

*The* •  
**Leicestrian**  
**2021**



LEICESTER  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL



# Contents

INTRODUCTORY	04
SCHOOL-WIDE EVENTS	06
FOUNDATION DAY ESSAYS	26
CHARITIES	40
ART	43
DT	50
CLASSICS	53
CREATIVE WRITING	58
ENGLISH & DRAMA	63
GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, PSYCHOLOGY & RS	67
MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES	74
MUSIC	76
SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS	81
SPORTS	93

## EDITOR

Mrs Marlene Higginson

## SUB-EDITORS

Rabiah Ahmad - Sciences  
 Kajol Mistry - Modern Foreign Languages  
 Alexandra Peet - Charities  
 Holly Teasdale - Music

## 6TH FORM WRITERS & INTERVIEWERS

Priya Ganatra, Georgina Holmes, Nimit Jobanputra,  
 Eleanor Jones, Rameen Masood, Lili Mephram, Sebastian  
 Moore-Friis, Caitlin Musto, Mia Rhodes

## A Word from the Headmaster Mr Watson



This year's Foundation Day essay was entitled 'My idea of fun', although I doubt many of us would say this year has been the most fun of our lives! Personally, I can only really have fun when I am with others, and it is those 'others' – family, pupils, staff, parents – who have kept me so positive throughout this challenging period, whether in person or remotely.

In the pages that follow, you will find many examples of the creativity, adaptability and resilience of both pupils and staff. I have been humbled by their dedication and proud to lead a community whose priority has not only been to sustain academic progress but also to look after and show generous consideration for others. During school closure, our online 'LGS Together' newsletter enabled us to share achievements, to celebrate acts of charity and kindness, and to feature sporting challenges and house competitions. In early March, the Sports Hall became a testing centre with a cohort of parent volunteers, so that all pupils could be tested over one weekend, ready to return smiling (behind masks) and excited to school at the earliest opportunity.

Control measures have helped to keep our own community safe and to limit further spread of the virus, but we have simultaneously been determined to give our pupils as full an experience of education as possible in the circumstances. Drama and music which had been broadcast remotely soon embraced socially distanced audiences, local trips resumed, and we played an increasing number of inter-school sports fixtures as the Trinity Term progressed. Our pupils have probably taken a greater interest in the

news over the last year and have engaged thoughtfully in healthy and productive debate and discussion of issues relating to race, inclusion and respectful relationships. I believe they can all be world-changers, inspired by the words of Mahatma Gandhi: "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

So, as we look back on this year, we are unlikely to say it was 'fun', yet we can still celebrate the many positives and, learning from our

experiences, look forward to the bright resumption of school life in all its fulness in September. There has been less to report this year, so I am very grateful to Mrs Higginson, her editorial team and all our contributors for bearing testimony to our tortuous journey and for filling *The Leicestrian* with such vibrancy and colour.

## A Word from the Editor Mrs Higginson

A vigorous walk in a beautiful landscape would be my idea of fun; I think in particular of two pilgrimage routes in the vicinity of Kyoto. Along both of these paths are numerous warnings about wild monkeys and other beasts, sternly advising foolish tourists not to make eye contact with these or to try to feed them. All I ever saw at Inari, however, was a couple of domestic cats and, at Kurama, a colourful lizard that my son Andrew was pleased to photograph.

The walk up Mount Inari and back winds through thousands of bright orange torii gates – low arches that are said to conduct human

wishes up to heaven. Many Japanese do this walk at the New Year. Along the route are shrines with fox statues, many decked in short red capes, some carrying a key or a scroll in their mouths. (The fox is the messenger of wishes.) Bamboo trees line the mountain and, in spring, wildflowers. I also like the walk at Kurama Temple, climbing to the peak and down the other side to a small fishing village. This is the famous "winding road" written about by Matsuo Basho and other Japanese authors. Dainty zig-zagging steps make the climb up Kurama manageable and along the way are vermilion lantern posts, little waterfalls, dragon statues and towering cryptomeria trees. These dragons have snaky torsos, four legs, antlers and whiskers, as Chinese dragons combine the qualities of many animals. The mountain is said to energise and purify all who visit it.

## A Word from Heads of Year, Ellen Blaine & Nahbi Odeh

**Ellen:** 2020-21 has been a strange year, not exactly how I had imagined my final year at LGS, trekking up and down to the pavilion in wind, rain and snow a couple of times a day, but it has certainly been memorable. It has been an unusual time to be Head Girl, and I am sure the rest of the prefects can agree there have definitely been pros and cons to the changes in our role. On the plus side, we have not been spending break times wheeling bins around in the refectory and I have not had to chase prefects down when they do not show up for duties, but on the other hand we have only got to wear our gowns once so far and I still have no idea how to direct the whole school into St Nick's and make it look easy.

There have been so many funny and amazing moments at LGS: rehearsals and backstage at the school play, the stunning outfits for charity netball and hockey and being chased by cows on D of E (almost a rite of passage).

**Nahbi:** 2020 really took the phrase "New year, new me" to a whole new level. We had the opportunity to learn new technical skills, such as the ability to time the crashing of your device for the moment you get asked a question. With new settings come new challenges, such as finding a microphone or camera engineer (due to high demand) this academic year. My time as Head Boy was very different to normal - taking Teams calls with Mr Watson and Mr Anderson whilst eating bowls of blueberry porridge. Though we missed the opportunity to glide around St.Nick's in our robes, I am sure the prefects were glad not to have to clean up after the Year 11s at lunch - a job even grown men fear.

School for me has been full of countless memories. House events were always a highlight of the term, with great participation but an even better display of funky outfits. School music has been an important part of my time here and I want to thank Mr. Barker for his humour – "Play the wrong notes nice and loud" made for great ensemble performances. Sporting activities have been my favourites, ranging from beating Langley in the NatWest vase (we don't talk about what happened next)

But the most memorable part of my time at LGS has to be the trips: Florida to see the Kennedy Space Station (and three different Disney parks), the Year 9 MFL trip to Germany and its questionable food, and the CERN trip in the February before coronavirus hit -- such an honour to see the cutting edge of science brought to life. I will never be able to express how grateful I am to the teachers who escorted us on these trips. I thank all of the teachers whose classes I have been in, especially at A-level, in particular Mrs Village who has helped Nahbi and me in our roles whenever we seemed a bit clueless. I would also like to thank Mr Allen and Dr Fulton who have been important figures for me at LGS. As Mr Allen steps down from his role as head of 6th Form, we can all agree he has been an icon, and will be remembered by generations of beardless 6th formers for his leadership. Finally, I would like to thank Mr Anderson and Mr Watson for listening to our opinions, however frank, in our Wednesday morning meetings and supporting us so enthusiastically throughout the year. I wish them luck in continuing to make positive changes for the future of the school.



to the summer time El Classico football game. It was fun for the lads playing, but I don't think our teachers were particularly keen on the smell of sweat through periods 7 to 9. All of these activities have helped build me as a person, but nothing develops character like that rehearsal the week before the school play when we are genuinely unsure if it will be ready the following week. The opportunities the school gave me were numerous and these were down to the amazing teachers we had. I want to say a thank you to all my teachers. The hard work they put in has been tremendous. A special thank you to Mr. Allen: a passionate historian and amazing motivator, with a beard any 6th-former would receive a detention for. The prefects have met new challenges and helped to lead the school in new ways, especially our deputies, Tom, Gracie, Antonia and Elliot. LGS has given me some of the best memories in my life. I would always urge you to take the opportunities the school offers and make the most of your time here. To the year 13s, these years have been wonderful and we have really grown as a group. It will be sad to leave but we now have new opportunities and challenges to face. I wish you all the very best of luck with these.



# Senior Head of House Report

by Miss Allcoat

I began the 2020-21 school year by planning for all the usual House events, but on reflection I realise my naivety. Despite the challenges of the pandemic and my absence due to maternity leave, the House System has succeeded at being exciting and inclusive, as well as a source of joy and escape for many.

In the Advent term we organised Spelling Bee, Cricket, Rugby, Hockey, General Knowledge and Creative Competitions. Pupils also worked hard to fundraise for Rainbows, the charity all four Houses had decided to support. Freya Astill, Senior Vice Captain for Judges, enjoyed House Hockey: "Everyone was able to get involved, we had fun with costumes, and it raised a lot of money for the House Charity". Neel Choudhary, VCs House Captain in Year 8, commented that his favourite event was "House Cricket, as some competitive games occurred, with high quality cricket coming from both teams in every match."

House events turned creative in the Lent term due to lockdown restrictions, with "Just a Minute", Photography and "Spring into Wellbeing". Jonah Moger, Judges House Captain in Prep, said "Just a Minute" was his favourite event: "It was fun to see everyone participate and the madness was very enjoyable!" Vashin Kaushik, Judges House Captain in Year 9, really liked the Photography competition: "It was something creative that people could do whilst in lockdown." (See the page on the House New Year Photo and Picture Competition.)

Trinity term was very busy with pupils competing in Football, Netball, Cricket, Cross Country, Swimming,

a Team Half-Marathon event, a pared-down House Music, Creative Writing and, finally, Sports Day. (Some of the winning creative writing appears in our Creative Writing section.) Rishan Raja, Masters House Captain in Year 9, said, "Despite the fact that House Music was online, it gave people an opportunity to share what they're passionate about with their year group peers." He also felt that the altered set-up required a lot more bravery and made the competition more exciting. (There is an article on House Music in our Music section.) Thomas Onions, Judges House Captain in Year 11, enjoyed Cross Country as it allowed all of the pupils to get involved and support their House. "With the Tom Ellis Trophy, Cup and Shield, this event was more competitive, while being available to all abilities. It really created an atmosphere of togetherness and joy within the school community, as the whole year group was able to compete together, welcoming in each pupil with bursts of applause as they crossed the finish line." (There is an article in the Sport section on the Tom Ellis Memorial Cross Country Competition.) He added, "I also felt connected with the environment more, due to the House Photography competition." Not only was Georgia Stewart, Dukes House Captain in Year 7, pleased that her House won Sports Day, but she also liked that "I got to see the whole house take part in something together!" Pupils also completed nine Kahoot quizzes across the year, covering a variety of topics that challenged many a competitor during morning registration.

Reviewing the year's events in the House Meeting on the last day of term, it was clear that Dukes and VCs had consistently demonstrated great participation as well as success. House events encourage pupils who try their best and push themselves out of their

comfort zone. Dukes won the Midland Bank Cup for the second year in a row, this year with a very convincing lead. VCs placed second and Judges third. Thank you to Mrs Dewe for being Senior Head of House in my absence and to the House Captains who reflected on the past

year and helped me to write this article, as well as enthusing their peers. Thank you to every pupil who represented their House in any way across the year and to the other Heads of House who kept everything not just running, but excelling, despite the obstacles.

## The Best & the Worst about Online Teaching

We spent most of the Lent term of 2020-21 teaching and learning online.

The best thing for me was using the wonderful roll-top desk that I inherited from my grandfather every day and imagining that I was adding to its history. And the worst thing was the difficulty in communicating fully and naturally.

**Mrs Higginson, English teacher**

The best thing was listening to lambs bleating whilst teaching (we live next to a farm). And the worst thing was our terrible internet and the occasional power cuts.

**Mrs Charles, Learning Support**

Learning how to use new technology in lessons was great; not being able to do practicals in the workshop was limiting.

**Miss Campbell, Head of DT**

We are in such a privileged position to be able to teach and learn online. Many other schools have not been in a position to do this and we should be very grateful for our blessings. The worst thing was trying to teach something creative, that is usually so tactile and hands on, over a computer screen. Some do not have materials at home to create with and some need help to sketch something and you need to verbally explain how to fix a study, rather than going over to the student and demonstrating the technique instead. Thank goodness for video demonstrations!

**Miss Driver, Head of Art**

The best thing was having your own space and structure for lessons, but it was very different trying to look after students pastorally and I was missing the face to face.

**Mr Thacker, Head of Year 9**

The best thing about online teaching was being able to wear less formal clothing. The worst things were the lack of social interaction, being unable to use non-verbal communication, the inability for the students to collaborate properly, sitting down all day and massively increased screen time.

**Miss Mould, Head of Prep**



The best thing was the commute (about 15 feet) and worst was when the technology went wrong, i.e. pupils dropping out of lessons or being unable to upload work.

**Mr Burns, DT teacher**

The best thing about online teaching was the slower pace -- no rushing around between classrooms, no duties, etc. The worst thing was the loss of genuine interaction with the pupils.

**Miss McCleery, Mathematics teacher**

Seeing more of my wife and children was the best part of online teaching, whilst seeing less of my pupils and colleagues was the worst.

**Mr McLean, Head of Classics**

The best thing for me was being able to spend my free periods working undisturbed. I got so much done that I could spend my free time doing my own thing rather than school work. The worst thing was not being able to help students as much as I wanted to, whether because they don't like asking for help online or that I could not see their work in front of me.

**Miss Burfoot, Mathematics teacher**

An enormous benefit was the continued ability to teach live lessons, giving pupils some stability and structure to their day. Small groups seemed especially engaged and productive. It also allowed work to be collated and stored centrally via Teams. The worst thing about teaching online was the lack of interaction between the group and staff. PE during this time was crucial in helping with mental health issues.

**Mr Stubbs, head of Academic PE**

The best thing about teaching from home was using my commute time to do more exercise. Worst was the awkward, dustbowl-effect silence that gravitated from my laptop when I asked for answers to tricky questions (and sometimes just any questions).

