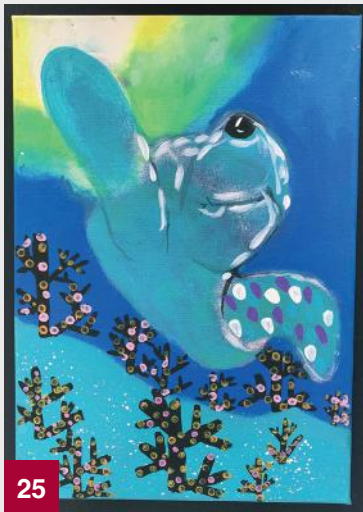
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**Art – J4**

- 01 Anmolika Roy
- 02 Aran Singh
- 03 Avneet Jheeta
- 04 Belle Blanco
- 05 Ben Grobler
- 06 Ciaran O' Brien
- 07 Claudie Sadler
- 08 Daniel Fogg

- 09 Edward Farncombe
- 10 Eliza Burroughs
- 11 Emma Cole
- 12 Eva Mirza
- 13 Harriet Shyamalan
- 14 Holly O' Neill
- 15 Husna Habib
- 16 Huw D'Arcy Ryan
- 17 Inaya Khurshid
- 18 Isabella Allan Castro

- 19 Isabella Amatsari
- 20 Issie Lea
- 21 Jayden Parmar
- 22 Kenza Hamaoui
- 23 Khrish Chauhan
- 24 Lacey Thomas
- 25 Lauren Urry
- 26 Lily Chadwick
- 27 Lucy Round
- 28 Megan Turner

- 29 Phoebe Thomas
- 30 Pippa Southall
- 31 Princess Qamar
- 32 Rayyan Bashir
- 33 Rien Patel
- 34 Ruby Hurst
- 35 Sebastian Pond
- 36 Sienna Shipley
- 37 Zara O'Neill
- 38 Zoe Grant Pearce

# Prep School



## Nursery Round Up

What a fun-packed year the Nursery children have had. The children have been busy making all year including trains from egg cups, trolls from clay and bridges from construction materials. At Christmas the children performed to their parents and were amazing singing their hearts out in our nativity 'Jesus' Christmas Party'.

During our Wings, Wheels and Sails topic Mr Walker drove us on a magical mystery tour of our local area on a school minibus, the children LOVED it! Our exciting visit to the Parkridge Centre towards the end of the summer term was a wonderfully enriching experience for all, bringing plenty of outdoor fun.

As part of Creative Thinking Week, a dance teacher came to school every day and taught the children a dance routine to 'Can't Stop the Feeling'. This was such a brilliant way to start each day both for the children and the teachers and resulted in a performance to be remembered by the end of the week.

As part of Science Week, to develop the children's understanding of the animal world, we enjoyed finding out about animals with 'Mo the Animal Man' where they held a tarantula, chinchilla, snake and an owl. The children learned what they eat, where they live and how to look after them. Then the children had their own caterpillars in the classroom and looked after to them until their release in Forest School.

All are now ready to embark on the next part of school life in Reception.

Mrs J Litwinko



## Reception Round Up



This year we welcomed our new outdoor classroom canopy which has been brilliant! Rain or shine the children are outside playing and learning.

The Christmas term was all about homes and celebrations. The children made homes for the Three Little Pigs, dens in Forest School and tiny homes for minibeasts. During the nativity Mr Walker was the grumpy inn keeper which the children found hilarious! The children sang the songs and performed the actions with great gusto.

Jetting off into space and walking with dinosaurs made our Easter term a blast! The children learned the story of Whatever Next and pretended to shoot off to the moon in their own cardboard box space rocket. The erupting volcano experiment resulted in the children squealing and jumping up and down with excitement. The exploration of dinosaur 'poo' to find out if they were carnivores, herbivorous or omnivores was not to everyone's taste!

During the summer term, our visit to we had a visit from two vets and a dog. They taught the children how to care for a pet and provided fun activities such as operate on the toy dog filled with jelly and spaghetti to find the things in his tummy he should not have eaten, bandaging toy animals and listening to a real dog's heartbeat! Our trip to 'All things Wild' supported our 'Animal Planet' topic, with the children having the opportunity to get up close to the animals as well as meeting fearsome dinosaurs we'd learnt about in our 'Long, Long Ago' topic.

It has been a wonderful year, full of excitement, learning new things and having fun!

*Mrs J Litwinko*



# Prep School

## I1 Round Up

What a super year for our I1 children. From learning how to use a computer, to understanding how our bodies work and ways to keep healthy, to learning about Harvest and why we still remember Guy Fawkes all in the first term! Before Christmas, we participated in the Bethlehem Bake Off as the I1 choir. A fantastic opportunity for the pupils to perform in front of their parents. The children worked hard on becoming more independent with their learning, building up their stamina with writing and problem solving which was aided by a wide variety of engaging topics. This allowed the children to be creative in lots of ways. In the Easter term, the children became accomplished artists, analysing and creating their own Van Gogh paintings based on his 'Sunflower' and 'Starry Night' paintings as well as matchstick people from Lowry. We wrote stories about 'Percy the Park Keeper' visiting our school campus, even bumping into our very own Scuffle and Twitch! The children were very excited to visit the Warwick Road campus and work with some of the Senior School pupils at the Easter pop up session in the Chapel. Our Kings and Queens topic in summer linked well to King Charles coronation, and children wrote to him to congratulate him on his special day. To finish of an amazing year the children visited Kenilworth Castle to become a king or queen for the day, but I think they will always remember pretending to storm the castle and getting caught in the keep.

*Mrs H Coleman and Mrs E Pimlott*



## 12 Round Up

12 pupils have had a very busy year! To start off the Christmas term, the children learnt all about the Great Fire of London, exploring how and why the fire started and the differences between now and then. To support the topic, the children participated in a drama workshop, where they retold the event through drama, which they loved! To round off the Christmas term the children showcased their theatrical talents, when they put on a phenomenal performance of the Bethlehem Bake Off – a super, tasty treat to start the festive period! In the Easter term, the children enjoyed learning about pirates, the history of pirates and using some pirate phrases. The children applied for a job as a pirate, working for Captain Blackbeard aboard his ship the Squeaky Sail – it was great fun recording their applications on the iPads using Chatterpix. Our trip to Ryton Pools was a great success. The children participated in den building and pond dipping, and a walk down to feed the ducks, although it turned out the big fish were particularly hungry that day!

Mrs H Grace



# Prep School Science Week

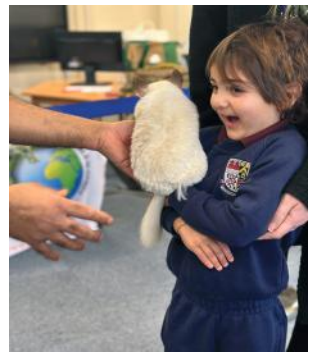
In February, pupils enjoyed five days of interactive activities, explosive experiments, imaginative inventions and more during our annual Science Week extravaganza!

Pupils enjoyed crafting rockets, spaceships, and replicas of the International Space Station. The homemade creations came in all shapes and sizes from Lego builds with lights ready for lift off to papier mâché and cake constructions!

Senior School Science teachers visited the Prep School to view the finalists' inventions before announcing the overall winner in assembly.

Nursery, Reception and Infant children were treated to a visit from 'Mo the Zookeeper' who brought his rescued exotic animals in to Alice House for a show, tell and touch session. Pupils enjoyed teacher-led experiments, 'States of Matter' presentations and performances, and an interactive Space in the Dome experience.

Sixth Form students ran workshops for the younger children to explore solar eclipses and distances between planets, and a specialist careers afternoon with a panel of parent experts gave J4 pupils the opportunity to learn about science-based careers including veterinary and manufacturing engineering.









## Creative Thinking Week

During March, pupils enjoyed five days dedicated to creative learning when their usual weekly timetable was given a flamboyant twist. Lesson time was bursting with activities including the construction of an eco-friendly willow dome, dazzling art projects, energetic dance performances and more during the school's inaugural Creative Thinking Week.

Pupils were joined by artist Sarah Edwards at different intervals throughout the week to make their contribution to a collaborative wall hanging based on the theme of 'Togetherness,' which will be positioned prominently within school.

Nursery and Reception children took part in a dance project guided by Dance Teacher Amy Price, with their daily practice sessions culminating in an impressive final show performed to the rest of Alice House. Junior School pupils exercised their rock star flair, getting physical with drumming, cardio and strength training during Pound sessions with visiting instructor Emily Mulholland.

Maths lessons took a tangible twist, with pupils creating 'human lines' to map out perimeters and performed Mexican waves to reflect symmetry. Giant scale portraits of teachers were created using fabric, whilst younger pupils enjoyed art lessons with their older peers to make self-portraits.

The theme of 'Togetherness' was consistent, perfectly embodied by a living willow dome which took shape throughout the week, built by visiting artist Chaz Friend. The dome will act as a special place for children to congregate, spend time and have fun together for years to come.

*Mrs R Morgan*







## World Book Day

On Thursday 2 March we celebrated World Book Day. This year, the School Council led a vote for pupils to decide whether to mark the occasion with a pyjama day or, as in more recent years, a 'dress up as your favourite character' day. The winning choice, by quite some margin, was pyjamas although we are assured that costumes will return next year! Fun activities took place across the week including a Read-a-thon, where Junior School pupils read to the younger children in Alice House; A 'Bedroom-in-a-Box' competition, which involved creating a bedroom for a suitable character, and our popular 'Stories with Staff' sessions, where stories were read in the most unexpected locations!





# MADAGASCAR

## Prep School

### J4 Drama Production, Madagascar

In our J4 production of 'Madagascar,' Alex the Lion (Claudie Sadler and Sienna Shipley), Marty the Zebra (Ben Daines and Lacey Thomas), Melman the Giraffe (Emma Cole and Huw D'Arcy Ryan) and Gloria the Hippo (Eva Shipley and Aana Haque) escaped from their home in New York's Central Park Zoo and found themselves on an unexpected journey to the world of King Julien's (Eliza Burrows) Madagascar, helped by a group of determined penguins. They met King Julien's devoted followers, the lemurs, and the not so friendly foosas on their adventures. The cast worked hard to put on an entertaining production full of songs, dances and lots of fun! J4 should be proud of the fantastic show.

*Mrs S Haley*





### Roald Dahl Day

As is tradition, our annual celebration of Roald Dahl Day was marked by pupils being invited to wear a splash of yellow or an item of clothing inside out. Pupils enjoyed taking part in lots of themed activities, including a scumdidlyumptious Roald Dahl lunch, and a competition where they could be Willy Wonka for the day and invent a new treat for his Chocolate Factory!

# Prep School

## Gold Star Award Winners

Congratulations to our Junior School Gold Star Award winners.



## Wow Awards

Well done to our Alice House Wow Award winners. Here are some of the pupils who received certificates to recognise their efforts this academic year.







**Junior School Eco Council**

As well as litter picks, the creation of eco-friendly Christmas decorations and generating ideas to support sustainability, a particular highlight of the year was our 'Fairtrade Tree' which we created for the Fairtrade Foundation's message for 2023, 'Choose Fairtrade now to save the future of our favourite foods.' Prep School Eco Council pupils contributed several super ideas, which were translated into the 'Fairtrade Tree', with supportive messages written on heart-shaped leaves, linking to our school aims. The tree was later displayed in Metro Bank on Solihull High Street, and members of our Junior School Eco Council were invited to meet the Mayor of Solihull at a special afternoon tea to celebrate their contributions to the Fairtrade Art Trail.

*Mrs N Dickerson*



**Junior School Public Speaking**

Our annual Junior School Public Speaking competition took place in the summer term with pupils presenting some carefully crafted talks on topics that interest them. A huge well done to every speaker and congratulations to the year group winners.





### Forest School

Throughout the year pupils have enjoyed some fabulous outdoor sessions, whatever the weather! Activities ranged from making garlic bread and s'mores over the camp fire, to climbing trees and den building...and everything in between!  
*Mrs H Pemberton.*



### J1 Attwell Farm Park Trip

Towards the end of the summer term, J1 had a brilliant day of fun in the sunshine at Attwell Farm Park!





### J2 Thinktank Trip

J2 pupils had a thoroughly engaging day at Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum for their summer trip.





### J3 History Trip

J3 pupils enjoyed a day at Mary Arden's Farm as part of their Tudor topic in History.



### J4 Coventry Cathedral Trip

During the Christmas term, J4 pupils took a trip to Coventry Cathedral as part of Blitz Week. The children listened to Blitz stories from a range of characters - from Provost Howard to an evacuation officer - and experienced what it would have been like in an air raid shelter.





### J3 PGL Residential

On Friday 19 May, J3 pupils set off to Boreatton Park PGL for a weekend of adventure, teambuilding and resilience. The pupils were tested in many ways such as solving problems 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.

*Mr A Poole*





### J4 Hilltop Residential

From Friday 12 May - Monday 15 May three coach loads of enthusiastic J4 pupils and staff headed off to the beautiful north Norfolk coast and Hilltop Outdoor Activity Centre.

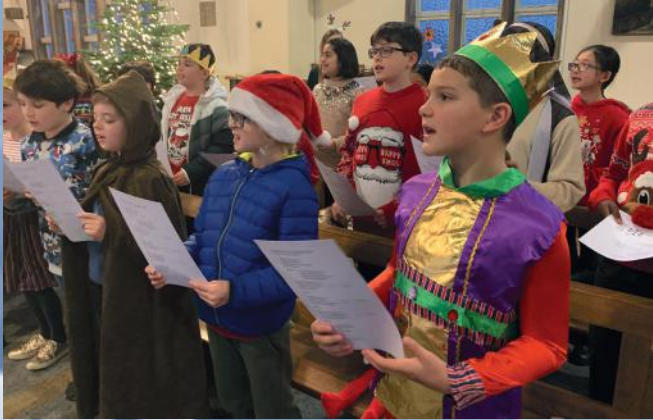
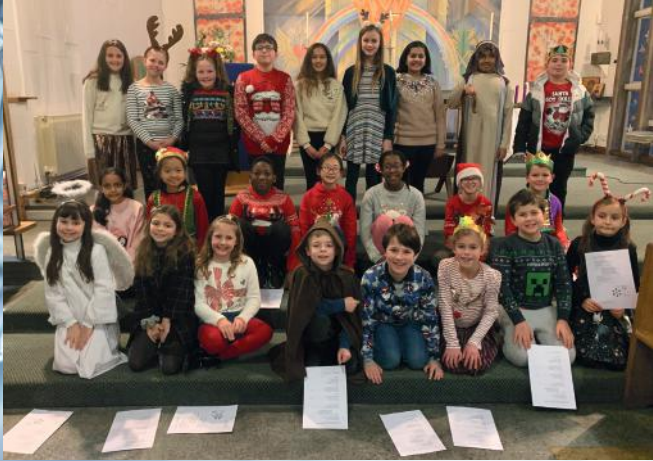
The action-packed weekend included zip wires, tree top trails, mountain biking and trips to the beach. Staff were incredibly proud of the pupils as they displayed bucket loads of teamwork, kindness, good manners and bravery. It was a memorable trip to mark the pupils' time at the Prep School and will be talked about amongst them all for years to come.

*Mr S Grove*



### Christmas Performances

A highlight of the festive calendar is the variety of pupil performances celebrating this special time of year. With three nativities, two carol services and a jolly sing song at the SSPA Christmas Fair, a joyous end to the Christmas term!









**J1 Stone Age Workshop**

On Friday 18 November, J1 took part in a Stone Age themed day, introducing our pupils to a vast period in history from the original hunter gathers to early farming communities. Pupils took part in a wide range of interesting activities including a group investigation, where the children explored numerous informative displays and artefacts and gained hands-on experience of ancient technology and skills.



**J3 Performing Arts Club**

Pupils in J3 Performing Arts Club had a fantastic year - culminating in a really wonderful performance of *Stuart Little* to an excited audience of fellow Junior School children.



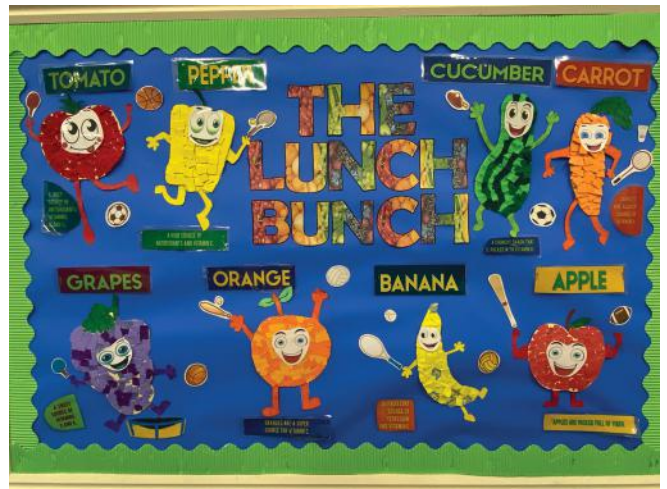
**J4 Anderson Shelters**

During the Easter term, J4 pupils created a variety of outstanding Anderson Shelters showing great imagination and attention to detail.



## J2 Victorian Day

On Wednesday 24 May, J2 pupils stepped back in time to experience a Victorian themed day, taking part in various activities including designing and creating Victorian toys and learning about money. A highlight of the day was the outfits, especially for the teachers!



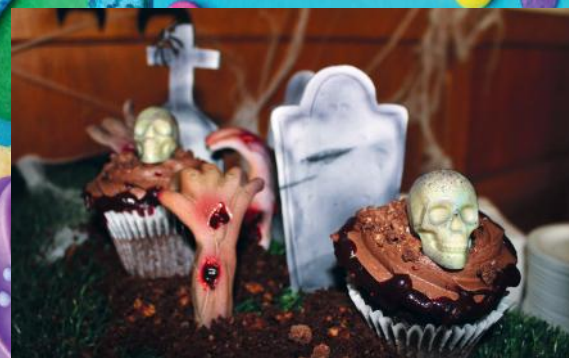
## Wraparound Care Club

Wraparound Care Club has continued to grow over the year with many new friendships being made over Guess Who, Chess and Uno. The recent introduction of a table tennis table has proved very popular and brought out the competitive side of many children! Lego is also a firm favourite from Nursery up to J4, with many fabulous creations being produced. Outdoor activities have continued to be very popular with the Junior children, who have been very excited by the arrival of new footballs which fly off the roof as quickly as they land there! Alice House children have made the most of their outdoor area, allowing them to have fun in the fresh air whatever the weather. In particular, their badminton and frisbee skills have grown over the summer term. The EYFS curriculum has guided the craft activities throughout the year and much fun has been had creating displays on space, rockets and vehicles. The children have also worked hard producing a fabulous sign for the Catering team, advertising the salad bar.

*Mrs A O'Leary*

# Birthday Celebrations

Once again, each month, Third Form pupils were welcomed by the Headmaster for birthday celebrations with special themed cakes! This year, the party moved from the Refectory to the Eleanor Chapman Boardroom. Pupils have enjoyed experiencing the splendour of this space, including its wood panelled walls engraved with the Governors, Headmasters and Heads of School and adorned with portraits of former Headmasters.





## Food and Nutrition

It has been a very busy year as always in the Food and Nutrition Department, we just aren't very good at sitting still!

Our curriculum has remained as varied as ever. We have continued to push our Third Form pupils with their excellent marinated kebab projects, they never fail to impress us and produce restaurant worthy food at such a young age. Shell Form have been making us all hungry with their gourmet burger dishes, some of them have been incredibly creative and have really showcased their talents with interesting ideas for sauces, condiments and serving suggestions.

Our older pupils have learnt about budgeting through making dishes for £1.50 - the usual budget of £1 had to be raised this year due to the price of food increasing, this has been a valuable lesson in budgeting for all. Lower Fifth had the opportunity to take part in the Tunnock's Teacake Challenge, with Libby King's winning entry going forward to the national competition. The Upper Fifth worked exceptionally hard this year and produced incredible work for their NEA 2 exam, three dishes in three hours is a MasterChef worthy challenge, and they did themselves and us proud!

The King's Coronation wasn't missed by us, pupils were invited to design a 'Dish fit for a King.' The winning entry, made by Third Form pupil George Cobb, was a 'Kingdoms United' salmon, leek and potato pie recipe. It included ingredients from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales and was created and served in the refectory by our chefs.

Christmas always brings opportunity for baking, the Lower Fifth baked beautiful chocolate logs, which were decorated to perfection. The Sixth Form enrichment classes cooked

a full Christmas dinner, which they sat down to with tables laid, crackers to pull and 'Nosecco' to drink! Not only have we celebrated Christmas, but we also celebrated the Lunar New Year with superb decorations, traditional foods to taste and lesson content to understand more about this festival. We have also sampled foods from other celebrations too, including Eid and Easter. This is an area we would like to embrace more in coming years.

We all believe firmly in the benefits of the great outdoors, hence our commitment to our school allotment. Mrs Massarella and Ms White have run Gardening Club as a co-curricular activity, and classes have all had the opportunity to get outside and get their hands in the soil whenever we've had time. It's a big commitment to look after an allotment, so we need all the help we can get from the pupils. This year we've grown broad beans, potatoes, herbs, celeriac, onions and lettuce. Pupils also planted up some seeds in lessons and brought these home, hopefully there are some chilli and tomato plants that have survived and will bear fruit!

We also had a superb trip to Sorrento, the pupils were exemplary and a real credit to our department, these opportunities outside the classroom are so enriching. We hope they've inspired our pupils to have a passion for food and to understand that is such an important part of life for so many people around the world.

Healthy Eating Week was celebrated by Third Form pupils using a pedal powered blender for smoothies for their five a day. We had hydration stations in the food rooms with fresh mint, berries, apples and ginger to flavour the water. We looked at alternative proteins - eating cookies made using crickets! It all culminated in a lunchtime cookery demonstration of a traditional German potato salad translated in to German by German teacher, Mr Delaney.

*Mrs H Hallworth*

## Academic Enrichment



### Academic Showcase Series

January saw the launch of a series of Academic Enrichment Talks, which run twice per half term and showcase the wider academic life of the school. These 25-minute lunchtime sessions are open to all pupils (and staff!) who are intellectually curious and eager to expand their knowledge of the world around them. The first talk was entitled 'It's in the DNA; America's Fear of Concentrated Power and Presidential Politics' and was delivered by Professor Cofone, who was visiting from New York.

*Dr A Eagleton*



### Classics Society

The Classics Society started off the year with a bang! In September, we were lucky enough to be one of handful of schools and institutions in the UK hosting the Black Classicists: from ostracism to scholarship exhibition. This exhibition told the stories of 14 prominent Black Classicists, focusing not only on the struggles they faced but also the amazing strides forward they took for both black academia and Classics as a subject. It was fascinating to see how the subject developed in 19th and 20th Century America and how that impacted on Classics in the UK. To accompany the exhibition Mrs Johnson gave an interesting and informative whole school assembly, exploring the ways in which Classics had been associated with the idea of whiteness, and what steps are being taken to redress this. In October, Dr Eleni Giusti, The University of Warwick, visited Solihull to give a talk on 'Black Classicism: terms, methods, key figures' to members of both the school and the Birmingham and Midlands Classical Association (BMCA).

In January, we visited The University of Birmingham to hear another talk hosted by the BMCA. This time we heard Dr Andrew Bayliss, The University of Birmingham, speaking on 'the Trouble the Spartans'. This was an exciting talk, looking at the ways the Spartans presented themselves, the way other Greeks viewed them, and the ways in which we think about them. Dr Bayliss looked at both the film *300* and the graphic novel *300* by Frank Miller and left us with many things to think about. In March, the Classics Society enjoyed a day out and marched on the British Museum. While we were there, we explored Mrs Johnson's Top Ten (plus one!) things to see in the museum, and many of us completed the extra challenge of the treasure hunt. It was a great day out, and lovely to be back visiting museums.

The Classics Society ended the year with a trip to the eternal city itself – Rome: the Forum, the Colosseum, the Baths of Caracalla, the Ara Pacis, the Theatre of Marcellus, as well as the pizza and the gelato! We have lots planned for next year, so watch this space!

*Mrs J Johnson*



### Debating Club

The Middle School Debating Club has met every Friday lunchtime for the past year and discussed a wide variety of topics. The standard of debating has been very high and there are a number of very talented speakers. We have explored some school-based issues comparing single sex education to co-education and considering the value of public examinations. At other times we have delved into politics and inquired whether the police were right to stop protesters at the coronation or whether significant cultural artefacts should be returned to their country of origin. There were some strong opinions as to whether reality TV should be banned and many agreed that England should not have sent a team to the World Cup in Qatar. A more philosophical session saw the group try and establish how we can measure success in the modern world. The Christmas balloon debate was hotly contested with The Grinch and The Turkey performing surprisingly well. Santa came in for some rough treatment on account of his corpulence and fondness for a tippie. I can't remember if Rudolf or an elf won overall and, in fact, it may have been neither.





## Oxbridge Successes

Solihull has reinforced its standing as one of the Midlands' most successful academic schools after recording another superb set of Oxford and Cambridge University results. Asad Iqbal was awarded a place to study Economics and Management at Worcester College, Oxford; Conor Collins, Maths at Jesus College, Cambridge; Paige Redfern, Natural Sciences at Newnham College, Cambridge; Ben Pulley, History at Downing College, Cambridge; Jem Perry, PPE at The Queen's College, Oxford and Pippa Meigh, English at Christchurch College, Oxford.

*Dr S Foster*

## Medics Success!

After considerable preparation and hard work, and with the support and guidance of their teachers and the Medics Co-ordinator, the following students received places to study a range of Healthcare disciplines. For Medicine: Balaarka Cheekoti (Leicester); Francisco Campino (Manchester); Mariella Scott (Liverpool), Lauren Hu (Southampton), Emaan Aamer (Nottingham-Lincoln); Jonathon Maundrell (Nottingham-Lincoln), Cedric Mergental (York-Hull). For Medical related degrees: Tatiana Chisholm (Imperial College, London); Riya Panesar (Liverpool, John Moores); Rachel Baumber (Manchester); Freya Kehoe (Birmingham); Hana Ali (Southampton); Michael Gabriel (Nottingham), Dylan Boora (Nottingham); Charles Arbutnot (Cardiff); Layla Llahi (Anglia) and Celina Oneyaka (Queen Mary's, London). Congratulations to them all!

*Dr S Foster*



## ESU Public Speaking

Many of the club went on to perform in external competitions. Maysa Hamood, Amber Creasey, Tessa Lamusse, Olivia Haynes, Shreeya Purbey and Libby King all took part in the Rotary "Youthspeaks" competition and did very well. Some of the group took part in university debating competitions which is a real challenge. We had excellent success in the ESU Public Speaking with both teams making the Regional Final which is a great achievement. Isabella Skinner and Shaya Moeini delivered two superb speeches on Britishness and Poverty respectively. Amelia Binning and Fatima Hammad were very assured chairs and Georgiana Bagshaw and Aimee Binning managed the tricky role of questioner with aplomb. Well done to all those who took part in all competitions.

Thanks goes to Hannah Greenwood and Sophie Burtenshaw for their help and expertise in preparing the pupils for debates and also to Miss Yates for her support with the club and competitions.

*Mr N Linehan*



## Lord Mayor's Quiz

In November, Sixth Form students enjoyed taking part in the Lord Mayor's Big Birmingham Quiz, which was held at the University of Birmingham. The evening gave students the opportunity to unveil Solihull's new Mascots, two bears named Percy and Verantia. Thank you, Miss Evans, for thinking of such fitting names!

## From Strength to Strength: Classical Greek!

Classical Greek involves academic rigour and intellectual curiosity and students gain a considerable amount for the study of this ancient language. It is both stimulating and seriously challenging and many students over the years have relished the subject!

This is the ninth year of Classical Greek off timetable - over 45 pupils have managed to achieve top grades over the past eight years from its inception under Dr Foster's tutelage to today, with all Classics staff involved! The results continue to be stellar. Every year pupils excel, achieving top grades. This year was no exception, with 12 candidates achieving top grades under the tutelage of Mrs Johnson, Mr Linehan and Dr Foster. Seven pupils sat GCSE this summer with Dr Foster and we have high hopes that they will continue the trail blazing results; there are already another seven preparing to follow them with Mrs Johnson and Mrs McAlister. These classes have led to two cohorts of Classical Greek A Level students, enhancing the school's offering of Classical languages at A Level. Success indeed!

*Dr S Foster*

## Academic Enrichment



### Green Power Racing

A highlight for the Green Power Racing team this year was competing in their first race, which took place at Mallory Park. The boys worked really well as a team, particularly given the level of competition as they were up against university students in their group category of 16-25 year olds. One of the marshals commented that the Solihull boys were one of the best 'first timer' teams they had seen!

*Mr N Corbett*



On Monday 24 April, the school's Green Power Racing team entered its first race at Mallory Park in Leicester. The team's progress has spanned across four years, which has involved manufacturing a car from scratch with optimal sustainability. The aim of the race was to complete as many laps as possible within a given time period on a finite amount of battery power. The team this year had the responsibility of making sure the car was race ready and after a few mechanical issues at the start of the race managed to complete around 16 laps with over 3/5ths of the battery left remaining, with plenty of potential for further speed improvements. The team pushed through tricky circumstances that occurred at the start of the race and were flexible when finding a solution allowing the team to remain inspired throughout the race, hence leaving the team in a healthy position for future races!

*Henry Close, Lower Sixth*

### Biology Olympiad

The Biology Olympiad is open to all students in the Upper Sixth and is the most prestigious competition available to enter. Over 13,000 students from 800 schools worldwide took part in this year's competition and our Upper Sixth have performed very well indeed, winning one gold (Balaarka Cheekoti), four silver (Dylan Boora, Suna Ozsoy, Liv Kiffin and Tatiana Chisholm), five bronze (Mariella Scott, Lauren Hu, Jonathon Maundrell, Michael Gabriel and Kitty O'Sullivan), seven highly commended and six commended. Overall, 23 out of 34, some 68% gained an award – a tremendous result. Well done to all.

*Mrs D Parker*

### Physics Olympiad

The following Lower Sixth students showed real dedication in attending weekly Physics Extension sessions which focused on areas of Physics that stretched far beyond A Level content. We are proud to see their commitment paid off in their final Physics Olympiad of the year, after having obtained the following results; Kezia Hartle (Bronze II), Noah Maclean (Silver), Valentyna Pylypenko (Bronze I), Lucia Baker (Silver), Scarlett Quakenbush (Commendation), Josh Litwinko (Gold), Alice Demianenko (Silver), Philip Eades (Silver), William Hodge (Bronze II), Laavunya Arora (Silver), Flynn Rickard (Silver) and Matthew Ashby (Silver). Good luck next year!

*Mrs E Saunders*



### Chemistry Olympiad

This year, 12 Upper Sixth students entered the Chemistry Olympiad. The competition challenges the students beyond the scope of the A Level course, stretching their ability to apply their chemistry knowledge on topics ranging from the dangers of vaping, how to produce holes in Swiss cheese and quite literally rocket science (or at least the science of rocket fuels). The students managed to achieve another great set of results with six gold awards (top 9%), five silver awards and one bronze. Congratulations to all students involved; Conor Collins, Lauren Hu, Paige Redfern, Alistair Tisdale, Anton Deineka, Mark Pratt, Tatiana Chisholm, Dylan Boora, Roma Morris, Rachel Baumber, Thomas Giddings and Michael Gabriel. Particular mention should be made to Conor Collins who achieved the best score we've ever had in the competition at Solihull!

*Dr R Jennings*



## International Biology Competitions

The Royal Society of Biology hosts online international competitions for biologists which test students' knowledge and stimulates their curiosity for the natural world. The papers covering familiar and novel topics across the entirety of biology from ecology to biotechnology and covers content from beyond the specifications. To gain a gold award across all levels, entrants have to finish in the top 5% of the cohort.

In May, our Lower Fifth competed against 43,685 students from 621 schools worldwide in the Biology Challenge. They were tremendously successful and achieved the following awards: 14 gold, 124 silver, 31 bronze, 22 highly commended and 27 commended. Special mention goes to our gold award holders Yuchen Zhang, Mari Chillcott, Umar Shah, Callum Graham, Bonnie Maughan, Sukhesh Balkrishna, Fatima Hammad, Holly Giddings, Kate O'Leary, Matthew Parker, Rosie O'Connor, Benen Guan, Libby King and Taha Mohammad Mohyuddin.

Lower Sixth biologists took part in the Intermediate Biology Olympiad in June and competed against over 14,000 students from over 700 schools worldwide, gaining very impressive results: one Gold, (Sophie Burtenshaw), five Silver (Thomas Evans, Daniel Youssef, Tom Leedham, Grace Pimlott, Harry Pemberton), five Bronze (Mia Pearse, Noah Harrison, Alex Rooney, Amy Barcock and Daleen Sherkawi) and a further seven highly commended and four commended.

*Mrs D Parker*



## La Gastronomía Española

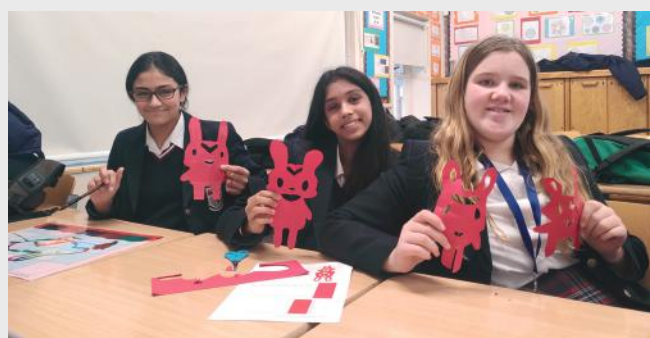
¡Viva España! As part of our Fourth Form Spanish curriculum, pupils have been learning all about la gastronomía of the Spanish speaking world. To bring that to life, pupils were invited to make 'Torrijas' – a popular Spanish dessert. Judged by the Spanish Department, Food & Nutrition Department and catering staff, the overall winner was Olivia Southall with Claire Delaney and Sophie Gilbert as joint runners-up. Super effort of bringing the learning to life...and tasty too!

*Mr M Gledhill*



## Spanish Spelling Bees

Following success in the regional rounds earlier in the year, towards the end of the summer term, Third Form pupils Beth Spratley, Emily Spratley and Emma Chan participated in the National Final of the Year 7 Languages Bee at Cambridge University. Well done to all three girls, and congratulations to Emma who came third out of 21,099 children who entered the competition. Congratulations also goes to J3 pupil Marielle Sherkawi who came second in the National Final of the Primary Languages Bee at Cambridge University. A superb achievement, especially as 1,999 children started the competition!



## Mandarin Club

Our popular Mandarin Club continues. A highlight this year was our celebration of Chinese New Year, where we got particularly crafty! To mark the first day of the Year of Rabbit/tù nián, Lower School pupils enjoyed the creative process of making a paper rabbit and painting using Chinese brush.

*Ms Z Zhou*

# Academic Enrichment

## Higher Project Qualification

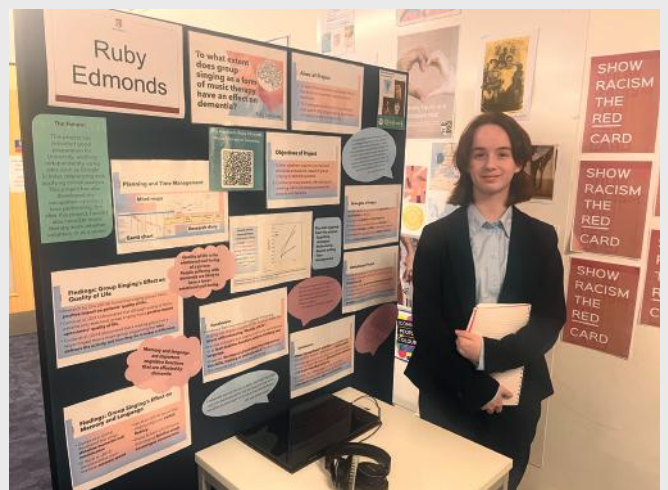
For the second year running, a group of pupils in the Upper Fifth completed their Solihull Diploma. Building on skills gained in the previous year when completing their LAMDA Public Speaking Award, they began the HPQ. Pupils chose an area of interest and, much like the EPQ, developed research, analytical and written skills. They finally presented their findings alongside EPQ students and were praised by those in attendance for their engagement and passion for topics on the impact of aerial arts on mental health and the popularity of true crime shows.

Mrs A Thacker

## Extended Project Qualification

This has been another fantastic year for EPQ at Solihull with over 100 projects on such a wide variety of topics. Titles included 'How do hurricanes affect marine life and coastal communities?', 'Should the primary purpose of prisons be to punish or to rehabilitate?' and 'To what extent is Artificial Intelligence a threat to the future of life on Earth and the human experience?'. There were also a range of artefacts including a website on how to get back into exercise following a spinal injury and a Vivienne Westwood inspired school uniform! The cohort of pupils worked extremely hard, displaying intellectual curiosity from the start, taking ownership of their research and presenting findings with real enthusiasm.

Mrs A Thacker



## Spanish Film Study Day

*"Almodóvar on the Edge"*

On Wednesday 12 October, Mr Gledhill and Ms Agudo-Dunn accompanied 15 A Level Spanish students on a visit to the Midlands Arts Centre in Edgbaston. The event, which was organised by the British Film Institute, allowed our students to engage profoundly with the film *Volver* by the famous Spanish cinematographer Pedro Almodóvar. This was important, given the fact that an essay written on this film forms an important part of the A Level Spanish examination. During the day, our students watched the film and attended lectures from university lecturers on the work of the director, all of which gave them the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the film. Students were able to discuss the film with university lecturers who possess a deep level of expertise regarding the work of Almodóvar. The students benefitted greatly and came away well prepared for writing a quality essay about this fascinating film.

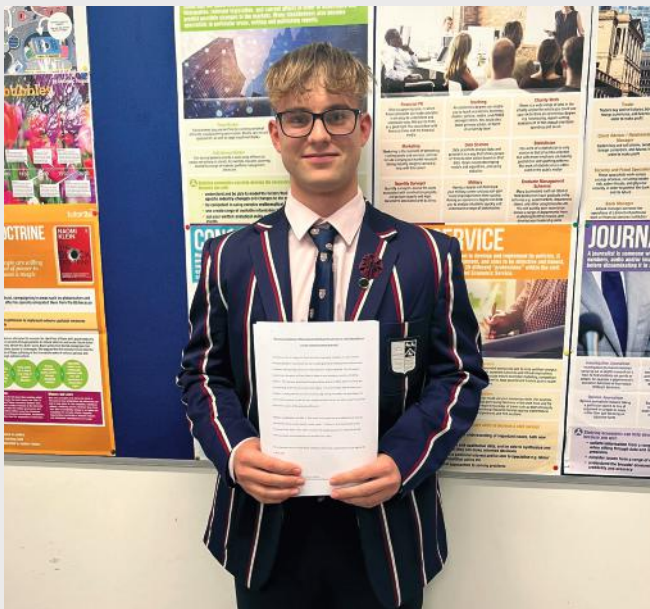
*Mr M Gledhill*



## Young Economist of the Year

Upper Sixth student Ben Raybould was highly commended for his essay submission to the Royal Economic Society Young Economist of the Year 2022 competition. His essay was commended for its original and creative analysis of UK's cost of living crisis. Congratulations, Ben!

*Mrs W Meigh*



## CIPFA Sixth Form Games

A team made up of Tom Bavin, Tom O'Connor, Hanoria Flannery, Noah Lea, Maddie-Leigh Hill, Sasha Hourigan and Ben Wild represented Solihull School at the CIPFA Sixth Form Games. (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy). These took place on Wednesday 28 June at the University of Birmingham Business School. The team performed brilliantly and managed to claim the title for our school for the second year in a row, beating four other local schools in the process. They were praised for their excellent teamwork and organisation during the event where they played the role of an NHS Trust Management team, challenged with making budget cuts and allocating finance to improve NHS services. They handled the various problems they were set throughout the day with considerable aplomb, consulting throughout to check on the validity of their decision making and approach. They were fantastic! They learned some valuable skills about working under pressure, and being organised to complete some fairly hefty tasks. The judges commented that they were the kind of students they would happily recruit and work alongside in the future.

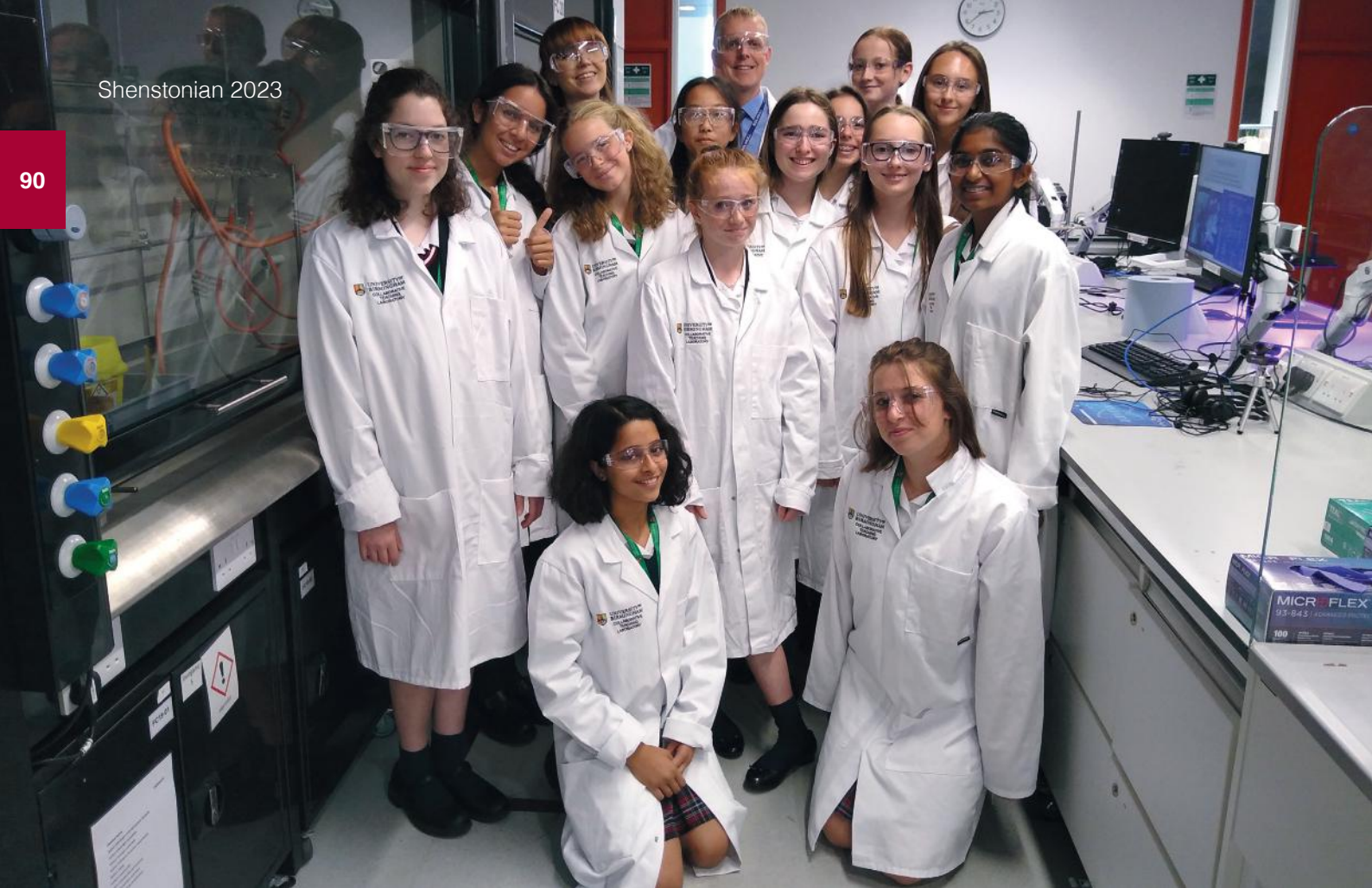
*Mrs J Mander*

## Engineering Enrichment Group

Eleven Lower Sixth students completed projects for Dennis Eagle and Siemens looking at battery installation mechanisms and green credentials for new train designs. Once the students had completed their projects, they were awarded the Industrial Cadets Gold Award as part of their celebration day at Loughborough University on Tuesday 20 June. This event enabled the students to showcase their work to pupils from other schools, as well as allowing them to view other work. Congratulations to all involved.

*Mr M Davies*

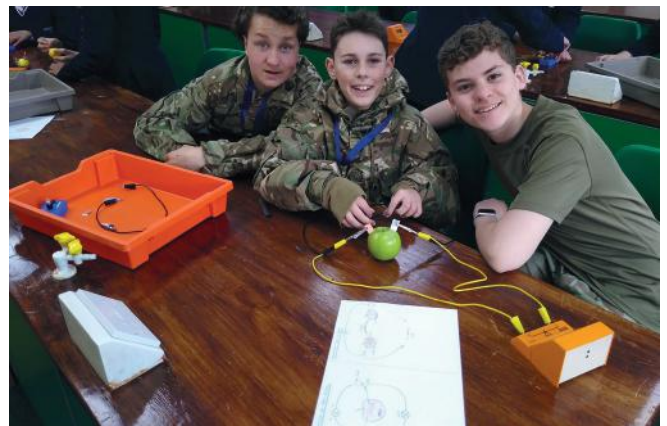




### Girls in STEM Trip

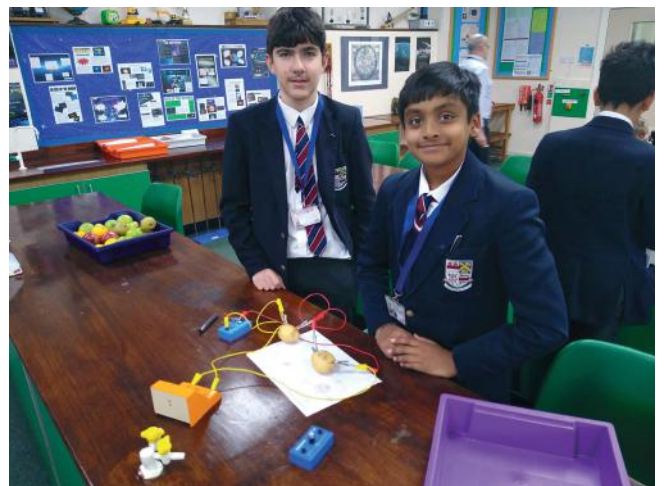
On Wednesday 14 September, a group from the Fourth Form attended a Girls in STEM day at the University of Birmingham. This day was aimed at encouraging more girls to consider careers and further study in Science Technology, Engineering and Maths related subjects. The pupils completed activities including computer modelling and cyanotype technology, as well as enjoying a presentation from a keynote speaker.

*Mr M Davies*



### PE Students visit Loughborough University

During the Easter term, A Level PE students enjoyed an inspirational day at Loughborough University. The group took part in VO2 max testing, max output on watt bike and were given a tour of the fantastic facilities... bumping into into GB Boxer and Olympian Frazer Clarke on the way!

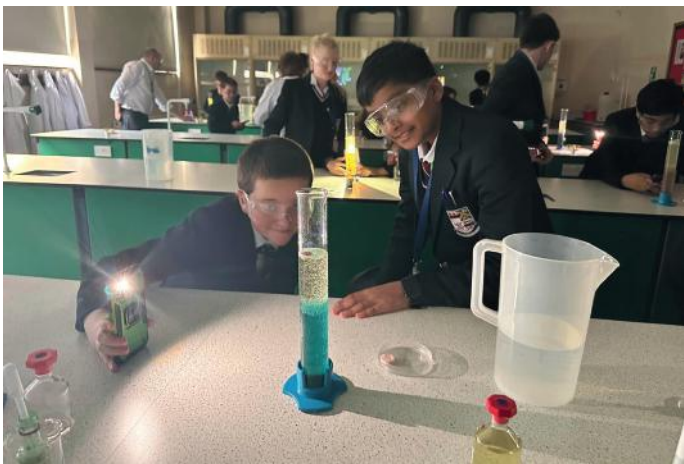
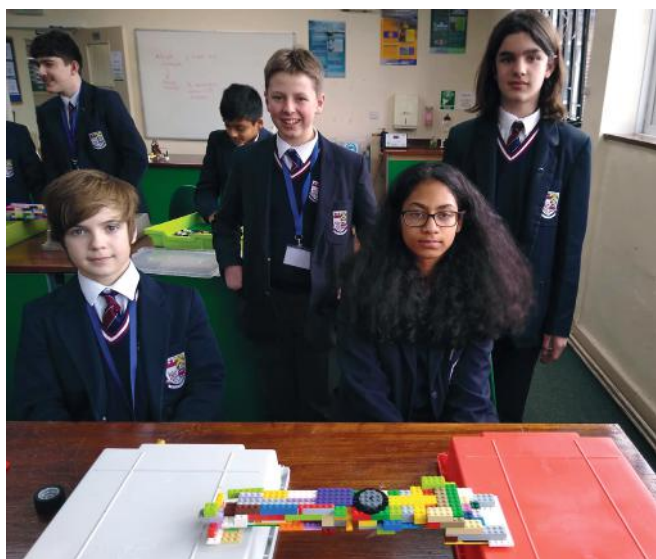
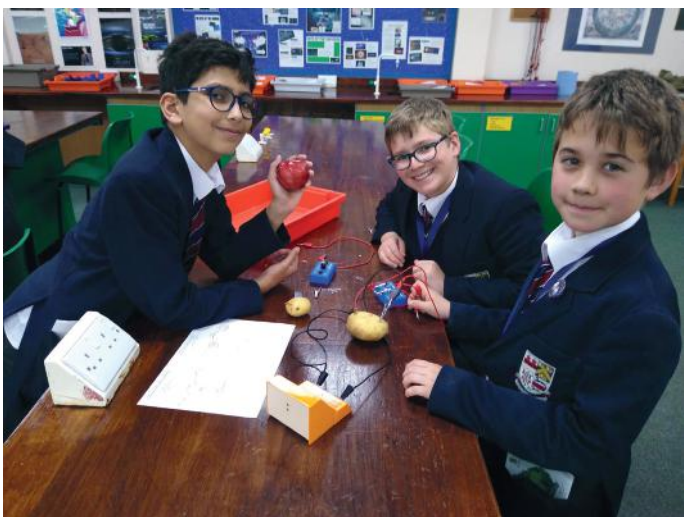




### Science and Engineering Club

Numbers for Science and Engineering Club continue to be strong, which is brilliant. Each week pupils enjoy a wide variety of activities. A particular favourite is the Lego bridge challenge, where pupils are tasked with creating the strongest bridge which also shows 'Engineering Creativity'. Once finished, bridges are destructively tested to find the strongest as well as looking at the most creative. Pupils have also learned about bio plastic and how it can be used as an alternative biodegradable material to regular plastic, even making their own bio plastic!

*Mr M Davies*



## Music – Senior School

It has been fantastic to have been able to provide the pupils with a full range of musical experiences, and for parents and friends to come and share in that wonderful musical journey. The following articles from me, my colleagues and pupils should give you a flavour of what we have all been getting up to and have achieved during the year.



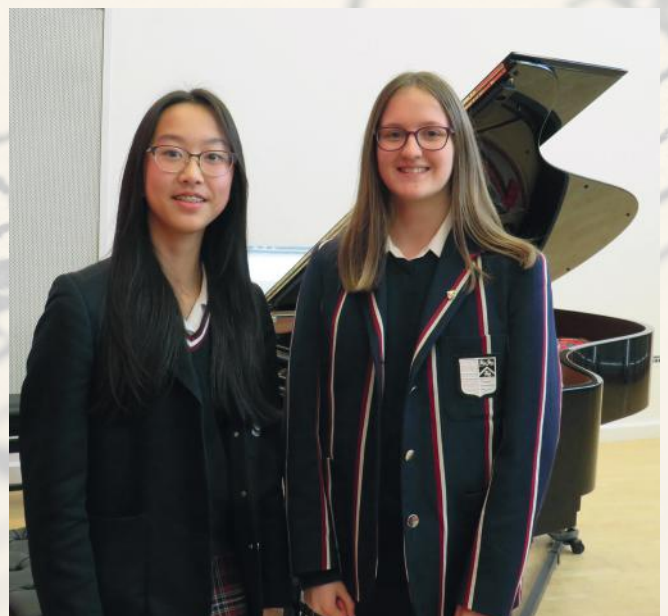
### Informal Concerts

Learning to play a musical instrument is wonderful in its own right, but the real joy comes when an individual is able to share that creativity with others. The Informal Concerts that take place every half term on both campuses are great opportunities for pupils to gain confidence in performing in front of a warm and supportive audience. One significant thing about any artistic performance (whether it be music, acting, dance, debating, etc.) is that we can never know exactly how things will go 'on the night'. By its very nature, sometimes we bring off something that is exquisite and just hits that mark of accuracy, sensitivity, and communication; whilst on other occasions some details may not quite fall into place. Live performances are therefore likely to have both highs and lows and our desire as a school is to support the pupils in realising that both extremes – and all the points in between – are seen as normal and acceptable, indeed human. I am delighted to report that all 24 concerts 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. A huge thank you to all who had the courage to stand up and perform (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.



### Recitals

In addition to the Informal Concerts, we had various recitals across the year. These include two Music Scholars' & Award Holders' recitals, a lunchtime concert at St Alphege Church as part of their Wednesday Lunchtime Recital series, and three 40-minute Diploma recitals - given by outstandingly gifted pupils Ziqi Ding (ATCL piano), George Finney (ATCL cello), and Gemma Winfield (ATCL recorder). 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 over £400 for the local charity Music Therapy Works. If you missed this, do look out for their concert next year. Bravo!



*Ziqi & Gemma recital and Scholars Concert*



Summer Concert

### 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 students 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.

### St Cecilia Concert

As ever, as the 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 seven different ensembles. The programme, as usual, featured a wonderful breadth of musical periods, styles and genres ranging from music by Grieg (*In the Hall of the Mountain King*), Dvorak (*New World Symphony, 4th movement*), Smetana (*The Moldau*), Vangelis (*Chariots of Fire*) and, to music from film (*Raiders of the Lost Ark - March*), musical theatre (*Tonight and Somewhere Over the Rainbow*) and pop (*Happy, Man in the Mirror, Funk Dunk, Ain't no Mountain High Enough and Clementine*).

These were presented by Brass Ensemble, Saxophony, Sinfonia, String Orchestra, Big Band, Concert Band and 'The Twelve' (close harmony 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.

### Senior School Summer Concert

Once again, a packed Bushell Hall audience was treated to a range of performances from different sized groups performing varying musical genres. The concert was opened by Brass Ensemble's rendition of *O Fortuna* from Carmina Burana (well known as the theme tune for the X Factor). Three smaller groups, Saxophony, Jazz 793 and Flute Choir, also performed during the first half. Our large String Orchestra played two pieces with a cinematic theme: *When she loved me* from *Toy Story* and *Cinema Paradiso*. *Toy Story* featured Upper Sixth Student Burcin Demiroglu as soloist. The first half of the concert closed with an amazing performance of the first movement of Vivaldi's *Concerto for Two Cellos in G minor* by George Finney and Katy Baker in the Lower Sixth, accompanied by our Chamber Orchestra.

The second half of the concert ranged from Brahms to Michael Jackson, via Mike Oldfield and Cole Porter, so again, a tremendous variety of music. We had more film music with Sinfonia's performance of *Lord of the Rings* featuring a vocal solo by Thomas Baumber in Fourth Form. Big Band had performed a full concert set outside school two days prior to the concert, so it was great to hear from them again. We then had the intriguingly named 'The Elastic Band' led by Mr Phillips in a performance of *Tubular Bells*, complete with a (pre-recorded!), guest appearance from Mike Oldfield at the end! Our a capella choir, The Twelve, sang an arrangement of Cole Porter's *Night and Day* before Concert Band brought the concert to a close. As well as Bernstein's *Mambo*, they performed a world premiere of *Overture* by Hiba Sandhu, one of last year's A Level students. Well done to all involved in the concert, and in particular to our Upper Sixth leavers. As has become tradition we presented each of them with a rose at the end to express our thanks for all they have contributed over the years to Solihull Music.









## External Concerts

In addition to our own series of concerts in school, a number of pupils attended and/or took part in concerts outside school. Some of the A Level music students went to hear performances of two of their set works: Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute* and Shostakovich's *Symphony no. 5*. A selection of singers from Chamber Choir had the exciting and extremely rare opportunity to sing in a performance of Mahler's *Symphony No. 2* with the Worcester Symphony Orchestra, in the cathedral, conducted by our very own Head of Woodwind - Mr Slade. This symphony is one of only a small handful that has a choir singing alongside an orchestra – in this case a huge orchestra. This experience is something those singers involved will not forget for a long time! In addition to their regular services in our wonderful school chapel, our Chapel Choirs went out and about once again: Chamber Choir sang evensong in Gloucester Cathedral and the combined Boys' and Girls' choirs sang in Lichfield Cathedral, and both choirs have teamed up with St Alphege Choir for joint services at both Saint Alphege and our school chapel. Big Band helped both the Old Sils Club celebrate its 90th Birthday by playing at their big summer fair and the SSPA at the Friday Family Fun afternoon in June at the Prep School. Finally, Saxophony have not only performed at Open Mornings and Welcome Evenings but also at Reynolds Cross School on the occasion of their sports day – their version of the Barmy Army, perhaps! Congratulations to all.

## Music Exam Successes

After many terms of recorded instrumental and vocal exams, it has been good to welcome back visiting examiners during the year. In fact, by far the majority of pupils returned to the face-to-face exams in which they can really enjoy performing to a person, rather than a camera. 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 Administrator, who has managed the juggling act of exam entries, timetables and (in a few cases) recordings. More pupils than ever, ranging from I1 to Upper Sixth and from Prep 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 recorder (distinction); Ziqi Ding – ATCL piano; George Finney -ATCL cello; Rachel Baumber – ARSM singing (distinction); Piers Kemp – ARSM singing; Shivani Swaminathan – ARSM piano.

## External Youth Orchestra Successes

As if the musical life at school were not busy enough, some pupils have had the exciting opportunity to work and perform with nationally acclaimed youth orchestras: Katy Baker, George Finney, Yichen Pan and Gemma Winfield with the highly acclaimed CBSO Youth Orchestra (performing in Symphony Hall, Birmingham); Gemma was also in the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain performing at a number of prestigious venues, including the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall.

## Performing at the RSC

Two pupils – Oliver Cooper and Thomas Baumber – rose to the occasion in performing at the RSC in Stratford in a run of the production of *Richard III*. Sharing the role on different nights, as the only chorister on stage, they frequently had moments of solo singing significantly adding to the atmosphere. In fact, the show ended with them singing unaccompanied! They had an amazing experience, working at such a high level and performing over many nights, and were highly praised by the production team. Bravo to both.

*Mr T Kermode*

## The Elastic Band's 'Tubular Bells'

This year Mr Phillips took his composition and arrangement skills to new heights with his rendition of Mike Oldfield's iconic work *Tubular Bells* in the Summer Concert. A simple (in many aspects) yet revolutionary piece, the challenge of recreating Oldfield's masterpiece live on stage was tackled enthusiastically by Solihull's newest band. 'Elastic Band', so named due to our ever-expanding nature of the ensemble, comprised of four tuned percussion parts (including the tubular bells themselves), three guitars and a bass, keys plus an electronic strings part, and a drum kit. The combination of a short rehearsal period and Mr Phillips' constantly updating scores provided another level of depth to our challenge, one which we (somehow) executed seamlessly on the day, hopefully doing Mr Oldfield proud. After only a few weeks of rehearsals, we had doubled in size and felt ready for concert day. The piece ended with a beautiful transition into a recorded clip of Mike Oldfield himself, as he brought our performance to a close with his poignant acoustic guitar solo. The performance created an atmosphere I have never felt before in the Bushell Hall, and I can't thank Mr Phillips and our group of wonderful musicians enough for the perfect final performance of my Solihull music career.

*Kaitlin Pragnell-Biggs, Upper Sixth*

## EPTA Piano Summer Concert

Solihull School hosted the EPTA (European Piano Teachers Association) Summer Concert. This year the concert was dedicated to jazzy style piano pieces. Several pianists from school learnt new pieces for this event and performed beautifully. Lower Fifth pupil Evie Walsh-Cooper said, "It was a great opportunity and experience to take part in the concert and I also enjoyed listening to jazz pieces of all different levels. Many people clearly enjoy the wonderful world of jazz and I felt honoured to perform New Kid by Christopher Norton. I encourage anyone wanting to play in a concert to definitely do so as you would have such a lovely and supportive atmosphere, just like this one and it is a great way to show your talent."

*Mrs H Martens*

## Big Band

In the vibrant world of music at our school, the Big Band stands out as a shining example of talent, dedication, and unity. As a drummer privileged to be part of this ensemble for six years, I can confidently say that the band has reached its peak under the expert guidance of our conductor, Mrs Spraggett. The Big Band has performed several gigs throughout the year from the Silhillians Rugby Club to the Prep School, as well as helping to raise the impressive sum of over £1,700 through their captivating melodies when playing in '*Music to Blow Your Mind*', a charity concert that I organised in aid of The Brain Tumour Charity.

In addition to their charitable efforts, our school's Big Band consistently delivers performances that leave audiences captivated and enthralled. With each note and rhythm, we demonstrate a level of musicality and skill that is truly exceptional, whether it be the prestigious St Cecilia Concert or the vibrant Summer Concert. Their dedication to honing their craft is evident and the contagious energy that flows off of every member and every piece we play is undeniable. The Big Band has not only become a tightly knit ensemble but also a symbol of musical brilliance within our school community. Their performances leave an unforgettable mark on those who have the privilege to witness their musical prowess, ensuring that the Big Band's legacy will endure for years to come.

*Fabian Botterill, Lower Sixth*

## Brass Ensemble

This has been my first year in brass ensemble and what a wonderful experience it has been. To see how the band has developed has been inspiring and it is always a positive start to my day. From playing the dramatic and exciting *O Fortuna* by Orff then moving on to The Proclaimers' *500 Miles*, the ensemble has displayed its skill and versatility both in the St Cecilia and Summer Concert. I look forward to seeing how brass ensemble grows and being a part of it next year, hopefully with some new additions to the team!

*Sirius Oldfield, Lower Sixth*

## String and Chamber Orchestras

The String Orchestra is a large group where string players of a range of standards can enjoy making music together. We meet every Thursday morning for rehearsals in preparation of the two orchestral concerts that take place during the year. In the St Cecilia Concert, we enjoyed playing the romantic *Tonight* from Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* and, contrastingly, the fiery *Blaze* by Erica Donahoe. For the Summer Concert, we prepared a programme of film music, which we played whilst clips from the films were shown to the audience – this really showed the importance and effect of music in cinema and the enjoyment it can bring.

The Chamber Orchestra also regrouped this year. This smaller group for more advanced players really enjoyed delving into more intricate works, like the Beethoven' *Bagatelle* and Vivaldi's Double Cello Concerto which we played in the Summer Concert. Katy Baker and I were both so grateful, not just for this amazing opportunity of playing the solos, but also to Mrs Roberts and all members of both string orchestras for such a great year of music-making.

*George Finney, Lower Sixth*

## Instrumental Masterclass

This year we had the joy of welcoming three professional musicians to school to give masterclasses in their specialist area – saxophone, drum kit and piano. In March, the Keyboard Department welcomed Graeme Humphrey, who taught piano at the Royal Academy of Music in London for many years, to work with some of our advanced pianists. Several grade 7 to diploma level pianists performed their pieces and received professional and insightful advice. All the pianists involved found the lessons inspirational and extremely helpful. These lessons were filled with lots of fun and enthusiasm due to Graeme's warmth and welcoming character. During these lessons pupils were given detailed advice which was beneficial to both the performers and piano pupils observing the masterclass. It has been a delight to welcome Graeme and we are so grateful to have had this wonderful opportunity.

*Ziqi Ding, Fourth Form*





## Saxophony

When I joined Solihull School this September in the Lower Sixth, I was quickly recruited by Mr Slade into Saxophony and I can confidently say that being a member of this selective saxophone group has contributed to making this the best year of my school career so far. As well as performing before the whole school in assemblies, open days and school concerts, the most memorable moments for the Saxophony this year must be from our visits to Reynolds Cross School. In December, we performed Christmas songs to a brilliant audience of primary school aged pupils and truly witnessed 'the power of music' when our audiences were captivated by our music, one of the pupils wanting to sit press all the buttons. These outings – we played in July at the Reynolds Cross Fun Run – were a truly bonding moment for the group; I believe we've become great friends despite being from different year groups (eight selected saxophone players from Third Form to Upper Sixth) and having three new members as of September. A special mention should be given to Charlotte Seale who has been a fantastic Baritone (or 'Bari') player and has also completed her A Levels this year. As a group, we wish her the best of luck with life post saxophony as an Old Silhillian! Next year promises to be yet another exciting year for the group as Mr Slade tells us he's already planned our repertoire – long live saxophony!

*Arden Rowley, Lower Sixth*



## Boys' and Girls' Chapel Choirs

Being in the Chapel Choir has given us lots of opportunities to meet new people and see and experience new things. In addition, we have the thrill of singing in places such as Lichfield Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey, as well as joining with St Alphege Church Choir for a joint Sunday morning Eucharist Service. The opportunity to sing in a harmonised choir is hard to find in schools, and it is a great experience which has certainly improved our singing and score reading skills. The Chapel Choirs provide a core role in important school events, in particular the atmospheric Nine Lessons and Carols Service. The opportunities within the choir for solos and small group performances really helps for choir members to grow in confidence with their singing. Overall, being a part of Chapel Choir has been a huge encouragement for us musically, and so many fun and interesting experiences have come with it.

*Claire Delaney and Thomas Baumber, Fourth Form*

# Music



What a busy year it has been for music at the Prep School! With two informal concerts every half term, Christmas productions, Spring and Summer Ensemble concerts, Young Voices, and lots of other performances in class...there is barely a week that goes past without an event taking place. Here is a snapshot of our 'Year of Music' at the Prep School:

## Christmas Term

The year got off to a great start with some marvellous performances at our first few Informal Concerts. Although we keep these events informal in order that they aren't too nerve wracking for the pupils, there is nothing informal about the amount of work that goes into these performances. Every child who learns an instrument has to work really hard at practising regularly through the week: something that isn't always easy when they also have homework, clubs, schoolwork, sports fixtures etc to factor into their weekly timetable. From 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' up to Grade 8 level performances – every one of these pieces represents a huge amount of effort and hard work and we love listening to every one of them!



Towards the end of the Christmas term, things always get busy in the Music Department. This year, the Nursery and Reception Christmas Performance took place in the SMART Centre. Reception told us the story of 'Jesus's Christmas Party' through songs and movement, while Nursery sang *Jingle Bells*, *S-A-N-T-A* and *When Santa Got Stuck up the Chimney* with so much energy and commitment! Over in the Malvern hall, I1 and I2 were baking for Christmas with their performance of *The Christmas Bake Off*. This full-scale nativity involved all the usual suspects, sheep, angels, Mary and Joseph ... plus Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry! The show was great fun, and a packed house of parents, friends and family enjoyed watching all the I1 and I2 children performing with poise and polish. Meanwhile, in the Warwick Road Chapel, Juniors participated in our 'Christmas Carol Service', singing a variety of secular and religious Christmas songs with great sensitivity. The pupils also told the story of Christmas through poems and readings and a full-house audience were all sent home with a warm Christmassy glow!





### Easter Term

The Easter term started with our annual trip to the Birmingham NEC arena for the 'Young Voices' concert. The J3 and J4 Choir had been preparing for this concert during the Christmas term, and they joined school children from hundreds of local primary schools to perform as a choir of nearly 6,000. These events have a real "Wow" factor to them and all the children who took part came away feeling like true superstars!