**Miss Hadfield, English teacher**

# 2021, The Year we Wore Masks at School



The Prefect Team 2020-21



1st XV Rugby Team 2020-21

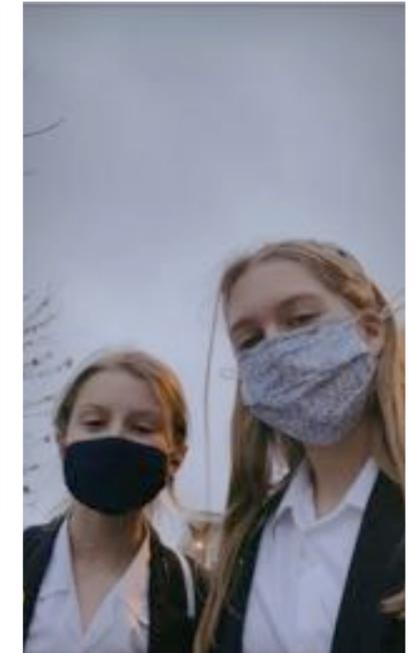
## From September 2020 we wore Masks in Public Areas at School



Ethan and Luuk



Ayman



Tallulah and Tilly



Rayyan, Vishy and Muhammad



Giselle, Aamani and Amara

# LGS Responds to the Black Lives Matter Movement

by Kajol Mistry

On the 25th of May, 2020, George Floyd, an unarmed black man, was killed by a police officer after allegedly using counterfeit money to buy a packet of cigarettes. The police officer, Derek Chauvin, knelt on Floyd's neck for 7 minutes and 46 seconds, in which time Floyd could be heard gasping and pleading for them to get off him: "I can't breathe!" "You're going to kill me!" and "Can't believe this,

man. Mom, love you. Love you. Tell my kids I love them. I'm dead." Chauvin's response was "Then stop talking, stop yelling. It takes a heck of a lot of oxygen to talk." Approximately six minutes after the incident began, Floyd fell silent and unresponsive. Urged on by witnesses, another policeman, Officer Kueng, checked for a pulse, finding none. Chauvin eventually removed his knee from Floyd's neck. Floyd was then taken by ambulance to Hennepin County Medical Centre and was pronounced dead approximately an hour later. Witnesses to this brutal event recorded it and posted it on social media. This went viral as the latest example of American police brutality.

The following day, the 26th of May, 2020, protests began in Minneapolis, and within a week had spread to the rest of the United States, in defiance of Covid 19 restrictions, with the largest protests being in Portland, Memphis, Los Angeles and Houston (George Floyd's hometown). By June 7th there were protests all over the world, including Australia, Germany, Spain, France and the UK. Millions of people protested for the rights of black



people, for freedom from systemic racism, safety from police brutality, and justice for the countless victims of racism: George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Treyvon Martin, Jacob Blake and Eric Garner, to name a few. The protestors were demonised by some of the media, who called them rioters, criminals and vandals; and at least 25 protestors were killed in the United States.

Violent, aggressive racism persists in the USA; however, I would say that racism is just as prominent here in the UK, but shown through subtler means: fewer job prospects, poor treatment in the workplace or in schools. You only have to look at the current cabinet to see that there is very little diversity in the top posts, with the overwhelming majority of the cabinet being white males. In 2019, a survey was published by the University of Manchester on the subject of racism at work, showing that over 70% of BME employees had been racially harassed. In the past five years, 15% of women and 8% of men have left their jobs due to racial discrimination; furthermore, after reporting a racist incident,

over 40% of people were either ignored or labelled troublemakers. Additionally, people from ethnic minorities will send about 60% more job applications before getting an interview.

To find out more about racial discrimination against black people on a personal level, I interviewed Mrs Lopez-Correia, Head of MFL at LGS, about her experiences growing up in France and teaching in England. As a child in France, Mrs Lopez-Correia experienced verbal abuse, like being told to "Go and wash yourself", to "Go back to your country" or even having the n-word and other racial slurs used against her. These insults were not just between students, but also used against teachers, and there were often no punishments given out. Having witnessed and endured all of this abuse from a young age, black people can grow up feeling less confident and inferior to their peers. However, I have always seen Mrs Lopez-Correia as very talented, confident and friendly. She said that this was largely because her parents always encouraged her to be friendly and kind, strong and confident, but also because she is fortunate enough to be a naturally positive person. She mentioned her first impressions of LGS, saying it seemed so different that she considered changing her appearance to fit in. Since joining the school, however, she said that she has not felt excluded or experienced any racism. She says she has found both staff and pupils extremely friendly and tolerant of others, regardless of their backgrounds.

Since September 2020, a number of new measures have been implemented at LGS to help reduce racism and racial bullying. These include: the panel of OLs that came in to talk about their experiences, both at LGS and afterwards, Mr Watson's Diversity Group, and the whole-school survey (taken in February) to better understand students' experiences with racism. Mrs Lopez-Correia says that there needs to be a zero tolerance approach to racism and it must be dealt with seriously. This



means no mocking of cultures, no stereotyping, no targeted bullying and no racial slurs, as these are all degrading and cruel; we should also celebrate different cultures, learn about languages, traditions, clothing, food and celebrations, and learn to appreciate and value the differences between us. Education is key in stopping racism; changing curriculums to incorporate more information about ethnic minorities, viewing films that depict racism and encouraging positive discussions about race and cultural differences.

## Book & Film Recommendations



**12 Years a Slave**  
book by Solomon Northup



**Selma**  
film about earlier American civil rights protests



**How to be an Antiracist**  
book by Ibram X. Kendi



**The Hate U Give**  
novel about police brutality by Angie Thomas



**Guess Who's Coming to Dinner**  
film about parental reactions to mixed race dating



**Hidden Figures**  
book about black women mathematicians who assisted in the American space programme, by Margot Lee Shetterly



**Noughts and Crosses**  
a dystopian novel by Malorie Blackman depicting a world where prejudices are reversed



## The Prep (Year 6) 2020-2021



# Prep Stamp Designs

## for Royal Mail's Heroes Design Competition

by Julia Rattay

The Prep class entered a stamp competition for the Royal Mail in May of 2021, to honour the heroes of the Coronavirus pandemic. We each designed a stamp featuring our heroes, people who we think have been very helpful and important during this hard time.

We first had to do a plan, deciding what we were going to display on our stamp and drawing it out. I did the NHS, as during this pandemic they saved lives and put themselves at risk to help others. Other topics that people chose included Captain Tom Moore, Marcus Rashford, the NHS and other key workers, delivery drivers, charities and vaccines. Rainbows, the symbol of hope, appeared on some of our stamp designs.

Once we had done a good plan, we had to do a neat copy on an official competition sheet. On mine, I did three NHS workers and wrote NHS in big letters. Once they were drawn and coloured in, we handed our entries in for Miss Mould to send to the Royal Mail. To share our designs with the rest of the school, we pinned them to a blue display board in the school entranceway. I think it was a very good competition because people should thank the selfless members of our country who did so much for us.

**“people should thank the selfless members of our country”**



# Remembering the Duke of Edinburgh's Visit to the School in 1999

by Mr Willis



of the Royal Family and he was very easy to talk to. I seem to remember him asking how long I had worked at the school and which Science subjects I was responsible for amongst other things, before involving some of the children in the conversation.

**The Headmaster had been through what was going to happen prior to the day, but I was still quite nervous, even though all the pupils were doing what they were supposed to be doing. Prince Philip was due to come into my lab at the old site (Lab 1) as part of his official school visit, and the Headmaster would introduce me to him. I would take it from there in explaining what the children were doing: making chemical indicators to test acids and alkalis.**

At the designated time, HRH duly entered the lab with his entourage behind, but to my surprise and dismay the Headmaster remained very firmly in the background. After a rather awkward realisation on my part that I had no option but to introduce myself, I made the first move and the ice was broken. I quickly recovered my composure to have my first and (as yet) only short chat with a member

“

His warmth and humour were very evident throughout and his legacy is assured.

He was genuinely interested in what they were up to and it was certainly a day that those of us present will never forget. His warmth and humour were very evident throughout and his legacy is assured. Rest in peace, Sir.

# House New Year Photo and Picture Competition



**First Prize:**  
Vidhi Thakor's photo  
(Year 10)

**Highly Commended:**  
Peter Rattay's drawing  
(Year 8)

# Young Enterprise Company, Kaizen Writes & Publishes Children's Ecology Books

by Nimit Jobanputra, Managing Director of Kaizen

**F**or the first-ever time, an LGS Young Enterprise team has reached the National final by winning the best company award for the East Midlands and Leicester. This means that Kaizen was in the top 12 companies across the UK, out of the 700 taking part. The company has also won other national, regional, and local awards. The six students who represented our team at the National final were Rabiah Ahmad, Emily Bennet (Vice MD), Nimit Jobanputra, Lili Mepham, Holly Teasdale and Alexander Winand.



Running a company amidst a global pandemic has been a mission; however, it has been extremely rewarding and I urge people to apply for the Young Enterprise scheme the school offers, which is overseen by Mr Moore-Friis. Our company, Kaizen consisted of 31 student members, making us one of the largest YE companies across the whole of the UK. With a team so large, I needed to convey messages clearly, divide tasks, and have a clear team structure with accountability for actions. We have had a lot of success in selling our range of children's books, which teach the younger generation about the effects of climate change and deforestation.

From the start, we wanted to create a product that would have a long-lasting and positive

impact. For this reason, we came up with our unique name, Kaizen, which originates from a Japanese philosophy to bring change for the better. Our company believes in tackling the issue of climate change by reaching as young an audience as possible. We created and published two children's books, "Saving the Planet" for 3-5 year olds and "Archie's Eco-Adventure" for 5-7 year olds. For both books, we had collaborative brainstorming sessions which led to creating a storyboard, with initial sketches by members of the product development team. The team then wrote the books and we hired two artists to illustrate them, helping us create a professional-looking and appealing product. These



efforts were led by Holly, Lili, Rabiah, Kaylan, Mustafa and Rameen. We then put the books together through online software and started a trading relationship with a UK printing press. Both books have been a huge success and after skilled negotiation by members of the marketing and sales team, like Hasan Fatiwala and Zain Haq, we have managed to sell 900 copies so far, with copies being stocked online at well-known retailers such as Waterstones, World of Books, Yorkshire Trading Company, Amazon, Peters Books, The Book Bundle, Browns Books, Blackwells and many more.

Coronavirus has posed a huge challenge to the running of the company. The pandemic made fundraising difficult; however, we did manage to succeed with our school raffle, which we are very grateful to parents for supporting. Creating and selling the books was also made very challenging due to the virus: for example, when illustrating the books, we had to convey all our ideas online. When printing and selling the books, we were in a second lockdown so all contact with businesses was online, and no in-person sales were possible. Despite this our online sales strategy to businesses has worked well and has made our books widely available which has led to a healthy profit.

Kaizen has been very successful in the Young Enterprise competition. We first won a local event called "Fox's Lair" where we pitched our idea to local business owners; they were impressed by our product. During Easter, we won the national Easter Trade Fair, by being the company to sell the most products online in the whole country between March and April. After this, the main contest began. First was the Leicestershire field. Our contenders were three other schools from Leicester, with the best company going through to the regional finals. When we won the "Best Company in Leicester" award, it was the first time a Leicester Grammar Team had

got past the local competition. We also won the "Teamwork" award for this stage. We then focused on the East Midlands Finals, facing three schools who had won their local contests. The competition was tough; however, we triumphed and won the "Best Company in the East Midlands." This meant we progressed to the National finals, where we faced the best 12 teams out of the 700 who entered the competition, from England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. We also won two other awards, "Customer Focus" and "Best Presentation". This reflected the team's earnest and concerted efforts.

The competition at the National finals was very strong, and even though the judges were impressed by our product, we did not win in that competition. Nevertheless, we were very proud of our achievements.

I have been asked to give advice to future YE teams. For the managing director, you will need to make tough decisions that will be unpopular in the short run, but at the end of the day will be for the greater good of the company. And to members, give your full effort and collaborate with other members. It is a team effort and even though not everyone will be able to contribute equally, just do the best you can. Use the experience to learn new skills and don't just participate for the sake of your personal statement.

Special thanks to Mr Moore-Friis and business advisors, Bal Kelai and Michael Davies, for their support. We would also like to thank parents and staff of Leicester Grammar School.





# Introducing Mr Millward

## School Chaplain

by Aditya Mathur and Svaraji Odedra

**What was your previous experience as a Boarding Housemaster like?** I was a boarding Housemaster at Trent College 2008-12, in a house where I had been a tutor and assistant housemaster for 11 years. It was a hugely rewarding experience, and so good to be able to make a tangible difference to the lives of dozens of boys living in the house, helping them as they faced different issues in their lives. Trent College is a full boarding school, with the whole of Saturday taken up with morning school and afternoon fixtures, and boarders staying over the weekend, so it was very full on, but very enjoyable most of the time.

**Do you have a favourite teaching from the Bible?** That is quite a difficult question. However, if you asked me for one extract, it would have to be Jesus's Parable of the Prodigal Son. The meaning of it – God (the Father in the story) looking out for his sinful child (you and me) and running to greet him with great joy and celebration when the son has turned back from his sinful ways – is an image that moves me hugely, because it resonates with what I understand of God's character.

**Have you ever been on a pilgrimage? If not, would you like to go on one?** To be honest, a pilgrimage is more reflective of the High Church tradition, which is not where I am from, and so I haven't been on a pilgrimage before, and I don't plan on attending one. I have been to numerous Christian conferences, where there has been Biblical teaching that has enabled me to grow in my faith and knowledge of God. I have also been a leader on numerous Christian Youth holidays, specifically aimed at teenagers from independent schools. One day I hope that students from all the schools in the Trust will be able to attend these holidays.

**How will you contribute to the school's pastoral system?** There is already a very good pastoral system in place at Leicester Grammar, but I hope to be able to develop our work with members of the community who have been bereaved. I hope

to be seen as somebody a little removed from the school's normal disciplinary loop, to whom people can come for help and advice should they choose to. Most importantly, I hope that the things I say in Chapel will help people to see that there is a compassionate God who longs to help us all in our times of need.



I hope that the things I say... help people see that there is a compassionate God

# 2020-21 Chapel Report

by Mr Millward

How can the life and work of the Chapel make a difference in a year such as this? One could refer to helping the community, looking out for those who are in need, thinking of charitable events it would be good to support, and getting alongside individuals as they struggle with the challenges of covid. All this is true, and I have striven to ensure that the Chapel has played its part in these areas, but the school already has an excellent pastoral team, and such is the strength of the community here that these things are going on naturally in tutor groups, lessons and departments. So what can Chapel give that provides added value?