There were four more informal concerts during this term and, again, these were filled with energetic, mature and entertaining performances. Our big performance for instrumental ensembles and choirs this term was the Spring Concert, due to take place in the Bushell Hall at the beginning of March. Rehearsals and preparations had been happening for months and everything looked set for a fantastic evening show ... and then the British Weather hit, and we had to cancel the event due to snow! Not to be put off, we issued our 'Virtual Spring Concert' not long after, with (thanks to Mrs Baumber's skill and time) recordings of all the fantastic performances.

J4's big project for the Easter term is their full-scale musical in the Bushell Hall. Costumes, scenery, props, makeup, music, dancing ... our performance of 'Madagascar' had it all! With fun songs like *I Like to Move it* and *Living in Paradise* bringing the whole cast together, the musical showcased some beautiful individual performers as well as large-scale choreography. The children worked so hard to learn all their

lines and songs, and the final performances to pupils at the school, grandparents (with lunch included at Warwick Road!) and parents, friends and family all went brilliantly well. Congratulations to J4 on a fantastic show!

J1 had been busy since September learning the recorder in class and showcased what they had learned in a performance to parents in the Malvern hall. This was then followed by demonstrations and try-out sessions for lots of orchestral instruments, leading them to decisions about which instrument they would learn during the summer term. Meanwhile, the whole of the Junior School had been busy rehearsing songs (with some great support from Senior School Lower Sixth students) ready for our House Singing competition. The theme this year was 'Soft Rock' and this resulted in some wonderfully lively performances of songs by (amongst others) Bon Jovi, Queen and Survivor. Lots of fun was had by everyone!







## Summer Term

The first half of the summer term seemed relatively quiet in the Music Department, compared to the busyness of the Easter term, but it wasn't long before performances were coming thick and fast. More Informal Concerts, J1 scheme, instrumental performances and pieces being played in Prize Giving... all of these had to be rehearsed – along with preparations for the final big Music Department concert of the summer term: the Summer Concert! This year, we combined the forces of all J3 and J4, plus pupils from I2, J1 and J2 Choirs in order to perform some large-scale choir numbers: *We Built this City on Rock and Roll*, *Roar* and a medley of songs from *Matilda*, *the Musical* were all a great hit with the audience. The concert also showcased all our wonderful Prep School Instrumental Ensembles: Wind Band, Brass Ensemble, String Orchestra, Guitar Ensemble and Samba Band. As if this wasn't enough, we also had fantastic Chamber Music performances from our motivational musicians on the piano, violin, cello and clarinet. The quality of the performances from these young pupils was truly inspirational!

*Miss J Sainsbury*







# Performing Arts – Dance

This year was our first performance from the Solihull Dance Company. The company originated to provide stretch and challenge for the pupils who successfully auditioned for the company this academic year. The piece performed was called Miriam and it was based upon the tragic death of a young, talented women called Miriam Hyman. Miriam tragically died in the 7/7 London Bombings in 2005 when she was innocently traveling to work.

In 2008 the Hyman family started a trust in Miriam's name. The Miriam Hyman Memorial Trust, together with L V Prasad Eye Institute offers a living memorial through 'The Miriam Hyman Children's Eye Care Centre' enabling a place of hope, healing, and rehabilitation for children. The Miriam Hyman Memorial Trust also provides educational resources and programmes based upon Miriam's story, to build awareness of extremism and terrorism, in the hope of building a more cohesive society.

The performance held within the SMArt Centre on Wednesday 22 March was filled with excitement and emotion. It was a beautiful performance that was made particularly poignant with Esther Hyman being the company's guest of honour. The dancers did the company, themselves, and Esther proud, and I was truly honoured to have shared the experience with them.

The annual Dance Showcase had over 100 pupils take part. It was full of a variety of styles and abilities, and it was a celebration of the community of dance at the school. It was also a sad occasion as it was the last live performance from our three talented A Level students, who presented their A Level choreography pieces.

The show all came together with the Hairspray finale, and even I had to get up and get involved!



International Day of Dance took place on Saturday 29 April, and we celebrated it in school on the Friday. The department had a live link with Nepal and India, where we shared performances, and selected pupils went to the Preparatory School to teach a variety of different styles of dance. Staff at the Warwick Road campus also participated by wearing their International Day of Dance stickers.

This year has been our first year for offering dance scholarships, and the department honoured Skye Homer and Jennifer Peng with their scholarships for 2024. The department is continuing to grow, as we are now providing dance within the Third Form physical education curriculum, and by introducing a new enrichment Level three teaching course. Congratulations to Emma Morgan and Keira Edginton who received full colours in dance, and to Aubrey Plunkett who received this year's Holly Brown scholarship from the Midland's Theatre Ballet.

*Mrs J Hart*

# Performing Arts – Drama

## Musical: *The Addams Family*

*The Addams Family* was a lively and upbeat musical that I loved being in! The songs were all uniquely transfixing and catchy and the costuming and set were spot on. On Fridays it was *The Addams Family* rehearsals which I always looked forward to! Show week was full on and extremely fun, with each performance a thrilling night!

*Isabella Skinner, Lower Fifth*

Being in any musical is extremely exciting and rewarding, especially *The Addams Family*! From the workshop to find out initial information of the musical, through to the final performance, every rehearsal brought new opportunities, filled with life, music and dance. Such experiences lead to the making of lifelong friends, with similar passions and interests, meaning that you can all spur each other on to truly reach your full potential and excel in the performing arts. When rehearsing and eventually performing, there is a buzzing atmosphere, which creates an air of vibrancy and enjoyment within the whole cast. Having played the lead role of Uncle Fester, I fell in love with the role (as well as the moon), along with the songs and the bald cap! 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 regardless 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 experience 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, or you could come and watch. It is something that created many fond memories which I will cherish for years in the future.

*Daniel Youssef, Lower Sixth*

The school musical is my favourite time of year, as I'm sure it is for many. There is always something for everyone, as proven by last year's musical, *The Addams Family*! I played the role of Alice, which I will forever be grateful for as I learned so many new skills. At first, I was extremely nervous as this was my first ever musical and I had no idea if I would enjoy it, let alone have the opportunity to play a principal role! I looked forward every rehearsal working alongside my friends, practicing new dances and songs. Auditions were stressful, as were the rehearsals and performance itself! But it will always be worth it, it's an extremely rewarding process as you watch something go from practically nothing to an incredible show, enjoyed by many! Hearing the band for the first time will always be one of my favourite rehearsals and memories, as you begin to really get a feel of how amazing the performance is going to be. As show week quickly approached, the feel amongst the cast was truly amazing, even during full day tech runs and dress rehearsals, as we all saw how incredibly this show was coming together. Opening and closing night are times I will never forget, the adrenaline shared between the cast and the post show blues that were quickly approaching brought us all so much closer together. I would like to say a huge thank you to Mrs Stafford, Miss Lawley, Mr Kermode, Dr Jukes and Mr Hunton for all that they do, they are incredible and allow us all to do what we love and to share it with everyone else!

*Ruby Flynn, Lower Sixth*



When arriving in the Lower Fifth, I had sensed the excitement from older pupils about the drama event of the year, the musical! And *The Addams Family* delivered in giving me this enthusiasm and self-confidence from performing in live drama. I was extremely thrilled about receiving principal role Pugsley in the Lower Fifth especially! After only a few ensemble rehearsals, I realised the abundant potential this show had to be a massive success: to be shown to an audience, to be performed by the actors involved, and to also assist in, for those vitally helping out in the technical team. The four nights of drama for me were an amazing experience to demonstrate my dramatic prowess to audiences from the whole school community. In particular, the ensemble numbers were the most special, as the choreography and being part of these songs alongside a star-studded ensemble was particularly refreshing. I must not also forget my solo performance, which was an emotional experience due to the isolation on stage that I temporarily felt in that moment, but the relief and pride I had after was overwhelming and I am so grateful I had this opportunity to do it. I thank Mrs Stafford and Mr Kermode for giving me this hugely ambitious role, and also the amazing Dr Jukes, Mr Hunton and Miss Lawley for the organisation and technical aspects of the show that they supervised, as these components are all crucial for successful performances. I look forward to the next shows that I can participate in and have such amazing success from. Thank you!

*Dillon O'Connor, Lower Fifth*



There is not one other area of school life that has shaped my time here more than theatre. The production and the rehearsals are long, incredibly demanding, and exhausting in the best way possible; exhausting in the way that makes it feel like you've done something to be proud of. Each person's experience of theatre will be different, and mine is specific to years spent backstage, wearing all black and running through the hidden corridors behind the stage because someone left something in their dressing room and it's now my job to try and find it! But even when I'm filling the same position each show, what happens backstage changes year by year, and sometimes even rehearsal by rehearsal. For example: February's production of *The Addams Family* was one of the most hectic – but ultimately rewarding – shows that I have had the pleasure to be a part of. It started a week before opening night, and the realisation that some of the smaller but no less significant props had yet to be made. There were five things to do, and five days (before the technical rehearsal) in which to do them: a spider-coat, a puppet, two crossbow bolts, and a potion trolley. Through a lot of late-night crafting, hot glue and raiding the Theatre Design department for supplies, I somehow managed it. With a little help from some of my friends. As I said previously, and will continue to say until the end, that week was one of the most stressful, yet rewarding and enjoyable, weeks of my life. Seeing all the work I put in finally pay off, with incredible actors being able to use my props on-stage and a brilliantly receptive audience, is a feeling that can't be replicated any other way. I was in my first year of secondary school when I first signed up to become a part of the Stage Management team, and ever since I have not looked back. 11-year-old me was told that I was 'one of the best runner's [they've] ever had', latched onto the position, and still I have not let go. And when I was 16, I had the opportunity to combine both my interests in the arts and in theatre. In short, the memories of being able to help bring these productions to life will stay with me forever, and I cannot wait to do so again, next year and all the years beyond.

*Silver Sherwood, Upper Fifth*



### Performing in the School Musical – A Reflection

Hi, I'm Tom. From Third Form to Upper Sixth, I performed in every play available to me. I remember the whole school plays *His Dark Materials Part II* and *Fuente Ovejuna* with particular fondness, looking up to the Sixth Form students who seemed like giants at the time. Yet it was in February this year when I performed in my first musical at school, *The Addams Family*.

I played the character of Lurch, the zombie butler of the family, a character with great comedic potential. Having recently played the grave yet passionate characters of Skellig and Jason in *Medea*, I was required to use my acting skills in an almost completely different manner. Along with this, I was singing and dancing for the first time; two things which I had previously avoided. It would also be my first time performing four nights in a row. All of this together with *The Addams Family* being my final performance at school, I was certainly feeling the pressure to make it a memorable one.

The singing element of my performance came both quickly and naturally to me. I spent much of my rehearsal time focusing on my singing and it never felt uncomfortable or awkward. Sadly, I cannot say the same for dancing.

Fortunately for me, Lurch, being a zombie, moves in slow motion, and the majority of my dancing looked like it was in slow motion anyhow. I found it useful to call on my previous experience playing Trevor Graydon in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* outside of school, in order to bolster my confidence in both singing and dancing. Performing four nights in a row for the first time was a challenge,

but a combination of great friends in the cast keeping each other going and a few energy drinks helped me to thoroughly enjoy each performance, including the very last one.

My interpretation of Lurch centred around making him as comedic as possible at all times. Through this portrayal, I hoped to make the contrast between Lurch grunting throughout the majority of the play and then bursting into song at the end clearly felt. Therein, every rehearsal I would try something new, be it nudging Gomez as Morticia came on stage and flashing him a grin or appearing to have a chat with the suit of armour. As rehearsals went on, I added more and more gags to my performance, and worked on perfecting those key to the performance, especially the prolonged sequence of grunting in which Lurch tells his life story. I again drew on my previous experience, this time of playing the character of Nick Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, to further consider how I could add comedic elements to my performance. All this helped me to capture at least some of the vast comedic potential that Lurch has and put on a performance that I was proud of each night.

So, for the pupils reading this, my message would be to just go for it in all areas of school life, especially in getting involved in drama. Do not listen to anyone pressuring you away from getting involved in drama or musicals and get stuck into whatever you want to do. I had an absolutely amazing time performing in *The Addams Family* and would do another musical again in a heartbeat.

*Thomas Giddings, Upper Sixth*





## Skellig – Lower Fifth to Upper Sixth

*Skellig* was a show with a smaller cast on the SMART Stage at the Prep School and allowed me to experience a new environment, and the great benefits taken away for an actor in an ensemble role, where teamwork is so important.

*Dillon O'Connor, Lower Fifth*

In October 2022, Middle and Upper School pupils put on the marvellous production of *Skellig*. Michael (played by Caspar Perry), a young, teenage boy moves to a new house whilst his baby sister is simultaneously ill. Michael's world seems suddenly lonely and uncertain however, whilst exploring his ramshackled garage with new-found friend Mina (played by Jenny Storey), he discovers Skellig (played by Tom Giddings). A strange creature, part bird, part angel, a being who needs Michael's help if he is to survive. From the moment rehearsals began, the cast bonded creating a tight knit community which was full of memorable quotes such as "Daft old biddy," and "27 and 53!" Due to the immense choral presence in the production, we worked hard as a team to create swift scene changes and fascinating storytelling. *Skellig* was performed in the SMARt Centre however, most rehearsals took place on Bushell Hall stage creating a challenge as the cast mostly worked with floor tape and basic structural elements all the way till the final few rehearsals. The set design was the work of Mr Hunton who created a visually stunning, intricate set as well as a specially designed, deconstructable garage door. The backstage crew worked hard to create a smooth, seamless array of lighting, sound and management. Of course, like all drama productions, it was not without its trials and tribulations such as part of the set almost falling on top of Tom (playing *Skellig*) mid-show and the stress of ensuring every chorus line was spoken at the correct time, in the correct order. The creative liberties our cast took whilst recalling some of our lines certainly gave the DSM team a unique challenge. However, myself and the whole cast can attest, *Skellig* was a beautiful, emotive performance which at times left the audience laughing, crying and smiling. Caspar Perry and Tom Giddings should be especially commended for their phenomenal performances given the immense workload of lines/scenes and just over a month to prepare. *Skellig* holds a dear place in the Drama Department's heart as it founded one of the most supportive communities I've felt since being at Solihull. Furthermore, that community only continued to grow in the forthcoming productions of *The Addams Family* and *My Brother's Gift*. What a spectacular way to kickstart the year.

*Annabel Bagshaw Upper Sixth*



I fell in love with the play adaptation of *Skellig* by David Almond, when I saw it at the Young Vic in London in 2003. It was magical, heart warming, yet included intrigue and it is left up to the audience to decide who/what *Skellig* is.

Whilst choosing a Middle and Upper School play this year we wanted to pick something that would be accessible to a wide range of audience members, especially after performing a Greek tragedy last year. However, we wanted a play that would be challenging for our talented pupil actors. *Skellig* requires choral and ensemble storytelling from the narrators, as well as multi-rolling when they create the characters we meet during Michael's experience. It was wonderful to see the cast grow as actors and develop their characters throughout rehearsals and create Michael's world. We created an ensemble experience, with the cast on stage throughout, fully utilising Mr Hunton's amazing set design and accompanied by Dr Jukes' atmospheric soundscapes.

We began rehearsals at the start of the Christmas term and performed five weeks later and the cast and crew worked so hard to mount a play in that time, as well as having so much fun in rehearsals along the way.

The performances were well received by sell out audiences and they enjoyed deciding whether *Skellig* was...a man...an angel...a figment...a dream...or all combined!

*Mrs K Stafford*





### My Brother's Gift – Shell Form to Lower Sixth

Being a part of the incredibly moving and important play *My Brother's Gift* was an experience I will never forget. Following the story of Heinz and for me to get to play his sister Eva, a young Jewish girl in the Second World War, was a privilege and allowed me to place myself in her shoes momentarily and develop further empathy. Meeting her in person, was an honour and the play itself was fun and stimulating to prepare. A lot of work and enjoyable rehearsals went towards a brilliant Drama Department production!

*Isabella Skinner, Lower Fifth*

When I first heard I was going to play the role of Eva in *My Brother's Gift*, I was thrilled and couldn't contain my excitement! This was going to be my first time in a prominent role in a school play and I was going to be the youngest performer in the production! I felt very nervous, but also conscious that I wanted to do a good job of portraying Eva, as she was going to be watching in the audience, and this play would be a very personal and emotional performance for her. As a group, we put in a lot of hard work to make the play an entertaining and thought provoking production. I really enjoyed working with the other Evas from different year groups in the school and was really proud of the way we pulled the play together.

*Bella Frith, Shell Form*

Drama in 2023 has been excellent, starting with the British Premiere of *My Brother's Gift* by Claudia Haas. This was an extremely moving piece which was able to display history on a very personal level. The cast, crew and directors were brilliant.

*Liam Rodan, Upper Fifth*



This year I was fortunate enough to be able to partake in our production, and the British Premier of Claudia Haas' *My Brother's Gift*, a play that follows the life of Heinz Geiringer, an extraordinary Jewish teenager who sadly lost his life in the Holocaust, and his sister, Eva Schloss MBE who has visited the school before to give talks and host Q&A's. This play was a fantastic opportunity for a wide range of ages to form a wonderful cast and produce a reflective, unique and moving piece of drama, that was enjoyed by three separate audiences, two of which also witnessed a Q&A with Eva Schloss that can be found in full on the school's YouTube channel. The play featured the incredible artwork and poetry of Heinz that could be seen across the set, and followed themes of family, loss and the power of music. I am so grateful to Eva Schloss, Claudia Haas and the whole of Solihull School's Drama Department for giving me this opportunity. I would like to congratulate the whole cast on what they achieved.

*Caspar Perry, Upper Fifth*



## Our Day Out – Shell and Fourth Form Production, Directed by Lower Fifth pupils

I had the pleasure of performing in the Shell Form and Fourth Form play *Our Day Out* and I loved it. Everyone was so kind and helped each other, giving it their all in every rehearsal. It was an amazing way for me to feel what a full production felt like and experience drama at its fullest. No one judged you if you messed up but pushed up to do your fullest performances. The Lower Fifth pupils were talented and patient and directed us to create an amazing play. Being in *Our Day Out* really helped me prepare for our new musical *Nine Teens* and I am glad for that. I would really recommend doing drama, it is amazing.

*Claudia Green, Shell Form*

Being a part of drama at school has been a great opportunity for me to make new friends and grow in confidence. Being involved in *Our Day Out* was really enjoyable and I learned a lot of new skills such as improving my cooperation as well as getting to know the other members of the Drama Department better. The performances at school are always very varied, and being a part of them is hugely fun and rewarding!

*Claire Delaney, Fourth Form*

This past year, one of the many dramatic opportunities offered by the department was the play *Our Day Out*. It was brilliant fun! Being performed by members of the Shell Form and Fourth Form Drama Club and blocked and organised by the Lower Fifth. At times it was slightly stressful especially as we approached the performance but I believe it was all worth it in the end. One of the reasons it was such a good experience was because it was directed by pupils and I personally enjoyed the smaller age group as it led to everyone being comfortable with everyone else. It ended up being an amazing performance despite some difficulties nearing the date and all of our parents thoroughly enjoyed it.

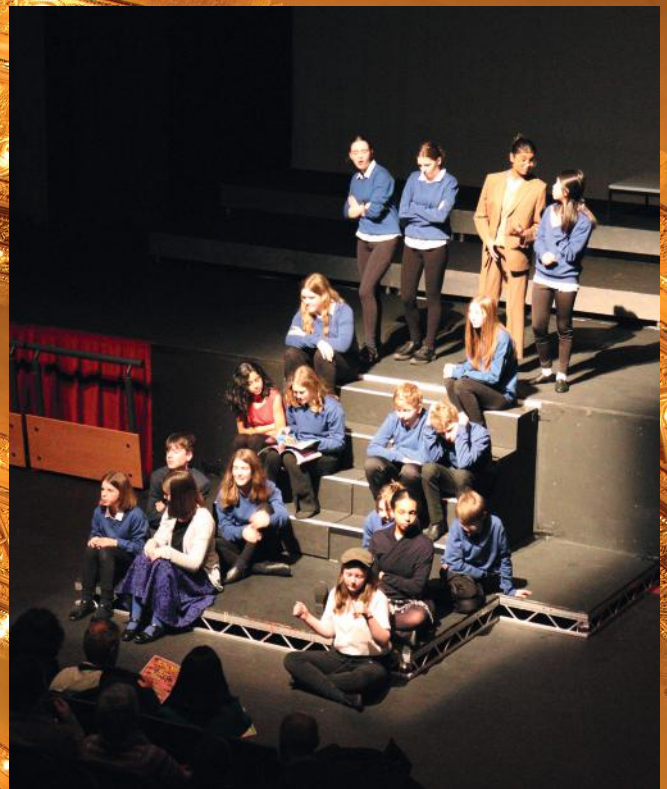
*Thomas Baumber, Fourth Form*

Being a part of the directorial team to create the production of *Our Day Out* was an incredible experience. I had the opportunity to collaborate with friends from my year and Sixth Form to ensure that the Shell Form and Fourth Form pupils were able to perform a fantastic piece of drama. Being the first play I have helped direct, it gave me an insight to the time and energy that the drama department take on, and, in turn, show how different year groups can work as a community to put together one of their first productions as part of the Senior School. Through these productions I have managed to create friendships with many new people, whilst creating memorable experiences through other productions that have been a whirlwind of adventures!

*Aaryana Khurana, Lower Fifth*

As well as performing in productions, I also love to help out in drama clubs for the younger years and get involved in helping to direct their pieces. Last year, I and a group of others directed a play called *Our Day Out*. The teachers helped to choose the script, but we did everything else ourselves, from blocking, to directing and producing, and even advertising! Producing an entire production with my friends was so much fun, and it was so rewarding to see what we had spent so long perfecting finally come to life on stage. This opportunity has not only taught me life lessons on organisation, creativity, and perseverance, but it has also created so many special memories with both my friends and the younger years I worked with. I have created some of my best memories in the Bushell Hall, and I hope to make many more in the future, and form so many more special friendships.

*Jess Bond, Lower Fifth*





**Arabian Nights - Third Form Production, Directed by Lower Fifth to Upper Sixth Students**

The Third Form *Arabian Nights* production was a colourful spectacle that I particularly enjoyed creating. From chaos with silky fabrics, to unique, exuberant costumes, the Third Form pupil cast created a wonderful piece as they worked together through many rehearsals! Personally, I loved the amity between the Third Form pupils as they weren't afraid to speak up about any ideas they had, which led to even greater performance. At times, the rehearsals seemed quite hectic, but I loved watching my group perform the best they had ever done in front of their parents.

*Aaryana Khurana, Lower Fifth*

I really enjoyed doing *Arabian Nights*. Even though I had a minor role, it was still an unforgettable experience for me. My costume was very silly, which I liked, so overall it was a very nice experience for me.

*Charlie Bayliss, Third Form*







### Technical Theatre for Productions

The amazing school productions, like *The Addams Family* and *My Brother's Gift*, gives pupils the opportunity to work with, and learn from, the incredible Dr Jukes, Mr Hunton, Mr Balcam and Miss Lawley, to help execute the feat of teching the show. Whether it's backstage, lighting, sound or set design, it is always a challenging, but an overall very enjoyable experience that provides a great insight into the backstage world of theatre. Last academic year, I was fortunate to be involved with lighting on *The Addams Family* and a member of the backstage team for *My Brother's Gift*.

*The Addams Family* was my first production working as a part of the technical team. Myself, Erin Goode, Phillip Eades, Jess Woodman and Dr Jukes, made up the lighting team. This experience gave me a chance to appreciate the effort, hard work and commitment put in by the tech teams each production, big and small. It was an experience that I will never forget because I was able to learn how to cope under stress, to successfully collaborate with others under a time constraint. It was also an overall enjoyable experience as each night was its own challenge trying to iron out mistakes made the previous night and overcoming the inevitable fatigue that crept up on us as the week went by.

The world premiere of *My Brother's Gift*, took place early May and was a very different challenge to *The Addams Family*. I worked in the stage left wing ensuring all of the performers were well on stage as well as navigating the challenge that were the gauzes. This was a different but equally rewarding experience behind the scenes as *The Addams Family*, I was able to experience first hand this special production, but I was also able to watch a very insightful and moving Q&A with the real life Eva (whose story was the basis of the play).

My time last year working backstage and with the tech team was very challenging but ultimately very rewarding.

*Giorgiana Bagshaw, Lower Fifth*

Last year I was the sound operator for all the shows including the musical. I really enjoyed being part of the backstage crew and hearing everything going on behind the scenes! I learnt how to download and programme the sound effects for the shows; to play them at the correct time and how to fit the microphones. I can't wait to be involved in the upcoming performances!

*Holly Giddings, Lower Fifth*



### RADA and Trinity Lessons

Both the RADA Shakespeare Awards and Trinity College Drama Award schemes are great opportunities for pupils who are passionate about drama. RADA has a focus specifically on Shakespeare. In RADA lessons you explore different texts performing monologues or duologues from his most famous works but also some of his more obscure works. As you ascend the grade system you also explore Shakespeare's extensive collection of sonnets. These are all devised and then performed to an examiner. Trinity is similar but you are not limited to Shakespeare and are free to explore the world of modern playwrights and their variety of styles and theatrical types. Both offer great opportunities for personal growth, both have brought me great joy and I would recommend them both to anyone. Unfortunately RADA have stopped offering the Shakespeare Award, however, I am looking forward to studying for my Trinity Grade 8 this year which is worth UCAS points and allows me to cover classical Shakespearian monologues, more contemporary pieces and develop my improvisation skills.

*Ethan Myatt, Upper Fifth*



# Outdoor Education



## CCF - Army

2022/23 was another hectic year for the army section. The highlight of the year was the American Cadet Exchange programme which saw eight of our cadets plus cadets from Tile Cross Academy fly to Boston and participate in an American Cadet Camp. In July, six American Cadets and two Officers joined us on our Summer Camp.

Unfortunately, our Range Days organised for this year were cancelled due to a flood on the range in January and snow in March.

In 2022/23 the contingent was led by Upper Sixth student, CSM Anna Whitmarsh, 01100, who led from the front and was a great example to all the cadets. We are hoping she will be able to come back and help with our weekend training next year.

In October 2022, we held the Introduction to Fieldcraft Exercise. This took place in Longmoor in Hampshire, 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. It was a very enjoyable experience for all concerned.

In February, we held a training weekend for the recruits at STANTA where we were able to help three Military Intelligence Battalion with their exercise. Our cadets were acting as refugees and the soldiers had to respond to several different scenarios. It was a great experience for the cadets and gave them some insight as to how the reserve forces operate.

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 Willsworthy Camp. As mentioned previously we were joined by the American cadets who had never been in the field before or in fact fired a weapon. The camp culminated in a 72 hour exercise which was meant to include two nights in the field but the Devon weather resulted in the cadets only able to sleep under the stars for one night. On the range day, Lower Fifth pupil Evie Walsh-Cooper won the Maurice Davis Shooting Trophy which was very kindly donated by Michael Morris a former Vice Chairman of Governors.

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*



# Outdoor Education

## CCF - RAF

This year, the RAF section has been very busy, with lots of events and activities. Several Lower Fifth pupils received their Method of Instruction awards after giving presentations on topics of their choice. Cadets who demonstrated excellent leadership qualities were promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal and now help to organise weekly activities. Many Fourth Form pupils also had success in RAF by passing their Part 1 test, displaying the skills and knowledge of airmanship they have acquired in their first year of joining RAF air cadets. One of the biggest highlights of the year has to be the day the cadets took to the skies in Cosford. Many Fourth Form and Lower Fifth pupils went flying on the Grob Tutor, a powered light air craft, where they had the opportunity to take control of the plane and to do aerobatics, including barrel rolls. RAF cadets also enjoyed going on various CCF camps throughout the year, including a camp where pupils slept outside in bashers, training weekends and finally, Summer Camp. At school, several leadership activities were pupil-led, improving teamwork skills and occasionally sparking a bit of healthy competition between teams, testing their navigation, radio and communication skills in challenging scenarios. I look forward to seeing what the RAF brings this academic year and hope the cadets enjoy it as much as they did this year.

*Sgt Laavunya Arora, Lower Sixth*





## The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has continued to thrive at Solihull with many pupils involved at the three different levels. It is a superb scheme for personal development of young people, but as we always stress at initial meetings at the start of the year with pupils and their parents, it does not suit all. Many pupils are so busy doing other activities that sometimes they do not have the capacity to commit. Something which is absolutely fine, of course, and completely understandable. Not all pupils who begin the award complete it either for many reasons. Well done to all for trying though.

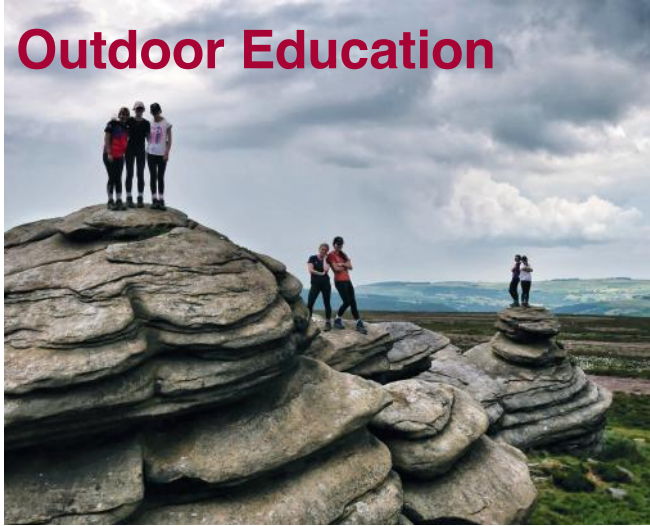
September as usual focused on the big task of enrolment with pupils then populating their eDofE accounts and beginning their various activities for their Skill, Volunteering, Physical and organising the extra Residential sections for our Gold candidates. Pupils have to source these activities themselves and then keep evidence through a log and/or via photos or certificates for example which they then must upload on to their account regularly.

During October half term, a Gold Walking expedition team took part in a four day assessment starting along the Llyn Peninsula of North Wales and crossing in to Snowdonia. They had completed a four day Snowdonia practice during the previous Easter holidays in hard terrain. Gales forced the group to pitch lower down the mountain and follow emergency routes meaning that the group were unable to wild camp. At the same time three groups of Lower Sixth students were involved in an Open Award external canoeing expedition in Scotland. These students had also done their practice expedition in Snowdonia the previous Easter. A huge well done to all! You will certainly have earned your Gold Award when you finally get there.

Our new cohort of Lower Sixth Golds partook a Malvern Hills training day in early December (along with several direct Lower Fifth Silver candidates) and then later during Easter, a practice expedition in Snowdonia. Another challenging few days for these four Gold groups which involved camping at altitude, filtering stream water and coping with real adversity.



# Outdoor Education



The day after returning from the Easter expedition, six groups of Lower Fifth pupils set forth on a three-day Silver practice around the Clent Hills / Wyre Forest area. Really well done to all of these pupils too who showed real grit in pretty miserable conditions! Later in mid-June, the majority of these pupils completed their Assessment in the the Peak District. Along with four groups of Silver pupils who completed their practice. These then subsequently went on to assessment in the the Shropshire Hills at the end of July.

Over the last weekend in April, 14 Bronze expedition groups accompanied by a very large number of staff members completed a practise weekend in North Warwickshire. This had been moved due to the King's Coronation when we had planned to attend; luckily and despite booking places almost a year ahead we managed to reschedule! Our Bronze candidates had all completed expedition training earlier in the year 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 Mid-June these pupils then attempted their assessment in central Warwickshire. Well done to all who were successful and then completed the relevant sections on eDofE to present their evidence.

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 residentials have included pupils attending various centres by themselves and across the whole UK. These are either personal development course e.g. Tall Ships sailing from Bristol, conservation in the Caribbean helping to protect turtles or helping with community type ventures such as assisting peers with physical disabilities on a summer residential trips. 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 12 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 things 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 various ways and achieved fabulous things. I had the privilege once more to attend a Gold Award Presentation at Buckingham Palace in May to witness many of our former pupils receive their Gold Certificates. To see what fine young adults our pupils have developed into and the pride on their parents' faces was a treat and made all of the efforts to get them through the three levels of DofE truly worthwhile.

*Mr O Bate and Mr P Dean MBE*





### 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 Coetmor 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

## Terriers

Terriers began at Solihull in 1953. This year is very special and represents 70 Years of what has become an institution and part of the very fabric of the school. Old Sils often ask about Terriers and reminisce about how it introduced them to develop a love of the outdoors. It is very true that Terriers represents the start of the Outdoor Education journey at the school and leads on to SnodSchool in the Shell Form, the CCF and DofE in the Fourth Form, and perhaps ultimately to a large overseas expedition such as the one to the Atlas Mountains of North Africa next summer.

Every year there are slight changes to the activities that are run in Terriers but the overall basic plan has stayed the same. Two rotations of activities which end and start again around February half term with simple proficiency tests in between for which pupils are awarded certificates and possibly a badge to celebrate their achievement.

First aid, cycle maintenance, knots, the outdoors, emergencies, water safety, communication, mountain craft and safe cycling are all topics covered in the Christmas term. Navigation is a two-week block which immediately afterwards they put in to practice with Mission which is a short expedition route that they must complete in the countryside several miles from the school. This gives pupils a very small taste of DofE!

In the second half of the year, pupils learned about bike packing, camp cooking, shelters, campfires, building shelters, orienteering and geocaching, tents, command tasks, circus skills, low ropes and targets. Because of the decommissioning of the pool this year we also used the Parkridge Centre, run by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust in Brueton Park for various woodland activities. We also ran a new Solsch999 emergency situation activity whereby pupils had to use radios, then navigate to an emergency scene, assess the situation, prioritise and put in to place some of the First Aid / Casualty management techniques they had learned earlier in the year. We hope that much of this they will never have to use, of course, but being prepared for all eventualities and developing resilience is what Terriers is all about.