When I arrived at the school at the start of the second half of the Advent Term this year, my opening assembly was a reflection on Deuteronomy 31:8: "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." It's a reminder that there is a God who is not

remote, but who loves and cares for us, even when we cannot make sense of all the pain and suffering going on. It's a reminder that, as well as looking **across** to friends and family, as well as looking **down** to people over whom we have responsibility, we can also look **up** to the One who can strengthen, encourage, guide and sustain. As we have worked through the year since then, with all the different Chapel services and events, that is the message I have sought to convey.

On a practical level, we have had to redefine how we 'do' Chapel, scaling down the activity in St Nicolas Hall and broadcasting it to the classrooms via Teams. I thank Mr Stagg and his student team of AV experts for their hard work in ensuring that what comes across in the classrooms is as slick and professional as possible, and Mr Barker and the Music team, for adapting their vital contributions to the services so that they are covid-compliant.

Staff and students have been so patient with watching Chapel as a TV programme rather than being part of the live congregation. I appreciate this has not been easy.

Since arriving in November 2020, I have been so grateful for a warm welcome to LGS from so many people, but especially those directly involved in Chapel life. Dr Ainge has been a pillar of support -- to have an organist of his calibre on the teaching staff cannot be taken for granted. I must also mention the student members of the Guild of Sacristans and Servers, who have endured an extremely frustrating two years with good grace and patience. The Year 13 team -- Matthew Ainge, Sasha Law, Gracie Fraser, Issy Harvey, Fraser Snow and Seb Moor Friis -- have given sacrificially of their time to the chapel since long before I arrived. Their contribution is hugely appreciated. I thank them and wish them well.

Moving forward there are exciting plans: to broaden the Guild of Servers into more of a Chapel team (whilst preserving the Guild within that) so that it reflects the broader range of church styles. There will be opportunities for students to explore the Christian faith; 'meetings for better understanding' with other faiths, and opportunities for those other faiths to observe their obligations and festivals. All these things are designed to enable Chapel to be an integral part of school life, but to encourage everyone in the community, as I wrote earlier, to look **up**.



Year 13 members of the Guild of Servers, pictured after their farewell Communion Service, 2021



# How the Neolithic Revolution affected Early Human Health

An Extract from Georgina Holmes' EPQ Essay

**One of the main causes of dental caries is believed to be cariogenic foods such as carbohydrates and sugars. The fermentation of sugars on the surface of teeth by bacteria causes demineralisation, whilst the sticky nature of sugars are prime for bacterial growth. Proteins and lipids have the opposite effect and high fluoride levels in water can also prevent the development of dental caries. In addition to this, food processing softens food before they are consumed and consequently promotes bacterial growth.**

In the Danube Gorges, only 2.5% of the Mesolithic population were found with evidence of dental caries compared to 15% in the Neolithic groups. This correlates with the increased carbohydrate and plant consumption in the Neolithic Danube, contrasted with the higher fish and protein consumption in the Mesolithic. This would support the idea that a diet based on cariogenic food is associated with abundance of dental caries, whereas a high protein and aquatic diet (particularly containing fluoride) is cariostatic. Jovanović notes that the results from the Danube Gorges are in fact lower than expected and rates of caries in the Neolithic should be significantly

higher. This indicates that fisher-farmers had lower rates of caries due to the lack of cariogenic food, and fluoride from aquatic foods could prevent caries. As a result, these regions demonstrate diet plays a significant role in dental health, and though this will depend on each population, cariogenic food consumption increases in agriculturalists (but not fisher agriculturalists) suggesting terrestrial agriculture does cause a decline in oral health to some extent.

Archaeozoological evidence and stable isotope analysis also shows that the Neolithic communities in the area were not entirely dependent on farming, and still somewhat reliant on foraging. This still implies that a degree of cariogenic food in the diet, even if it is not the main food source, has adverse effects on dental health compared to a protein rich diet (as represented by the Mesolithic populations). The example provides a useful insight into how the transitional stages into farming began a trend of declining health, as opposed to forager health.

On the contrary, there is evidence of caries prevalent in hunter-gatherers in North Africa. Of 52

individuals analysed in North Africa, only three did not show signs of carious lesions, equal to levels in agricultural populations. Similarly, carious lesions are found in foragers from the Pecos region in Texas for much the same reason – a highly cariogenic carbohydrate diet. This seems atypical compared to the general association of agriculture with poor oral health, but examining the lifestyle factors of these hunter-gatherers explains this situation. In the case of Iberomaurusian foragers of North Africa, they had developed selective systems of obtaining and preparing terrestrial foods. Agriculture is clearly not the only method of obtaining food that causes a decline in health: the cariogenic diets explain why hunter-gatherers may have poor dental health. Moreover, examining lifestyle factors within hunter-gatherer groups demonstrates they were foragers beginning to develop agricultural techniques. The Iberomaurusians left evidence of burials, food storage (deposits of acorn cups suggest harvesting and storage of acorns before they were ripe, as the cups would then fall off naturally) and processing (fragments of grasses indicate the whole plant was utilised for baskets and tools). These subsistence techniques bridge the gap between hunting and farming, demonstrating that even among nomadic populations there is some element of selective food production. To this end, it is the use of methods of food production commonly attributed to farming – but not the adoption of agriculture itself – that negatively affect oral hygiene. Therefore, prior to the adoption of agriculture we can see trends in declining health showing the Neolithic Revolution was not such a sudden radical compromise to human health as previously thought, but rather a gradual and progressive decline.

Studies of modern day hunter-gatherers transitioning to farming also support the idea of a progressive decline in oral health, attributed to lifestyle shifts. Crittenden et al. observe high rates of caries, periodontal disease and antemortem tooth loss amongst Hadza bushmen, attributed to their cariogenic diet, particularly honey which is a staple part of their foods. There were sexual differences, with bush women having relatively good oral health compared to village women, whilst the opposite was true of men, with bushmen having the worst levels of dental hygiene and the least sexual dimorphism was observed in the forager-farmers, suggesting a more equal food system. It is important to note that the Hadza do not perfectly reflect prehistoric foragers: none rely solely on wild food – each year 15% of individuals in Hadza bands move to rely on cultigens and sedentism – and the sample is short-term and small. Nonetheless, this is still a useful

comparison as it provides tangible evidence for health during the transition to farming, which is perhaps less distinct in the archaeological record.

Fisher-farmers also see an unexpected trend, whereby carious lesions are less abundant than in their hunter-gatherer predecessors. In the Baltic, the Neolithic fisher-farmers have low dental caries, as well as other oral pathogens. Mesolithic predecessors have marginally higher rates of caries and the Bronze Age successors have significantly higher rates of caries and periodontal disease. Equally, the frequency of dental calculus was highest in Neolithic fisher-farmers and Iron Age populations but lowest in the Bronze Age sample. Both of these trends can be explained by the high protein-aquatic diets in fisher-farmers (which also contain high levels of fluoride) and the increase in farmed meat and milk in the Iron Age sample compared to the soft and cariogenic Bronze Age diet. High protein diets promote high rates of calculus, but decrease the presence of caries, periodontal disease and antemortem tooth loss. This demonstrates that variations in the lifestyle and diet of agriculturalists are more important factors in determining the impact of subsistence strategies on health. Rather than grouping agriculture as a whole, considering how lifestyle varies regionally and globally is more informative when assessing the underlying causes of declining health.

In some cases caries increased five-fold since the adoption of agriculture, compared to the 2% abundance seen in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic remains. However, the role of dietary change is still more significant because caries prevalence is highest in agricultural populations subsisting off maize, whereas in some rice-consuming populations there are fewer cases of caries. To this end, the transition to agriculture is not the sole cause of declining health and the variability of regional diets plays a large role in the pattern of health from foragers to farmers. Thus, the pattern of declining dental health is more likely linked to the adoption of agriculture where more cariogenic foods were consumed. However, the Neolithic Revolution cannot be pinned as the main cause of dental caries when diet is very variable in different regions of the world, as well as between different individuals and sexes in the same community. The composition of a diet and methods of food preparation are the most significant factors in determining caries prevalence, and not agriculture alone.

(An extract from Sebastian Moore-Friis' EPQ essay appears in the Classics section.)

# Making Tracks

Interview of Oliver Bunce and Ned Corry by Aayush Patel, Year 10



**Over the summer lockdown you two went out of your way to create a something special for your local community. For those who do not know what you did, please can you explain?**

**Ned:** That's right. During the lockdown Oliver and I made a bike track in a small forest near our village. Our aim was to make it usable for anybody of any age.

**Why and when did you decide you wanted to build the track?**

**Oliver:** As everyone else was, we were very bored during the holidays. One day we both went for a bike ride together near the same forest and that gave us some inspiration to do something.

**It must have been very difficult to create a track from scratch: what were some of the problems you faced?**

**Ned:** Having the track in a forest came with its own problems, but mainly there was a lot of rain, which slowed us down. Luckily for us, there were some other kids in the village who were happy to help us out.

**After finishing the track and letting others on it, what was the reaction of the people in the village?**

**Oliver:** Initially the local parish council thought that the track could be dangerous for younger children. But in general, the response was really positive and we had loads of people wanting to ride their bikes on the track.

**How did you resolve that problem with the safety?**

**Ned:** We decided to make a set of rules that all the participants had to follow.

**Were there any other challenges?**

**Ned:** Also, because of the great weather, people were on our track every day. Inevitably, this led to damage on the track and the jumps. But we were determined to keep the track safe and worked hard to fix it.

**Finally, do you guys think you will carry on developing your track or start a similar project?**

**Oliver:** Definitely, it was a lot of fun and it was great to see such a great reaction from all the community. We would like to expand our track or with the experience we now have, help other people create their own bike track.

## GCSE Revision Without the Faff

by Priya Ganatra, U6th form

If what you are doing to revise works for you, then it is definitely good enough. However, if you have tried other techniques and are looking for a fresh approach and ways to save time, you don't always have to do things conventionally.

**DON'T be afraid to write all over the books (that you have bought).**

'Internally wincing', describes most people when they look at my revision guides for Physics and Biology, but I have no regrets. With GCSEs there is so much to revise that there is no time for faffing. And for Edexcel Biology and Physics, the revision guides have most of what you need to know, including diagrams, with everything colour-coded so you need to make far fewer additional notes. And yes, they have an irritating tendency to write in full sentences in the guise (as see-through as the disguise of an amateur thief) of numbered bullet points, but here is where the book-defacing comes in. No-one is going to arrest you for crossing out some sentences and writing more concisely yourself, or for adding a few notes from your classwork. You are saving yourself an incredible amount of time. Just please do not try to sell them off on eBay, afterwards under 'good condition', unless you desire more backlash than Piers Morgan.

**DON'T be a neat freak (but be legible).**

As far as I am aware, there is no prize for having the neatest revision notes, as, to twist Lincoln's views on democracy, they are of you, written by you, and most importantly for you. Definitely invest in a multi-coloured pen, but if one of the colours runs out (the inevitable trade-off for the convenience of having twelve colours rolled into one pen), and all your 'style' notes have been written in that colour so far, do not stop writing your notes in protest until you can hunt down a pen of that colour, but just use another colour. Your brain is not going to start rejecting the notes just because of that one inconsistency, I promise you. Similarly, if you make a mistake, there is no need to laboriously cover it up with a perfect stripe of Tippex, as you are not on "The Great British Bake-off". Just scribble it out. The same applies to your revision timetable: mine was black and white with crossings-outs galore, but I honestly was not jealous of other people's beautifully colour-coded rectangles, because, at the end of the day, the only purpose of their ornately decorated rectangles was to tell them which subject to do when. Having said all of this, make sure

you can read what you are writing. It is all about striking the right balance.

**DON'T start with the past papers.**

I cannot tell you how many times I have been told (especially in Maths) that the best way to revise is to continually do past papers rather than looking over notes. I am not sure about you, but I unfortunately had not assimilated the whole syllabus at the end of the year. Do not get me wrong, past papers are vital for all subjects, but make sure you have learnt the content first in order to get a true idea of what you did not understand as opposed to what you simply had not remembered – for Maths I only really moved on to past papers in the last week of Easter.

**DO make silly acronyms/sentences/pictures.**

I have never been artistically skilled, but it has not stopped me from drawing tiny cartoon sketches related to a certain idea/annoying piece of Latin vocabulary to help it stick in my brain. The most useful technique, however, has been acronyms, which were essential to me when trying to learn essay plan paragraph headings for Geography and English. It does not matter that they make no sense to anyone but yourself and that they are not fantastically witty or original, as long as they help you remember a giant page of text.

**Finally, DO love the mark scheme.**

For subjects such as sciences, GCSE mark schemes are seriously useful to glean exactly how to get all the marks, especially for topics you might not fully understand. I never had a clue about protein synthesis in Biology, or the motor-effect in Physics, but ultimately I could recite the order of events word-for-word in an exam. You may have never understood subjunctives in Modern Languages but if you had memorised a go-to phrase that you could whip out in the first 'Describe the photo' question for speaking exams that could be very helpful during a high-stress exam situation. ('Il est possible que les personnes aient x ans' in French.)

# My Experience

## Applying to American Universities

by Mia Jasmine Rhodes, Year 13

**L**ast year, after attending virtual open evenings and information sessions, I sent off my college applications to multiple universities mostly on the East Coast of the United States. The past few months have been filled with a spectrum of emotions. I have felt curious, nervous and beside myself with excitement. I have since been met with acceptances, and naturally, a couple of rejections also. Receiving my first acceptance was one of the most exciting moments of my life – I actually cried when I received the email. I was particularly excited when I received a presidential scholarship to an Honour's college in Maine – where Stephen King went to college!

Due to the fact that I chose not to use UCAS this year, my perspective on the admissions process relates almost entirely to the American application system. The whole process of applying to American universities has taught me so much about myself and my ability to be independent, especially since the process requires so much time and effort to complete. Even so, I have enjoyed it so much and feel that my application was something I was very proud of. I chose to follow the often-used, Common Application route. This required submitting my grades and personal details. Then there was the more creative side of the application, the area I enjoyed most. This consisted of "extracurriculars", a series of small essays and one or two larger essays, injecting a more idiosyncratic element into the application. My favourite part about the whole process was probably the personal essay. This is an essay about your life experiences and your character. It usually has an open prompt to allow applicants to direct their essay in a way in which they can represent every part of themselves. I treated this part of the application almost like a piece of art, carefully crafting an essay which I felt was a reflection of myself through words.



I would like to thank the staff who helped me along this journey by giving me advice when I needed it and writing heartfelt recommendations for my applications, particularly my personal tutor, Mrs Haywood and the Head of the Sixth Form, Mr Allen. I have found the whole process fascinating in how college admissions departments pay such individual attention to each student. Many of the admissions staff I spoke to during the process had such a genuine interest in who I was and what I liked to do outside of school. They seemed to value that on the same level as my academics. This made the whole process much friendlier and more enjoyable throughout the many hours of researching and form-filling. Having thought about my goals more in the past few months I have decided to take a year-long Art Foundation course to discover which area of study I would like to focus on for the next three or four years, before committing to an undergraduate degree. After having application experience this year, I feel it will be an even more enjoyable process now I know how to successfully complete the application and select colleges that fit me personally. To those who have also applied and to those who are considering applying to the United States for college, I wish you the very best of luck in your academic pursuits.



## Assistant Head, Mrs Jess Moves On

Interview by Kajol Mistry

### What will you be doing after leaving LGS?

I'm going to be a Housemistress and to teach languages at Canford School. I have absolutely loved my time at LGS, and would not be moving were it not necessary for us to relocate as a family. However, I am also really excited to be taking up a different role in September and to exploring Dorset.

### What have been the most memorable moments at LGS?

I will have so many wonderful memories from my time at LGS and will miss the community enormously. House events, Sports Day and School Trips will all feature, as will individual conversations with pupils and their families, where it has become clear that the partnership between school and home has been of real benefit.

### What inspired you to become a teacher?

The truth is that I have always been drawn to teaching. I feel really privileged to have a job which I not only enjoy, but which also allows me to be surrounded by positive and ambitious young people. Despite what people might think, teaching is actually a very varied profession but, first and foremost, it allows me to work closely with others, which is what I enjoy.

### What made you interested in languages?

My first visit to France was aged ten on a family holiday to Brittany. I was so excited

at the prospect of going abroad, and counted down the days to our departure for months and months. I was fascinated by the different language and way of life and eager to know more.

### Do you have any advice for someone wanting to learn a foreign language?

Grasp any opportunity to spend time in the country, and immerse yourself in the culture. In my experience, you grow to love a language by living it, rather than by learning it.

### What do you get up to outside of school?

The free time that I have is mainly spent with my family and friends. We enjoy walking, swimming and enjoying the great outdoors as a family, and I spend weekends taking my son to football matches, tennis training, Beavers, etc.

### What is your perfect holiday destination?

I love the mountains and have had some fabulous holidays in the Alps both in winter and summer. I am not a strong skier, but the combination of snow, sun and stunning scenery is hard to beat.

### What is one piece of advice you wish you had been told when you were younger?

Don't take criticism from people you would never turn to for advice. If you choose to surround yourself by people who are good for you, your path will be straighter.

## Foundation Day Essay Competition 2021

# My Idea of Fun



## What is Fun?

by Benji Dubois, Prep Class, First Prize

**W**hat is Fun? I think that fun is having a good time or enjoying something. It is when you feel on top of the world. It is when you are playing with your friends and time flies by.

What I find fun is the excitement of something, for example the mud ball fight that my friends and I were having at the park. There is the sense of not knowing what is coming next. Another thing I find fun is football and this is because of how your team works together so that, no matter whether you win, lose or draw, you know you have played well. There is the enjoyment of seeing the ball in the back of the opposition's net.

One of the main things everyone finds fun is winning. When most people think of winning, they think of winning

a race, but in life you can win in lots of other ways. To me winning is when you manage to play that song on the piano that you have not played before; it is when you get 20 out of 20 on a spelling test or get the answer right to that Maths question that you have been practising.

Lastly, I find it fun to do something that scares you: jumping off that diving board or doing that speech in front of a thousand people. Strangely, once you have done it, it feels amazing. Now you can enjoy life with nothing to dread.

Fun is the best kind of emotion. Although some people might have more fun than others, we can all have fun as long as we know where to find it.

## Chess

by Ethan Turner-Peters, Year 7, First Prize

**R**egicide is a heinous crime, although I do it every Thursday night from seven-thirty to nine. I practise this all the time at home and online, learning new strategies and tactics. Of course, I am talking about the wonderful game of chess, not killing a real king.

Three years ago, my dad found a chess set which my great grandpa had owned. At first, I took no notice of the pieces and instead wanted to play checkers, knowing that it was an easier game to learn. Eventually, I got my head around the game, learning the moves and the way the pieces worked. I soon found my love for the game. Wanting to increase my

knowledge, I asked my mum if I could join a chess club. After constant nagging, my mother found one in Market Harborough. Over the years I have been a member, the club not only taught me how to lose, but also how to grow. A younger member of the club, Rene, took me under his wing. Despite ups and downs, my enthusiasm for the game remained high.

Chess is so strategic and involves so many tactics that my brain was occupied with it for hours at a time. As my parents believed I was playing too much, they

imposed a four-hour chess ban on weekends. Soon I was playing in tournaments, winning silver medals as my experience grew. Chess has taught me that with every mistake there is a chance to learn, and with every loss there is a new chance to win.

Chess has helped so many people in their lives. There is a film called "Queen of Katwe" about a young girl named Fiona Mutesi, who was from a poor background and became a chess master, changing her life forever. The game offers opportunities to everyone, rich or poor. You may think that killing a king is wrong, but in chess it is what I love to do!

“

Chess has taught me that with every mistake there is a chance to learn, and with every loss there is a new chance to win.



## Ponies

by Molly Curtis, Year 7, Tied Second Prize



From a young age, I have always loved horses and when I was around eight years old I began riding at my local riding school, Witham Villa Equestrian Centre.

I started off doing beginner group lessons, whilst learning the basics of walk, trot, canter and controlling the horse. My instructor was really impressed with my riding, so I soon went up a level. I began to learn to jump and to attend 'Pony Days' at the stable. A 'Pony Day' means that you are assigned one pony for the day and it is your job to make sure that it gets fed, is cared for, and is ridden. You also learn the different parts of the saddle and the body parts of the horse and other important things.

After I had been having weekly lessons for a few months, my

instructor told me that she wanted me to help out at the yard. I was very excited, however I was only nine years old, so too young for that, as it turned out. However, I went to every 'Pony Day' that I could make, joined the Pony Club and helped around the yard every Monday night. Soon I started going to dressage tests and working on my jumping.

A year or so later, we went into lockdown and were not allowed out of the house, so all my fun was drained away. Luckily for me, many other opportunities came up. My mum's friend has a horse, but is unable to do much with it, as she is pregnant. She asked me if I was interested in riding and training her horse, Mollie. I was thrilled. Recently, I was offered a 'job' at my riding school. I had been waiting for this opportunity ever since I started riding so, as you can imagine, I was filled with happiness. I lead in the lessons now, muck out the stables, brush the yard, tack the horses up, clean the tack, turn the horses out in the field – and, on top of it all, I get a free riding lesson!

The fun hits me when I am galloping across fields with the wind in my hair, or when I am soaring over jumps. When I go horseback riding, I get filled with excitement over which horse I will be on and what we will do. This is my idea of fun.

Alice Coker, Year 8, First Prize

## Sometimes being Social, Sometimes being Alone

In life we are always told that you need to be safe, secure and sure with your actions and choices. But there has always been another phrase we have heard throughout our lives, "As long as you're having fun". Fun has

always been something we have desired to have, as there is no better feeling than having a smile on your face. Fun will change, depending on your personality, living situation, gender and age. When we were younger, it was seen as maybe taking a trip to the park or going to Disney World; yet as we get older, it tends to change to more social events.



When I was younger, I was more social than I am now. My idea of fun would have been going to a friend's soft play party, or having a sleepover that lasted all night long with ice-cream and sweets. Being around people led me to be more creative and joyous; however, since I have grown up a bit more, since age ten or so, I began to enjoy simpler things with fewer people around me, such as the two musical instruments I am lucky to play, my dancing on Saturdays, and sketching and doing puzzles. Of course, at ten I still had quite a few friends that I would meet up with almost daily because of school, but I started to gain a truer perspective of my idea of fun.

When my twelfth birthday came, I was offered a big gathering of people and friends, which sounded nice to my family; however, that was when I truly grasped that my idea of fun was less social – it was simple things, such as having two or three friends over to have a talk when we had not spoken in a while. Public activities, such as going to a concert, or a big party with lots of people, or a busy restaurant or any crowded place, just does not appeal to me. I am more than happy to stick on some pop music and dance and sing my heart out, of course, out of tune and with no rhythm. Playing with my cats helps me to smile and laugh, because they are so easily entertained with a string, yet we are also easily amused watching them have fun. As

long as a smile is on my face, I believe that any situation can have a little magic and, well, fun.

Fun is a very loose term, and thank God it is, because some of the things I count as fun definitely would not fall into a set category. When I look back on how I used to be, a simple bottle lid with a face could entertain for at least ninety minutes. As we get older, our humour matures, as if I still had my Year 2 humour, drawing a smile with a tongue would be the pinnacle of my day.

Fun times come and fun times pass, yet we all develop a unique idea of fun. If I have fun with someone that is all I need to know, to know that they are close to me. As I explained earlier, social gatherings and meeting new people are not really my thing, so I know that when I meet someone else with my idea of fun I am with someone that I trust, admire and respect.

When I recently turned thirteen and became a "dreadful teen" as my mum calls it, my idea of fun changed again. I now like spending countless hours painting, sketching, colouring and creating some decent artwork (and usually some big messes) as, with all this virus nonsense, I find it de-stressing and calming. I can make a mess and call it modern art. I tend to avoid social gatherings and then go home to dance my heart out – that has never changed. To me, as long as you have a smile on your face and a decent couple of friends to do activities with, you are going to have a good time.

Being at Leicester Grammar School has helped me to realise my idea of fun in a massive way. Cooking classes have been offered to me, as well as more sports, physically involving subjects and intellectually engaging subjects, all of which have put a smile on my face. My idea of fun has altered and evolved, changing for the better. It is always going to change, but I am happy with how it has changed.

## Playing Hockey in Goal

by Harriet Firth, Year 8, Third Prize

The exhilaration and excitement of going to outside hockey matches and just playing hockey in general cannot be rivalled.

Before Covid 19, my team and I would go on hockey fixtures up and down the country. Whilst crammed into a minibus, everyone would silently be preparing for the hockey match. I am a goalkeeper, so wherever we would go it would be my responsibility to bring my kit with me. Sometimes, however, this would prove to be slightly challenging, as normally the boot in a minibus is tiny, so more often than not, I would find myself sitting for two hours with a massive, brick-like suitcase on my lap, much to the dismay of the person sitting next to me.

Once we got to wherever we were going, the whole team would unload. The list of things that everyone had to take was enormous: hockey sticks, gum shields, water bottles, shin pads, team shirts. When we got onto the pitch, it was the first opportunity we had to look at who we were playing. Most of the time it was girls, but sometimes it was boys. Occasionally, the score would be embarrassing, particularly if they were younger than us, but luckily we won a lot of matches. One of my friends even made it into the national final. Being a goalkeeper comes with lots of downsides. I have already mentioned that you have to be terribly organised, but you also have to be very quick. At one match, we arrived very late, so I had to run onto the pitch with my shoe half-done-up and my helmet lopsided. One of my jobs is to remember four masks (for the defenders) and to clean them regularly.

Whilst being a goalkeeper you get extremely lonely. I am at one end of the pitch, and if the other team is bad, I might not touch the ball for the entire game. Sometimes I daydream when I am in goal or look up at the clouds, the airplanes and the birds. I have let quite a few goals into the net via this method, though. When I am playing, I sometimes want to say to the defenders, "Please could you let just one ball past?" But I stop myself. The amount of spectators' conversations I have overheard is formidable. Some parents are quietly accusing the referee of cheating, whilst others go even further and demand to speak to the coach. The majority of parents clap for both teams and offer encouraging support.



Some stand there quietly, wishing to be doing something more interesting than watching their daughter play hockey. But secretly, I know that we all greatly appreciate our parents' support.

I have played in some stunning locations, such as in the Peak District, surrounded by rolling hills and lush cornfields. Whilst on the way to one match, our minibus broke down, forcing us all up the motorway bank. We waited patiently for assistance to restart our broken bus. From the hill we had an amazing view of all the cars whizzing past below. Some locations, however, are less pleasant. One playing field was in the centre of a city, with noisy car exhausts and factory smog. Whilst in Nottingham we were pleasantly shocked by the sound of trams, a novelty to us.

The teams we play are generally familiar, people we have played dozens of times before. The most frustrating teams to play are the significantly younger ones, because when they win their smugness is obvious. Playing older teams, though, is horrible: they might stand on your toes, or try to whack you on the knee with their hockey sticks. Luckily, I myself have never had to go through that, because I am tucked away, nice and quiet, at one end of the pitch. It feels like being hidden, but once you get to play properly it feels wonderful. The goalkeeper from one team we played was desperately trying to get ready, but was also trying to put her leg pads on upside down. She clearly had never played before!

Hockey is my idea of fun. The difference that comes with each new match makes the wait all the more interesting. All I have to do now is to wait and hope that my hockey matches can soon continue.

## Fun is Flexible & Fluent

by Diya Bhatt, Year 9, First Prize

Fun does not have one concrete meaning; it is flexible, it is fluent, it moulds itself to fit the person. Fun is abstract. You cannot hold it between your palms, you cannot buy it in a supermarket, you cannot drink it from a chalice. Fun is a thing that makes you feel light-hearted and free, happy and enjoying yourself to the fullest, all at the same time. Fun thrives when we are at peace with ourselves. My idea of fun is spending time with the people I love, watching horror movies on Netflix, playing video games and relaxing. These things make me feel positive and carefree.



It may sound clichéd but it is the truth: simply being with the people who love and cherish me for who I am makes me feel bubbly and warm inside. Spending time with my family closes me off from the outside world, abolishes all stress and superficial worrying. Enclosing me into a cocoon of safety, it gives me a sense of home. My parents work very hard: my dad is always abroad and my mum is always at the surgery. My sister and I are always at school. Life stops for no one; it is fast-paced and gruelling at times. Moments where we can sit and be truly still are rare, and I cherish times when my family is all together, for once not wanting more or taking things for granted. Being with the people who raised me, shaped me into who I am today.