An experienced staff team, supported by a dedicated team of Lower Sixth Instructors, have delivered these lessons to the 14 Terriers groups and the Monday preparation time for the Lower Sixth has proved invaluable. It is wonderful to see our Lower Sixth Instructors grow in self-confidence and become competent at planning lessons, speaking publicly and managing younger pupils. They have been magnificent role models to our Third Form, and had fun too! The instructors benefit a great deal personally and often mention their experiences in the UCAS Personal Statement or speak of Terriers at university interview.

Terriers has changed a great deal, and in many ways, since 1953 including the activities offered and, of course, by the wearing of the famous red fleece! What remains absolutely the same today however (as it did 70 years ago), is the ambition of Terriers to develop a love and respect for the great outdoors, in a fun and active manner. That said; we do look forward to seeing the Terriers next year on SnodSchool and beyond that getting involved in the many other aspects of Outdoor Education that the school can offer.

Well done and thank you to all the staff, the Lower Sixth Instructors and the Terriers themselves in making 2022/23 another very successful year.

*Mr O Bate*







# House Report

It's been a busy year, with House badges earned a plenty! The year kicked off with a wonderful Third Form House Singing Competition. The theme was Disney hits, and Fetherston's rendition of 'I Just Can't Wait to be King' from the *Lion King*, ran out deserved winners. It was a fabulous competition undertaken with great spirit from the new Third Form pupils, and brilliantly led by a fantastic team of Lower Sixth. It really set the tone for what House Competition is all about- joyous, fun and quite competitive!

The annual House One Mile Run took place, with again Fetherston overall winners. Some great running from pupils and staff alike. By the end of the Christmas term we had seen House competitions in hockey, touch rugby and netball taking place in Games afternoons. Pupils participated with terrific enthusiasm, with some really top quality, and inclusive, sport on show. House Photography also saw some superb entries, with Pole picking up the overall winning spot. In the run up to Christmas we also held a number of festive themed competitions, with jolly jumpers, quizzes and the annual House Christmas Tree competition (an exceptional winning entry from Fetherston), with efforts then being donated to charity.

After Christmas, competitions in badminton and chess were held. In February, the hotly contested Annual House Pancake Race took place. With some photo finishes, and some dubious pancake flipping, we saw Windsor crowned champions once again!



An inaugural House Music Festival was held with a real variety of entries from pupils across the Senior School. Pieces ranged from choral, to drums and woodwind, and also ranged in terms of genre with everything from pieces by J.S. Bach to AC/DC! A great event, and one that we will certainly look to continue and expand next year. Windsor and Pole were joint winners on this occasion. Bike Week was also successful with House points being earned for travelling into work and school on two wheels!



Further House sporting competitions were held in Games afternoons, and as tradition seems to now dictate, the annual House 5k took place on 4 May. Great effort by those involved, with Imogen Pemble and Ben Stewart winning overall with some impressive times. Well done to all those involved and to those pupils who helped organise it.





Our final House Competition of the year was Sports Day. It marks one of the biggest House events of the year, with the aim for all pupils to have fun and to enjoy themselves. It was a great afternoon with parents also enjoying the events. There was some amazing team work, energy and leadership on show throughout. Special mention to the below pupils who broke some school records on the day:

**School and Sports Day Records:**

**Shell Form Girls:**

Cerys Tippings, Javelyn (23.74m)  
Alex Souter, Discus (16.90m)

**Fourth Form Girls:**

Mollie Beeton, 200m (27.5s)  
Mollie Beeton, 800m (2m 31.0)  
Frankie Gallagher, Discus (18.95m)  
Aimee Hanley, Javelyn (26.49m)

**Lower Fifth Girls:**

Jemima Meigh, 200m (27.2s)  
Maryam Olajuwon, Shot (8.06m)

Congratulations to the Victrix and Victor Ludorums from each year group;



**Victrix Ludorums:**

Third Form – Margarida Campino  
Shell Form – Alex Souter  
Fourth Form – Mollie Beeton  
Lower Fifth – Jemima Meigh  
Lower Sixth – Florence Pugh

**Victor Ludorums:**

Third Form – George Cobb  
Shell Form – Harrison Middleton  
Fourth Form – Oliver Burtenshaw  
Lower Fifth – Seb Smith  
Lower Sixth – Noah Maclean



Overall winners of Sports Day were Fetherston, with some excellent efforts across the board.

Mrs H Fair



Senior School Final Standings	
Pole	939
Windsor	899
Shenstone	846
Fetherston	838
Jago	815



# Senior School Art

## Upper Sixth



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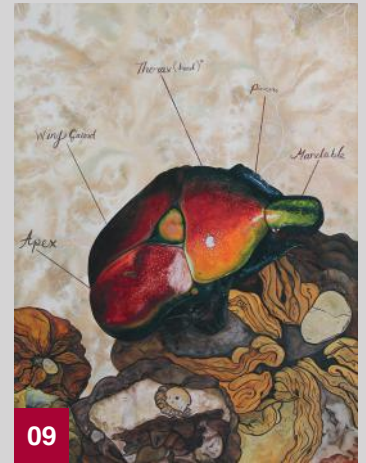
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**A Level Art**

- 01 Amy Goodworth
- 02 Annabel Bagshaw
- 03 Annabel Bagshaw
- 04 Eva Burrell
- 05 Eva Burrell
- 06 George Roe
- 07 George Roe
- 08 Megan Barrett
- 09 Megan Barrett
- 10 Nupur Kumar
- 11 Nupur Kumar
- 12 Sophie Storey
- 13 Sophie Storey

# GCSE Art

## Lower Fifth



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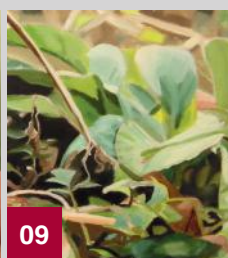
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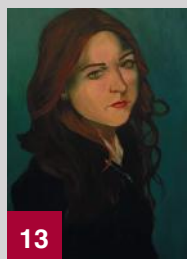
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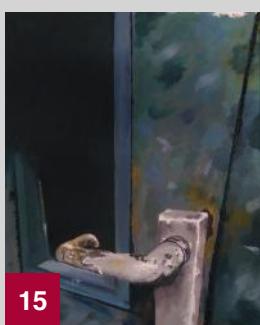
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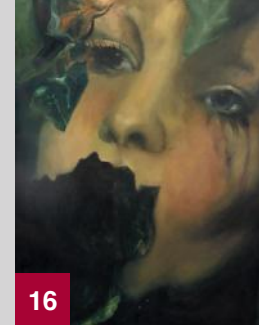
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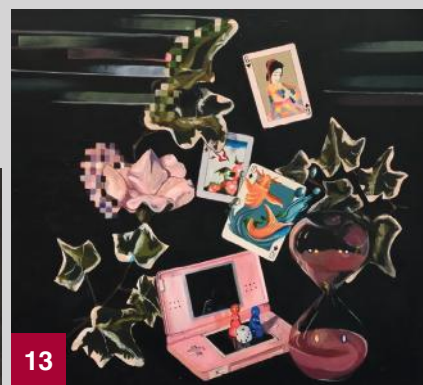
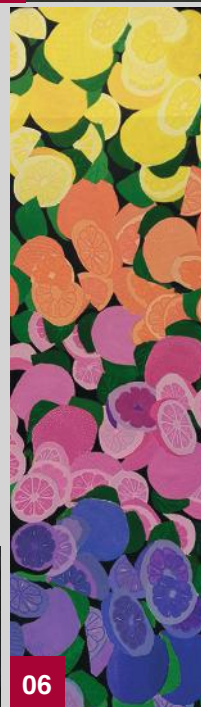
19

### GCSE Art

- 01 Ameelya Chouhan
- 02 Annah Miller
- 03 Bella Taylor
- 04 Bonnie Maughan
- 05 Camille Behr
- 06 Chloe Harrison
- 07 Hugo Smyth
- 08 Jessica Knight
- 09 Khushi Duggal
- 10 Lily Atkinson
- 11 Luca Romano
- 12 Martina Green
- 13 Millie Binns
- 14 Murray Watts
- 15 Samuel Christopher
- 16 Sapphia Jackson
- 17 Scarlett Pugh
- 18 Shreeya Purbey
- 19 Sophie Round

# GCSE Art

## Upper Fifth



### GCSE Art

- 01 Alia Osman
- 02 Alia Osman
- 03 Anna White
- 04 Bella Jones
- 05 Bella Thomas
- 06 Charlotte Farmer
- 07 Chloe Haslehurst
- 08 Eve Farrer
- 09 Florrie Grice
- 10 Fredrick Sunderland
- 11 Freya Gallagher
- 12 Giorgia Cook
- 13 Gurneet Jheeta
- 14 Hannah Boumenjel
- 15 Harriet Fretwell

# GCSE Art

Upper Fifth



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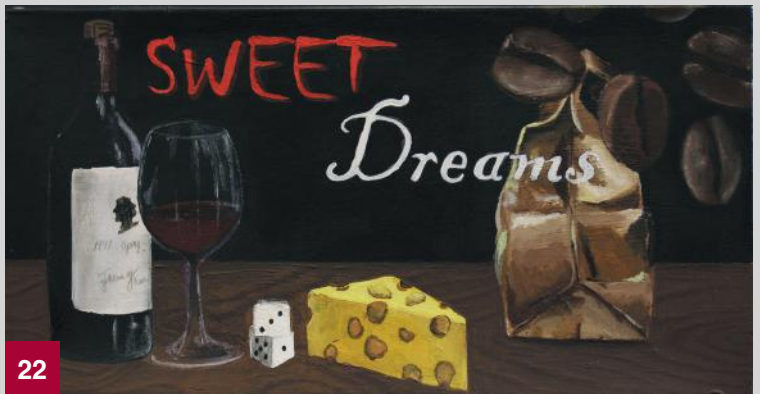
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26

## GCSE Art

- 16 Isobel Meads
- 17 Jake Evans
- 18 Karolina Rarko
- 19 Kassian Cowan
- 20 Lukas Osborne
- 21 Maddison Watson
- 22 Natarsha Wadsworth
- 23 Olivia Gransbury
- 24 Olivia Wassell.
- 25 Serena Arbuthnot
- 26 Silver Sherwood



# A Level Photography

Upper Sixth



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02



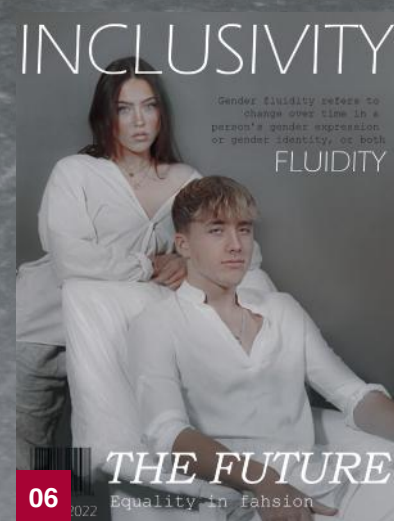
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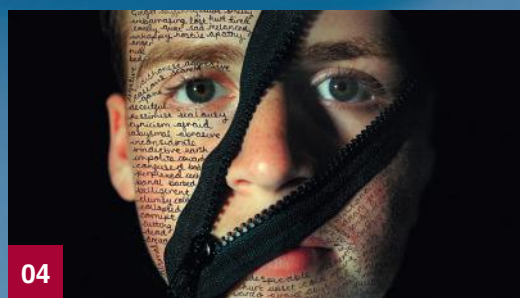
08

## A Level Photography

- 01 Amelia Iqbal
- 02 Beth Morris
- 03 Burcin Demiroglu
- 04 Emma Morgan
- 05 George Roe
- 06 Jane Woodley
- 07 Lily-Mae Hodson
- 08 Pierce Smythe

# GCSE Photography

Lower Fifth





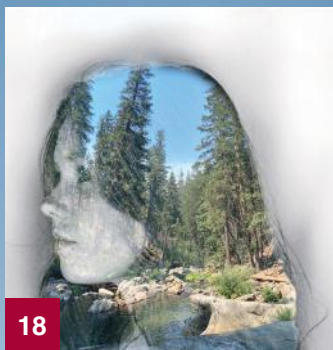
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### GCSE Photography

- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 01 Amar Gill        | 13 Luca Romero     |
| 02 Andrew Lee       | 14 Maddy Brown     |
| 03 Arjoi Cheema     | 15 Martina Green   |
| 04 Bea Neeson       | 16 Max Reece       |
| 05 Benjamin Kermode | 17 Natasha Reda    |
| 06 Imogen Rogerson  | 18 Olivia Reda     |
| 07 Isaac Maddy      | 19 Phao Taylor     |
| 08 James Scurlock   | 20 Roxy Martin     |
| 09 Khushi Duggal    | 21 Scarlett Pugh   |
| 10 Libby King       | 22 Sophie Reynolds |
| 11 Lily Atkinson    | 23 Theo Smith      |
| 12 Louisa Phillips  | 24 Zabi Ayub       |

# GCSE Photography

Upper Fifth



**GI**  
£3.50

**AAKASH SINGH** UV

01

**THE IT GIRL MAGAZINE**  
WELLNESS - LIFESTYLE - HEALTH  
AUGUST 22ND

**THIS MONTH'S INTERVIEWS**  
ZEINA KHALED  
WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO STAY TRUE TO YOURSELF IN A RELATIONSHIP

KENDALL JENNER  
HOW I BECAME A MODEL AT THE RIPE AGE OF 13

**ALIA OSMAN** UV

02

**WOMEN'S HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE**  
LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

20 Healthy Recipes  
A collection of fresh recipes packed full of flavour

All of the latest trends  
on the most popular gifts of 2021

**DANIKA ELLARD** UV

03

January 2023 Edition  
**EXPO**

**COSPLAY TIPS AND TRICKS**

**D&D**

LEGEND OF ZELDA: TEARS OF THE KINGDOM  
COMING 12 MAY 2023

**EVE FARRER** UV

04

**VOGUE**  
Dec. £3.99

**A Fashion REVOLUTION**  
COLORS, COMBINATIONS AND CUTS  
VOGUE EXPLORES THE TOP 10 BEST DRESSING TIPS

**EVIE DA SILVA** UV

05

**Teen Vogue** Issue 38

Inside look out for the new Swarovski range  
Secret Urban Outfitters discounts!  
New Kellogg's health campaign  
New gossip of the latest celebs  
Spotify has every song you'd want

**FREYA THORNTON-BAKER** UV

06

**seventeen**

**GIORGIA COOK** UV

07

**Womans Weekly**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Every Tuesday 19th March 2022

Ladies, keep up with all the responsibilities you now have.

**GRACE KELLY** UV

08

May 27th No. 188 Sports & Outdoor

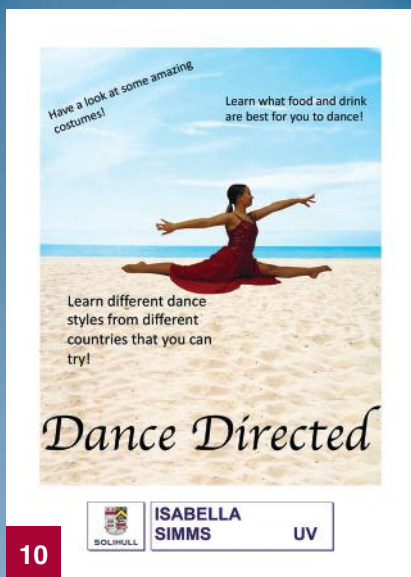
**HOCKEY MAGAZINE**  
www.hockeymag.co.uk

INTERVIEW  
hockey's 116 world champions

SPORTS to try this summer

**HARRIET FRETWELL** UV

09



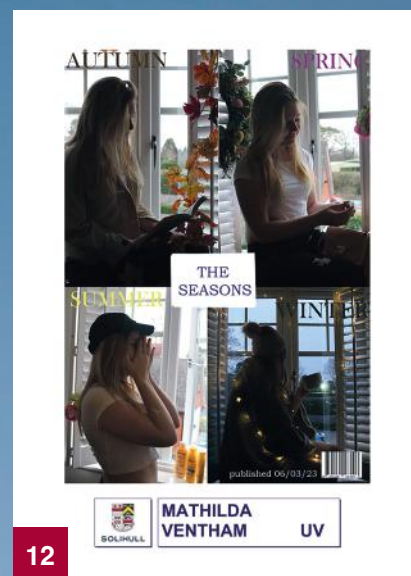
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**ISABELLA SIMMS** UV



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**LARA EL DAIEF** UV



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**MATHILDA VENTHAM** UV



13

**MAYNA VAN ALDERWEGEN** UV



14

**MILLY MARKLEW** UV

### GCSE Photography

- 01 Aakasj Singh
- 02 Alia Osman
- 03 Danika Ellard
- 04 Eve Farrer
- 05 Evie Da Silva
- 06 Freya Thornton Baker
- 07 Giorgia Cook
- 08 Grace Kelly
- 09 Harriet Fretwell
- 10 Isabella Simms
- 11 Lara El Daief
- 12 Mathilda Ventham
- 13 Mayna Van Alderwegen
- 14 Milly Marklew

# Lower School Art

## Third Form



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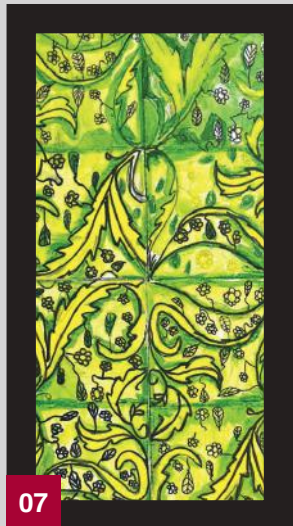
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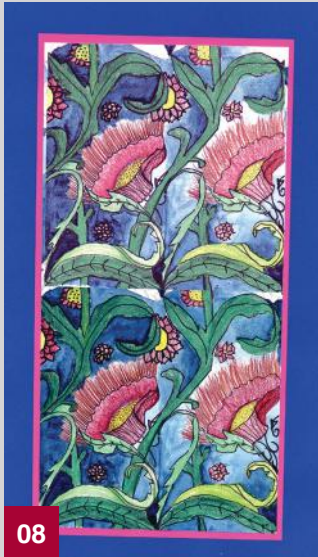
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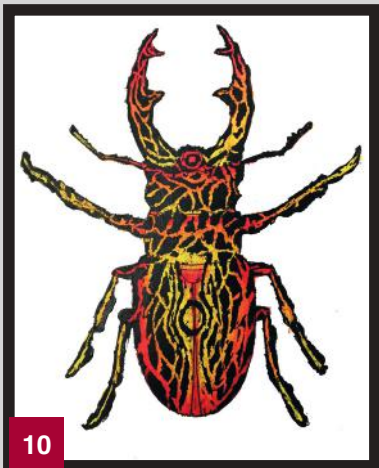
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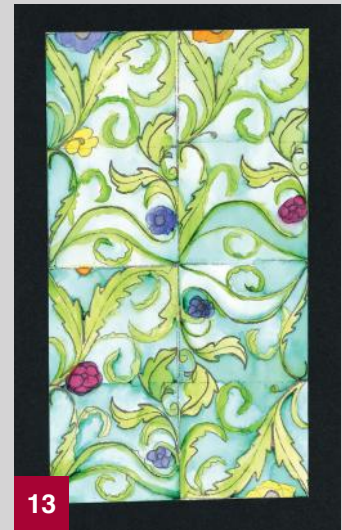
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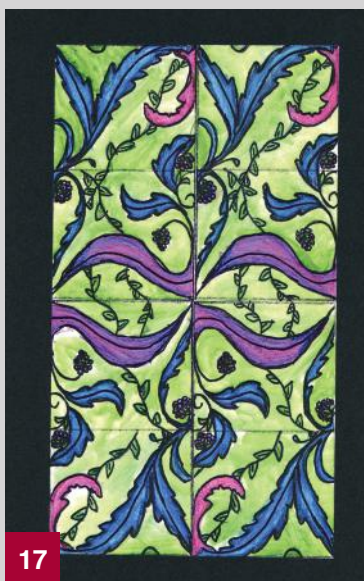
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### Third Form

- 01 Aadya Agarwal
- 02 Alayna Shami
- 03 Alisa Deyneka
- 04 Charlotte Sabine
- 05 Third Form Pupils
- 06 Dhruv Naik
- 07 Hari Irvine
- 08 Harmaan Kaur
- 09 Isaac Bagshaw
- 10 Jamie Walker
- 11 Margarida Campino
- 12 Megan Brindley
- 13 Niamh Bannister
- 14 Oshala Knox
- 15 Pari Khurmi
- 16 Petra Saggi
- 17 Priya Moran
- 18 Sayona Ranganen

# Lower School Art

## Shell Form



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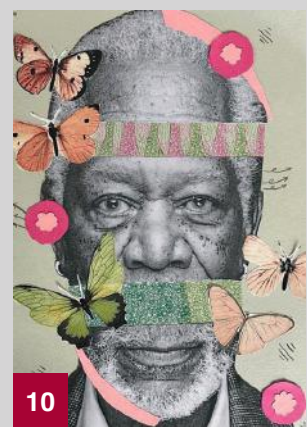
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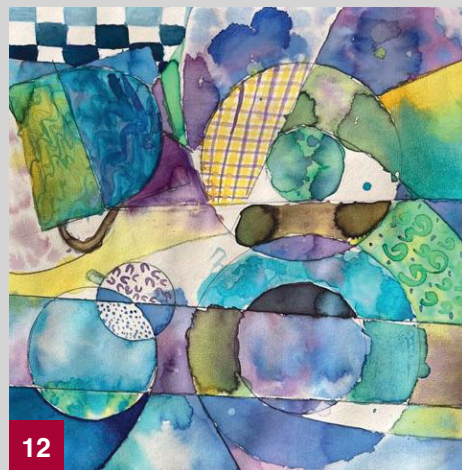
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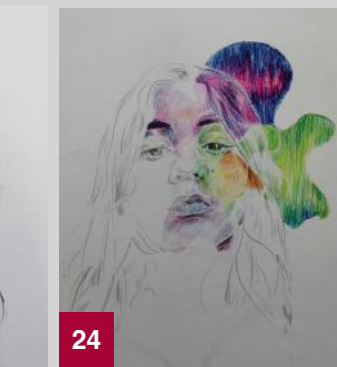
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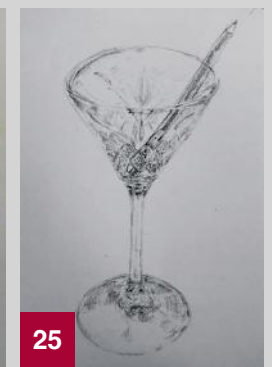
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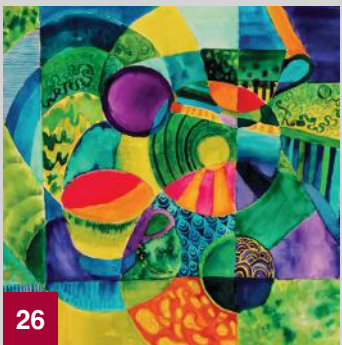
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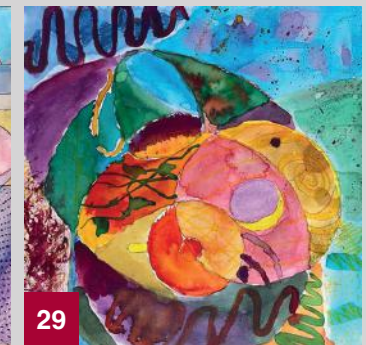
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**Shell Form**

- 01 Ali Khalil
- 02 Amelia Cox
- 03 Anaiya Kalla
- 04 Angelica Willford
- 05 Angelica Willford
- 06 Angelica Willford
- 07 Annabel Hobden
- 08 Charlotte Cooper
- 09 Claudia Green
- 10 Esmee Behr
- 11 Gracie Mann

- 12 Hannah Dovey
- 13 Harriet Murphy
- 14 Harriet Murphy
- 15 Harry Baden
- 16 Henry Durrans
- 17 Masha Afanasova
- 18 Masha Afanasova
- 19 Mollie Moore
- 20 Nihaal Patara
- 21 Ria Jaipesad
- 22 Ria Suthar
- 23 Roman Koziol

- 24 Sophia Kumar
- 25 Sophia Kumar
- 26 Sophia Kumar
- 27 Sophia Kumar
- 28 Sophie Callaghan
- 29 Vasuman Gupta
- 30 Zain Ladak

# Lower School Art

## Fourth Form



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### Fourth Form

- 01 Alfie Goodson-Pickard
- 02 Emily Bergin
- 03 Eva Kulikova
- 04 Frankie Gallagher
- 05 Gracie Shearing
- 06 Jemima Miller
- 07 Leila Smith
- 08 Lucas Eastwood
- 09 Mandeep Dosanjh
- 10 Milo Washbrook
- 11 Olivia Southall
- 12 Sophie Higgs



### International Refugee Week

In June, pupils Stacey and Yeva and their mother, Mrs Kulikova, were invited to participate in an art exhibition organised by Solihull Council to celebrate International Refugee Week.

The Ukrainian family's creations were displayed at Solihull Library for the week-long event which showcased instalments from refugees from Solihull and the surrounding areas.

Some of the Kulikova family's work is now displayed at school.



### Sketching School House

On a particularly sunny day during the summer term, Fourth Form pupils enjoyed an outdoor Art lesson sketching School House.



# Prep School Sport

138



## U11 Boys' Hockey IAPS Tournament

In February, the boys U11 IAPS hockey team attended the regional event at Rugby School and, after wins against Nottingham High, The Ryleys, Aysgarth and a draw against Dean Close, they moved through to the cup knockout competition. Wins against Cheltenham College and Winchester House saw them meet Dean Close again in the final and Solihull emerged 1-0 victors. The finals were hosted at Repton School and the boys enjoyed a good group stage with wins against The Downs, New College School and draws against the eventual winners Perse and Great Walstead. In the quarter final Solihull beat The New Beacon School in extra time and were beaten by St Faith's in the semi-final. After overcoming the initial disappointment, our Solihull team picked themselves up and were victorious against Dean Close School to claim an amazing third place.



## 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 were in attendance at 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.



## Solihull Borough Rounders Tournament

On Thursday 15 June, five boys and five girls selected from J4 attended the Solihull Borough Rounders Tournament at Lode Heath School. 20 schools from across the borough were in attendance and with four groups only the winning team from each group would make it through to the semi-finals. In each of the four group games Solihull didn't concede more than 1 rounder and scored between 4 and 8 rounders so convincingly topped the group and made it through to the semi-finals. In the semi-final against St Augustine's the team fielded amazingly conceding only half a rounder and then when batting the first four children stepped up and score a rounder. The final score was 6 - ½. In the final Solihull came up against Greswold and although trickier opponents they were once again convincing winners and were awarded their medals after being crowned champions.



**U11 Boys' Football IAPS Tournament**

The J4 boys' football team headed to Fairfield Prep in October for the IAPS Regional Football Tournament. Remaining undefeated in the group stages and a victory in the quarter final, the team came across a strong Wolverhampton Grammar School and the two teams couldn't be separated during normal time, extra time and it eventually took a sudden death penalty shoot out for Solihull to emerge as the winners. In the final, Solihull came across London based school Eaton House The Manor and a 1-0 victory meant they lifted the regional trophy and qualified for National Finals at Millfield Prep School. On the day of the final, a very early start saw the team and families make their way down to Millfield Prep School. A mixed group stage saw Solihull move into the plate competition and another close match with Wolverhampton Grammar (who had qualified as regional third place) resulted in a defeat, and the now very tired team made their way home after a wonderful experience.

**Dance and Gymnastics Showcase**

All Junior School pupils have the opportunity throughout the year to attend Gymnastics and/or Dance Club before school. We have many girls and boys that take up this opportunity and work hard to hone their skills. On Wednesday 8 March our Infants and J1 and J2 pupils performed. On Wednesday J3 and J4 parents were invited to their showcase to see the pupils perform. After some intense rehearsals, the event ran in the SMART to a packed audience with lots of smiles all round!



**Girls' Football**

This year in the Prep School the girls have been taking over on the football field! Co-curricular clubs for Junior School girls have grown and grown throughout the year. The J4 girls' team played in the Solihull Borough League for the first time resulting in them gaining a place in the Plate Competition. The end of season tournament on Thursday 23 May was played at Solihull Moors. They also attended a tournament at Repton School on Saturday 18 March, and enjoyed a great day of match play, as well as a lovely lunch! The J1 and J2 girls also played in the Solihull Borough Tournament on Wednesday 3 May to prove we are building for the future, with plenty of girls ready to take part in football. After a tough evening of competition the girls came out overall winners!





**IAPS Netball**

On Wednesday 1 February, a group of J4 netballers attended the regional qualifying event for the IAPS Netball tournament at Rugby School. This event was played in the 5-a-side format and all the girls had to rotate positions therefore playing in all five positions at some point during the day. After an intense day of competition, the girls found themselves in the quarter finals. With another victory against Manor Lodge School winning 10-2 it was Thomas Fulham in the semi-final. Knowing the top two teams would qualify for the National Finals, the girls just needed to win this game to earn their place. They won a close encounter 6-5 to progress into the final against local Stratford rivals The Croft. Although Solihull lost this final, they were through to the National Finals!

On Friday 17 March, we again returned to Rugby for final's day. With independent schools from all over the country in attendance, the girls were set for a fantastic day of netball. After the morning games, Solihull progressed into the Plate Competition with two wins, one draw and two losses. In the quarter final a win 6 – 5 against Ravenscourt meant a semi-final match up against Richmond School. Unfortunately, losses against Richmond 8 – 5 in the semi-final and Oakwood 9 – 5 in the 3rd/4th playoff meant an overall finish of 12th place in the country. Not a bad effort girls - Well done!



**J4 Girls Hockey**

The J4 girls' hockey team represented Solihull at the IAPS regional rounds on 12 October at Fairfield Prep. After two wins against Swanbourne and Nottingham High and a loss against Fairfield in the rounds, the girls were unfortunately defeated by Repton in the quarter finals. On 6 March at Warwick Prep School, the girls took part in the County Hockey Tournament. After some fantastic play and teamwork, the girls were crowned County Champions and moved onto the Regional Finals. At Rugby School, the girls moved onto Midlands round and even though the competition was a lot tougher than in the previous round the girls came 2nd overall.

**Prep School Sport**



**IAPS Tennis 2023**

Sam Atcheson, Sam During, Isla Maidment and Aana Haque attended the IAPS Tennis National's Tournament at Rugby School in June. The boys pairing managed to pick up third place after some superb tennis during the two-day event.



**Solihull Borough Netball Skills Competition**

On Tuesday 7 February, two teams of eight 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. The girls performed extremely well under the pressure with one team being crowned overall winners.



**Solihull Borough Netball Tournament**

On Tuesday 21 March, two teams of eight took part in the Solihull Borough Netball tournament at Alderbrook School. Each team performed extremely well in the group stages without losing a single game. In the semi-finals one team unfortunately lost to Dorridge but the others convincingly won to progress to the final. Everyone came away with a medal as Solihull won both the final and the 3rd/4th play off to finish 1st and 3rd place overall. A great achievement and showing the strength in depth in netball from the J4 girls this year.

*Mr E Carne, Mrs T Farnell, Mrs K Higginson & Mr C May*

## House Swimming

March is House Swimming Gala month and all the children from Infants to J4 practised really hard and took part in their galas. All pupils performed outstandingly well, and we couldn't be prouder of their enthusiasm and effort. As always, we had a great turnout from family members who

got involved with very enthusiastic cheering and fervent support.

All the children competed for House points, and the results from all the galas are as follows:

## Overall Results

	Fetherston	Jago	Pole	Shenstone	Windsor
Infant 1	7	2	4	10	7
Infant 2	5	10	7	5	3
J1	130	94	94	95	86
J2	119	162	105	111	118
J3	126	154	144	166	91
J4	120	181	168	157	143
	507	603	522	544	448
	4th	1st	3rd	2nd	5th



## IAPS National Swimming Finals

We had great 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:

- Ellie Hull            1st in the U11's 50m backstroke
- Caleb Lobo         2nd in the U11's 50m backstroke
- Charlie France    11th in the U10's 25m freestyle

The boys' relay team of Caleb Lobo, Alex Maile, Ben Grobler and Tarun Chowdhary came 14th in the U11's 4 x 25m freestyle

## ESSA Primary School National Relay Finals

Two weeks after the great successes in London, our boys' Prep School swimming team were at it again but this time in Sheffield for the ESSA National Relay Finals. The boys' team of Caleb Lobo, Alex Maile, Ben Grobler and George Mansell came 10th in the U11 and U10 Medley relay. The boys' team of Caleb Lobo, Alex Maile, Ben Grobler and Charlie France came 5th in the U11 and U10 Freestyle relay.

*Mr T Mayled*

Every year the fastest four girls and boys in each stroke compete for the Victor and Victrix Ludorum trophies, from these results the overall winners this year are:

- J1 Charlie Callow & Erin Fenlon
- J2 Tom Debenham & Holly Connor
- J3 George Mansell & Amira Farooq
- J4 Caleb Lobo & Ellie Hull

*Mr T Mayled*

# Prep School Sport

## Nursery and Reception Sports Day

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 on 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 Reception pupils competed in one sprint race, two novelty fun races and their House relay. In total 38 races were contested, and all involved were rewarded with their positional rosette stickers.

## Infant 1 and Infant 2 Sports Day


Following on from the EYFS Sports Day, our Infant pupils were very excited to see their family and friends ready and waiting for them when they entered the field. The temperature was rising as the children 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 58 races contested and everyone receiving their positional rosette or 'well done' stickers on the finish line.

Congratulations to all the pupils. The PE Department are extremely proud of the pupil's perseverance and determination to demonstrate their personal best in front of all their peers, teachers and parents.