Playing video games, such as Fifa 19, Formula 1, or Call of Duty, immerses me in a world of thrills and danger, feeling the adrenaline pumping in my veins as competition gets more and more intense. The feeling of euphoria when you win, washing over you in tidal waves of glory. The crushing feeling when you lose, only to be filled with steely resolve seconds later, picking up your controller again and playing another round with fiery determination. That is my idea of fun. Feeling worries and inhibitions wash away like a cold shower, as you get hurled into a new world of bright colours and fast cars, or one of green pitches and cheering fans. The feelings I experience when playing video games are what make it fun. Determination, fear, euphoria and excitement all rolled into one. Fun is like a perfect cocktail, or the best blend of spices. It is all of the best feelings for

the moment, intertwined together to make a brilliant mosaic of contentment.

If you could not already tell, I am a thrill-seeker, an adrenaline junkie. I appreciate being still and calm, whisked away from the fast-paced nature of the outside world, but at the same time, I embrace the fast life, taking pleasure out of feeling excited and having a sense of fear. Hence, watching a horror movie with other people strengthens my bond with them, while igniting a deeper part of my mind. We stick together so that whatever is behind that screen cannot get to us, a camaraderie that I revel in. When watching a horror movie, the monsters feel as palpable as the beating of your heart. There is a steady drumbeat in your ears as the tension builds. Deafening silence seems to suffocate you, as the pace quickens and everything gets faster, until you feel like the monster is chasing you and all you can think about is the thing behind you. You are simply sitting, in a cinema or at home, but you have been hurled into this world of fear and danger. The escapism that horror movies provides is my idea of fun.

Fun is what we choose it to be, as it is so flexible and adheres to the person who moulds it. My idea of fun is feeling at peace with myself, alongside feeling scared or determined or excited or all of the other amazing feelings that fun brings. Fun is a state that thrives when we are at one with our inner selves.

## Going to the Seaside at Southwold

by Millie Parker, Year 10, First Prize

**M**y idea of fun is very simple: being in my favourite place, Southwold. Southwold is a minute seaside town located on the east coast. I enjoy walking along the golden sandy beaches with my dog, watching him splash in the salty water. We throw hundreds of stones into the sea, which he returns, placing them back on the shore. Then we repeat this over and over again, until he is only slightly worn out!

We get ice-cream, sit on the beach and watch the world go by, or if it is raining and cold, we congregate in our colourful beach hut with hot chocolate to warm our hands. My favourite memories are of running barefoot on the beach as a small child, without a care in the world, until the sun has disappeared. I love going for long walks, getting lost in mile-high grass, and going on adventures. Crabbing at the harbour is the best: we all become way too competitive, seeing who can trick the poor crabs with a bit of stinky bacon, to grab onto our lines and be lifted from their home to lie in a plastic bucket for the next few hours. Later we tip our buckets out and it is as intense as the Olympics



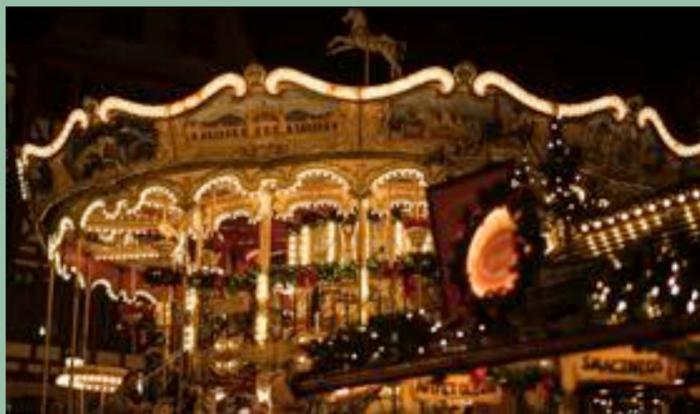
watching them race back into the muddy water they call home. Only to be caught by someone else.

From time to time we go on the Voyager, a speedboat that takes you racing over the waves, soaring high into the air. We went on the Voyager for New Year's Day 2020,

blasting out Christmas music whilst crashing into the waves, completely soaking ourselves with salty, freezing water. We were mad, but it was so much fun. I think you only appreciate that something is fun when you look back on it and remember how much everyone was smiling. Those days spent in Southwold have left a lasting impression on my memory.

## Chasing Childhood

by Shruti Chakraborty, Year 11, Tied First Prize



**M**y uncle loved fairs ever since he was a little boy, and so every Christmas he would take my sister and me to Winter Wonderland in London. After my first few years, I realised that these visits were far less fruitful for me than for him. He would often walk with us to the gate, and as soon as our bags were checked he was swept away by the sea of people and my sister and I were left to fend for ourselves, battling through the thousands swarming towards the churros stand.

We always kept close enough to him to see his excitement at the flashing lights, his glee as he won a stuffed reindeer at the fish-for-Rudolph stand, and his gaping expression at the drop tower as the screams from outer space bounced about in the smoky air. While I know that these fairs are created with the intention of entertaining little children, for some reason I have never found as much pleasure in them as my uncle did. He was always so engrossed that he never even thought to turn around and realise that my sister and I accompanied him every year simply to provide him with an excuse to have the fun he had always craved since he was a child.

I have always been a daydreamer and it is something I was reprimanded for a great deal during my early childhood. The poorly edited wavy scenes when a television character awoke from a daydream described an experience that was a frequent occurrence for me. I have always thought of daydreams as teleportation machines to provide me with an escape from reality at any time of my choice. When the title of this essay was first announced, I was discussing it with my friends after a gruelling double Maths lesson learning differentiation, and almost all of them jokingly suggested sleep as their idea of fun. I feel that we have all been forced to grow up far too quickly, and that the idea of childish fun has been suffocated under the pressures of daily life. This has changed our perception of what fun is. Something as common and natural as rest or



imagination has become what we crave for fun.

I would like to return to the time before having fun took conscious effort. These days we are pressured to have fun. How many times we roll our eyes as the P.E. teacher promises that the most important part of doing half an hour of cross-country running is "to have fun". My mother says, "Have fun!" reflexively, whether it be that she is dropping me off to school, to a party or to the doctor's. Due to modern consumerism, it is shoved down our throats daily that the only way to be happy and have fun is to buy this new car or these new shoes or this new diet pill. I believe that we can never have more fun than when we have returned to what made us feel happy during our childhood. My uncle's love of fairs and theme parks stems from the fact that rollercoasters are simply a glorified version of the slide in the park next to his childhood home. My father's football obsession stems from the football matches he used to play with an empty soup can on the street with his friends (and I

can only hope that his support for Manchester United is because his school sports shirts were red).

To conclude, I believe that we have lost sight of what the meaning of "fun" really is. Many would say that it is a short-lived burst of excitement that allows you to enjoy the good in life, with the constant niggling knowledge that it will not last forever. However, I find this to be quite a cynical view. My uncle came back from Winter Wonderland every year, satisfied with the experience, but I think he deserved more than just a few hours' worth of roasted chestnuts and rollercoasters every December. I find daydreaming fun because it will always be the only way I can follow the string back to that feeling of childhood innocence and freedom. Many say having fun is a lost art, but what is stopping us from enjoying life the way we used to, before there was a stopwatch counting down the seconds before reality restarted? Enjoyment is a natural element of human nature and you cannot put an age on that.

## Riding a Horse at Full Gallop

by Beatrice Sadler, Year 11, Tied First Prize

I want you to imagine a big field, full of green grass rolling into the distance, so far that the end is hard to see without squinting your eyes. Now, imagine a gentle warm breeze, curling through the morning mist, which looks like drops of rainbows in the golden light of the morning sun. Walk forward a couple of steps, and climb into the saddle of the gorgeous ginger mare, whose golden mane flows down her neck like water. Sit up, lean towards her too-big ears, and nudge her with your feet. She runs. And runs. Your breath is caught in your throat as you gallop, as you urge the horse on, faster and faster, until you feel like you are flying, soaring. It is exhilarating. The wind is in your face, tears begin falling from your eyes at the sting, but you would wish nothing different. The hedge begins looming closer, so your fingers tighten on the reins and the mare gets the message: she turns to gallop parallel with the brambly hawthorn. You feel safe, invincible, like nothing can hurt you. You let the reins slip out of your fingers and tuck them loosely under the martingale, where they fly wildly with each pump of the horse's head. You lift your arms in bliss, still leaning forward, and yell at the top of your lungs. Nobody is around for miles, it is just you and her, running. Unexpectedly, she notices something on the floor and jumps, so you grab the reins as your heart jumps into your throat, but you stay seated and her pace steadies out once more, so you keep galloping, full pelt down the long expanse of the field. As you start to slow down, you notice the mare sweating and breathing hard, as you are, and when you stop, you tell her she did a good job and slide out of the saddle and onto the grassy ground. You lead the horse back to her own field and untack her, giving her pieces of apple and mints, then brush her down. After she has been let off the lead rope, she walks away and rolls on the soft grass.

My idea of fun is not expensive, or hard to get, it is just riding a horse at full speed. My family and I share five horses with our neighbours, and we can ride them whenever we want, as long as we check in with them first. Although, granted, we



have not been able to ride much recently due to the coronavirus rules, I can still very clearly remember riding my favourite mare, a beautiful appaloosa called Betty, through fields of stubble, accompanied by Braka, Willow, Onri, and Pinina, the chestnut I asked you to picture. One of the most fun rides is along a huge field with stubble in it, which is better than normal grass because it does not fly into your face, and the crunchy noise excites the horses and makes them want to speed up. One of the problems with this, however, is that the fields with stubble are generally crop fields that we are very much not allowed to ride through, but as long as we do not see a tractor, we gallop anyway. It does not harm the fields, and the farmers cannot catch up with us, even on quadbikes – that is how fast the horses are.

To have fun, I do not even need to be on a horse: standing in their field or sitting on a rug on the grass is just as good, because Betty always comes over to say hello and sniff every inch of you looking for food. Willow comes over and tries to move the rug with her mouth so she can eat the grass underneath it, and I have lost track of how many videos I have on my phone of her nuzzling blankets. Spending time with the horses is always interesting, and it is never the same, because they are all so different and they all have mood swings, but not as much as Onri, a big bay with a white flash on her forehead. They are all quite clever too, apart from Baraka, who gets scared of everything and never learns not to be,

but she makes up for it with her ability to open and close nearly any gate. I think Betty might be the cleverest, because she waits until the other four leave, knowing she will get an extra scoop of food, and she has recently worked out that I do not like it when she drips water on my neck after she has had a drink. Whenever she does not want me around for any reason, she dips her nose in the trough and comes over to make me go away. I think they are all so fun and different, like Willow who barges straight through the group to get food, Pinina who will eat anything, and Onri who waits patiently at the back.

Riding with them is always an adventure, and no ride is ever the same. It can be dangerous, but it is always so much fun to be out with them. Recently, I was thrown off Betty, and my leg was all banged up, so I could not walk properly for weeks, let

alone ride, but the second I could, I was back in the saddle. We have all had our share of spills, but it never deters us, and although we could do without them, the accidents almost add to the experience.

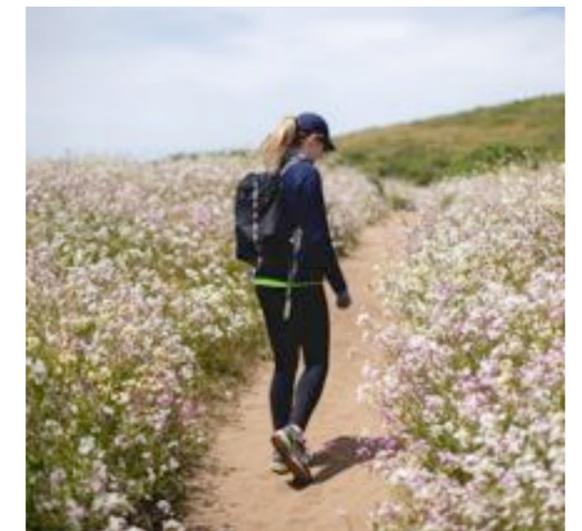
I just love being with the horses – they are like big dogs, following us around, nudging us for food, and when we ride them, they do nearly everything we ask them to do. One thing I love about them is that they never judge me for what I say, mostly because they cannot understand. That is really helpful, because I do not feel comfortable with practising Spanish in front of other people, so on some rides I just stay at the back and speak Spanish to the horse. It is fun because I can correct myself and not feel bad, and since Pinina and Onri are Argentinian mares, I like to believe they can understand me. My idea of fun is to ride horses at full speed, to go on adventures with them, to be around them.

## Walking Outdoors

by Eleanor Jones, L6th, First Prize

**B**elow your steady footsteps, the afternoon sun paints the path in dazzling stripes of light and dark as it shines through the trees. The branches form a tunnel of green above you, surrounding you with the gentle rustling sound of a breeze through the leaves. There is a gate, and suddenly the sky is spread out above you: the clouds forming an untouchable world of layers and colours; the grey of rainclouds in the distance so deep it is almost blue, the edges glowing with the palest yellow in the sun; the fluffier clouds drifting past in lazy wisps of cotton wool; a vapour trail appearing in a soft line of white that will soon glow amber, orange, salmon pink under the gaze of the setting sun. Beyond the gate, the field slopes down to the road, a deserted strip of grey winding between the fields, with only the occasional car disrupting the sounds of nature momentarily. With the birds chirping, leaves rustling, a river flowing, your footsteps mark a relaxing rhythm, a calm passing of time.

Numerous studies tell us that being outdoors has a positive effect on our mental health. A study in 2015 showed that people who walked for 90 minutes in nature showed a significant decrease in activity in the part of the brain that deals with negative and repetitive cycles of thought. Wildlife and greenery force us to focus on events outside our heads, unlike an urban landscape with its traffic,



buildings and pollution. This, combined with the endorphins released by walking, has the potential to combat illnesses such as mild to moderate depression and anxiety.

During lockdown, after days spent in the same place, sitting in the same chair, at the same desk, an escape outside for an hour of exercise became particularly important. Despite the global pandemic and the fact that exams might be cancelled or postponed, or they might not, and school will re-open, or they will re-open for half the day, or maybe not, nature will always be there and will always keep going, every day, every month, every year.