*Mrs K Higginson*




Nursery House Results	
1st Place	FETHERSTON 
2nd Place	JAGO
3rd Place	POLE
4th Place	WINDSOR
5th Place	SHENSTONE

Reception House Results	
1st Place	JAGO 
2nd Place	WINDSOR
3rd Place	POLE
4th Place	FETHERSTON
5th Place	SHENSTONE



Infant 1 House Results	
1st Place	SHENSTONE 
2nd Place	JAGO
3rd Place	WINDSOR
4th Place	FETHERSTON
5th Place	POLE

Infant 2 House Results	
1st Place	SHENSTONE 
2nd Place	POLE
3rd Place	JAGO
4th Place	FETHERSTON
5th Place	WINDSOR




### Junior School Sports Day

Our first Sports Day on the new Prep School field was a great success! The weather was kind to us and there was a fantastic turn out from parents and spectators. All races were competitive (especially the final spectator's egg and spoon race!) Field event medals were presented throughout the morning and all race winners collected their medals on the finish line.

Mrs K Higginson

### Victor and Victrix Ludorum Winners

- J1: Charlie Callow & Amelia Fair
- J2: Divij Hullur & Sophia Wood
- J3: Charlie France & Lizzie Wood
- J4: Sam Atcheson & Ugo Abraham-Igwe

Overall Junior School Results					
	Fetherston	Jago	Pole	Shenstone	Windsor
J1 & J2	4	3	5	2	1
J3 & J4	1	3	4	5	2
	5	6	9	7	3
	4th	3rd	 1st	2nd	5th





## Sporting Successes 2022-23

IAPS Boys' Football Regional Winners & National Finalists

IAPS Girls' Netball Regional Runners-up & National Finalists

IAPS Boys' Hockey Regional Winners & 3rd place nationally

IAPS Swimming National Finals:

1st place Girls' 50m Backstroke & 2nd place Boys' 50m Backstroke

IAPS Boys' Tennis 3rd place nationally

Warwickshire County Girls' Hockey Winners & Regional Runners-up

ESSA Swimming Boys' Freestyle Relay & Medley Relay National Finalists

# SOLIHULL



# Sport, Health and Fitness

## Cricket

144



The 2023 cricket season has been another huge success. A total of 47 teams were fielded this year, between boys and girls and across all age groups, with 200 matches being played in the nine-week season. I wrote in last year's report, that I couldn't imagine a busier season but this year we have taken the cricket programme to another level.....! We have played in National, Regional and County competitions, hosted Six-a-Side tournaments, House Cricket, Cricket Week and Friday Night Lights fixtures, as well as raised money for the Ruth Strauss Foundation. What an incredible year!

The girls' cricket programme has grown exponentially and for the first time this year we entered into National Competitions at U15, U17 and U18 age groups. I am delighted to write that the U17 girls are now National Plate winners after a fantastic run in the competition, culminating in a dominant performance against Norwich at Haileybury School in the final. Congratulations to all of the girls who represented the school in these competitions, and what an amazing achievement in only the first year of competing at National level. In addition, we also recognise the value of acquiring Mrs Ginn's and Miss Hill's services to help deliver quality coaching for the girls and I would like to thank them wholeheartedly, as well as Mrs Sixsmith and Mrs Baden, for their commitment and tireless work in providing opportunities for the girls to play more matches and develop their personal skills. As mentioned, the speed of which the girls programme has grown is very exciting and I was overwhelmed by the number of girls playing in the matches and in attendance at lunchtime practices. Their transition from softball to hardball matches has been astonishing and seeing their confidence grow with each match was amazing. I only hope that more schools are able to do the same, so that we can play more competitive hardball fixtures.

The boys this year had another successful season and I would like to congratulate Isaac Maddy, Ben Blakemore, Jamie Tregellas, Ben Raybould, Josh Reynolds and Sam Sitch for all scoring centuries this season and to James Hawkins, Solomon Graham and Josh Ackroyd for taking five wickets or more in an innings. A special mention to Anaiya Kalla who took a hat-trick for the girls U13A vs Leicester Grammar School.



There are a lot of people I need to thank who have contributed tirelessly to the success of the season; Karl Brotherhood and his ground staff for the monumental work they have put into accommodating so many matches. Neil Harris and his catering team for providing all of the food on time, despite the constant changes to the playing schedule. The cricket staff who have managed all of the teams and have given up their evenings and weekends so that we can play so many fixtures. Fynlee Hateley who sets up the live scoring on Play Cricket and is my assistant Head of Cricket and official scorer and to Samuel Graham who has led the 1st XI so admirably and successfully in his second season as captain. Finally, thank you to all the boys and girls who have represented the school this year.

In closing, I would like to thank all of the Upper Sixth players for their contributions to Solihull cricket and in particular to the four boys who have contributed so much to the 1st XI cricket team, Samuel Graham, Ben Raybould, George Sitch and Fynlee Hateley 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 U12A

Our boys U12A team had a good cricket season, they played 13 matches, they won seven and lost only three. U12A started their season with a convincing 52 runs win against Lawrence Sheriff School and, in the second game, beat King Edward VI School, Stratford by four wickets. In the third game U12A restricted King Edward Birmingham to 110 runs in 20 overs, but in reply U12A were all out on 42 runs and lost by 68 runs. After losing to KES Birmingham, Solihull responded strongly and beat RGS Worcester in their next game by 79 runs. A win against RGS Worcester boosted the team's confidence which helped them to play their best in the remaining matches. They beat Loughborough Grammar School by 33 runs, Magdalen College School by three wickets, King's School Worcester by 64 runs and Leicester Grammar School by 124 runs. In the last three matches of the season, U12A sustained two losses, first they lost to Manchester Grammar School and then to Bishop Vesey's Grammar School by six wickets. However, in the last game of the season Solihull beat Bablake & King Henry VIII School by 117 runs. Overall the boys played well and enjoyed their cricket, they attended training sessions regularly, showed enthusiasm and were always ready to perform their best. Everyone worked hard and contributed to their team success either with the bat or with the ball. In the batting department Toby During scored 319 runs, Sebastian Hemmings scored 242 runs, Jay Pirta scored 209 and Martin Johnson scored 187 runs. In the bowling department, Jonty Scurlock took 20 wickets, Sebastian Ginn took 10 wickets, Martin Johnson and Dylan Gittens took nine wickets each. It was a pleasure to coach such a talented group of the players, and hope they will continue their progress in the future as well.

*Mr A Raza*

### Boys' Cricket U12B

2023 was an excellent season for the U12B team. They played 11, won seven and lost four. Great credit goes to every single player involved for taking on feedback and improving their game. Nick Hewett as captain was great, setting the team up every game. Well done. Their attitude was fantastic and always played in the spirit of the game. They are such a supportive team, both when things go well and not so well, and when emotions are running high in close games. Many lessons have been learnt on the way in this successful season. Their fielding has been fantastic all season, and through hard work our bowling was much improved, and our batting became more patient in waiting for the bad ball. So many Third Form pupils played this year, and the passion they have for cricket shone through. Every single one of them contributed to games and will all have their own highlights to reflect on, and for some, it was their first experiences of hard ball cricket and I hope you remember your first wicket and run on a cricket pitch! I wish you all the best for next year and continue to learn and challenge the A team for their places.

*Mr C Guy*



## Sport, Health and Fitness

146

### Boys' Cricket U13A

Attempting to build on the success of last season the U13 cricket team started the season with another close fought victory against KES Stratford. Unfortunately, the weather turned for the worse, with the following two fixtures cancelled. Trying to build momentum the team chased down a strong RGS Worcester total. The most complete performance of the season followed with a commanding batting, bowling, and fielding display which led to a comprehensive win over Warwick School. Unfortunately, an agonising four run loss against Loughborough came next. Following the heartbreak, the boys turned heartbreak into glory with a two wicket win over Magdalen College. The following game became a very important and pertinent learning experience with the team losing to Arden Academy.

How teams handle adversity is often signs of a good team, and this was absolutely the case when the team were looking to defend the Solihull Sixes title. With four commanding victories in the group stages and semi-final set up a final with KES Stratford, scraping to 66 runs the boys had to bowl and field well to retain the title, and they did just that! The boys became back-to-back Solihull Sixes Champions! Back to full sided games, comprehensive wins over King's School Worcester, Princethorpe and Leicester Grammar followed. One of the areas the team needs to develop is to learn how to become a better chasing team. The team has showed great promise throughout the year, but certainly have a lot to learn as they progress through their cricket seasons at school.

*Mr D Brotherhood*



### Boys' Cricket U13B

The U13B team have had a mixture of results but have played with passion and flair throughout the season. The opening game was lost to Lawrence Sheriff in a close finish with Ali Khalil scoring a fine 50 in a losing cause. This was followed by a good win against RGS and two close defeats to Loughborough and Warwick. Toby Smolden had an excellent season scoring consistent runs before promotion to the A team. We beat Princethorpe and MCS well and lost a tight game to QMGS. Yusuf Abdur Rasheed's spin proved dangerous and Eleanor Lyman-Smith bowled some excellent spells including a 3-19. Steady bowling options were provided by Rupert Pick, Isa Aamer and Gabriel Rickard. Henry Timbrell and Harry Bould often made useful runs in the middle order. The fielding improved over the season but has been an area in need of improvement. Thanks to all players involved for their enthusiasm and effort.

*Mr N Linehan*



### Boys' Cricket U14A

The first fixture of the season saw the U14As field a team of mainly Shell Form pupils, due to the DofE weekend. However, the players who came into the squad stepped up and got Solihull over the line with a one wicket win the penultimate over. Solihull needed 129 off 20 overs, Otis Lee and Martin Johnson the pick of the bowlers. In our batting innings we got off to a flyer and were going at 10 runs an over, mainly due to the aggressive hitting of Gus Lea 43 (31) and James Nye-Brown 35 (28). However, a middle order collapse brought the game back to a very even contest and we just managed to get over the line for the win. Against RGS Worcester the U14As elected to bowl first in overcast conditions. However, our key paceman Rufus Warrington got sick during the warm up and couldn't play, so our bowling attack had to adapt. We bowled tight lines and fielded with great focus, restricting them to 44-4 off 13 overs; Josh Ackroyd and Matty Gardner getting one wicket each but Ryan Sherwood the pick of the bowlers with 2-17 off his five overs. Their opening bat, who got 100\*, managed to accelerate the run rate at the end and they finished on 145-4 off 25 overs. In reply, James Lister scored a quick 20 before getting out to a world class catch by an academy goalkeeper.

Several others chipped in but at 106-8 in the 18th over things were looking bleak. Harry Tomlin and Joseph Ruston displayed some superb running between the wickets and put a lot of pressure on RGS with some powerful hitting. In the end we needed nine off 12 balls, with Ruston hitting the winning runs to joyous and jubilant scenes from the Pavilion; a truly remarkable victory, winning by one wicket with seven balls to spare. Sadly, we couldn't repeat this form against Warwick School, who had a very quick pace attack and bowled us out for 100, chasing the required score down in 13 overs with only two wickets down. This was very much a wake-up call that we weren't the finish product yet and lots of hard work in training still needed to follow. The U14As bounced back well when they travelled to Loughborough Grammar School. Solihull batted first on a good track and found themselves having to face a quick opening pair, but James Lister and Ryan Sherwood did very well to dig in and see them off. James Lister played some stunning cover drives and made 57 (46). The last five overs were superbly managed by Solomon Graham and Daniel Graham, with excellent power shots and running between the wickets, taking our score to a very respectable 149-3 off 20 overs, Solomon finishing on 53\*. Loughborough in reply had an opening bat who put his foot down from the first ball and got 84; dismissed via a great catch in the deep by Ryan Sherwood. Our bowlers were giving to much width to Loughborough, and the momentum was going with them into the last five overs. However, Matty Gardner remained calm under pressure and took 3-16 off four overs, with one maiden. Eventually Loughborough were dismissed for 124 with two balls to spare, meaning we won by 25 runs. Our next fixture we always going to be a tough one as we travelled to an unbeaten MCS Oxford on a glorious day. Although we were bowled out for a very below par 97 we pushed MCS all the way and they won the game by only two wickets, Matty Gardner the pick of the bowlers with four wickets.

The mid-point of the season saw plenty of midweek action. Firstly, we travelled to Rugby School, who made 158-4 off 20 overs. Solihull in reply got 145 all out, losing the game by 13 runs. The following week we played KES Stratford, and made an excellent 152-4 off 20 overs, with James Lister scoring 50. In reply, KES could only make 100-6, meaning a big winning margin of 52 runs. This set us up nicely for the Leicester Grammar School fixture. Batting first Solihull made 169, Dan Graham the top scorer with 72\*. Solomon Graham picked up five wickets with a fine display of leg spin bowling, to help bowl Leicester Grammar out for 77 runs. In the penultimate week of term the U14s travelled to Bishop Veseys, where an inspiring spell of bowling from Josh Ackroyd put Solihull in a great position. Josh took a seasons best six wickets for 11 runs, making use of the conditions to swing the ball. Dan Graham scored 45\* to ensure Solihull won the game by eight wickets. We then hosted Manchester Grammar in a midweek 30 over game. In a game dominated by the ball, Solihull were all out for 128, but came back into the game with some inspiring swing bowling from Josh Ackroyd, David Brown and James Lister, who each got 2 wickets each. However, Manchester Grammar managed to chase down the total with two wickets remaining. The final game of the season vs Bablake was a 50 over declaration game. With Solihull batting first we accelerated straight from the first ball, with Dan Graham, Solomon Graham and Matty Gardner all contributing well with the bat. However, it was captain Finlay Davies who top scored with 42. Shortly after Finlay was out the captain declared a total of 216-8 off 26 overs, our highest score of the season, leaving Solihull 24 overs to bowl Bablake out. David Brown and Josh Ackroyd produced some fine swing bowling for the first 10 overs, restricting Bablake so much that the draw was always going to be their best option. However, even though both James Lister and Solomon Graham took wickets towards the end of the innings. We needed to take three wickets in the final over. Bablake batted out the draw in a thrilling finish with all 11 fielders around the batsman. A very exciting end to what has been a great season of cricket for the U14A team.

*Mr B Richmond*



## Boys' Cricket U15A

The U15A team has a successful season with highlights including being crowned Warwickshire County Champions and reaching the Midlands semi-final. In the first round of the County Cup, the team performed well with a comfortable victory over King Edward VI School, Stratford. The semi-final took place at Warwick; batting first we returned a low score of 132-10 off 20 overs. In reply, Warwick started well and looked on course to overcome our total. However, tight bowling and some good catching pulled things back for Solihull and, in the end, we ran out victors by 14 runs. This led to a County Final showdown versus Rugby; having restricted them to 136-10, Solihull were nervous in reply. Early wickets tumbled, which led to us getting behind the run rate until Ruthvik Morajkar came to the crease. Needing 24 to win off two overs and five wickets in hand, Ruthvik smashed the ball to all parts of the ground to secure the win with an over to spare! This was a breathtaking innings and one worthy of leading the team to being crowned County Champions. Having lost to the same opposition in the County Final the year before, the victory was sweet. The win over Rugby, allowed the team to progress to a Midlands quarter final against King's Worcester. Solihull had failed to beat this team on all previous occasions and had even lost to them the Saturday before. Going into the game, the boys realised that we had to be in top form to get past this opposition. On the day, Solihull outplayed King's in every area and reached the target of 145 to win with great skill and calmness. This was by far the best all round performance of the season. The Midlands semi-final followed a week later; we were drawn against Trent College, with the match being played at Shrewsbury School. Bowling first, Solihull reduced Trent to 108-10; unfortunately, we failed to chase down the total and were bowled out for 103. This was a missed opportunity and it left everyone feeling bitterly disappointed.

Over the course of the regular season, the team performed well and recorded a number of resounding victories. There were many notable individual performances with the bat; Taha Mohyuddin smashed 113 off 58 balls in the match against Wellington School, Isaac Maddy got 100 off 52 balls at Leicester Grammar School, with Taha Mohyuddin getting 84 in the same game, Samuel Stockdale narrowly missed out on a ton by scoring 96 versus Bablake and Callum Graham was 89 not out against Loughborough Grammar School. With the ball, Ruthvik Morajkar took 4-17 in the regular season match with Warwick, Samuel Stockdale got 4-24 versus Loughborough Grammar School, Ansh Sutariya achieved 4-29 against Magdalen College and in the big game with Trent College Arya Kale took 4-17. The team enjoyed the Solihull six-a-side tournament, playing very good cricket throughout but narrowly missed out in the final to King's Worcester. Bhrijesh Parmar did an excellent job as captain and performed well with bat and ball. The players showed great commitment throughout both in fixtures and practice sessions. I hope that the experiences gained over the course of this season encourages individuals to focus more, which in turn will make the team perform to their maximum regularly in the future.

*Mr C Mayer*



**1st XI Boys' Cricket**

The 1st XI has had an outstanding cricket season and it has been an absolute pleasure being a part of it. At the start of the year the team met to discuss their values and goals and I am pleased to write that they have achieved everything that they set out to do. Under the calm leadership of highly experienced Samuel Graham, he led the team admirably and I would like to congratulate him on doing such a fantastic job. Samuel committed wholeheartedly, and it was extremely easy to give him the full responsibility of the team, as he had the trust and respect from his players which was evident throughout. However, he was well supported by senior players such as George Sitch, Ben Raybould and Josh Reynolds and there was a noticeable culture within the team that embraced enjoyment, togetherness and commitment to one another; traits that I am sure we have all heard a lot about within the England Cricket Team. Their brand and style of cricket was ruthless and of such a high level that the victories against Wellington, Monmouth, King's Worcester, Bromsgrove and RGS Worcester were outstanding, and wins that will always and should always be remembered. There was one minor blip however, and that was against Magdalen. After getting into a winning position, we couldn't quite finish and suffered our only school defeat of the year. A first win against them would have completed the perfect season and I am sure that we all feel that this was one that got away. An impressive victory against Bishop Vesey in the Hugh Cherry U18 County Cup Final, when both Ben Raybould and Josh Reynolds scored centuries, completed a fantastic season and crowned them County Champions. There were many significant individual performances that contributed to the success of the team as well. Notably, the centuries scored by Ben Blakemore, Ben Raybould, Josh Reynolds, Isaac Maddy and Samuel Sitch, as well as the two five wicket hauls from Jimmy Hawkins. However, there were so many contributions that miss out on the accolades but were equally important to the team's success; George Sitch and Ted Clarke's match winning half centuries, Sohail Jamil's wickets during cricket week, Samuel Graham's consistency as a leader and with his

bowling throughout the whole season and finally who could forget the four spectacular catches from the specialist fielder Will Turner at Monmouth! I am proud of the commitment that everyone has put into this season and you thoroughly deserve your success.

*Mr D Maddy*



**1st XI Boys' Cricket Player Report**

The season started off with a home derby against Warwick School, having won the toss and batting first, the team found themselves in the trouble until a late overs resurgence, getting Solihull up to 137/7 off the 20 overs. With a run out in the very first over, the team got off to a great start and spirits were high. This carried on all the way through the 20 overs, as Warwick finished 77/8, leading Solihull to a comfortable win. Our first Saturday home game of the year saw a huge win over Bloxham School as we chased down 127 in just 13 overs, thanks to a well made 71\* from Isaac Maddy. Just a few weeks later we were lucky enough to host Loughborough Grammar School, in what was our first game on Bigside.

Having won the toss and choosing to bat, the team were confident in putting on a big score. Despite the mid-order collapse, batsman Ted Clarke came to the rescue, scoring 88, showing great perseverance and ambition. This got us up to a respectable score of 214/7 off our 40 overs. As the opposition found themselves 127/4 off just 20 overs, we knew it would take real fight to turn the game around. However, as we took the 5th wicket, with LGS finding themselves 200/5, we pulled off a great win, taking the next five wickets for just two runs, leading to another Solihull win, and an angry Mr Maddy team talk avoidance! Suddenly it was, and unfortunately getting closer and closer to the end of the season. We started off June with a traditional game against the Warwickshire Imps XI. As we found ourselves bowling first to some very high quality players from the area, we thought we'd be in for a tough day. However, with four wickets from opening bowler James Hawkins, we managed to bowl them out for 178 in just 41 overs, setting up a nice chase. A classy 90 and 46 from Ben Blakemore and Jacob Lee respectively, saw Solihull chase down 179 in just 32 overs, leading to the first XI's first ever win against the Imps! The team were then lucky enough to play in two 'Friday Night Lights' T20 games on Bigside, where we were supported by over 200 people, all enjoying the live DJ, face painting and barbecue. Our first T20 was against our rivals Bromsgrove, who narrowly beat us the year before. Obviously we were keen to change this result, and having won the toss and bowling first, the boys were up for the fight. Bromsgrove batted very well, posing a score of 192 off their 20, hindered by some great bowling in particular from Ruthvik Morajkar, who ended with figures of 3-24 off his four. Knowing the difficulty of this big chase, the batsmen went out and got stuck in. With a 50 partnership for the first wicket, spirits were high on the balcony, however in true Solihull fashion, there was a slight middle-order collapse. This was until brothers George and Sam Sitch came to the rescue, putting on a 50 partnership to get us to 144/7, still requiring just under 50. This is where George Sitch shone, scoring 61\* off just 22 balls, guiding Solihull to a home win, much to the distaste of the Bromsgrove boys. Mr Maddy described this innings as 'one of the best recent T20 innings he has seen', showing how well George played in getting us over the line. Two weeks later we found ourselves taking on Bablake and King Henry VIII School in support of the Ruth Strauss Foundation. This time there was also a live DJ, face painting and barbecue, as well as the addition of an auction, with all profits going to the Foundation. Having won the toss and batting first, the boys put on a display, with contributions from all of the top order, yet stand out performances from Josh Reynolds and George Sitch, who scored 85\* and 60\* respectively, coming off just 40 and 24 balls. This got us up to 225 off our 20 overs, leaving the boys with confidence going into the second half of the game. This confidence did us well, as we bowled the opposition out for just 104, mainly helped by maiden first XI wicket from Ted Clarke, who didn't stop mentioning it for weeks on end! The team had a great time representing the school in front of so many people and supporting such an important cause, and we'd just like to thank everyone involved for their time and effort that went into setting up both of these fixtures.

We quickly found ourselves in cricket week, which despite the fun, always means the end of the season is approaching, something particularly felt for us Upper Sixth leavers. We started off the week with a special fixture against the prestigious MCC. Our 44 overs of bowling were very successful, with the MCC declaring on 254 just before tea. Runs were shared all around in our chase, with Ben Raybould making 45 opening up, and Josh Reynolds making 42, however stand out performer James Hawkins scored 71, getting Solihull into a position to beat the MCC. However, with the fall of Jimmy's wicket, tactics changed, and we decided to see out the bowlers for a draw, narrowly avoiding the win by just 13 runs. Our second day of cricket week, we found ourselves against an Australian Touring side, bringing in some 'Old Boys' to aid us. Winning the toss and bowling first, the team were very confident going into the second half, as we reduced the tourists to 221 all out off just 46 overs. However, some classy bowling saw us unfortunately be

bowled out for 198, losing by just 23 runs, in a game which could've gone either way. Wednesday saw us make the trip to Bishop Vesey for the final of the Hugh Cherry Cup. Having lost the toss but batting first, we felt the hosts may know something we didn't. However, this didn't prove to be true, as we scored 327 off our 40 overs, with batters Ben Raybould and Josh Reynolds scoring 114 and 122 respectively. With the team full of confidence, we went out to bowl. We managed to bowl Vesey out for just 93, mainly aided by four wickets from Sohail Jamil, leading us to earn a bit of silverware for our season. Thursday saw us arrive at school at 7am, ready to make the long journey to Monmouth School. On a very hot day, we won the toss and chose to bat first. A classy partnership between Ted Clarke and Ben Blakemore, aided by a lower order fight back post collapse, saw us get up to 254 off our 50. The momentum was thoroughly on our side, and with a quick early wicket we thought this would continue. However, with a second wicket partnership of 103, the game seemed to be drifting away from us, as Monmouth found themselves 128-1 off just 30 overs. However, the next 17 overs were some of the best overs I've ever been involved in. After breaking the partnership, the wickets didn't stop falling, as Monmouth went from 128/1 to 190 all out. The environment the team made on the day was seriously good, and the journey home was made even better due to this huge win. And finally, we found ourselves in the last game of the year, where we took on a strong Wellington team. Wellington have always brought a good game, so we knew we'd have to be on the ball to get the result we wanted. We won the toss and batted first, a decision which the overheard conditions didn't necessarily support, and when we found ourselves 0/2 off three overs, decisions were almost being regretted. However, a 4th wicket partnership of 186 between Isaac Maddy and Josh Reynolds saw us claw ourselves back into the game. Isaac finished on 117, becoming the youngest ever player to make a First XI century. However the 100s didn't stop there, as number 8 Sam Sitch smashed his maiden school hundred, scoring 113 off just 57 balls. These contributions meant we finished on 404 off our 50 overs, a score which we later found out was four behind the school record! With the Wellington bowlers being fed up and moaning about the small boundaries, we knew we had more than the upper hand going into the second half. This was proved very early on, as James Hawkins took 5-12 from his seven over opening spell, getting him his 2nd Five Wicket Haul of the season. This led to us bowling Wellington out for 120, meaning we finished our season with a huge 284 run win, thoroughly deserved after all of the effort put in by the team across the year.

At the start of the season we set ourselves a challenge of winning 70% of our games, a challenge which we smashed, winning 88% of our games. As this was my final season, I couldn't be prouder of the team and the way we've gone about our cricket this season, and I'd like to thank everyone who has represented the First XI for their efforts shown. I'd also like to thank and congratulate Ben Raybould and George Sitch who are also leaving, as their commitment to school cricket throughout the years has been immense, and I wish them all the best in their post-Solihull endeavours. And finally I'd like to thank Mr Maddy and Wynlee Hateley, I think it's easy to underestimate the amount of work that they put into school cricket, however, it absolutely would not function the way it does if these two didn't do everything they do. I think our 88% win record shows how effective the work Mr Maddy puts in is, and I'm glad we could deliver such a great season in my last time working with him for the school!

*Samuel Graham, Upper Sixth*



## 2nd XI Boys' Cricket

The boys' 2nd XI had a most enjoyable season playing with great enthusiasm at all times; 24 players were used and several players captained the side. The season started with a win over local rivals Warwick. The opposition batted first and were reduced to 103-9 off their 20 overs. Noah Lea was the pick of the bowlers, taking 3-7 off three overs. In reply, Solihull lost both openers for nought, but recovered through Adil Uddin's power hitting (44 off 26 balls) and Ibraheem Khan's measured inning. William Holt saw the team home with 22 valuable runs, allowing the team to notch up a five-wicket win.

The next 3 matches saw us lose in closely fought contests; this was followed up by two excellent wins over Bromsgrove and Princethorpe 1st XI. The most emphatic win of the season came in the final fixture against The King's School, Worcester. This was a Friday match that took place on the Ruth Strauss Foundation cricket evening. Batting first, Solihull amassed 203-4; all the batters contributed well to the total, but Sidney Albrighton, in his final game for the school, struck 51 off 32 balls to top score for the team. Ibraheem Khan batted superbly scoring 40 off 28 balls. It then took 11.2 overs for us to bowl out King's for 78; the bowling was accurate, the ground fielding was electric, and the team did not miss a chance when it came to catching! The wickets were spread out amongst the bowlers and Will Evans ran out one of the openers with a direct hit when he only had one stump to aim at!

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

Mr C Mayer

## Girls' Cricket

This year was a great start to girls' cricket at Solihull School, with teams from U8 up to first XI, including multiple teams in some years. The first match of the U17's season saw us lose narrowly to Shrewsbury School. Holly Whitfield started with the ball with 3 for 8, ably assisted by some excellent fielding including a run out with a direct hit from Leila Scott. We fell slightly short in our run chase but would have the chance to redeem ourselves in the National Plate. We advanced in away games against Wrekin College and Brentwood School to set up Finals Day. After we posted 125 for 5 against Wrekin, Emily Bergin and Katie Skinner set us off to a great start with their opening bowling spells, which the opposition struggled to recover from. Against Brentwood, Cerys Tippings and Zara Collinson set us up for a total of 134 for 5 in our 20 overs. A wicket with the first ball of Brentwood's innings by



Holly Whitfield was the perfect start. This was followed by a superb run out by Millie Gidda and outstanding catches from Maddy Brown. The standard of the ground fielding by Rahemeen Ali, Ayushi Shah and Imogen Rogerson was excellent and rounded off a great performance. Finals day was next! Finals day was one that will live in the memory for a long time. We met at 7am for our memorable coach journey, sensing this could be our day. In the semi-final against Denstone we scored 168 for four with a sensational innings of 73 by Zara Collinson. Excellent bowling from Cerys Tippings, Alex Townsend, and Katie Skinner, along with superb fielding from Jessica Filmer restricted Denstone to 133 for 9. After a 10-minute turn around, we faced Norwich in the final and bowled them out for 59 with Millie Gidda removing their best batter in the second over. We won by nine wickets and the celebrations began.

The 1st XI lost to King's Worcester in the National Cup but rebounded well in the Plate against Stamford. We have qualified for finals day and hope that Carys Rowland will be able to play before leaving for university.

This is an exciting start, and the future looks bright for girls' cricket at Solihull School.

Mr D Maddy



**We are delighted to have been named as one of the UK's best schools for cricket in The Cricketer's Schools Guide 2023.**





## Friday Night Lights and the Ruth Strauss Foundation

After last year's success, Friday Night Lights (FNL) returned and we made them bigger, better, more exciting and played for a worthy cause. The first of these evenings was a triple header against Bromsgrove School. On a beautiful summer evening we saw the 1st XI, 2nd XI and U15 all in action and of course the return of the music, BBQ and more importantly (for the parents) the beer and prosecco tent!

The evening belonged to Solihull as all three teams rose to the occasion and were victorious. More impressively, this was the first time the 1st XI had beaten Bromsgrove in over ten years. Notable contributions were made from Ruthvik Morajkar, Lower Fifth who took three wickets and George Sitch, Upper Sixth who played a match winning innings of 61 not out off only 23 balls.

The highlight of the season has to be the second FNL fixture which was played on behalf of the Ruth Strauss Foundation. A non-uniform day was held and I was delighted to see the support and contributions made from the pupils who wore 'Red for Ruth' throughout the day. Equally from the spectators who showed their support by also wearing red. The theme of wearing Red for Ruth (something that we saw recently at the Ashes Test match at Lords between England and Australia) made it a truly memorable occasion and both the 1st and 2nd XI players were united in wearing a special red playing shirt and cap for their matches.

The evening proved to be equally successful and entertaining as the 1st XI beat Bablake King Henry VIII convincingly by 121 runs and the 2nd XI beat King's Worcester by six wickets. Josh Reynolds fully entertained the crowd with a destructive 85 not out off just 40 balls and George Sitch finished the innings with another 60 not out off just 24 balls; it was a 'ruthless' all round display! The day was completed with a live auction, loud music and good food and was well supported by Sixth Form students celebrating the end of their exams and parents alike marking a truly memorable occasion.

I would like to take this opportunity in thanking everyone for their generous support as the money raised goes to a fantastic and worthwhile charity. If anyone would like more information regarding the Ruth Strauss Foundation then please visit [www.ruthstraussfoundation.com](http://www.ruthstraussfoundation.com)

*Mr D Maddy*



# Sport, Health and Fitness

## Hockey

152



### U12A Boys' Hockey

The U12A team, captained by Gus Lea, had a successful season. The boys were committed to both training and matches and had a good team spirit. Over the course of the season we played many schools, some several times. One of these was Warwick, where four matches were played; the honours were even with two wins apiece. This looks as though it could be a keen rivalry for many years to come. We enjoyed many memorable matches; the standout being a 5-2 win over another local rival, Bishop Vesey's Grammar School. Congratulations to all for making the season fun and enjoyable!

*Mr C Mayer*

On a crisp September Saturday morning a new set of Third Form pupils embarked on their first Senior School fixture, a close encounter against Warwick School proved to be a good steppingstone for the remainder of the season. Strong victories against Bromsgrove, Bablake & King Henry's VIII and Loughborough followed. Next up came the familiar opposition in Warwick School, in the most disappointing performance of the season it led to some harsh but incredibly valuable lessons. The team followed this with their first 11-a-side fixture against Repton School, a closely fought match and some wonderful defensive performances saw the team run out 1-0 victors. Close fought victories against Dean Close, Bishop Vesey and Princethorpe followed. The game against Newcastle under Lyme School was the most complete game of the year, some wonderful team hockey led to a commanding 7-1 victory. Next up came the county tournament, after a shaky opening game the team needed to find two victories and they did just that to set up a semi-final with King Edward's School Birmingham, after a nervy game which ended in a stalemate. Penalties preceded this and unfortunately, we didn't make it through. With a point to prove just three days later saw the rematch against KES Birmingham. A gritty and hard-fought performance the boys ran out with a 1-0 victory. The season proved to be a very successful one, with some great victories and team performances, but with some very valuable lessons that need to be learnt if the team is to move forward. Well done to all involved.

*Mr D Brotherhood*

### U12B Boys' Hockey

An excellent season for the U12B team where they played 15, won nine, drew one and lost five. The B team showed a great work ethic throughout and developed their stick skills and understanding of the game. A big focus was on leading runs, which slowly came from practice into game situations. Their understanding from 16s grew, both in a defensive and offensive set up. These will be things to work on moving forward but with the keenness and enthusiasm you showed, lots of you should be pushing for A team places. Well done on a successful season.

*Mr C Guy*

### U12C Boys' Hockey

This year our U12C hockey team showed themselves to be a determined and capable group of players. They are, of course, keen to develop their individual skills but it was in their work together as a team that they impressed most this season. Indeed, it was very rewarding to work with this U12C squad, as they worked hard to put into practice the techniques and strategies we discussed in training sessions and team talks, resulting in some great hockey. As the season progressed, it was particularly good to see players increasingly choosing the correct pass to make, as well as holding their position on the pitch well. Defensively, we put in strong tackles and our shooting was often accurate and difficult for the opposition to handle. The overall statistics for the season are positive: of 11 matches played, we won six, drew three, and lost only two. We scored 26 goals and conceded 16. I am grateful to the members of the squad for taking their hockey seriously, and I'm sure that many players will go on to achieve success in this sport as they move through the school. We were also glad to be cheered on, especially at home games, by a team of supportive parents – thank you!