## Board Games

by *Urvita Roy, U6th, First Prize*

Board games lull you into a false sense of security: you believe that you and your family will bond over the game, but instead they turn your closest relatives into a group of liars and cheats. You still will not be talking to your family a week later because they built two hotels on Mayfair during a game of Monopoly. You are filled with rage, your relationships are ruined and the neighbours are probably going to file a noise complaint about all the shouting, but despite all of this, you are having the time of your life.

The biggest cause of tension between families (at least in terms of board games), as you might have guessed, is Monopoly. I do not know what happens, but whenever anyone plays that game, no matter how nice they are in real life, they transform themselves into cunning businessmen and women, using whatever methods they can to make you go bankrupt. Since I was stuck in lockdown on my birthday this year, my family decided to play Monopoly together and I will never forget how much we all manipulated each other to try and steal each other's property, concealing our pre-meditated exploitation as 'business deals'. I tried to trade Water Works, a pink property and a ton of cash to get that all-powerful last station, and had such a sense of satisfaction when, after hours of wearing my family down, they finally agreed to give me the property (and then I promptly bankrupted them). It is clear that, whilst it is satisfying to get the properties you want and 'control the board' as it were, there is something rather cruel in how we manipulate each other. And I am not going to preach about whether or not this is moral – it is a board game, not an important life situation – but it definitely does not feel good to

be on the receiving end of this manipulation, especially when people team up against you. I definitely feel sorry for my mother, who relented after my brother and I ganged up on her, using the fact that we were her children to get what we wanted. But in and amongst all the manipulation, the cruelty and the relentless gloating upon finally winning the game, I remember greatly enjoying my socially-distanced birthday, laughing and having fun with my family. This is the very nature of board games: they unlock a rage you neverknew you had in you, and you end up conning half of your family tree, but they are fun!

Another culprit is Uno. (I am aware that this is technically a card game.) Ever since I can remember, my cousins, my brother and I have been obsessed with playing Uno. This game pretends to be fun, just a simple card game that you can play with your family whilst having a nice conversation. However, it is not all that fun when all of your cousins have stacked +2 cards on top of each other, thus leaving you to pick up 18 cards and destroying your hopes of ever saying the fateful, "Uno!" Also, it is not great when your turn is relentlessly skipped after you have only got two cards left, and then your chance of winning is stolen from you by



that very person who was doing the skipping. Uno is filled with betrayal and more betrayal, as we all fight to have no cards left, but it feels great when you are the winner. Moreover, despite my anger in the moment, it is quite funny in retrospect when I look back upon that one time when my hand of cards was actually thicker than the deck from which we were drawing cards. What we can see is a trend – board games can be incredibly infuriating in the moment, but that is because they bring out our competitiveness. In retrospect, they are incredibly fun.

The last board game I want to discuss is slightly different. It is relatively newer and more unknown and functions in a very different way from the competitive Uno and Monopoly. This game, Truth Bombs, involves anonymously answering questions about your friends, such as "What will your friend get tattooed and where?" What could be a nice game where you all give each other compliments becomes the board game equivalent of a roasting, in which you spend ages trying to craft the perfect answer that will brutally make fun of your friend. I am still recovering from that time when my friend answered the question "What are they most ashamed about?" truthfully

on my behalf, and everyone had a good laugh, whilst I covered my face. Truth Bombs just has a way of bringing up embarrassing things from your past that you want to forget, but your friends will never let you. This game probably pushes the limits of friendship, but it is

all in good fun and time seems to fly when you are playing it.

Despite our obsession with social media, TV shows and movies, board games still endure as timeless fun for all members of the family, even when you have to explain the rules of Monopoly

to your grandfather every single round. They have a way of bringing out the competitive fire within us and are a perfect way for us to create moments we will not forget – even if I do throw something at my friend for making me pick up four cards in Uno and then changing the colour to one that I do not have.

## The Joy of Language

by *Antonia Veary, U6th, Tied Second Prize*

Unpicking the tangled web that is language is one of the most satisfying things one can do. Be it French, Spanish, or even Latin, finally producing a translation into English is a feeling that cannot be topped, as you go from a page of seemingly alien words to a comforting, recognisable passage.



up speed, working through every word, every sentence with increasing ease, until you reach that final full stop. Finished. To look back at the foreign mountain you have conquered whilst climbing into the warm bed that is the English language is immensely gratifying.

The other thing that makes language so fun is being able to

communicate with native speakers. Seeing that look of understanding and almost shock on someone's face when you speak their mother tongue fills me with joy. As with everything, it is not easy, as you fling open all the drawers and cupboards of your mind, trying to locate the appropriate word, with little success. But when you do find it, cowering in the darkest of corners, and you pluck it from its place and drop it into a sentence, what you are saying flows from your mouth like liquid gold. The affirmative nod from the person you are talking to adds fuel to the fire. When they answer you, and the initially uncomfortable words swarm into your ears, there is a risk of being stung. There is always one pesky word that you do not recognise, and it buzzes annoyingly around your head as you desperately try to recall what it means.

It is okay to admit that you do not know, and when you do this, out comes the glass jar to trap the word and put it away for future use. Threat neutralised. That is the absolute best part about language: you never stop learning. There will always be words that you do not know, but learning them gives you ammunition for upcoming battles with the next tricky page of your book. Grammar is your toolbox, words are the bricks to be laid, and you are the craftsman. To be able to express your views and feelings is crucial, especially in today's world, and another language is yet another way to communicate.

## Sewing is my Idea of Fun: Staff Essay

by A L Hulme

**M**y idea of fun probably would not be most people's. I dislike pubs and clubs, noise or festivals, travel I can mostly take or leave and I have no interest in watching (or playing) sports. I was over 30 before I saw my first live gig (Robbie Williams at Knebworth) and, although I greatly surprised myself by having a fantastic time, I have only seen a handful of live performers since. I look upon many of the things that others enjoy – particularly nights spent in pubs – as a waste of money. At around £4 for a pint, all many people have to show for a night out is an empty wallet and no memory of what happened. I sometimes think I am not so much unsociable as too tight-fisted to enjoy what most people qualify as 'fun'. So what do I think is fun? Some years ago, I took up the first of what I described as my 'old lady hobbies'. Although, in the past, I had done a bit of knitting (simple patterns, with my mum talking me through the complicated bits) and sewing (a pair of curtains which I hung to 'drop' and never hemmed in the eight years they trailed on the living room carpet), these were very sporadic attempts and never got me hooked. Then for some reason (mid-life crisis or preparation for retirement?) I decided to do a quilting course. I enjoyed it and produced a couple of fairly respectable quilts, but I only have so many beds and, honestly, very few people appreciate a home-made quilt, however lovingly and painstakingly constructed.

And so I moved on to dressmaking. I did a three-day course and shocked myself by coming home with a dress and a pair of trousers – both of which fitted me perfectly. No more gaping waistbands on trousers (I have a 'sway back' apparently) and no more dresses designed for people with much shorter bodies and waists where my ribs are. It was something of a revelation to me that you could sit at a sewing machine for a few hours (or in my case, days) and walk away with a garment that actually fitted. My first solo attempt was the optimistically named 'one-hour dress.' It took me eight hours, several of which were spent reading and re-reading the pattern, clueless about almost every term and symbol. I finished it, though. The neckline is a bit wide, I overestimated on size and because I was afraid of zips, it is basically a sack – albeit a comfy one.

I know what you are thinking: this is supposed to be about fun, and none of that sounds terribly enjoyable. I suppose that some of the time it is not. It can be incredibly frustrating, and when things go wrong –



inserting a sleeve inside out, running out of fabric, burning an iron mark onto the front of a top you have not even finished (I have done all of these and many, many more) – I do question my sanity. Sometimes I finish a garment and it does not fit, or will not hang right, or I just dislike it, and that is disappointing, but I will always have learnt something from it, and I know the next project will be a little better.

I may not have been entirely honest when I said that my idea of fun is not most people's. A quick Google search revealed that an astonishing six million people tuned in to watch series six of "The Great British Sewing Bee". Now seeking applicants for series seven, it seems unbelievable that competitive sewing could prove so popular – particularly as a recent survey suggested that around a quarter of us cannot even sew on a button. The Make Do and Mend generation of the Second World War, encouraged by the Ministry of Information to unravel old knitwear to make new designs, turn men's shirts into stylish tops, and darn, patch and repair rather than disposing of items, is long gone. We throw away 26 million items a year that could have been mended, at a

cost of some £3 billion. Fast fashion is partly responsible for this, but a lack of skill, time or inclination is obviously holding many people back from making their clothes last. For a huge number of people, their idea of a sewing kit is something that comes back from a hotel with the free shampoo and shower cap, and is even less likely to be used. One in three of us has never been taught to sew, and textiles is yet another Arts subject gone from (or at least jeopardized in) many schools by the current obsession with STEM subjects, while creativity and practical skills have seemingly gone out of fashion.

That makes me sad. As well as making me think (often until my brain hurts), and giving me some very cheap clothes -- I have a winter coat which cost me £13.50, 50p for a charity shop pattern, £1 for thread, and £12 for some really good value fleecy fabric, which is not far off the cost of three pints -- sewing has done a huge amount for my wellbeing. I am lucky enough to have a sewing room and it is my refuge from work and chores. I was given a fabulous sewing machine for my 40th birthday and it is probably my most treasured possession. Sitting on the sofa curled up with a book, or watching Netflix is great for relaxing, and I probably do this as much as most people, but sewing is one of the most fulfilling things I do – possibly because it gives me a sense of achievement without really feeling like hard work.



Ms Hulme's Sewing Room

“

...sewing is one of the most fulfilling things I do – possibly because it gives me a sense of achievement without really feeling like hard work.

Last year a friend and I undertook the '52 Week Sewing Challenge' on Facebook. There were around 40,000 members of the group from all over the world, and each and every week we posted a picture of what we had made, either following the challenge set or 'going rogue' and doing our own thing. It was a really interesting exercise: for someone who claimed she 'didn't have time' to sew, suddenly I found time, every single week, to sew at least something. I made a lot of presents, some clothes and things for the house, and it gave me such a feeling of accomplishment. I really am not a good sewer, but I got a lot better undertaking that challenge and I loved being part of something bigger. I sometimes struggle to persevere when things get complicated – I have yet to finish my first pair of jeans, started a year ago – I would rather buy fabric than sew with it, and I am still scared of zips, but sewing is definitely my idea of fun.

# A Marathon Walk for NHS Charities and A Marathon Run for Rainbows Children's Hospice

by Alexandra Peet

**A**lthough fundraising has been difficult during lockdown, members of the school have still found opportunities to raise money for causes they care about.

During the February 2021 half term, Poppy Page (Year 11) and Alice Dobson (Year 13) walked a marathon to raise money for "NHS Charities", because of their lifesaving work during the pandemic. The girls said that they thought walking 26 miles would be fun and also ambitious: "Go



big or go home." Although the fields were muddy and although they had done no training to walk such a distance, Alice and Poppy said that they had enjoyed the challenge and felt both pride and relief when it was over. Doing the walk together was what kept them motivated, they said.

Lucy Cooke (Year 11) ran 26 miles in 26 hours to raise money for Rainbows Children's Hospice, who aim to bring support to children with life-limiting conditions and their families. She was looking for a new way to motivate herself and was inspired by someone she saw on social media who ran 24 miles in 24 hours. Running a marathon was something she had always wanted to do, Lucy says. After the seventh mile, she started to get a bit tired, but taking some breaks made the experience bearable.

"Running through the middle of the night was a really strange experience," Lucy says. "The street lamps went off at about 1:00 am so it was quite difficult to see. I don't think I've ever been so happy finishing a run. It was completely exhausting but the sense of achievement at the end was incredible."



# LGS's Massive Charity Easter Egg Collection

by Alexandra Peet

**T**he whole school came together to bring some Easter 2021 cheer to the local community. The response to this was overwhelmingly positive, with Easter eggs being collected throughout the school to be given to the Motor Neurone Disease Association Leicestershire, who had contacted the school with a request.

Overall, approximately 455 Easter Eggs were collected from all years of the school. Approximately 200 eggs were given to people with Motor Neurone Disease and children whose parents have Motor Neurone Disease. A further 200 eggs were sent to Loros for Day Therapy and distributed among their staff and patients. The Jubilee Food Bank in Market Harborough received 40 eggs, whilst the Matt Hampson Foundation were given the remaining 15 Easter eggs. This Foundation aims to support young people who have sustained a life-changing injury through sport. Following this, a parent, Mrs Strevens created an Easter hamper, which was raffled, raising a further £514 for the Motor Neurone Disease Association Leicestershire.

This was a highly successful endeavor, as the school community got completely behind it. We intend to continue to support the Motor Neurone Disease Association, perhaps by doing another Easter egg collection next year.



# Virtual Pet Show for Pets as Therapy

by Alexandra Peet

**F**undraising has been difficult during the lockdown. The majority of the usual methods cannot go ahead on account of the pandemic and concerns for safety relating to it. Despite this, our Charity Committee has been working away in order to discover Covid-safe ways for our school community to fundraise.

A recent fundraising success was a Virtual Pet Show, which took place a few weeks before Easter 2021. After coming up with the idea, the next challenge was to choose the categories for judging the lovely pets. After much deliberation, seven categories were chosen:

The winners were chosen by the members of our Charity Committee following a vote. They ranged from a cute puppy showing off its tricks to a tortoise having its very own spa day. The Virtual Pet Show raised £52 for the Pets as Therapy Charity. Special thanks go to Charity Committee members Holly and Lili, who played a key role in the co-ordination of our school Pet Show.

## BEST IN SHOW

won by Biscuit and Coconut,  
belonging to Hannah in Year 7

## MOST EXOTIC

won by guppy fish, Odysseus Junior and  
Round Tail, entered by Demetrius, Year 7

## BEST DRESSED

won by turtle, Tallulah,  
belonging to Isabelle, Year 7

## MOST TALENTED

won by Monty the cockapoo,  
entered by Eleanor, Prep

## WORST BEHAVED

won by Mango the toy poodle,  
belonging to Aneya, Year 8

## CELEBRITY LOOKALIKE

won by the rabbit belonging  
to Isabelle, Year 7



## Introducing Miss Driver Head of Art

Interview by Mia Rhodes (photo by Mrs Hunt)

### When did you first take an interest in art?

I always wanted to do art. As I spent all my time at it, I could draw well from an early age and my family are very interested in the arts too. I would enter every art competition I could find and would do drawings for my teachers. When I was fifteen, I set up a drawing and painting business called 'By Katy' and would go to craft fairs to sell my art. My grandfather helped to get me started and I made £500 in one summer.