*Mr A Macarthur*

### U12D Boys' Hockey

The U12D team experienced a very enjoyable season, with some tough fixtures they developed as a team throughout the Easter term. Notable wins were picked up against Bablake & King Henry VIII School, Bishop Vesey's Grammar School and KES Stratford. The team were also involved in some very exciting losses, which could have gone either way, firstly against Warwick and secondly against KES Birmingham. Viron Jindal proved to be an excellent leader on the pitch, and expected high standards and a strong work ethic from all his players. Throughout the season several key players consistently demonstrated attacking flair and tenacity in defence. William Mansell was always a danger on the ball, and used his speed to good effort, especially against Bablake & King Henry VIII. Bob Neary always worked hard to get back in defence, turning the ball over and transferring it wide to the wingers. Lastly, Ethan Mills showed excellent stick control throughout the midfield, and set up many goals for his strikers. A very enjoyable season and I look forward to more improvement next year.

*Mr B Richmond*



### U13A Boys' Hockey

Boys U13A had a decent season, they played total 23 matches, in which 17 matches they played in 7-a-side and six matches they played in 11-a-side format. U13A won 8 lost 8 and drew 1 match in 7-a-side format and in 11 a-side matches they won all their six matches. U13A's results were mixed in 7-a-side matches that they won, lost with no particular pattern. There were few matches we lost, including losing 3 – 4 to Taunton School in National Cup – Round 3, losing 2 -0 against Warwick School and losing 1 -3 against King Edward's School, Birmingham in County Cup we believed we could have won. Some of the problems U13A did have during the season were lack of consistency of keeping the ball, undue ball carrying, and making too many unforced errors in defence. But, when U13A played simple and eliminated these mistakes they performed well and produced some amazing results. Some of the performances U13A produced were of a very high standard Specially a 6 – 4 win over Warwick School in National Cup- Round 2 was one of the best performances. Also 4 -2 win over Bromsgrove School, 6 – 3 win over Princethrope College and 6 – 0 win against Newcastle-under-Lyme School were the games we played calmly, passed nice and early and dominated the game from start till end. In 11-a-side format U13A remain unbeaten in all their six matches. Some of the results they produced were of a high standard including 6-1 win against Bablake & King Henry VIII School, 7-0 win against Nunnery Wood High School and 4-0 win versus Bloxham School, the ones that stand out were the 3-0 win over Repton School in that game we defended well, kept our composure and utilised our chances smartly. It was an excellent team performance. Overall, it was a fantastic season for the U13A, with some amazing and challenging games and players should be proud of their commitment and performance.

*Mr A Raza*

### U13B Boys' Hockey

The U13B team enjoyed a very successful season, winning 16 out of the 18 matches played. The only draw came early in the season at Bishop Vesey Grammer School; in the return fixture, a much-changed team because of rugby Sevens commitments, saw us lose narrowly 2-3. Outside of these two fixtures, the team played superb hockey and were dominant in many of the matches. Over the course of the season 67 goals were scored, with 14 conceded. The highlight of the season came at the Tier 2 U13 county tournament.



On the day, the team topped their group having beaten Bablake and King Henry VIII School, Warwick and KES Birmingham. This took the team into a semi-final against KES Stratford A team; the team produced a fine performance and won the match 3-0. The final saw the boys face Bishop Vesey GS; it was a close and hard-fought match, which saw Solihull come out on top 1-0. It was a terrific day, and the team were deserved winners of the tournament. Congratulations to all that played, 34 in total, and for making the season fun and enjoyable!

*Mr C Mayer*

### U13D Boys' Hockey Player Report

The U13D team played well throughout the season. We started off against Warwick School which we narrowly lost 1-2. We then lost to KES Birmingham before two good wins against Bromsgrove and Greshams. The season finished with two draws and two defeats. The squad changed from week to week with the following amongst the mainstays: Pranavh Kathirvel, Isa Aamer, Alex Phillips, Henry Cosgrove and George Pinkney. The squad played with passion and scored many goals. Congratulations to all involved.

*Isa Aamer, Shell Form*





### U14A Boys' Hockey

This year we were delighted to again be in charge of a talented group of players and we finished the season with 19 wins and over 80 goals scored along the way. We were also runners up in the County Cup and winners of the Midlands, reaching the National finals at Lee Valley as a result. We had a strong start to the season as we drew against a good Warwick School team and beat KES and Bishop Vesey's comfortably. In the later two games, we were able to demonstrate our ability to physically dominate and outwork our opposition. In the midst of these three games we took the team on tour to Holland, where they were able to hone their skills and I'm sure all had a great experience. We won all three games in Holland by a combined score of 19-0.

Another good win against Malvern started the Easter term and we were in good form going into the County Cup at the end of January. Cold weather on the day led to a change in format that didn't really benefit us, and we ended up as runners up on goal difference to Warwick. The Regional round again saw bad weather strike and the boys had to battle through snowy conditions as we made it out of the group without really being at our best. In the semi-finals, a very impressive performance against Warwick saw us come out as 1-0 winners and put us into the final against perennial champions Repton. Unlike previous years, we won 1-0 thanks to a late goal from Oliver Burtenshaw and reached the National finals. Unfortunately, the scheduling of the National finals wasn't really to our advantage (being after Easter) and we didn't get the wins that we would have liked, but I hope all enjoyed the experience of playing at the Lee Valley National hockey centre and will savour the accolade of being one of the best 8 teams in the country.

The team was led ably by Finlay Davies and he led the side by example along with a very strong contingent of midfielders. Toby Bavin and Jayden Lendhra marshalled the defence whilst Jake Lendhra provided some craft upfront and goals aplenty were scored by him and the other forwards, particularly Paul Savage and Josh Ackroyd who scored a high number between them. All the other players chipped in with impressive individual displays throughout the season and I was very impressed by the overall improvement of all the players throughout the season. I look forward to seeing them make further progress, as a team and individually, next season.

*Mr D Brough and Mr N Leonard*

### U14B Boys' Hockey

The U14B team enjoyed a very successful and rewarding season, displaying many dominant performances along the way. Strong in all areas of the pitch, the team remained unbeaten until the final two matches of the season. A much-changed side due to rugby sevens commitments, saw us lose narrowly to KES Birmingham and to KES Stratford A team. Prior to this, the team recorded several big wins, including Warwick 5-0, Bishop Vesey GS 8-0 and Princethorpe College 6-0. The tally for goals was 41 for, with eight against.

In total, 29 players were used over the course of the season. A big thank you goes to all that played, but in particular to those that made themselves available on Saturdays, as well as during Games afternoons. There was good attendance at after school training throughout, which helped many players improve a great deal. Next season, several of these players should push for a place in the A team. This was a good team, that was a pleasure to coach, had the right attitude, and played nice hockey. Kelechi Achinivu captained the team, leading by example both on and off the pitch.

*Mr C Mayer*

### U14C Boys' Hockey

Boys U14C team had a decent hockey season, playing 10 matches in which they won four, lost five and drew one match. At the start of the hockey season the U14C boys lost their first four matches in which three of their matches they lost only by one goal margin including 3-4 loss against Warwick, 1-2 against Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, and 0-1 against Repton School. The only game the boys lost with a big margin was against Bablake & King Henry VIII School U14B in which they lost 0-3. U14C continue playing well and won their next three against good oppositions, they beat Warwick School with a 4-1 margin first, and in next two matches they beat Dean Close School 2-1 and Bishop Vesey's Grammar School 2-0. In the second last game of the season, the boys yet again lost 0-1 against Queen Mary's Grammar School U14B. The last game of the season was their best performance of the season beating King Edward's School Birmingham 3-0. The U14C team are an enthusiastic group of players. They always worked hard and tried their best. They trained regularly and attended all lunchtime and after school training sessions. Their passion, hard work and commitment was amazing, their continued hard work and efforts helped to bring them into a winning momentum after a challenging start. The U14C improved their basic hockey skills, made a good progress and enjoyed their hockey this year. I wish them very best and I hope they will continue their development in the future.

*Mr A Raza*

## U15A XI Boys' Hockey

Taking over a team that won 23 of 25 fixtures and lost only one (that being on penalties, after a 0 – 0 draw), really doesn't offer a lot of room for improvement. A bit like following Sir Alex Ferguson at Manchester United or Arsene Wenger at Arsenal there was, however, ample scope for making things worse. No pressure for the new coach, then, as the season got underway! Things started positively, with a strong performance and a 6 – 2 defeat of King Edward's. Joe Baker opened the side's account for the season, with additions from Ryan Bennett, Will Cobb, Ruthvik Morajkar and James Wilson. Next up were Loughborough Grammar School, on the end of a 6 – 0 scoreline against us as Under 14s last season, so confidence was high. Following a frustrating and somewhat tetchy encounter, however, the side travelled back to Solihull with only a 2-2 draw to show for ourselves. Having had two other fixtures cancelled during the first half of the term, the squad approached the break, and the Netherlands tour, with only two games under our belt and a 50% win rate. Would it be fair to suggest that the jury was out on the new coach?

So with little match-time and a somewhat stuttering start to the season, the team, along with one hundred-and-something other hockey playing girls and boys from the Fourth Form to the Upper Sixth, embarked upon what I think I'm correct in describing as the largest overseas endeavour ever undertaken by the school. Whether that was the case or not, what it certainly was was a fantastic experience for everyone involved and an amazing insight into a world of club hockey on a scale barely conceivable back home. Throughout the trip, the U15 boys conducted themselves in an exemplary fashion, both on and off the pitch, and were excellent company. I'm sure, however, that a report on the tour will lie somewhere else in this Shenstonian, probably just a few pages from here, so I'll focus mainly on our matches.

We played three fixtures on the six-day trip, and it wasn't long into the first fixture against HC Maarssen, that the boys began to realise that Mr Mayer's tales of Dutch umpiring were not exaggerated. Not even a little. The boys rose to the challenge of taking on both the umpiring and some very good, very athletic young players, and played with great energy, commitment and quality, largely keeping frustration in check. That first fixture yielded a 3 – 2 win and the second, played in the same committed manner against HC Alphen, resulted in a 3 – 0 victory. That left the possibility of a 100% win record very much alive as we faced HC Reeuwijk in the final march of the tour (it's a good job I only have to type the club names and not try to pronounce them). Whatever we'd experienced of Dutch umpiring so far was, however, taken to a whole new level in this final fixture and, despite our wise policy of the players focusing on their own game whilst the coach took responsibility for becoming quietly apoplectic, it proved difficult to maintain the pressure and to dominate a match in which we were largely the best side. The boys gave their all, however, and we weathered a few crises of confidence and the odd, uncharacteristic error to earn an extremely well-fought 2 – 2 draw. When tempers had cooled and disappointment had diminished, I think the whole squad could be enormously proud of the way they had acquitted themselves against opposition from one of the strongest hockey-playing countries in the world. And, however inhospitable the umpiring might have been to a foreign side, the hospitality of all the clubs we visited was outstanding. We were made to feel so welcome, the boys were very well looked after and they enjoyed the good company of their hosts after the game. A few of our lads, however, may have overestimated how interesting the Dutch girls would consider English boys to be.

Returning to school after the half term break, the benefits of the tour became even more clear. The squad had bonded brilliantly, we'd had significantly more match experience and the enthusiasm, at least, of the coach had been appreciated. Commitment and endeavour at training was sky high and we swept aside Bishop Vesey's (4 – 0) and Warwick School (7 – 2) before the Christmas break. But, more importantly than the results, we were beginning to

show signs of adapting to the different style of play that was being demanded. This coach may have seemed perennially dissatisfied, and it's certainly difficult to extol the virtues of change when excellent results have consistently been achieved, but these boys were taking it all on board, albeit a little reluctantly at time perhaps.

The progress continued after Christmas, with small improvements and greater consistency being achieved each week, as we knocked Bromsgrove out of the National Cup (4 – 0) and saw off Malvern College's Under 16 side 2 – 0 in a physical Saturday morning encounter during which Murray Watts netted his first of the season on British soil. With uncertainty about the new focus of our play still prevalent, confidence could be a little fragile at times and this was apparent in the next fixture, as we struggled to find our rhythm against a very strong Trent College side, eventually losing 2 – 3, despite Hugo Smyth's first goal of the season. This was not an ideal result to precede our next National Cup game, but we bounced back, performance-wise at least, in our away fixture against Bristol Grammar School. Despite absolutely dominating the match from beginning to end, we somehow conspired not to score, though – their goal apparently protected by some Potteresque shield charm – and the game finished 0 – 0. Following the resulting shootout (2 – 3), we moped our way back to the Midlands as undeserved losers.

Something in those two disappointing results seemed to light a spark in the side, however, and the steady progress observed so far accelerated. The following month saw an unbeaten run of six games, with no goals conceded, as we beat Warwick 4 – 0, Rugby 5 – 0 (in the first round of the National Plate, which our early cup exit had qualified us for), Dean Close 2 – 0, Bishop Vesey's 2 – 0, Princethorpe 8 – 0 and Newcastle-under-Lyme 9 – 0. Some strong opponents featured amongst those fixtures, along with first goals for Bhrijesh Parmar, newcomer Calum Graham, Oliver Cooper and Daniel Ryan.

On the back of this run we approached the County Cup with optimism but, despite a strong 7 – 0 start against Bablake, the vulnerability we felt in the short-format games caused something of a wobble in confidence. Despite losing 0 – 1 to Warwick in the second match we showed some grit and fought our way to the final, captain Murray Watts dragging us through the last two fixtures by the scruff of our neck to a penalty shootout victory over Bishop Vesey's. It may not have been pretty or particularly enjoyable, but it was a valuable lesson in resilience and Perseverantia, and a County title to boot.

Embolded by this experience, we continued our progress in the National Plate by beating Eltham College 3 – 0 (a match I sadly missed due to a third bout of COVID-19) and Loughborough Grammar 7 – 1. The reward for these successes was a day out to the National Plate Finals at Nottingham Hockey Centre. Despite the early start, the grey, drizzle-soaked day and the ridiculously long waits between fixtures, the side remained focused and determined. Whilst it may have been the Plate and not the Cup, a look at the roster of teams, in all three age groups, told us that this was not going to be a walk in the park. First up we despatched Framlingham College 3 – 0 courtesy of a hat-trick from the on-fire Ryan Bennett. Next up we drew 0 – 0 with Millfield. Whilst the result may have been a little disappointing, given our dominance, the fact that Millfield's boys were relieved, pleased even, to have earned a draw was a measure of just how good a side we had become, echoed by some glowing compliments from their coach at the end of the game. So, one game and one familiar opponent stood between us and a National title. Bromsgrove. In the end it was comfortable, but a fitting summation of the phenomenal work the squad had put in and the phenomenal progress they had made this season. It seemed equally fitting that captain Murray Watts, top-scorer (by quite some margin) Ryan Bennett and Ruthvik Morajkar, who had been near unplayable for the latter part of the season – tormenting, tangling up and tearing apart teams – scored the goals in our 4 – 1 win.



So, come season end, had the new coach fared better than David Moyes at Man Utd, or Unai Emery at Arsenal? Well, with a bit of silverware to show for it, that claim could be made. But, other than providing a healthy streak of pessimism and perfectionism, so they couldn't rest on their laurels, it was the boys in this squad who did all the work. I've worked with some eager U15 sides over the years but few, if any, who matched the determination and commitment of this squad. These boys worked tirelessly to adapt their play as asked – to become less direct and more sophisticated in their hockey, to prize possession and be comfortable on the ball – even if, for a time, it might have looked like it was making us worse. But by the end we clearly weren't worse. At our best we could be breathtaking to watch, and relentless in our energy and fight. The as-yet-unmentioned Harry Griffiths-Pointon, Sam Barton and Ethan Howe formed part of an incredible defensive set-up, ably backed up by the excellent James Scurlock in goal and impressively marshalled by the immense Will Cobb, which proved very difficult for opponents to breach and from which much of our excellent possession-based attacking play stemmed. We learned valuable lessons in resilience, patience and self-belief and, collectively and individually, these players have made great progress towards readiness for Senior hockey at the highest level.

It has been a pleasure to work with this Under 15A squad and I am tremendously grateful to Murray Watts for his exemplary captaincy and to Mr Mayer for all his hard work with the team. I look forward to following their continued success as they move into the Senior sides next year.

*Mr M Babb*

### U15B Boys' Hockey Player Report

The U15B team has been exceptional throughout the 22/23 season, with so many highs and lows. We played 18 games, winning 11, drawing two, and losing five. We had Callum Graham as our captain, but he quickly transferred to the A team halfway through the season, so Armaan Basra was given the reins and guided the team for the remainder. The team got off to a great start with a victory over KES Birmingham, and they kept winning until they faced a defeat to Bablake. The team only strengthened after the holidays as they prevailed against opponents like Bishop Vesey's, KES Stratford, and Warwick. After we lost our next few games, we hit a low point. Yet, this only empowered us as we easily defeated Lawrence Sherriff in our first game following the Christmas break. We continued to grow as a team throughout the season, grew as individuals, and demonstrated what we are capable of when we collaborate. Generally, the squad demonstrated perseverance this season, and some players received awards. As the season concluded Armaan Basra, who loved the game and played every game as if it were his last, ended the season as our leading scorer



with 22 goals. Alex Sethi also rose to the position of top assister for us with 10 assists. He performed like a true champion while displaying a great deal of tenacity. Eventually, we reach the player of the season who was chosen by the team. This player demonstrated a strong passion for the game and scored his 100th career goal. Once all the votes were tallied, Amar Gill was named the season's Player of the Year.

*Armaan Basra, Lower Fifth*

### U16 Boys' Hockey

The U16 season began with a game against a touring Manchester Grammar School, a young team with new formation led to a shaky start. As the team settled into new roles and positions the hockey truly started to flow. A strong performance led to a 5-2 victory. Next up we played host to Bishop Vesey in the first round of the National Cup, a tough fought game with end-to-end action. The boys gritted out a 3-1 victory to advance to the second round. Unfortunately, this is where the season ended, a disappointing loss to a physical Bromsgrove School team left the players with a lot to learn.

*Mr D Brotherhood*





## 1st XI Boys' Hockey

Having done well the previous season, a decision was taken to enter the U18 Tier 1 National Competition. The competition was 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 six opponents to play; three at home and three away. We started with a tough match at home versus Ipswich. Having led for most of the game, we unfortunately ended the game 2-3 down. Next up were Repton, where we were disappointed with how we performed and lost 0-4. Our first points on the board came at Denstone College; this was a game in which we deserved the 4-2 win, having played well. In our away day at Norwich, we drew 3-3 and learned a great deal about the difficulties of travelling a long way and then having to play. These results meant that our hopes of qualifying for the next stage of the competition, rested on us winning the final two matches to secure third place, and scoring enough goals to ensure our goal difference was better than those in the other leagues. In our match with Gresham's, we came up against a very tough opponent; we won 3-2 but had to play well and battle all the way. This set us up for our final league match at Oakham; we needed to win by three clear goals to progress to the quarter finals. At 2-0 up with 10 minutes left, on top and pushing hard for the third, we conceded a goal which took the wind out of our sails. We quickly conceded another before rallying for the last five minutes. Unfortunately, the scoreline stayed at 2-2 and we were out of the competition. This was a bitter blow, but I am hopeful that the experiences gained will be of benefit next season.

For the first time since the pandemic, we were able to travel to the Netherlands during the October half-term break. We had most of the 1st XI on the tour and the matches were very competitive. We recorded three wins, with us being truly tested in all the fixtures. We were due to have a fourth match, but a problem with Covid for that club on the day of the match, saw only one team being able to play against our two teams; we played a half each. A brilliant tour with lots of hockey (watching two premier league matches, three training sessions, 3.5 matches), plenty of fun and great memories. In the fixtures outside of Tier 1, we won every match. Our most impressive performance came versus our local rivals Bishop Vesey GS; against an experienced and tough opponent, we came away with an 8-1 win having played at a high pace throughout the match. This was a most satisfying performance, backing up the 1-0 win at their place earlier in the season. As always, the Bath Hockey Festival was great way to end the season; this is something that both the staff and the players look forward to and it did not disappoint. The team played superbly, with the performances and attitude capping off a great season.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Upper Sixth leavers that have played for the 1st XI at some stage this season – George Sitch, Blake Adams, Benjamin Raybould, Jem Perry, Francisco Campino - for their time and effort in playing hockey whilst at school; your contribution is greatly appreciated. George Sitch captained the team superbly both on and off the pitch; he set the example for all to follow. Caspar Lea, Jacob Lee, Thomas Bavin, and Sebastian Jones were awarded their full school colours. Blake Adams received half colours. Over the course of the season 30 players were used. The team scored 109 goals and conceded 31; Caspar Lea top scored with 27 goals, James Hawkins 25, Louis Taylor 14, Blake Adams 12, Jacob Lee 11, and George Sitch 8. Thank you to Mr Leonard for his able assistance in running the team, to Mr Maddy for the athletic development sessions, and to Jon Cloke for umpiring. To the players that will be with us again next season, well done and let's go again. This team proved themselves to be one of the best we have had at the school in my time here; this is something they should be proud of.

*Mr C Mayer*



## 2nd XI Boys' Hockey

After an incredibly strong season last year, the 2nd XI had a tough team to match. The opening games of the season proved to be sign of things to come, with some free-flowing hockey the highlight of which was the 7-1 demolition of Warwick School. The first game against Loughborough Grammar School was a real learning point for the players, with the team struggling to find any rhythm. However, the sign of a great team is finding a way to win when things aren't going well, and they did exactly that. The next challenge came against Bishop Vesey, an incredibly fast paced and emotional game led to a 1-1 draw, a fair reflection of the game. A strong KES Stratford 1st team followed. After going 3-1 down the boys had to battle hard to keep the dream of the unbeaten season alive. Two second half goals meant we were able to scrap a 3-3 draw. Despite several changes in personnel over the matches that followed, each and every player stepped up to the mark in delivering commanding wins of Queen Mary's Grammar School, Loughborough and Warwick School. Next came Bishop Vesey for the second time, motivated from the previous draw the team had a point to prove, an early short corner goal led to a nail-biting affair in the second half. A strong defensive performance meant the team were able to come out on top. Two good performances against King Edward's School Birmingham and Nottingham High School set up the final game away at Denstone College. With the unbeaten season on the line, the boys stepped up to the mark cruising to a 3-0 victory. The team produced some of the best hockey I have seen and should be incredibly proud of all the achievements they have accomplished. Going a season undefeated is no mean feat and has truly set the bar for future teams to follow. Well done to all 33 players that represented the team in this incredible season, a true sign of the quality depth we are fortunate to have!

*Mr D Brotherhood*

## 3rd XI Boys' Hockey

This year was another good one for the 3rd team and we ended the season with a record of 13 wins, one draw and three losses. This was one of the best 3rd teams that I think the school has ever put out and we able to put together some very impressive performances throughout.

Zak Shareef was our most regular goalkeeper but we were also benefits of the rotation of the school's plethora of talented keepers. They were helped by the defensive experience of Michael Gabriel and Ibraheem Khan. In midfield energy and organisation was provided by Ryan Chahal and captain Anton Deineka (among others). Up front our forwards contributed to our grand total of 63 goals with Ben Pulley and Cian Morgan often on the scoresheet. Many other players also made excellent contributions over the course of the season and I hope it was one enjoyed by all.

Highlights included beating all our traditional rivals at least once over the course of the season and putting double figures of goals past Bablake & King Henry School and Denstone. Overall, it has been a very successful season and I have been impressed with the attitude and skill level of the players that have represented the school 3rd team this year. I hope that they will continue to improve as players and I look forward to seeing many of them in higher teams next year!

*Mr D Brough*

## 4th XI Boys' Hockey

This year, the Boys 4th XI hockey team built on the success of last season, with a number of good performances, resulting in ten wins from 14 games. This is particularly impressive given matches were often against other schools' 1st, 2nd, or 3rd XI teams. Some highlights were a 6-1 victory over King Edwards School and a 4-1 win against Warwick School.

The pupils all got involved and it was wonderful to see such an enthusiastic approach to the games, even against some tough opposition. Thomas Evans' determined captaincy and powerful shooting proved to be the deciding factors on numerous occasions, and Alfie Cheatham's goalkeeping was consistently effective, leading to multiple clean sheets across the season.

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 and Lower Sixth students, 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 many a victory against the odds and an excellent mentality towards both winning and losing throughout. My thanks go to Miss Waldron for her assistance coaching and umpiring the team.

*Mr O Anderton*





## U12A Girls' Hockey Player Report

I have really enjoyed my term of hockey. There were many opportunities to play matches against other schools as well as ourselves during practices, and we had fabulous coaches who helped us improve and develop new skills throughout. This included learning new skills like flicking or polishing ones we already knew like hitting. Our coaches were incredibly supportive and made the sessions fun for all abilities. Many pupils joining Third Form had never played hockey before, but thanks to our coaches some of them are now playing in high teams. Also, we had some of the older pupils coming to help. They explained difficult drills and helped us when they knew we were struggling. They were great role models for us, and it was incredible to see what we could be like in a few years, and really inspired us to try our best. Overall, I think the term I got to do hockey in Games Form was fabulous, and made me want to play more. I feel that I have come on leaps and bounds, thanks to the coaches and older pupils.

*Bethan D'arcy Ryan, Third Form*



## U12B Girls' Hockey Player Report

This season I have truly discovered my passion for hockey! We have played lots of matches and I have loved playing with and against a variety of different children. It is nice getting to know fellow pupils and other schools, develop and it has enabled me to broaden my skills learning from how different people and teams play. I would really like to thank our hockey teachers as they are always supporting us to develop our skills, improve our fitness and turn our mistakes into lessons to help us improve. Thanks to them I have found a sport I am very passionate about.

*Enaya Hoque, Third Form*

## U13A Girls' Hockey Player Report

The U13A Girls' hockey team has had a great season. The team were crowned County Champions and represented Warwickshire in the Midlands Regional tournament.

The team also had a very good run in the England Schools' Cup which resulted in some very long coach journeys! One

memorable trip was to Kings Macclesfield where we sneaked a 4-3 win. Other notable matches included wins against local rivals Kings High, Bromsgrove and Kings Worcester. We have played some good hockey with a focus on team shape and skills.

A real highlight was winning the U13 County 11-a-side tournament held at Warwick University, and as we move to 11-a-side games next year this shows the team is ready to take the step up. We are also looking forward to the Holland Hockey Tour next year. The team has really gelled, and it has made playing so enjoyable. It's also been great to see so many of the team going on to represent their county. Thanks must go to Mrs Sixsmith, Mrs Wana and Mr Mayer for all of their coaching support, umpiring and minibus driving – without them none of this would have been possible!

*Hannah Dovey, Shell Form*



## U13B Girls' Hockey Player Report

The hockey season has been successful. Our training sessions every Thursday afternoon have been so much fun, and we have learnt so much from our amazing coaches. Mrs Sixsmith has been our main coach and has supported us through all our matches and training. We also had clubs every Tuesday lunch and Friday after school where we have had sessions on match play and skills. We, as a team, won five of our seven matches where the other two, we drew. Our first match was against Princethorpe, we won 5-1 which was great. And we finished the season with a brilliant 6-1 win against Loughborough High School.

*Anaiya Kalla, Shell Form*





### U14A Girls' Hockey

The girls' U14A team enjoyed a successful hockey season, they played eight matches in which they won seven and lost only one game. We started our hockey season with a big 8-1 win against Bromsgrove School, followed by a 3-0 win against Princethorpe and a 2-0 win against King's High. Playing in a Tier 1 tournament, the girls U14A lost both 1st round matches, the first game they lost 2-1 and the second game they lost 4-2, and exited competition without winning a game. After an unexpected exit in the Tier 1 competition, the U14A team responded well and won their next four games, beating Nottingham High School 6-0, Bablake and King Henry VIII School 7-1, Trent College 4-2 and Loughborough High School 5-1. In the last game of the season, we played against Repton School, it was an exciting game and both teams played a high standard of hockey. Despite their slow start in the first half and conceding an early goal, the girls responded instantly and equalized the game within a few minutes. In the second half, the U14A team scored a second goal and dominated most of the second half till Repton scored a second, third and fourth goal in the last few minutes of the game. Despite losing to Repton School in the last few minutes of the game, the effort and resilience of the girls' U14A team was amazing. They are a group of skilful players, their commitment to lunchtime and after school training has been incredible. During the 2022-23 hockey season the U14A team played energetic and fearless hockey, they always worked hard and tried to give their best on the pitch. They scored 37 goals and conceded only nine goals. It is nice to coach such a talented group of players and we wish them very best for the future. Good luck!

*Mr A Raza*

### U14B Girls' Hockey

This year the hockey U14B girls team has come on in strides from our first match to the last. If you were to ask anyone in this team, they would say that they really enjoyed playing alongside one another. We have found that our hockey skills have improved massively, which is often due to match play against other schools, as well as the teacher's brilliant hockey training. During Games sessions we are split into our teams, allowing us to connect with our teammates, and improve at playing with each other. We have undertaken various drills led by our coaches to help our team, especially in areas that we need to improve. Everyone on the team practices defending and attacking, allowing all the pupils to get the most out of their play, meaning everyone in the team can help in different situations during matches. This way of coaching is not only fun - except for the fitness of course - but also clearly successful as we can see with the large number of matches we won last year! We have found playing in the U14B team a great experience, learning more about hockey and improving our skills. Many people in the team plan on continuing with hockey in the Christmas term, with us two being the same!

*Chloe Burgin & Anna Tisdale, Fourth Form*



### U15A Girls' Hockey Player Report

This season has brought the U15s many exciting opportunities. Overall, we played 10 fixtures, winning eight and scoring a total of 37 goals! To start off the season we played Shrewsbury School in the first round of the Independent Schools' Hockey Cup, winning by a whopping 7-1. In this competition, the U15A team made it all the way through to the quarter finals, after several rounds of knock-out matches, one of which was against AKS Lytham, where we travelled to Blackpool to win the tight game by 2-1. But this was not it, the team finished the season down in London where we played Surbiton High School in a tough game that ended 3-1 down, but none the less another great game where the girls gave it their all up until the very end. Travelling up and down the country, the team shared many laughs and made some great memories, and coming up against good sides has also meant that we were able to improve our hockey as a team and individually. Although, I'm sure the highlight for this year for the U15s has been our first sport tour to Holland, where players from the A and Bs made one team and we played against some very talented Dutch teams. Overall, it has been another amazing season and many thrilling experiences that will not be forgotten.

*Scarlett Pugh, Lower Fifth*





### 1st XI Girls' Hockey Player Report

The Girls' 1st XI have had a brilliant season. We started the year off with a bang as the Solihull girls headed off on tour, making sure to enjoy everything that Holland had to offer (well, not everything)! We took on strong opponents in the home of hockey and were thrilled to return undefeated, although most of the teams we played seemed to be 16-year-olds. Anyway, with the memories of Holland fresh in our minds, we descended back to the Solihull pitches ready to show the West Midlands teams our newfound abilities. The Cup run continued with wins against Ratcliffe College, Rugby, Kings Macclesfield and Repton we made it to the prestigious quarter finals of the National Cup and took on Scarborough at our home ground with a huge crowd of supporters making up inventive chants and even bringing their own homemade banners. Unfortunately, it was not to be, and we lost to the mighty Scarborough 2-1. Despite this gutting loss, we made sure to give the rest of our season our all, beating RGS in our revenge match from last season and smashed the Bromsgrove first team 8-0, completely deserving 'The of Team of the Week'. We have all loved this season and want to give a massive thanks to our coaches. We feel honoured that we can look back on such a memorable season with great memories and camaraderie.

*Ellie-Mae Beeton, Upper Sixth*



### 2nd XI Girls' Hockey Player Report

I've participated in games for both the first and second girl's senior hockey teams, which I have thoroughly enjoyed this year. Highlights of my 2022/2023 hockey season included the tour in Holland in the October half term. It was a great opportunity for the senior girls to bond at the training sessions, matches, in our free time, and with the other teams after games. We also had time to visit Amsterdam city centre, the Ajax stadium, a water park and much more. The Bath tournament at the end of the season was another highlight for me as it was a more intensive experience due to the nature of the games, however equally enjoyable in the level of competition and match quality. I have loved attending the weekly hockey training sessions and I feel like this season I have developed my hockey skills and improved in my performance with the help of the school hockey coaches.

*Georgia Byrne, Lower Sixth*

### Girls' Bath Hockey Tour

In April, the girl's 1st XI headed off to not so sunny Bath where we experienced every weather condition possible. The fleet of minibuses headed down to take us to our first game where we saw a 7-0 victory full of excellent team goals and most of all a clean sheet. The hotels were not like we'd experienced earlier in Holland with all the guests in the room originating from Solihull instead of Hull. What felt like a five-star breakfast helped fuel us for the upcoming second day. Day two saw us with another 5-3 victory and a lovely day trip into the city of Bath to enjoy all of what it had to offer - Roman Baths and Café Nero galore. Later in the evening, we 'hit the town' and lived it large at TGI Friday's for some excellent nutrition to power us through our last day. Our final game became more of a challenge, unfortunately, we were narrowly defeated 1-0 by Hurst. As always, we stuck in until the very end and were very unlucky to not have buried a short corner in the last moments of the game. Bath 2023 helped round off our successful season and helped us say goodbye to our Upper Sixth players Ellie-Mae Beeton, Pippa Meigh, Carys Rowland, and Lorna Brooks Scott.

*Leila Scott, Lower Sixth*

# Sport, Health and Fitness

## Netball



### U12 Netball Player Report

Our first netball season in Senior School has been fun, we have grown as a team both mentally and physically. We have embraced the challenges and have come up with ways to overcome them together. Although we have had some losses this year, this does not reflect the overall effort we have been putting into improving our performance. We have played 16 matches this season and have won 12 of them. We managed to make it into the third round of the Sisters n Sports competition, losing to King's High School. As a team, we were able to win the Borough sports tournament at Alderbrook school, walking away with a clean slate. This was one of the main highlights of this year's season, as it proved that all our hard work had really paid off.

During the season, we have come up against The Kings High School for Girls three times, during those times, we have improved our game massively and the score has become closer each time, 14 goals, ten goals and three goals respectively.

We cannot wait for next season, to show off everything we have learnt this year!