### Who are some of your favourite artists?

John Everett Millais and Frederic Leighton: I love Pre-Raphaelite paintings such as 'Ophelia' by Millais; it was what first got me interested in oil painting, which is now my favourite medium. I admire Kara Walker and Jenny Saville also. I always loved Antony Gormley's 'Another Place' figures on Crosby beach; I thought they were simple yet very moving, particularly when they would emerge from the sea during low tide.

### What did you do before you came here?

I worked as a costume standby, designer and maker for theatre, TV and film sets, making costumes for the crowd or the extras in films such as "The Huntsman: Winter's War", "Beauty and the Beast" and "Alice through the Looking Glass". I met Helen Bonham Carter, Johnny Depp, Emma Watson, Anne Hathaway and Emma Thompson whilst on set, which was really fun!

### What is your favourite part about teaching?

Getting people really excited about learning

and to be proud of their artwork. I wanted to be more than a teacher who stands around at the front of the class: someone to talk to. I am so excited to teach at LGS as the creative arts are valued here and I think creative subjects essential in education, as it makes pupils more well-rounded and helps them to find an area they flourish in. Art is tactile, it is working with your hands and an escape for lots of students, where they can express themselves and experiment and explore.

### What inspires you creatively?

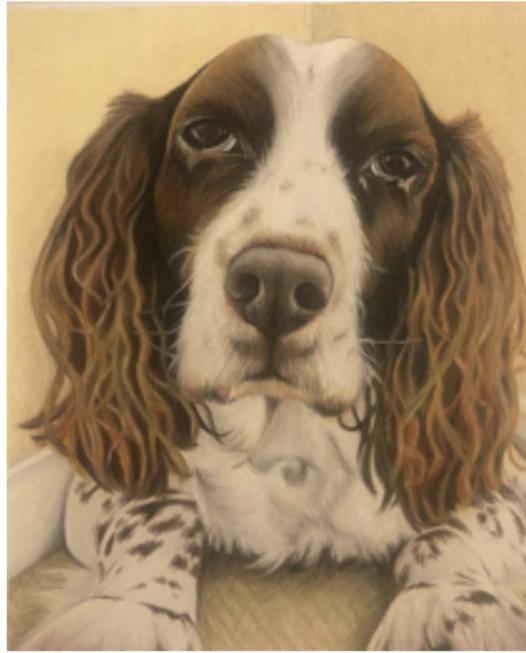
I love to bounce ideas off people in creative conversations and talk about future possibilities for projects with them. I am also inspired by nature and the outdoors as I love walking, hiking and exploring. Art galleries are the best source of inspiration for me though. The Tate Britain, the Royal Academy and the V&A in London are my favourite places to get lost in when I hit a creative block.

### What is your favourite piece that you have done?

I did a drawing of my boyfriend's dog who passed away and gave it to his family. Their dog's name was Derry, as they are from Northern Ireland. They teared up when they saw the drawing and it made me feel really honoured to be able to create a piece of Artwork that they can keep as a reminder of him. I am also proud of my expressive A-Level pallet knife paintings inspired by water and the wearable sculpture I made during my Loughborough Foundation course, where Mr Sylvester was my tutor.

# Artwork

by Miss Driver



Portrait of Derry the dog

Self-portrait

Bird costume made of leather and black bin-liners, with claw made of leather and glass beads fired into clay



## Featured A-level Artist: Sian Brewin



### When did you first become interested in artwork?

I have always been a hands-on creative person and have enjoyed Art for as long as I can remember. However, it wasn't until GCSE that I realized how many exciting careers there are within Art and Design. School Art trips to the Tate Gallery always provided work to admire and draw inspiration from.

### Which artists have inspired you?

As I am most drawn to textiles and pattern design, William Morris and the Scottish interiors company Timorous Beasties were key inspirations for my work in Upper Sixth. I also drew ideas from Alexander McQueen for my sculptural work. Although he was a fashion designer, there were plenty of elements from his approach to design that I could apply to Fine Art.

**Please describe your major GCSE Art piece.** For my final GCSE piece, I painted

a portrait of myself with screen-printed silhouettes of different figures in the background. The focus was on conveying different emotions through different facial expressions and creating something that was simple but impactful.

### Please describe your two major A-level Art pieces.

My two projects were a 3-D insect swarm wallpaper installation and a wearable art sculpture. These two pieces were more directed towards textiles and I was able to push the boundaries of what is considered Fine Art. I created a double-layered repeat butterfly and bee pattern which I screen-printed to create the base of my wallpaper. This design was very much inspired by Timorous Beasties. Then I cut out a vast amount of 3D paper butterflies to attach to the wallpaper and its surroundings to mimic the effect of the butterflies coming to life.



For my wearable art sculpture, I wanted to represent plastic pollution and the importance of protecting the natural world. Drawing inspiration from Alexander McQueen's 'Plato's Atlantis' collection, I decided to create a form of wearable art armour. I digitally designed my own plastic patterns and screen-printed them onto fabric and paper which I then used to construct the sculpture. All of the paper elements of my sculpture are different-sized circles, folded in a range of ways to create volume and different shapes.

**What are your plans for the future? Will you pursue a career in art?** Yes, in September I will be starting a Textiles degree at Bath Spa University, where I will learn about textiles for fashion and interiors, as I hope to pursue a career in interiors textiles or interior design.

## Featured A-level Artist: Ella Davies

Interview by Svaraji Odedra and Aditya Mathur

### Which art medium do you enjoy working in the most?

Clay, as I love the way that its form and texture can be manipulated so easily. I enjoy being able to completely transform the surface of clay using complex layering involving silk-screening, decals and glazing. I have also enjoyed silk-screening and painting onto fabric.

### Who are some of your favourite artists?

Nam June Paik's exhibition at the Tate Modern was the last exhibition I went to before the lockdown. He uses a variety of non-traditional materials and technologies to create installations and robotic sculptures. I found it fascinating how his early work, titled the 'Electronic Superhighway', predicted the future of technology and the internet age. My favourite piece of Paik's is "TV Garden" (1974-7) where he places TV screens alongside live plants, creating an environment where technology and nature can co-exist.

### Describe your A-level final projects. What inspired you?

My theme was the memories that are stored inside spaces. My first piece was an installation made from hanging fabric and wooden scaffolding – I am interested in construction and deconstruction. My other final project is made of numerous ceramic houses all

connected with gold thread, leading up to a gold house at the top of the display. This piece was looking at renovation and change, and how these are reflected in the memories of different people who share the same space.

My work was inspired by Rachel Whiteread, Do Ho Suh and Christo. Whiteread's 'House', a cast of the internal space of a London terraced house, is sadly no longer viewable as it was removed by the council, but it was well documented and I have been able to study it. Suh is best known for his life-sized

fabric sculptures of interior spaces and passages within houses. Christo and his wife, Jeanne-Claude, are famous for transforming buildings by wrapping them in fabric. For instance, they enveloped the Reichstag in miles of fabric. Working on such a large scale was not possible in school, but has inspired my ambitions.

### What will you pursue at university and as a career?

I am studying Computer Science next year and hope to specialise in Software Engineering, a creative field. I will also have art as a way of relaxing, even if it is not a daily activity.



## Featured A-level Artist: Suditi Chattopadhyay

### When did you first become interested in artwork?

From an early age, I started drawing, primarily cartoons, and watching arts and crafts shows. As I got older, I started to use books and YouTube tutorials to develop and refine my skills. Going on school trips to art galleries broadened my horizons immensely, in terms of the possibilities of colour, media and scale. Art has now become a personal outlet for me to display my creativity, as well as my frustrations and joy. It has been tremendously beneficial for my mental health, as it allows me to clear my mind and detach myself from my surroundings completely.

### Which artists inspire you?

Barbara Walker: her series, 'Show and tell' explores how clothing, hair and jewellery can be used to form judgements on someone without even glimpsing their face. Walker uses clothing associated with African American gang culture and demonstrates how many viewers

form a negative judgement so quickly, so that people can examine their unconscious prejudices. It is this ability to start a conversation about societal injustice that I have aimed to create in my own work.

### Describe what you did for your major GCSE piece.

At GCSE, my work explored the theme of fragmentation to show frozen moments in time within a continuous movement. I was particularly interested in cubism (Picasso and Braque) and the ways in which they were able to flatten forms completely, yet create so much depth and sharpness through dynamic composition and colour. However, I mainly work realistically, hence I used realistically drawn forms, fragmented using sharply edged shapes. This created a contrast between soft and harsh forms, hence symbolising how each moment is so quickly overtaken

by another in the rapid movement of time.

### Describe what you did for your A-level piece.

At A-level, my theme was cultural bilingualism and the societal pressures around establishing an identity in the western world. Often a person tries to detach themselves from their cultural heritage, but in my works I show the beauty in proudly embracing it, through my use of vibrant hues, free-flowing layered composition and figures in open stances. In my main piece, the figures are all immersed in a traditional Indian dance genre, Bharatanatyam. I show visually how a person's heritage will always be a part of them, no matter how much they may want to suppress or run away from it.

### What are your plans for the future? Will you pursue a career in art?

I hope to study medicine at university. Nonetheless, I am tremendously grateful for all the skills fine art has given me: resilience, time management, dexterity and attention to detail. I definitely hope to continue art in my own time for relaxation but also to challenge myself.

## Featured GCSE Artist: Keira Beatty

Interview by Jed Simpkin and Will Wale

### Why do you enjoy art so much?

It allows me to be creative and I find it very relaxing. It is also something I have been able to do with my family. When my grandparents retired, they both became artists, painting for exhibitions and running classes, and my dad also did Art as an A-level, so artwork has always been something we have been able to do together and I could always go to them for advice.

### Who's your favourite artist?

I enjoy looking at and seeking ideas from the famous artists like Picasso, Monet, Van Gogh, but I also enjoy discovering less high-profile artists such as Henrik Uldalen, one of my favourite artists so far because of his use of abstract realism in an amalgamation of naturalist human form and more abstract expression.



### Do you think art just exists to portray what happens or do you think it is used to challenge opinions and create change?

I do believe that art is used to challenge and create change. Countless societies, empires and governments have used art to manipulate and change people's views.

### Do you think that the art world has suffered at the hands of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Obviously the restriction of movement has had a great effect on the art world: people haven't been able to visit art galleries and see paintings and were less able to go outside and paint.

### Do you believe that digital art is the future?

I think digital art is only one form of art - I definitely do not believe that art should become solely digital. I think we should continue to practice the classic method of paint on canvas, even as technology continues to advance.

### Do you think that when art represents something undesirable in society, such as old art that represents old values that aren't currently acceptable, that we should get rid of it?

I don't think it would be right to get rid of it. Throughout history society's views have constantly changed and will continue to change. For example a lot of old art objectifies women due to the way they are portrayed, but it wouldn't be a good idea to get rid of it. I think that it's important to look back and see what has changed and what we can do to change things in the future.



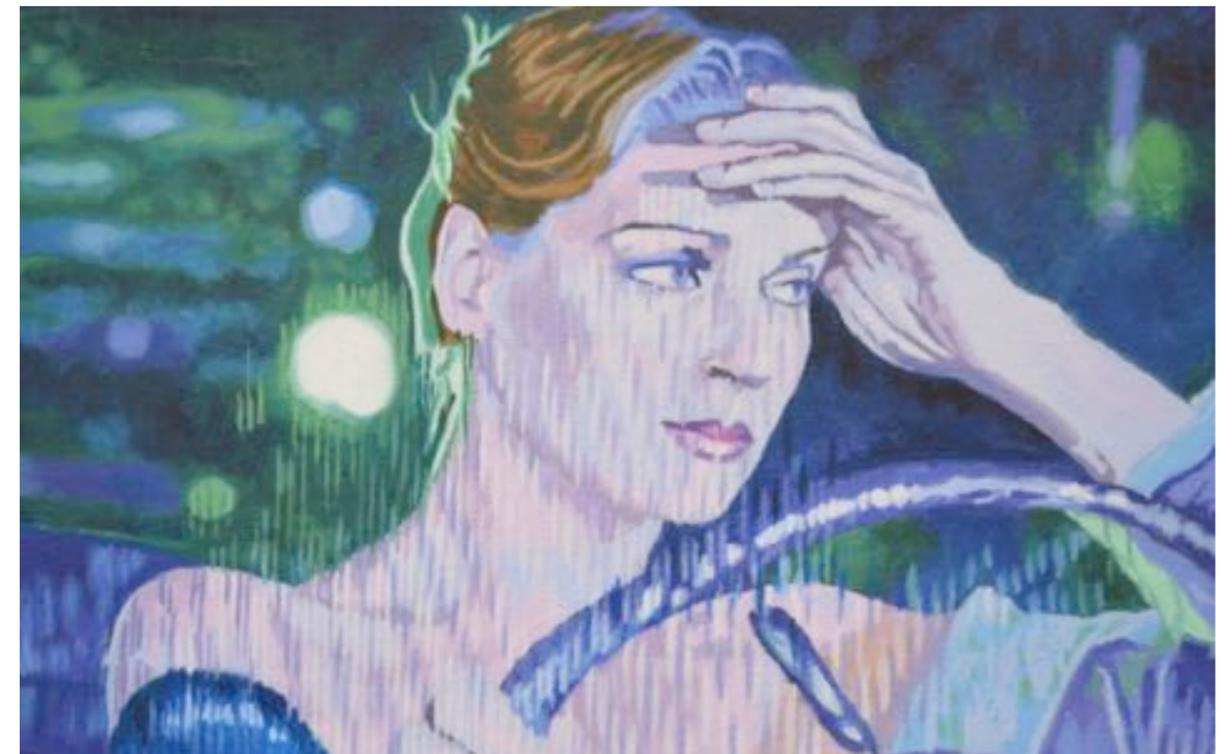
# A Solo Art Exhibition

## by Mrs Cade-Stewart

Mrs Cade-Stewart is better known as a part-time Classics teacher at LGS, where she has been teaching since September 2019. However, in her spare time, she is also a prolific painter and professional artist who has been painting since she was a teenager, but chose to pursue an academic route at university, securing a place to study Classics at Oxford. Whilst at Oxford, she spent hours in the life room at the Ruskin School of Art as a part-time student, going on to complete an art foundation course at Oxford Brookes University.