*Megan Brindley, Third Form*



### U13 Netball Player Report

The U13 netball team has grown and progressed over the course of the year. We have won many matches along the way and secured a lot of goal differences. The team played well as we progressed in the Sisters n Sport rounds eventually losing to Trent in the fourth round. We realised that we had improved as a group after we were knocked out of this round but that there was a lot to take away from it and to work on. Each player adapted to the games and worked well with other members of the team. We all work hard as a team and help each other to improve and become better players! Each member of the team is looking forward to next season and the regional and national pathway. Special thanks to Mrs Baden for always motivating us and bringing great energy and coaching to the team :)

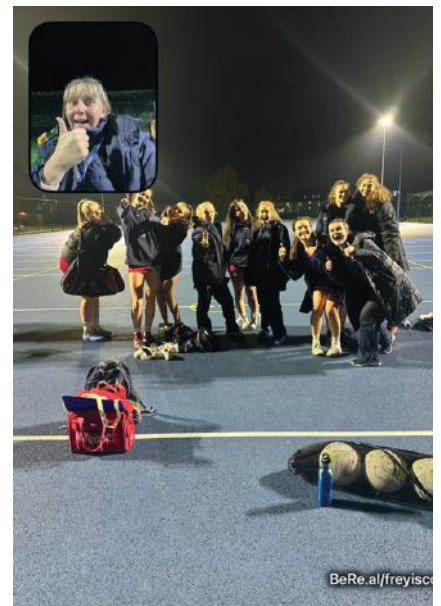
*Macy Ranson, Shell Form*



### U14 Netball Player Report

This years netball season was amazing for our U14 squad. We have made excellent progress and grown as a team whilst experiencing our highs and lows throughout the year. Our biggest highlight was when we won the Solihull Borough tournament at Alderbrook School. I think this was a big confidence boost for our team. We then went to regionals when we had an unfortunate loss, due to playing in terrible conditions. However, we were able to defeat the toughest opponent there which meant we finished the day with a positive spirit. Even though there were some tough matches we persevered and supported each other as a team this whole season. Throughout the season we have played some difficult competition but still managed to score 275 goals, which reflects the consistent hard work this team has put into matches and training sessions. I have loved being part of this team and the memories we have made together, and I am really looking forward to next season and even more success to come.

*Jasmine Singh, Fourth Form*





### U15 Netball Player Report

The U15s have had a really positive year this year and have enjoyed training with the seniors and really pushing themselves ready for next season. Beth Cobden has been taking some of our sessions and we are really looking forward to having her as our coach next season ready for U16 and the County and regional rounds all to play for. This year we have had a very successful season winning all of our matches up until the quarter final of the Sisters n Sport competition where we faced Upton by Chester. We had travelled a long way for the match and were not very prepared and I think we went into the match a little bit too blasé. Upton by Chester went on to win the competition which was well deserved. It would be good to play them next season. Thank you to all the hard work from all the staff who have invested in us.

*Phao Taylor, Lower Fifth*



### U16A Netball Player Report

This academic year has been very successful for the U16A team at Solihull. We started the year off strong at a pre-Sisters in Sport tournament at St Helen & St Katharine's school. This was an extremely competitive tournament and Solihull won 3 out of their 6 games. Following this tournament, the U16 team went on to win every single friendly game they participated in this year.

Our U16A team also entered the National competition this year. We had to participate in a borough, county, and regional tournament to reach the Nationals. We won our borough tournament, and the county tournament (despite the torrential rain!) and we placed 2nd in the regional tournament, meaning we were through to Nationals.

All of the U16 team would agree that Nationals was the highlight of the year – we had time to bond as a team and put in our highest efforts to get as far as we could in this tournament. At Nationals, we won 3, lost 3 and drew 1, which meant that we narrowly missed out on the semi-finals. However, we came 11th overall meaning we are the 11th best netball team in the country!

*Olivia Cooper, Upper Fifth*





## Senior Netball Player Report

This year has been very successful for the netball team, although there have been ups and downs. I cannot fault the overwhelming commitment and perseverance of the team. This season was a success, with 10 out of the 11 games won by the team. The season started off with a fantastic pre-season in the summer term, with great attendance from everyone involved. We started the season off with the Borough Round of the National Schools Netball Tournament, playing against Arden, Tudor Grange, and Alderbrook School. The first team came out on top, being undefeated at the county round. This allowed us to progress to the county round, where we faced many tough competitors. We were also fortunate enough to compete in a national competition called Sister in Sports. Qualifying for the Cup, the first game of the knockout competitions was against Kings High Warwick. Kings High put in a great performance, with the game being close throughout. Each quarter was going a different way, but Solihull came out on top, winning 47-46. Each girl's performance allowed us to take the win. The next round was against Bromsgrove. Travelling away to Bromsgrove, we were ready to put up a fight. The game was just as close as the previous, with Solihull leading in the first quarter and then Bromsgrove taking the lead in the next one. Coming into the final quarter, the score was very close, with Bromsgrove narrowly taking the lead. As the final minutes crept up on the team, the score was close, with Solihull only two goals behind. Every member of the team played extremely well fighting for this win, but we were narrowly defeated 35-33, meaning

we were knocked out of the cup. However, we still had the regional and county rounds of the tournament to look forward to. The tournament started with wins over Bablake and King Henry's, putting us in a good position to qualify for regionals. Then we played against Stratford Grammar, where we narrowly lost. The last game of the evening was against Kings High Warwick, a very fierce competitor. After Solihull beat them in the Sister in Sports competition, we knew they would be out for revenge. We needed to win this game to qualify for regionals. It was a very fast and furious game with turnovers from either team, but Solihull came out victorious, allowing us to progress onto the next stage of this competition. After Regionals was postponed due to the snow, we were all waiting in anticipation for a new date to take on the competition. We were practising, making sure we were going to put our best foot forward, with the support of Beth Cobden, a Commonwealth Gold Medalist for netball, who was supporting us every step of the way. A new date was given, and we were raring to go. We were up against some really strong competitors, such as Kings Worcester and Wrekin College. We came second in our group stage of the tournament, meaning we progressed onto the semi-finals. We were meeting Stratford Grammar again, the team we had previously lost to. Everyone on the team put in the best performance they could, with intercepts aplenty and support from parents and staff; however, we were unable to defeat Stratford Grammar. This loss meant we were unable to go onto nationals, but it did teach us about resilience, which we used in the latter half of the season.

*Imogen Pemble, Lower Sixth*



# Sport, Health and Fitness

## Rugby



### U12A Rugby

It was a highly enjoyable and entertaining season with our U12A rugby team this year. As the season progressed, they got better and better, culminating in a fantastic last game of the season at Loughborough Grammar School.

The team trained very hard throughout the year, enduring cold and wet Monday evenings and early morning skills sessions on Wednesdays. There is no doubt that the extra work paid off – particularly with their resilient defence and ability to move the ball wide into space in attack.

The season got off to a great start with every boy in the year invited to play Princethorpe College on the first Saturday of term. Over 40 boys played in festival conditions with lots of challenges set out to both teams. Trips to St Peter's RC High School, Gloucester and Leicester Grammar saw lots of tries scored with Jacob Ranson, William Mansell and Charlie Lunt able to demonstrate their speed and agility on the firm grounds. Next up was King Edward's School, Birmingham on the 1st XV pitch at Moseley Rugby Club – George Cobb managed to match KES try for try after some quick hands from Sebastian Hemmings, until some slick handling from the opposition secured victory. Our home game against Old Swinford Hospital was not made any easier when a biblical storm drenched us all! Bob Neary and Gethin Ruddock were starting to impose themselves in games with some fearless tackling and Jack Willis like jackalling to regain possession. RGS Worcester was our toughest game of the year with some strong runners difficult to put down. It was great to see Thomas Frost, Ollie Chidwick and Max Brown using their newly learnt tackle techniques to bring down much bigger boys. Bablake/King Henry's also provided a stern test but with our attacking game improving all the time we were able

to outscore them with some excellent distribution from Jacob Byrne and Harrison Taylor at half back. A six all draw away at Trent College had everything with try saving tackles from Veer Naga and rapier-like speed from Toby During on the wing. Our final XV game of the season was away against an undefeated Loughborough Grammar School. It was if all the lessons of the season were rolled into one as we tackled much bigger boys, stole ball on the floor and moved the ball into space brilliantly. In the first half Harry Fisher stood out with some excellent close quarter tackling and Jacob Ranson scored two long range tries after excellent turnovers from Bob Neary and Gethin Ruddock. With scores tied at half time the game was played from end-to-end but we kept coming back to secure a 6-5 victory on the final whistle – a proud moment for our travelling supporters on the touchline.

Our Sevens season followed a similar pattern with some excellent work in training but a slow start in tournaments and a couple of heavy defeats. In our last tournament at King's School, Worcester we were drawn against the same teams we had struggled against in earlier competitions. With some superb warmups from our Head of Rugby, Mr Richmond, our boys were fired up to reverse the early season results. They all showed great guts and determination to win five of their six games with some brilliant handling and great energy in defence.

There is lots to look forward to with this year group – they are committed, tenacious and enthusiastic. There is a good crop of B and C team players who will be pushing for places in the years ahead.

*Mr C Dossett*





### U12B Rugby

It has been an entertaining season for the U12Bs where they have really developed as a team. Not only have they improved their technical and tactical skills but also their confidence on the rugby pitch. The season consisted of 10 games starting at home against Princethorpe where they played touch Rugby, as many of the team were new to the sport. The remaining nine games of the season were all full contact and the boys defence improved each game with Jonty Scurlock setting the standard, often tackling and winning the gain line battle against players twice his size. Throughout the season, we had a pre-agreed criteria of moving the ball wide, tackling low, and having fun. Captained by Patrick O'Brien the U12B team played their best game of the season with a 9-5 victory against Nottingham High School. Everything that was worked on during the cold Monday night training sessions fell into place. Strong carries from Samuel Raybould, Gabriel Russell, and Martin Johnson coupled with some Danny Cipriani style passes from Matthew Dean meant they were able to move the ball wide quickly into the hands of Sebastian Ginn and Faizan Hussain on the wings. The home fixture against Old Swinford Hospital also stood out as a game to remember. Despite the harsh conditions and torrential rain, the boys played some entertaining barbarians inspired rugby with all of them managing to get on the scoresheet, with Thomas Cain running the length of the pitch and scoring one of the tries of the season.

*Mr C Mayer*



### U13A Rugby

After a strong season in the Third Form, the U13A rugby team were looking to build on their success. A strong preseason outing against Monmouth set the tone for the opening game. Princethorpe College provided the first opposition of the season, with some great defensive work and individual efforts in attack the boys ran out 20-15 winners. A tough midweek fixture to St Peter's Gloucester followed, a disappointing performance left the team with a lot to learn. After the first loss of the season the team regrouped and put together two fine performances against Leicester Grammar School and King Edward's School Birmingham.



A strong Old Swinford Hospital team proved to be too good in the preceding game. The second half of the season proved to be a real turning point with great performances against RGS Worcester and Nottingham High School. Up next was highlight of the season, under the floodlights of Coventry Rugby Club the players entered the zone. After a tough loss against an incredibly strong Bablake & King Henry VIII team exactly 12 months prior, the boys had a point to prove, racing out to a 20-0 lead the team played some beautiful rugby. A second half barrage from the opposition meant the game ended as a 30 all draw, however it proved what this team is truly capable of, finishing the season with a strong showing against Loughborough Grammar School. Well done to all the players involved in a very successful season, the team has great potential and I hope the year proved to be a sign of things to come.

*Mr D Brotherhood*



## U13B Rugby

It was a season of grit and flair in equal measure for the U13B rugby team this year. After an early defeat to Princethorpe at home and a defensive re-collaboration, the boys achieved an impressive run of away results starting with a determined draw at St Peters RC High School and free flowing victories at Leicester Grammar School and King Edwards's School, Birmingham. A more experienced and powerful Old Swinford Hospital dented the squad's confidence a little, but the boys recovered in time to seal a tense victory under lights against Bablake & King Henry VIII School. The highlight of season came via a nerve jangling, seesaw, and occasionally chaotic victory against a well-matched Trent College side. There are some impressive statistics associated with the U13B team's season, all victories achieved away from home, conceding 118 less points and improving their points difference column by 51 points, compared to the 2021-2022 season. These numbers are testament to the focused and committed leadership from the player group, which makes a Leicester Tiger supporting coach purr with pride. Perseverantia.

*Mr T Emmet*

## U14A Rugby

The U14A team: What a group of chaps! Some of my crowning moments as a coach, teacher and general educator happened on the rugby pitch with this group of boys. It was a net win season for the U14s with five wins, four losses and one draw, scoring a whopping 265 points and averaging 4.5 tries a match. The boys fought through a difficult fixture list and provided some quite incredible wins, performances and memories. The match of the season was the 17-17 draw against KES Birmingham, in which the boys played a complete game of rugby – devastatingly strong in attack and aggressively impressive in defence, including a two-minute defensive spell on our own 5 metre for the final moments of the game. Try of the season came from a wonderful crossfield kick from Harry Bell (10 matches, 12 points) to Oliver Burtenshaw (7 matches 20 points), who still had two defenders and 40 metres to beat. A close loss to RGS in the middle of the season was followed by three very impressive, bruising victories. The boys really hit their stride in a 51-12 win against Bablake followed by a 50-19 win against Trent College, Max Evans (10 matches, 15 points) scoring a sublime hat-trick in the latter match. The team was ably and masterfully captained by Caiden Rees (7 matches, 10 points) and Harry Tomlin (10 matches, 41 points) and special mention must go to Matty Gardner (8 matches, 60 points), no player has scored more points or tries for me in a season.



31 boys playing in 10 matches, scoring a total of 265 points. The 15-a-side season was followed by a very fruitful Sevens season. The Solihull boys started with silverware at the Kings Worcester Sevens, winning the bowl. The highlight of the Sevens season was a complete performance against a strong Whitgift side at Rosslyn Park, with qualification looking possible the boys were only able to be stopped by the eventual semi-finalists, Radley.

I was so impressed by this group of boys who hold the idea of being a team so strongly. The number of boys that still turned up to support on match days when injured, particularly those that turned up for away fixtures is a real testament to the togetherness of the group. I am truly honoured to have been given the opportunity to coach this group and I wish them the best with their season as U15s.

*Mr J Everling*



## U14B Rugby

These were an exceptional group of rugby players; one of the best B teams I have coached. They were committed and hard working in all the training sessions and had a mature and positive approach in learning more about the game. They supported each other and played with a smile on their faces. Their success was a great team effort – one honourable mention needs to go to James Inshaw, who was an outstanding captain. He was highly committed, leading the team with authority and kindness yet with a steely determination to win. All in all, a wonderful season of rugby!

*Mr S Chillcott*

## U14B Rugby Player Report

What was a late start to a season, turned out to be one of the best B team rugby performances I have seen and proudly been a part of. We opened the season against KES Birmingham with little training but, moments before the match started, Mr Maddy showed us a few teams moves including the iconic move of the season "banana ball". We kicked off the first half strongly but then after they scored the first try, they managed to score another three before the end of the first half. Filled with doubt we discussed tactics and how we could use our strengths to our advantage - namely pace. We gained more possession in the second half and used our new move for the first time scoring our first try. They began to tire and so we used this to our advantage. Scoring try after try; we pushed through to the final whistle concluding the score at 30-20 to Solihull. The following week followed a similar pattern when playing against Old Swinford Hospital but if we had five extra minutes for the game, I am sure we could have won. We played valiantly but OSH were a stronger side winning 28-17. This was our only defeat of the season as we pushed on through, playing RGS Worcester winning a close 36-31 with a thank you to those few A-team players who filled in

for those who were injured. We then had our second away game of the season, off to Coventry to play Bablake where we played our best match so far. Many honourable mentions go to Kelechi Achinivu, Cameron Chand, Sam Hughes, James Lister who were too good; they had to be brought off the pitch, to even the play, after many excellent tries, tackles, runs and James' exceptional conversions. Best tackle of that game goes to Flynn Bayliss for a memorable dump tackle. The game ended with an outstanding 59-5. We finished of the season at home against Trent college winning 37-19.

Overall a formidable season for the boys and again final congratulations and thanks to Kelechi Achinivu with most tries of the season, James Lister and David Brown in successfully scoring multiple "banana ball" tries, the whole team for representing the school and thank you to all coaches and staff: Mr Chillcott, Mr Everling, Mr Fakatou, Mr Maddy and to all organizers and supporters.

*James Inshaw, Fourth Form*



### U15A Rugby Player Report

Another season of rugby has passed and I couldn't have asked to spend it with a better group of players. The team showed heart and determination through some tough moments this year, at times turning losses into wins in the later stages of games. From taking a heavy defeat to OSH (56-19), to winning in the last minute against Nottingham High School (24-19), the team has been put through every emotion during the season, fighting for every last point until the end.

The season started with a close game against Princethorpe College (36-31), a talented side with a number of strong players. Issac Maddy was extremely dangerous with the ball in hand during the game and we managed to secure a victory in order to kick start our season from the very outset, something we haven't managed to do in previous years. This was then followed by a challenging Kenilworth side (64-17), who got the better of us and progressed further in the plate competition, then two big wins against Leicester Grammar School (48-7), and KES Birmingham (53-0). Towards the back end of the season the matches were extremely competitive, with draws against Trent College and KES Stratford testing the resolve of the squad. One of the best displays of running rugby came in the away win vs RGS Worcester, where Billy Clark, Dan Ryan and Seb Smith carved through the RGS defence using speed, strength and guile.

From there, our squad continued to work together to secure more points on the board throughout the season (317), with new players stepping up and becoming important members of the team. 27 players represented the U15 rugby team this

year, a particular standout example of this is Zac Richardson, who won most improved player at our season roundup. Charlie Fiest also took home an award that night, securing best player after his consistent contributions to defence and attack throughout the year.

I want to finish by thanking all the boys for making this such an enjoyable and successful year of rugby at school, with a special thanks to Zak Nijran and Seb Smith, who acted as brilliantly as two vice-captains, and to Mr Richmond, who's commitment to the team has been unwavering. It has been a pleasure to lead the boys out this year, and I can't wait to get started on another season.

*Sam Stockdale, Lower Fifth*



### U16A Rugby Player Report

The boys started the season ready, and raring having just completed a long pre-season during the summer, we travelled for our pre-season triangular fixture against both Abingdon and Hurstpierpoint. Unfortunately Hurstpierpoint claimed the win during the first game, but the boys came back fighting in the second and managed to tie the game up against Abingdon and a brilliant kick in behind from Matt Hemming securing the win. Having learnt and developed greatly from some early errors, the boys were ready to begin their season. Our first block fixture saw us face St Peters School Gloucester where both teams fought extremely hard as was shown in the scoreline throughout until, at the death, Jake Evans made a brilliant line break to secure the victory with a final score of 26-21. On the back of a good win the boys were in high spirits and just a few days later headed down to South Bromsgrove for the first round of a County Cup. The boys work had clearly paid off with outstanding performances from Orrin Sampson and Jack Croft, the boys secured a comfortable victory of 50-0. After a brief period off due to unfortunate cancellations by the opposition, the boys were desperate to hit the field once again, until we found out we would play local rivals Bromsgrove and Warwick's A/B teams within just four days of each other. On the Saturday, the boys played Bromsgrove and thanks to incredible performances from Archie Willox and Gus Clarke who even had to play out of position at inside center the boys had an overwhelming victory. Shortly after, on the Wednesday, we travelled to Warwick and although not their best performance, the boys did end up coming out with a win and are excited for next year to compete against their full outfits. The following Saturday saw the boys play RGS Worcester, which turned out to be a very intense match which the boys wouldn't have won without some excellent line breaks from Ben Barclay Jones. Shortly after this the boys played Wrekin College in the next round of the County Cup which proved to be a real challenge with the boys going behind multiple times during the game however thanks to the brilliant defensive vision of Matt Hemming and his interceptions the boys scored two more tries to secure the win.

Following this victory, the U16 team would go on to play Old Swinford Hospital in the semi final at the Old Sils ground. Unfortunately, the boys lost due to some unfortunate break-away tries. However, this couldn't take away from the dominant display the Solihull forwards put on that day largely in thanks to some brilliant scrummaging from Theo Gallagher and Bhuvan Botchu. After the boys' first defeat all season, their heads remained high as they went into the final game against Trent College where they boys achieved a narrow victory thanks to a fantastic try in the dying moments of the game.

*John Gallagher, Upper Fifth*



### 1st XV Rugby

This 2022/23 season was a much awaited one with a great deal of excitement in the camp; once Reading Festival had come and gone! Sebastian Thompson was revealed as 1st XV Captain to be supported by a very experienced and vocal leadership group. Preparation was intense with numerous rigorous training sessions not for the faint hearted, with the whole extended squad showing their hunger for 'WINS'! A pre-season training day at our local rivals and friends Bromsgrove was just the tonic; culminating in a 'scrag' game which soon bubbled over in to no holds barred. Ideal preparation for the Kings Macclesfield Festival which saw the squad undefeated, beating sides such as Oakham, Wirral GS and Lancaster GS. The camaraderie was at the necessary level and all players demonstrated the 'Die for the Badge' attitude.

The school's new central fixture system pitched the fifteen against Princethorpe for their first game. On a warm summer's day Solihull ran the ball from everywhere possible, demonstrating a high skill level at pace. The one-sided encounter ended 7-63 in Solihull's favour; not a great deal had been learnt sadly. Next were St Peters, a team buoyed by some cup success and clearly hopeful of a win. Solihull had different ideas and put in one of the performances of the season, winning 14-64. The 4G surface suited our style of play which at times was exhilarating; the off-loading game was awesome! Concern was we still hadn't really been tested. This was also to be the case in the next game which saw us against Leicester GS. The fifteen ran away with an emphatic 57-3 victory, barely reaching 3rd gear. Then, as is always the case, round one of the National Cup put us against Bromsgrove, away from home. It was a classic schoolboy game,

brutal at times with some pure elegance in other moments. The game was turned on its head in a two-minute period of play and we sadly lost 20-7; bitter pill to swallow but now we were in the National Plate competition. Our Friday night extravaganza under lights against KES Birmingham was played in perfect weather for ducks; it was horrendous. A healthy crowd though braved the elements and saw a spirited KES throw the kitchen sink at the fifteen. But some moments of individual brilliance won us the game 22-8. There was no brilliance to be seen from us in the next game - we simply didn't rock up! Hammered 53-12 by local rivals OSH - this hurt the fifteen and some soul searching took place at the next training session.

Round two of the National Plate brought Cheadle Hulme to town and allowed the team to exercise their demons; shackles were off and the side managed a convincing 52-10 victory and now the frown had been turned upside down. Nottingham HS was a slog of a battle - always is - but the fifteen demonstrated their attritional side to claim the 'W', 12-22.

Bablake & King Henry VIII once again proved to be our nemesis under lights at Butts Arena. We started superbly with a length of the pitch score, but then the wheels came off the Ferrari and we were a chugging Robin Reliant! Their forwards dominated and the fifteen went down 22-30 - great game though! Trent College were a superb challenge which we overcame 24-35; this was a professional display and definitely a game of two halves. And so we entered our losing streak, that was not only matches but even more sadly our influential captain, Sebastian Thompson. 'IF' only everybody had played against Loughborough Grammar School, and 'IF' only we hadn't kicked possession away against Barnard Castle School in the quarter final of the National Plate! 'What IF' 'What IF' 'WHAT IF'!

The Christmas break brought us some well-earned relief and KES Stratford felt the brunt of the Christmas turkey as a physical display gained us a 7-37 victory. Our final fifteen match was against the King Edward Foundation Barbarian XV for 'The Covill Cup'. The 'golden oldies' kicked-off whilst the 'young pups' brought the cup home. This was a superb game under lights at Bournville RFC; as schoolboy rugby should be played - fast and worthy of the entrance fee. The following day a squad travelled to Seaford College for the annual 10s tournament; this was our first visit. It was a great experience for all and lessons were definitely learnt. Solihull was certainly put on the map!

Congratulations must be given to Jack Kinder on gaining his U18 England Camp after playing against France, a great achievement. Also, to Tom King on his deserved selection for Midlands Counties U18 XV to play in the divisional tournament. Jack Brennan and Joe Aston also gained U18 County Honours, whilst Ted Clarke and Josh Litwinko gained these at U17 level. Harry Pemberton played an integral part in the Midlands Rugby Academy U17s campaign and has since been retained for the U18 2023/24 season.





I would like to thank firstly Seb Thompson for leading from the front. He epitomised what being 1st XV captain is all about! It is also the end of Fynlee Hateley's six year sabbatical as analyst - and a whole lot more. He has been a vital part of the very successful and professional coaching panel we have had and his efforts have always been much appreciated. Thanks Fyn!!

And finally, thank you to all of the players over 18 years who have represented the 1st XV with pride, honour and determination. You have always 'worked to win' and being willing to do it 'for the badge'. A further thanks to all staff, be it grounds/medical/refreshments/teams/refs/admin/kit washing - you've ALL helped the journey be a very successful one in my tenure. And to all of the 1st XV parents over the years, I appreciate your patience and continued valuable support. I've loved every second and now wish Mr Richmond and Mr Gallagher the very best for next season and beyond. Over and out!

*Mr S Thompson*

## 2nd XV Rugby

It is often said that a 1st XV is only as good as the 2nd XV that drives them forward, and this was most definitely the case this year. From the outset, we had good numbers at pre-season training, and it was clear very early on that training would be very competitive, selection would be challenging, and a cracking season awaited.

It all began with a great start against Princethorpe, with captain Will Chater leading from the front as he did all season alongside the old guard in the form of vice-captain Charlie Arbuthnot, Josh Kermode, Tom Burnett, Ben Andrews, Sid Albrighton, James King, Ben Bednall, Max LeBlevec, Ravinder Sehmi and George Phillips. Having a good split between Upper and Lower Sixth throughout the season showed the strength in depth across the senior rugby group. Next up was Leicester Grammar and KES Birmingham; both were comfortably beaten, and the squad depth was tested as Chater, Albrighton, Kermode, Jack Gallagher, Noah Maclean, King, Charlie Anthony and Rob Burnett were all given their shot in the 1st XV. This allowed us to look to the future with 2nd XV debuts for several of the U16s with impressive performances from Matt Hemming and Orin Sampson, both of whom would go on to make their 1st XV debuts later in the season.

With the squad back to full strength, the season's first test came at OSH, who were a big outfit, as we expected. We got off to a very fast start with an early score and kept our noses in front throughout, and the defensive set at the end tested our resolve for the first time in the season. Chater and his merry men were the only side to return with a W against OSH, and they were rightly pleased as they got to half-term unbeaten.



Refreshed and ready to go, we entered a block of seven games in five weeks, as the weather began to turn and our all-court game of back and forwards combining was tested to the hilt. Alcester, RGS Worcester, Nottingham, Bablake and Trent were all beaten comfortably as we built towards the game of the season against arch-rivals Warwick at the end of November. The Warwick game was upon us with the rugby group fully loaded and ready across the board as we travelled the short distance for the Wednesday afternoon fixture. Sport teaches you all sorts of lessons, and although we lost a tight affair, the 2nd XV didn't need a coaches debrief afterwards; they did it themselves. On watching this game back through the VEO technology, I'm still at a loss to see how we let this one get away. They say you learn more lessons from defeat than winning, and seeing the senior leaders doing the debrief made their coach very proud; the transition from boys to men had begun! The last game of this block of seven came against Loughborough, which ended with a loss in the last play of the game. Game management probably deceived us, but lesson learnt, we moved on. The final two games ended with two comfortable, very well-deserved wins against QMGs and KES Stratford. Was that the final curtain? Not quite.

The Sevens season was upon us, and such was the strength in depth of the group that we entered two squads for KES Stratford and our own tournament. A loss in the semi-final of the plate at KES was followed by winning the Plate at our own tournament, a fantastic way to end the season.

This has been a tremendous 15-a-side season for the 2nd XV, and they have been an absolute pleasure to coach. A big thank you to Will Chater and Charlie Arbuthnot, who were a cracking leadership team. We all learnt a lot along the journey, and I wish all the old guard all the very best for the future; try to stay in the game, and we look forward to seeing you cheering from the sidelines in the coming years.

*Mr M Gallagher*

# Sport Tours

## Cricket Tour, UAE



It has been four years since a Solihull cricket team departed for foreign climes, but the Easter tour to the UAE was well worth the wait.

A total of 25 boys went on this trip and we were able to field an U17 and U15 team. A relatively short tour of only 11 days saw an action-packed schedule that included five day/night matches, two practice sessions, three excursions, before finishing with the traditional Lion Sports six-a-side tournament.

The accommodation was outstanding and the boys were lucky to stay in a Five Star hotel right on the beach front, enjoying an afternoon swim in the sea. Was the perfect way to cool down after a day of cricket!

The matches were played at the Malek and Ajman Stadiums where the facilities were superb, a total of eight cricket grounds lined up in one complex, each with a playing field as good as the other. The Malek Stadium however, stood out as being the most modern addition to the complex and was equal to any first-class ground in this country.



The wickets were a batter's paradise and with quick outfielders, scoring runs proved a lot easier than taking wickets on these flat non-responsive pitches.

The opposition were equally matched and the format was to play two T20s per team every match day. This proved tiresome work in the hot afternoon sun (the evening matches were more manageable) but I was extremely impressed with the effort and intensity that both teams displayed and were able to sustain over a hard week. A special mention must go to all of the wicket keepers whose work did not go unnoticed or unappreciated.

The U17s won seven of their nine matches which included a 40 over game. Notable performances were from Isaac Maddy with a total of 333 runs, scoring a century and three half centuries. He was well supported by Bhrijesh Parmar, Jimmy Hawkins and Samuel Stockdale who also scored impressive half centuries.





With the ball, the leading wicket takers were Samuel Stockdale who took a total of nine wickets bowling his off spin, Caspar Lea with six, and Muhammad Ali and Jacob Lee both taking five wickets apiece.

The U15s won six of their ten matches, with impressive performances from James Lister who scored a total of 198 runs, with two half centuries. Other batsman who scored half centuries were Gus Lea and Luke Tipping. Whilst with the ball, Oliver Bentley took eight wickets, Luke Tipping, six and Rufus Warrington, five.

Away from the cricket, the boys were treated to some local culture after an desert safari 4x4 experience across the sand dunes; a fun and exhilarating experience. We then headed into a desert village for a BBQ and were entertained by local artists, who performed traditional dances before ending with a fire eating contortionist! The boys were able to buy local head scarfs and curios as well as traditional dress wear. A memorable occasion in the setting sun and all performed under the Arabian moon and stars.

The highlight of the excursions though was the day trip to Aquaventure on the Palm. The boys were treated to a rare day off from cricket and were able to enjoy one of the world's best water parks, with the biggest and fastest water slides to race down. After which they enjoyed some shopping in the world's largest shopping mall (Dubai Mall) and watched the dancing water fountains under the world's tallest building (Burj Khalifa); not a bad day all round!

The tour concluded with the traditional Lion Sports Travel six-a-side tournament, when four teams battled it out for the end of tour bragging rights! It was an enjoyable and colourful event with Team LST beating Team Maddy in the final. Both Team Mayer and Brotherhood showed spirited performances and despite Mr Mayer and Mr Brotherhood's best efforts whilst playing, they couldn't help to boost their chances, as they wilted in the hot sun!

The end of tour presentation followed and was a fitting finish to the most perfect of tours. It was an absolute pleasure touring with this group of boys, who were great ambassadors for the school. I'm sure they will look back on this tour with fond memories.

I would like to finish by thanking the parents who joined us out in the UAE and to Dipan and his team at Lion Sports Travel for arranging the tour and accommodating all of our needs and requirements. Finally, to my two trusted members of staff who gave up their Easter holidays; thank you to you both for your help in making this a very memorable and special tour.

*Mr D Maddy*





## Holland Hockey Tour Senior Boys' Report

During the first week of the October half term, a 34-strong group of senior boys – one of four touring squads totalling 138 pupils, plus 16 staff – travelled to The Netherlands for the school's first hockey tour since the pandemic. Both staff and pupils were very much looking forward to the busy week that lay ahead.

For most of the week, the boys were based in the picturesque city of Haarlem, travelling to a variety of venues in the surrounding area. The focus of the tour was, of course, very much on the hockey with the aim of exposing the boys to the hockey club culture of the Netherlands and some highly competitive matches that would, hopefully, stand them in good stead for the remainder of the hockey season.

During the week, the boys took part in three coaching sessions, one of which was run by HC Bloemendaal coaches, and four matches. Here, the standard of opposition was pitched perfectly ensuring some excellent, keenly fought contests. The majority of clubs were extremely welcoming, and the boys were great ambassadors for the school, socialising and mingling enthusiastically with their hosts during post-match refreshments; many very enjoyable experiences for all involved.

In addition to the hockey, the boys did have some downtime which included visits to Amsterdam (incorporating a tour of the Johan Cruyff Arena) and the centres of Haarlem and Leiden. There was also an opportunity for some of the party to watch two top-flight Hoofdklasse Hockey matches and as is now the tradition, the boys visited the 'Tikibad' water park. This was a chance for all the touring squads to meet up and compare their experiences of the week.

The tour was a resounding success. Certainly, from a coach's perspective, all the boys grabbed the opportunity presented to them and their hockey developed as a result. Well done to all boys who represented the school admirably. Hopefully, they have forged memories they will cherish for a lifetime.

Thanks to the staff, Mr Guy and Mr Leonard, for giving up their time and in particular to Mr Mayer for his painstaking organisation, ensuring the trip ran as smoothly as possible.

*Mr S Mitchell*



## Junior Boys' Report

The Junior boys' hockey tour to Holland saw 43 boys and five members of staff head for the beautiful city of Utrecht, Netherlands; this was our base for the duration and from here we visited many different places across The Netherlands.

After a short hop over to Amsterdam airport from BHX, the tour started with an exhibition of men's premier division hockey at Pinoke Hockey Club. Inspired by the previous day's events, the three teams started the following day with a hockey clinic delivered by great professional coaches. In the backdrop of a stunning sunset at Maarsse Hockey Club, the first games of the tour were underway. The U14 and U15 squads put together commanding performances and ran out comfortable victors on the night, playing some scintillating hockey showing the Dutch teams how Solihull likes to play. The U15/U14 mixed team played in the most entertaining game of the evening; a truly brilliant end to end game saw the opposition score in the dying seconds to claim a close 1-0 victory. The boys were left heartbroken.





On the back of a successful first match day, the boys took the short trip to Ajax Football Club and were given a great tour around the Johan Cruyff area. Inspired by the footballing legends, the boys made the trip to HC Alphen. Once again, the U14 team dispatched the opposition in convincing fashion, showing exactly what that team is capable of. The mixed team unfortunately came up against a very strong opposition, and despite their best efforts and the efforts of a guest Dutch goalkeeper, they came out on the wrong side. The U15's game followed; this was an incredible show of grit and determination from our boys against a physical and fast paced team. They dug deep and came out victorious. The following day saw a pupil favourite with a trip to the Tikibad waterpark; the part of the tour with never fails to provide enjoyment for all.

With the end of the tour fast approaching, the final hockey training session prepared the boys for the final matches of the tour. The mixed team set off to HC Waddinxveen, whilst the U14's and U15's played against a mixed Gouda and Reeuwijk Bodegraven team. Whilst the mixed team were disappointed by their previous two fixtures, they were determined not to leave foreign soil without a victory. An inspired team performance and some fantastic shooting enabled a wonderful win for the team. Back at Gouda Hockey Club, the U14 team again took care of the opposition in fine fashion. Free flowing hockey, with a flurry of goals from all over the pitch, meant they left the Netherlands with three victories. The U15 team were looking to follow in the footsteps of the U14s. A truly incredible and emotional game of hockey, with some unbelievable goals, followed. A match that epitomised what hockey tours are about, a draw on the day was a fair result.

As the tour drew to a close, the boys reflected on their hockey and lessons that had been learnt whilst playing hockey away from the UK. Well done to all the pupils involved and a special thank you to the staff who made such a great tour happen. I hope the pupils are inspired to return back to the Netherlands when the next opportunity arises.

*Mr D Brotherhood*



### Senior Girls' Report

Wow, Holland 2022, a tour I don't think any of us could forget! We were a new team but our commitment to the first term of pre-season, training and matches meant we were ready to face the Dutch. We entered Birmingham Airport at 3am looking smart in our new Holland kit with energy levels that remained consistently high and never dipped throughout the week. Upon arriving, we met our beloved coach driver and with tunes blasting headed off to the gorgeous StayOkay that was perfectly 'okay'. We were lucky enough to watch a Dutch team play at a local club that had four full sized hockey pitches and experienced the high standards that are played here. We took inspiration from this as we faced our opponents and won our first three fixtures, the 2nd team also showing great strength. Meeting the Dutch players and sharing nutritious pancakes and pizza post matches was a highlight of the games, especially when we ended dancing on the tables with them. Between our intense training, our schedule was packed from being set loose in Amsterdam, to a full day where

all Solihull hockey teams hit the waterpark and rides. Finally, with new matching headbands we went into the last game against our toughest opponent, it was a heated match that ended in a tense 3-3 draw. Post match we made up and partied with the opposition to Holland's finest party songs, that can now be found on our team playlist! We grew stronger as a team throughout the week and it was perfect way to begin the best season.

*Florence Pugh, Lower Sixth*



### U14 Girls' Report

On Sunday 16 of October we flew from Birmingham to Amsterdam for the Girls Hockey Tour, and what an experience it was! The tour started with a visit to Premier League Hockey Club, Kampong, where we watched two brilliant ladies and men's matches. The next day we enjoyed a masterclass hockey clinic by Sybrand Bolhuis – a former Dutch Youth player. Following this, we visited a large hockey store where we could test and buy different hockey equipment. We then travelled to our first fixture of the tour. The fixture was against HC Nieuwegein, and we quickly discovered how good this Dutch team were! On Tuesday we visited the home of Ajax Football Club, here we had a guided tour of the world-famous stadium and spent some time taking in the sights of Amsterdam ahead of our second fixture that evening. Our second fixture was against another incredibly good team HC Wateringsee. Wednesday was a day of fun spent at the Duinrell Theme Park including two hours in the Tikibad water park – everyone really enjoyed themselves! Thursday would be our final fixture of the tour and we prepared with a training session at HC Dordrecht. This third and final fixture was against HC Hoeksche Waard, and they were just as good as the other teams we had played! On Friday we returned home reflecting on a fantastic trip, having experienced some great hockey, seen some fascinating sights, and made good friends.

*Ellie Whitmarsh, Fourth Form*

### U15 Girls' Report

The trip to Holland this year will always be cherished and really helped the team develop individually and together. We were able to have fun and explore the different cities of the Netherlands, spend time in their malls and enjoy the Duinrell amusement park, as-well as understand the game of hockey.

Our hockey was evenly distributed throughout the six days, having three matches and two training sessions. By playing against difficult teams, we put our all into each game and the efforts were successful as we got a victory on our final day! Our team spirit and encouragement were tested, and we came back from the trip stronger and better.

It was a great experience to make new friends and explore the sport of hockey in a different country; seeing the different attributions the teams carried, such as long-distance slapping. The experience in Holland will definitely help with our transition into senior hockey, bringing confidence into our game! Overall, the trip was amazing for the development of the team and helped us improve our individual game.

*Rahemeen Ali, Lower Fifth*

# South Africa Rugby and Netball Tour 2023



On a sunny morning in July, the excitement was palpable as 76 tourists – seven staff and 69 pupils readied themselves for the long awaited tour to South Africa. Looking resplendent in their tour kit, the group departed for Heathrow full of anticipation as to what lay ahead 8,000 miles away from home.

Our first stop, after a smooth flight, was Johannesburg. Staying close by in Pretoria, the group soon settled into training at the impressive High Performance centre at Pretoria University. The energy displayed by all was impressive considering the long journey and it was clear all were eagerly awaiting the first fixture. Before this though, a very poignant visit to the Apartheid museum took place. The tourists were told of the journey and the hardships South Africa encountered under the Apartheid regime and learnt of the life of Nelson Mandela and other anti-apartheid activists.

Following a very lengthy visit to KFC (turns out ordering for 76 people is quite a feat!), the first fixtures saw the rugby teams play Harlequin FC and the netball players take on Cornwall High. We were welcomed with open arms and excellent performances were given by all, the girls and Mrs Baden even making an appearance on South African television! The presentations after the matches saw friendships formed and a rousing rendition of the school song, Perserverantia filled the air. A trip to Lesedi Cultural village was fascinating, learning about the traditions and customs of the people of South Africa and trying some local delicacies, enjoyed far more by some than others! A drumming workshop and cultural dancing saw the pupils get involved, thoroughly enjoying the entire experience.





Our time in Pretoria quickly came to an end and the mission of packing 76 bags commenced again for our internal flight to Port Elizabeth where the first sight of the Indian Ocean and the beautiful beaches buoyed everyone's spirits. Training here included friendly but competitive (from pupils and staff!) games of rugby, football and volleyball on the beach, only coming to an end when the stunning South African sunset accompanied our short walk back to the hotel. Our trip to Addo elephant park was a tour highlight for many – these fabulous creatures were a delight to see in the wild. Unfortunately, it was at this point, that many were struck down suddenly with a superbug and the entire tour showed great strength, camaraderie and resilience to recover and be ready to move on once again. The next stage though was safari time and the excitement built once again.



Kwantu Game Reserve was our chance to spot the 'Big 5' and it didn't disappoint as we encountered a majestic lion within minutes. Elephants, buffalo, giraffes, jackal, impala, hippo and zebra were all spotted too as the knowledgeable guides toured us on the safari jeeps, with some anxious moments as some became stuck in the mud and had to disembark for a while!! Another display of cultural dancing and fabulous food saw us all thoroughly enjoy the South African bush and we then moved onto ziplining at Tsisikamma, where we experienced a thrill seeking adventure sailing through the treetops, albeit in the absolute pouring rain!



A long but breathtaking journey on the Garden Route then took us to George where we played our next fixture against Knysna High School, previous home to many of the Springbok National rugby team. Set against a stunning backdrop, more competitive games were played and the atmosphere was electric with singing and chanting in the stands.

It was then time to move on to Cape Town, where being greeted by the imposing Table Mountain and the humbling experience of driving past many of the townships is something we will never forget. The cable car journey to the top of Table Mountain under the blue South African skies was a perfect start to our stay. The following morning was a very early start for our fixtures against St Bernadino High School. This was situated in a relatively deprived area of Cape Town but the sporting programme there sees pupils encouraged to get involved in sport. This was evident in the sheer enjoyment they exuded with competitive and exciting games of rugby and netball played by all. Sollihull pupils were very moved by the friendly welcome of all at the school and many gave away their shirts and boots to pupils there who had never owned their own pair before. We left hoping to continue to forge links with this special community.





The afternoon comprised of a trip to Robben Island, where the history of the island and the lives of the former inmates there was superbly conveyed to us all by a former political prisoner. Hard hitting at times, the students heard of the brutality of the regime there, but also of the forgiveness and the ongoing efforts in South Africa to move beyond this time in their history. Dinner was a trip out to the V&A Waterfront, a stunning complex with mouthwatering restaurants and of course, time for shopping! I think steak was the choice of the majority of the tour and we were definitely not disappointed – a culinary highlight.

Our final full day dawned and it was to be perhaps our most memorable. We visited Langa Township and were accompanied by one of the residents. To say that most of the tour have never seen anything like this before would be an understatement, and it is difficult to put into words the impact this had on us all. The staff were very proud of all the pupils who embraced this opportunity to understand how many of the South African people live today. We ate lunch in a house in the township and were treated to a wonderful display of singing from a local band. As we returned to the hotel for the Awards Evening, we all felt very privileged and humbled by our visit to Langa; the spirit of the people there and the smiles and welcome from the children will certainly live long in the memory.

Presentation Evening was a chance for Mr Thompson to thank all the tourists for their participation and behaviour on tour. Every pupil represented the school superbly well and I know all the staff were very proud of them. In turn, the Captains of each team thanked their coaches for their support and this was particularly poignant for the Upper Sixth Leavers as they offered their thanks to Mr Covill. Singing performances were dubious, especially from the staff, but a great atmosphere and the presentation of awards was a fitting end to what had been a truly memorable two weeks together.

Thanks must particularly go to Mr Thompson and Mrs Baden for organising a tremendous experience for the tourists, both on and off the field.

*Mrs R Speirs*



## Trips

180



### A Level Biology Field Trip

On Tuesday 4 October, 31 Upper Sixth students accompanied by Mr Bate, Mrs Jansen Van Rensburg and Mrs Parker, set off for the sunny hills and sand dunes of North Wales...only to not see much sun for the next four days but to experience a LOT of rain, even for Wales! Fun was had on the first afternoon, which was spent river sampling in the River Conwy followed by the 'essential' skimming of stones and then a dash back to the FSC Centre for tea and cake before an evening of statistics and ecology.

Day two we headed over to find the sun on Anglesey, only to fail again. Despite the inclement weather we enjoyed discovering the secrets and organisms in the rock pools on the shores of Penmon Point. From blennies to crabs there were shrieks of joy and discovery. To quote one student; "Miss, I will never go to the beach and look at it in the same way again". After a much-needed treat of fish and chips, staff and pupils battled the wind and rain to continue with yet more practical assessments on the grassed area by Beaumaris Castle. At this point, it is usual for students to try and avoid the quadrat tasks and try and play on the swings, but not this year...sides and climbing frames became shelters for writing up data collection before the sun came out and treated us to a beautiful rainbow, fleetingly. After returning to the centre, we then headed into the local oak woodland to carry out another investigation. The highlight of the day was certainly the evening hunt for woodlice with a very healthy competition between groups for collecting the most.



Studying psammoser succession on the sand dunes of Morfa Harlech on day three brought more rain, sandblasting facials and fun running down the dunes and an impromptu beach clean. Mr Bate and Mrs Rensburg enjoyed playing football in the rain back at the centre whilst some students tried to recall the skills of hula-hooping from primary school as a break from work. The evening session was spent studying the behaviour of freshwater shrimps whilst drying completed practical papers on radiators in the labs, followed by some down time in the student common room with pupils from another college.

On our last day we still had a full day of activities and practical assessments. In the morning we had a talk from a National Park ranger and a soggy, windy walk around Cwm Idwal National Nature Reserve. Back at the centre the trip concluded with some chromatography before 31 tired students staggered onto the coach to return to Solihull. Whilst the weather was less than perfect, the company and the camaraderie of the party was second to none and a good time was had by all, with one teaching set subsequently declaring it the definite high point of the A Level course.

*Mrs D Parker*

### Geography Iceland Trip

Saturday 15 October saw 52 intrepid Middle School pupils and five members of staff embark upon a five-night, six-day trip to Iceland.

The result of which was days of amazing and long-lasting memories for life. You cannot be anything other than inspired by the stunning landscape that provided the backdrop for the Game of Thrones, be in awe of the amazing waterfalls of Gullfoss or Skógafoss, be exhilarated by the walk upon the Sólheimajökull glacier as well as the soothing waters of the geothermal pools throughout Iceland not forgetting the wonders of Geysir. This all resulted in some fantastic photographic opportunities, none more so than witnessing and capturing an unbelievable display of the Northern Lights whilst offering the pupils some insane 'BeReal' opportunities of which many were instantly took advantage.

Icelandic culture was viewed at the world's oldest parliament setting at Þingvellir, through the stories about the Elves and Trolls, turf houses whilst this wonderful trip was further characterised by great camaraderie, the ever-present in-house DJ all framed by plenty of laughter.

An unforgettable trip that certainly won't be forgotten!

*Mr M Covill*



## German Exchange

After a three year break due to the pandemic, it was fabulous to mark the 25th anniversary of our long-standing partnership with the Elisabethenschule in Hofheim with a revival of the German exchange, placing it firmly back in both schools' calendars. For this year only, both Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth German pupils participated, hosting our German guests in the autumn and visiting them at Easter. Both legs of the exchange featured a full programme of activities, spending time in lessons experiencing the different school systems and venturing out into the surrounding areas for further cultural encounters. A few highlights from the programme here at Solihull were teambuilding activities at Beaumanor Hall; ThinkTank in Birmingham; a day spent in London; tour of Stratford. Likewise, our pupils were treated to an equally packed itinerary in Germany: Wiesbaden; Mainz and the television broadcasting centre for ZDF; the Natural History Senckenberg Museum in Frankfurt; a ninja warrior course in Kelkheim! A key part of the exchange is the shared school experience and our pupils worked hard both before and during

the exchange preparing and delivering presentations to younger German students in their English lessons at the Elisabethenschule, showcasing our school and answering questions about the British school system and how it differs from Germany. Klaus Stockhofe, a German teacher who has accompanied the exchange many times over the past 25 years, commented that Kieran and Akos in Upper Fifth gave one of the best presentations he had ever seen in the history of the exchange – high praise indeed!

Although this year's exchange is now over, it's been wonderful to see that many of the pupils have already made plans to visit their partners again in the summer and it is clear to see that some lifelong friendships have been forged. Plans are already well underway for next year's programme, and we look forward to strengthening this well-established link even further in the future. Many thanks to all who took part and supported the exchange, especially Mr Morgan, Frau Buckard and our wonderful hosting families, both here and in Hofheim.

*Mrs S Stout*



## CERN

In early February, a group of intrepid Upper Sixth Physicists visited the largest particle acceleration in the world; the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in CERN, Geneva. We arrived on Friday lunchtime where we visited the historic heart of Geneva which included St Pierre Cathedral, which was the adopted church of John Calvin, one of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation. We followed this up with an outside lunch at the Parc des Bastions overlooking the Reformation Wall. Saturday morning was the main show – a visit to the LHC. We visited the cyclo-synchrotron; a machine which accelerates protons and deuterons to a speed close to the speed of light using magnetic and electric fields. On Saturday evening, we had a traditional Swiss fondue meal, accompanied by live music including cow bells and yodelling. On Sunday, in beautiful sunshine, we enjoyed a lakeside tour of Geneva where we visited the UN, the Geneva History of Science Museum and the Geneva Botanic Garden. Thanks to Miss Saunders for her help during the weekend.

*Mr S Chillcott*



## Andalucia

Between 14 and 18 December, Ms Campbell and Mr P Morgan had the good fortune to be able to accompany a lovely group of 21 Middle School and Sixth Form students on a Spanish language and culture trip to Andalucía in Southern Spain.

After arriving in Málaga, we travelled straight to Seville, and having got settled into our youth hostel, we began exploring this incredible city. Whilst in Seville, students had two mornings of Spanish language classes, which they really enjoyed, and during the rest of time there, in the company of our very gracious host Ignacio, we visited the most emblematic buildings of Seville, such as the River Guadalquivir, the world famous “Maestranza” bullring, the



Cathedral and its beautiful bell tower, known locally as “La Giralda.” We had a lovely picnic in the beautiful Parque de España, and we also had some delicious tapas in a local restaurant, which gave everyone the opportunity to taste some of the best dishes that Seville has to offer.

Having spent three wonderful days in Seville, we returned to the bustling port city of Málaga, where we visited all the city’s most interesting cultural sights, such as the Ataranzas market, the harbour, and of course, the Malagueta beach. Needless to say, more delicious food was consumed, and one of the highlights of the trip was undoubtedly our Flamenco dance workshop, after which the two dance instructors described our group as “un grupo espectacular.” She obviously wasn’t paying much attention to Mr Morgan’s dancing!

Both Ms Campbell and Mr Morgan thought our group of students were a pleasure to be with from start to finish, and a fabulous time was had by all!

*Mr P Morgan*





### Château de la Baudonnière 2023

Our trip to Château de la Baudonnière was both enjoyable and memorable, as we took part in many activities and excursions across the French region of Normandy. Some of our favourite activities at the Château consisted of archery, rock climbing, and the assault course! The group of 62 Shell Form and Fourth Form pupils enjoyed the days out to visit Saint Malo, the Bayeux Tapestry and Mont Saint-Michel, which were both interesting and beautiful to see. The trip was most certainly a wonderful experience, and we were delighted to have gone on it! We particularly enjoyed trying delicious French cuisine – most memorably some snails! We made so many memories and learned so much French!

*James Mercer and Oriana Oldfield, Fourth Form*





### Vermont Ski Trip 2023

During February half term, 40 intrepid members of the Upper Fifth to Upper Sixth departed school in the early hours of the morning bound for Heathrow, accompanied by Ms Campbell, Mr Chillcott, Miss Bovill and Mr Corbett as Trip Leader. After a long wait to get through security, we finally boarded our plane to Boston and arrived, travel-weary but excited for the days ahead, at our hotel in Rutland, Vermont some 22 hours later.

Fully refreshed after a good night's sleep, the group banished any last vestiges of jetlag to hit the slopes of Killington for the first day of skiing. The forecast had not been optimistic, with reports of icy slopes to start with followed by warm temperatures bringing rain before the week was out, but we were lucky and the temperatures stayed low enough to bring snow, rather than rain, and the conditions on piste, whilst not a bumper year, were plenty good enough to enjoy four full days of skiing.

Our group ranged from experienced skiers to some near novices, but all did a fantastic job and were praised by the team of instructors for making such good progress and being a delight to interact with, with many individuals moving up through the ability groups.



## New York



Alas, we did not escape injury and whilst the teachers saw rather more than they would have liked of the inside of the health centre, the team of doctors there were excellent and patched our injured pupils up brilliantly. Thus, an ever-growing number of walking wounded accumulated in the main lodge, unable to take part, but all showed great fortitude and good-humour despite their bad luck in being sidelined.

In the evenings, we were extremely well-fed by the local conference centre which hosted us each night, who also laid on entertainment such as movies, games and even karaoke! Whilst the pupils were surprisingly reluctant to show off their singing skills, they were treated to a very impressive performance by Miss Bovill and Mr Chillcott; a highlight for many! A trip to the local bowling alley saw the group's competitive instincts come to the fore, which then peaked the following evening when challenged to Mr Chillcott's quiz after a night out at the local diner to round off the Vermont segment of the excursion.

The following morning it was time to load the coach and settle in for the long road trip to New York, stopping off en-route for a spot of well-timed outlet shopping. Again, the weather was kind to us and the rain held off as we took in the sights of Manhattan by night; Times Square and a trip to the top of the Empire State Building followed by a meal at the Hard Rock Café.

Our final day dawned grey but dry, and we were treated to an excellent historical tour of the Big Apple by our local guide, who explained that the term 'Big Apple' was originally coined due to the prizes given to horses after a race. With lots of other fascinating facts to share, he took us round the island on our coach, getting off at Strawberry Fields in Central Park and at Grand Central Station, before dropping us at the Staten Island Ferry terminal to hop on board and take in the view of the Statue of Liberty from the water. After racing round to board the ferry in the other direction, we were able to fully appreciate the imposing Manhattan skyline as we returned to shore. To finish off our visit, we stopped off at the poignant 9/11 Memorial, where our pupils were moved to see the 2,983 names inscribed on the fountains, and then were wowed by a final view of New York City in all its glory from the top of the One World Observatory. We were extremely lucky that, on such an overcast day, the clouds cleared at just the right moment, giving us the only clear view of the city that had been available all day.



All that remained then was to head to JFK airport and catch our plane home, delivering 40 sleepy pupils safely back to their parents on the Friday morning before returning to school on Monday.

The trip was an educational and enjoyable experience for everybody involved, and thanks must go to Mr Corbett for all his work and organisation in the weeks and months leading up to our departure, and for his efforts at the helm, keeping things running smoothly for all the participants even when accidents and illness conspired against us! We look forward to the next US ski trip in 2025. Watch this space!

*Ms L Campbell*



### Ski Trip to Kitzbühel, Austria

A fantastic week skiing in the Austrian Alps. Our new destination of Kitzbühel, Austria, at the start of the Easter break didn't disappoint. A short six hour delay at Dover and a choppy late night ferry crossing wasn't the best start, however, we made it to the hotel shortly after our expected arrival time.

The cosy and welcoming Hotel Wiesenegg was great, nestled just 3km from the picturesque village of Jochberg and a mere 6.5km from the renowned slopes of Kitzbühel, this location provided the perfect base 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. Whether a beginner eager to take your first turns or an advanced skier seeking thrilling challenges, Kitzbühel had something for all. To ensure that everyone improved their skills and had a fantastic experience, the trip included five hours of lessons per day, spread over five days of skiing. These lessons were tailored to everyone's level, allowing beginners to gain confidence and advanced skiers to refine their technique.

Beyond the fantastic skiing, our evenings were filled with entertaining activities. We enjoyed two hours of ten pin bowling, allowing everyone to unwind and partake in 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, providing a unique cultural experience for all.

Having been on several late-season ski trips this was by far the most enjoyable for so many reasons. The bluebird skiing conditions on day three and four made for some exceptional skiing and some great photo opportunities. These were standout moments for me.

A big thanks to Mr Brough, Mrs Johnson, 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*



## Rome

Despite the (very) early morning, we arrived at the Level in good spirits, ready to go on our long-awaited Classics and RS trip to Rome. Landing at Fiumicino Airport at 10am local time, we made our way to the first of many pizzerias, where we enjoyed a hearty lunch fit for a gladiator of, you guessed it... pasta! The San Sebastiano Catacombs were first on our sightseeing list, which involved us descending underground into a series of tunnels where we learned about the tombs and their history. That evening, we planned on visiting the Pantheon, an extraordinary sight, however, a more extraordinary sight was the gigantic queue, so Mrs Johnson made the executive decision that we would return 'domani' (tomorrow) and we went to get our first gelato of the holiday instead.

The next day we visited the Forum, an intriguing setting with lots of history to appreciate – from noughts and crosses etched into steps by bored ancient Romans to the Temple of Vesta, there was so much to see! We then got to witness a selection of beautiful Catholic churches where we appreciated their magnificent interiors of breath-taking frescos and ornate golden decorations. As well as this we paid a visit to the renowned Colosseum where someone gave Mrs Johnson a microphone; she was in her element, transforming into tour-guide extraordinaire, imparting her impressive knowledge on us all.

The following day we went to the Vatican, a long walk but totally worth it; the view was incredible. Wednesday mass was occurring when we arrived and you'll never guess who was taking the service... the Pope himself! Pretty cool. Unfortunately, we were unable to go up the dome, so instead we went to the Spanish Steps, surrounded by a variety of stores where we did some hard-core shopping. After that, we went to the Capitoline Museum and infamous Trevi Fountain, a bustling location to say the least.

On the penultimate day, we went to the Baths of Caracalla where we appreciated some quality Roman architecture and some even more extravagant floor mosaics.

*Charlotte Atkins, Lower Sixth.*



## Sorrento

In the Easter holidays 48 Lower Fifth and Fourth Form pupils visited Sorrento. Pupils had the opportunity to visit authentic Italian family run food factories and experience cooking traditional Italian dishes.

After leaving a dark and dismal Gatwick at 6am we arrived in Naples to glorious sunny weather. The first place on the agenda was Pastificio Cuomo, a small pasta factory, in Grangio. Alfonso showed us around the factory and museum. He explained that the factory had been on the current site for over 200 years. He was incredibly proud to tell us that they still use many of the same methods and techniques they had use when they first opened. Alfonso treated us to delicious pasta meal and the pupils had the opportunity to buy some of his pasta. A quick stop in Sorrento for a much-needed Italian coffee and sweet treat completed day one.

Saturday saw yet another early start. The first activity on the agenda was a trip to a coffee and honey factory. Maresca Café was founded in 1920 Gioacchino. Three generations later the company is still run by his descendants. The pupils were treated to an interesting talk about how the company convert the South American coffee bean into the much-loved Italian coffee which is an integral part of Italian life. We then ventured into the garden where the business had branched out to create their own honey and marmalade. The marmalade was made using the famous Amalfi oranges. The pupils saw the beehives and were able to sample some honey straight from the honeycomb.

For lunch we took a short trip scenic trip up the local hills to La Sorgente Farm. The factory makes mozzarella for local restaurants using traditional method. Pupils watched a demonstration by the owner and then enjoyed a wonderful lunch including freshly made mozzarella.

A pasta making lesson was on the menu for Saturday evening. The pupils were taught by a local chef how to make pasta from scratch. The chef then served this pasta with a simple tomato sauce made from locally sourced ingredients.

Sunday morning involved a trip to Frantoio Gariulo olive oil factory. This factory supplies premium olive oil to local and international restaurants. The pupils saw how olive oil is manufactured and witnessed the 'field to fork' process. The factory shop was a great success with many pupils buying samples to take home. The highlight of Sunday had to be Davide's Gelato factory. He enthusiastically talked the pupils through the making process. He explained that he was



experimenting with savoury flavours for his gelato such as tomato, basil and Sorrento ham. The pupils opted to sample the more traditional gelato flavours!

The final excursion on this trip was to a cookery school to make pizzas. We were treated to a Tarantella show. All of the pupils (and staff!) embraced the experience and took part in the dancing and singing.

A fantastic trip! Pupils were wonderful company. They now have a greater insight into Italian cuisine and ingredients. The Food and Nutrition Department look forward to seeing the pupils use these new skills in future lessons.

Many thanks to Mrs Davidson, Mr Gledhill, Mr Guy, Mrs Massarella and Ms White for accompanying me on the trip.

*Mrs H Hallworth*





## Boston

Arriving at Boston Airport, our first order of business was to check into the hotel where we would be spending the night. After a classic American breakfast, we embarked on our journey via the subway system, bound for Bunker Hill—a historic site where the Battle of Bunker Hill took place on June 17, 1775, during the American Revolutionary War. Our next stop was the USS Constitution, the world's oldest warship still afloat, where we admired its history. Continuing our exploration, we made our way to the Naval Sea Cadet unit, where we observed American cadets in action, witnessing their unique activities and operations.

The following day brought us to Lawrence High School, the home of our American friends who are part of the JROTC program, equivalent to our CCF. We eagerly anticipated joining these JROTC members from the high school for an upcoming camp at Ft. Devens. After enjoying a barbecue and a tour of the school, we ventured back into the city for some shopping and further exploration. As night descended, we retired early in preparation for the five-day army camp that awaited us.

Our camp experience commenced with the distribution of our gear and a lesson on how to properly arrange our bunks and store our equipment. The subsequent day was filled with team-building exercises, featuring a variety of challenging tasks. Additionally, we tackled two rappel towers, one standing at 20 meters and the other at 10 meters in height. The following day was dedicated to water activities, including canoeing and kayaking. As we approached the camp's conclusion, we engaged in air rifle shooting and experienced an automated shooting range. To cap off our enlightening journey, we embarked on a historical tour of the Minute Man National Park, delving into the rich history of the area. 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.

*Ben Wild, Lower Sixth*



# Solihull School Teams of the Week 2022-2023

## Christmas Term

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Engineering Enrichment Team   | <i>Successfully achieving their Silver Level Crest Awards</i>   |
| 2. Team Solihull                 | <i>An amazing team effort completing the Wolf Run</i>   |
| 3. Equity Group                  | <i>Outstanding commitment &amp; involvement in the launch of the Alumni Equity Group</i>                        |
| 4. Young Linguists               | <i>A wonderful assembly to mark European Day of Languages and their continued commitment to multilingualism</i> |
| 5. Sixth Form Helpers            | <i>Superb teamwork supporting the Third Form House Singing Competition</i>                                      |
| 6. Fourth Form Sleep Out Team    | <i>A memorable camp out raising funds for the SIFA Fireside homeless charity</i>                                |
| 7. 3rd VII Netball Team          | <i>Excellent teamwork &amp; determination in their victory against Wolverhampton Grammar School</i>             |
| 8. Cast & Crew of Skellig        | <i>Three fantastic nights of Drama</i>  |
| 9. Senior 1st Team Netball Squad | <i>An incredible team performance against King's High Warwick</i>   |
| 10. CCF Guard of Honour          | <i>For an admirable performance in the Remembrance Day Wreath Laying Ceremony</i>                               |
| 11. Interfaith Ambassadors       | <i>Wonderful role models and helpers at the J2 Interfaith Workshop</i>  |
| 12. Senior School Debaters       | <i>An amazing team effort competing in the Warwick University Debating Competition</i>                          |
| 13. Sixth Form Quiz Team         | <i>For their excellent teamwork and superb quiz skills</i>  |
| 14. U12A Rugby Team              | <i>A fantastic team performance against strong competition from Loughborough Grammar School</i>                 |
| 15. Chapel Choir                 | <i>Two moving performances of Nine Lessons and Carols</i>   |
| 16. Christmas Fair Fundraisers   | <i>For being organised, motivated, helpful and cheerful in raising funds for LAFF</i>                           |

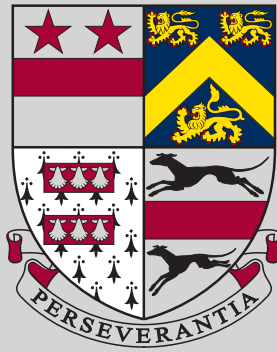
## Easter Term

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 17. Chapel Choir                        | <i>A fantastic performance singing at the Ukrainian Christmas Service</i>   |
| 18. Ukrainian Christmas Service Helpers | <i>Preparing and leading a very special celebration</i>   |
| 19. Ethics Cup Team                     | <i>For their supportive teamwork and positive engagement towards their competitors</i>                            |
| 20. Equity Group                        | <i>An inspiring team effort presenting to J4 pupils, showing their community spirit and encouraging others</i>    |
| 21. Girls' 1st XI Hockey Team           | <i>A superb team performance against Bromsgrove School</i>  |
| 22. Reynalds Cross Volunteers           | <i>For being generous and giving up their time to help others</i>   |
| 23. Cast & Crew of The Addams Family    | <i>Four fantastic nights of drama, music and dance</i>  |
| 24. U14 7s Squad                        | <i>For their excellent performance, sportsmanship and team spirit competing in the Kings Worcester Tournament</i> |
| 25. Senior Chess Open Team              | <i>An excellent team performance in the Regional Semi Finals</i>  |
| 26. Cast & Crew of Our Day Out          | <i>A superb night of Drama</i>  |
| 27. U16 Netball Team                    | <i>A brilliant team effort at the National Finals</i>   |
| 28. The Grounds Team                    | <i>An extraordinary team effort keeping the school open and safe on the recent snow days</i>                      |
| 29. U13 Girls' Hockey Team              | <i>A terrific team performance in the County Tournament</i>   |
| 30. Contemporary Dance Company          | <i>An impressively choreographed and performed piece of dance</i>   |
| 31. U18 Rugby 7s Team                   | <i>A fantastic team performance across two major tournaments</i>  |
| 32. U15 Boys' Hockey Team               | <i>Winners of the National ISHC Plate Championships</i>   |
| 33. Durham & ESU Debate Team            | <i>A brilliant performance across the three-day event</i>   |

## Summer Term

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 34. The School Bench                 | <i>Congratulations to the Bench, a fantastic team effort for 2022/23</i>   |
| 35. Cast & Crew of My Brother's Gift | <i>Three exceptional, emotional and insightful performances</i>            |
| 36. U14 Boys' Hockey Team            | <i>A superb team effort participating in the National Finals</i>           |
| 37. U15 Boys' Cricket Team           | <i>An excellent team performance in the County Cup Final</i>               |
| 38. U15 Girls' Cricket Team          | <i>An outstanding team performance against King's High School, Warwick</i> |
| 39. Enrichment Drama Group           | <i>A polished production of Underground</i>                                |
| 40. Sixth Form Team                  | <i>A solid performance at the CIPFA Games</i>                              |
| 41. U17 Girls' Cricket Team          | <i>A fantastic team performance and National Plate Champions</i>           |
| 42. Boys' 1st XI Cricket Team        | <i>A brilliant team performance and winners of the Hugh Cherry Trophy</i>  |
| 43. Chapel Choir                     | <i>An incredible performance singing at Lichfield Cathedral</i>            |
| 44. CCF Cadets                       | <i>An outstanding team effort on the Boston, USA Trip</i>                  |





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