Her recent solo show 'The Supposition of her Existence' at Stamford Contemporary Arts tackles portraiture, but the figures suggest narratives rather than specific identities. The paintings often capture a moment of hesitation or transition, and emerge from or recede into a pattern of lines. She re-photographs found photographic sources multiple times from the screen of a device: this provides a starting point for colour reductions and textural confusions. The paintings often allude to classical myth and pre-Raphaelite representations of women.

Mrs Cade-Stewart has exhibited at numerous art fairs, at Modern Art Oxford and at the Mall Galleries for the ING Discerning Eye exhibition in 2005. She was a semi-finalist in the Big Art Challenge 2004, was shortlisted for the Alpine Fellowship Visual Arts Prize 2021 and is the recipient of an Arts Council Grant which will enable her to develop a series of paintings about maternal mental illness. Mrs Cade-Stewart has a website ([www.lucycade.com](http://www.lucycade.com)) which documents her work and artistic activity.



## Featured A-Level DT Student: Patrick Wang

Interview by Samuel Jordan and Nishchal Mistry

### Briefly describe your A-Level NEA Project

I chose to design an architectural model as opposed to a product, as I plan to study Architecture at university. For A-Level we set our own brief and so I decided to design and prototype a sustainable school building. Specifically, I designed a building for the Prep which would be on the current front playground. During my research, I learned a lot about our school buildings and the factors that go into sustainable architecture and construction.

### What other A-Level subjects are you currently studying to prepare for Architecture?

For me, it was quite satisfying when I found areas of overlap between our Geography case studies and certain topics in DT theory, such as sustainable foresting and resource extraction. Maths was quite different, but I enjoyed the fact that it required a different mind-set to my other subjects.

### What are your aspirations for the future?

The reason I became interested in DT and Architecture was because of sketches I had seen at university open days and on Pinterest -- I really admire people who can simply put what they visualise down on paper. In the future, I am definitely going to keep working on my sketching skills.



## Featured A-Level DT Student: Callam Cowan

### What was your major design project this year?

This year we had to design and make a stool for the Leicester Grammar School library. Our brief was to produce a stool that was suited to all ages and also included references to Leicester in its design. My stool included holes around the sides that reflected the exterior design of the Curve Theatre.

### What were the challenges in putting the design together?

We started making our stools before the Christmas holidays and the plan was to finish them off when we returned in January. However due to COVID lockdown, we were delayed until March. Overall my stool had a simple design; however there were still intricate stages in putting it together, such as making the curved mould and the process of routing the holes. I also had to be very precise when cutting my materials down to size to ensure that the two sections of my stool lined up perfectly. There were some initial worries around whether my stool would actually support the weight of a person sitting on it; however, after some initial cautious testing, the stool was found to be safe to sit on.

### What was your major design project at GCSE?

For GCSE I designed a children's desk that could be increased in size to match the child's growth. It aimed to address the problem of providing a safe and comfortable home by making sure a child always has a desk that fits their needs and measurements. It also addressed sustainability problems by providing a long-lasting piece of children's furniture; children's furniture can often be a short-use product that gets disposed of quickly after being bought, due to the quick growth of younger children.

### What are your plans for university and your career? Will DT be involved?

For university I am thinking about doing a design-related course such as architecture or product design. I am interested in many aspects of design and I enjoy creating so I feel that a course like this would be enjoyable.



## Featured GCSE DT Student: Annie Gould

Interview by Kajol Mistry

### Which project have you enjoyed most in DT and why?

The project I have most enjoyed has definitely been my NEA that I have done during the last two years; I designed an organiser/workstation for completing school work at home. Even though we were not able to construct the product, the designing process was really enjoyable because of how we developed it – it wasn't just making the first idea that came to mind.

### What is your favourite aspect of design?

My favourite part of design has to be the practical part (final construction with the real materials), which is a nice thing to do after spending a long time developing, refining, and fixing problems for a product. However, I also do enjoy catching problems during something like modelling (either in CAD or using card models) and finding solutions for them, because I feel like the design is always a bit more cohesive afterwards.

### Is there a designer you particularly admire?

An architect I admire very much is Zaha Hadid for her incredibly artistic use of buildings – the buildings she has designed are really unique and beautiful (see example on the right) and would

definitely leave an impression on any visitors; they make you think by just looking at them.

### What do you plan to do (at A-Level and beyond)?

At A-Level, I'm planning to do DT, RS, Physics and Maths, all of which I am excited about doing. Further than that, the current plan is to go into architecture or architectural engineering, although it is of course possible that this may change.

### Do you have any advice for younger DT students?

I would say to be open to new ideas, and not to fixate on one design or on one particular aspect of it. Being open to changing your design and listening to others' feedback will help to catch problems you might not see yourself and will also provide a wider range of practical solutions.



## Mr McLean Moves On



**B**oris Johnson and I don't have much in common but we do have two close similarities. Firstly, his hair and mine are both rather unkempt. Even in non-Covid times the length of mine can be used as an indicator of how close to the end of term and, consequently, how close to my next thrice-yearly haircut we are getting. More importantly, we both studied the same degree at the same university. The course's name, 'Literae Humaniores', dates from a time when there were only two courses on offer; Theology and, well, everything else. My Latin pupils should already have identified the comparative '-ior' (more / -er) and worked out that it means something along the lines of "the more human literatures" (as opposed to the biblically 'divine' ones). A more helpful translation would be 'Classics'; including Latin, Classical Greek, Classical Civilisation, Ancient History, Philosophy and Archaeology.

Clearly, Boris and I have followed very different paths since university but what we both share is a debt to a very special subject, through which our view of the world, our place in it and our vision for its future have been shaped. The worlds of the Romans and Greeks still dictate British attitudes and actions in numerous ways, not least because of the disproportionate influence that students of the Classics have had on British life. This can easily be charted from the Renaissance right through to Boris' most recent political acts. In making his decision to support Brexit rather than Remain, we are told that he wrote two arguments as persuasively as he could, for and against. This is a homework task on rhetoric

that would have been second nature to every Roman school boy, including Pliny the Younger, who tells us in one letter that it was a need to get his homework finished that saved him from the volcanic eruption that killed his uncle. (So, homework really can be a life-saver!) Boris' illegal action of proroguing parliament to circumvent parliamentary scrutiny on his Brexit deal was one that he made in full knowledge that monarchs can be misled, and legalities and political conventions transgressed, as long as one has sufficient popular support. It was his extensive studies of the political machinations of Julius Caesar and others that gave him this confidence.

Use and abuse of Classics is nothing new. Enoch Powell's 'River of Blood' speech twisted Virgil's imagery to express a peculiarly British kind of racism, while Trump's insistence on all new federal buildings being built in neo-classical style, reminiscent of plantation houses, has been seen as a 21st century invocation of the 'glory days' of the slavery of the American South. If you are starting to conclude that, given Classics' record of producing such manipulative egotists, we should ban its study at once for all our sakes, think again. Immunisation against evils, medical or otherwise, is the result of exposure under controlled conditions. The answer is always more education, not less. It will come as no surprise that the British Supreme Court, which passed judgement against Boris and forced the reopening of parliament, was presided over by none other than Baroness Hale, another classical enthusiast. Her recent re-creation in a British court of a famous Roman trial from 70BC can be found by searching for "a mock trial of Verres". Inspiring leaders closer to home, whose skills and outlooks were honed by classical study, include both our Headmaster (a degree in Classics and French) and our Director of Finance and Operations (A-level Latin). So, if you want to be a doctor, priest, accountant, activist, translator, scientist or artist, please study Medicine, Theology, Maths, Politics, MFL, Science or Art. But if you want to be a better version of any of the above, make sure you study some Classics too.

It has been my privilege for the last nine years to teach the finest subjects, in a department of the finest colleagues, to classes of the finest pupils. I will treasure the memories of my time at LGS. For me personally, they will be, in the words of Thucydides, a "κτῆμα ἐς αἰεὶ - a possession for all time."



## A Latin Reading Competition

by Aarnav Saluja, Year 8

**A**arnav was awarded the Bronze award in the Junior Category of this year's EACT Latin Reading Competition for his rendition of 'coniuratio' ('A Conspiracy') from page seven of the Year 8 textbook. The judges commented, "What distinguished Aarnav's entry from all our other entries was the quality of the vowel sounds and the intonation which suggested an exceptional level of comprehension."

If you get a chance to participate in a Latin Reading competition, then there are many aspects to consider. If you are aware of these, then you have a good chance of doing well or even getting a certificate.

First, the judges will be looking for the correct pronunciation. The Latin 'v' should be pronounced as an English 'w', '-er' should be pronounced as '-air', the '-t' should be pronounced in 'est', unlike in French, and there should be an effort to distinguish long vowels like ā, ē, ī, ō, ū, with accents on top from the short vowels a, e, i, o, u. If you manage to follow these rules consistently, this will show that you are efficient at reading Latin and that you

know all the fundamentals to reading Latin stories.

Secondly, the judges will also look for some drama, so, if the character is surprised, convey the line in a surprised tone. In addition, it should be the correct characterisation for each person in the story. For example, Salvius is a murderous and scheming Roman, who doesn't think twice about putting sick slaves to death, so you should say his lines in a mean tone to let the audience know what type of character he is.

**"...you get to experience and learn something new and unique"**

Finally, it would be really fun to enter one because you get to experience and learn something new and unique and if you win you get a voucher to spend. If you did not get a chance to do it this year, try it next year instead. Good luck.

# Myths About Myths

by Eleanor Jones

**A**lmost everyone knows the basic story of Pandora's box: Pandora was given a box and told not to open it. She opened it, and out flew all the bad things we have in the world today. Logical conclusion: Pandora is to blame – she deliberately opens a box she has been specifically told not to open. However, what fewer people know is that in the Ancient Greek version of the story Pandora did not have a box, she had a jar. In Greek, a *πίθος*, not a *πύξος*. At first, they seem very similar – does it really matter if Erasmus, translating the story from Greek into Latin in the sixteenth century mixed up his vocab? Maybe not, but if Pandora had a box instead of a jar, this causes a subtle shift in who is blame. First, imagine Pandora's box. Maybe it is a heavy gold chest (as depicted in John William Waterhouse's painting) or a smaller box, like in Rossetti's version. Now, imagine Pandora opening the box. This is a deliberate action, requiring forethought and effort. However, as Natalie Haynes points out in her book Pandora's Jar, if Pandora instead released all the bad things from a jar, this seems less deliberate: a jar could be knocked over or broken much more easily than a box. And so, whilst later translations of the story depict Pandora as either so lacking in self-control that she just had to open a forbidden box, or so evil that she was deliberately disobedient, in the Ancient Greek versions this was not always the case. In fact, in some versions of the story, the box is not filled with bad things but with good things, and in others it is not Pandora but her husband Epimetheus who opens the box.

For us today, Pandora's story has become almost a Greek equivalent to the story of Eve in the Bible: a woman disobeys instructions and brings all bad things into the world. However, Ancient Greek art seems to focus less on Pandora's role as a bringer of all evil, as we do today, and more on her role as the ancestor of all women. When Pausanias (a Greek geographer and traveller writing in the second century AD) described a carving

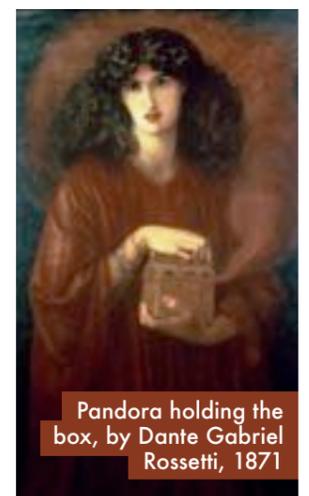
showing the birth of Pandora on the pedestal of a statue of Athena in the Parthenon, he does not mention her jar, or the role we associate with her today of bringing all evil into the world. Instead, he simply reminds us that before Pandora, there were no women. Since this carving of Pandora in the most impressive temple in Athens shows her birth, it suggests that the part of her story where she was created as the first woman was more important to the Greeks than the part when she (or her husband) opened the jar, which we tend to focus on today.

There are many other examples of mistranslations: Hippolyta, the Amazon warrior queen, is often described as having a 'girdle', when in fact the Greek word used is the same as used for Achilles and other warriors, *ζωστήρ*, a war belt. Whilst a girdle is not strictly gendered, it sounds so much more domestic than a war belt and reduces Hippolyta from a warrior equal to if not better than men, as the Greeks saw her, to a woman with a pretty belt, as modern translations imply.

Whilst this does impact the view we might have of the Amazons today, it has less of an impact that the mistranslation in Pandora's story – the phrase 'Pandora's Box' is an idiom meaning 'a gift which seems a blessing but is in fact a curse' or a 'source of unexpected evil', becoming a part of our modern language in a way 'Hippolyta's girdle' never has. In a way these changes are irrelevant, as it is part of the nature of stories to adapt and evolve over time - in many cases, there is no set 'original' version of a myth. However, when looking to use these stories as sources of information about the classical world, we should remember that many more modern retellings have been influenced by other stories, views and prejudices not representative of the classical world.



John William Waterhouse's Pandora, 1896



Pandora holding the box, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1871

# 'The Oresteia' & 'Hamlet'

## A Bridge between Cultures

An Extract from the EPQ Essay of Sebastian Moore-Friis

**W**hile drafting a title for my EPQ essay, it caught my interest how a society's view of cultural events, such as regicide, the killing of a king, may change over time. Looking at historical exemplars, the social perception of regicide depends on how positive a nation believes monarchy is to its cultural identity and well-being. To the French of the late 1700s, monarchy was the greatest impediment to fraternité and égalité, the communal fabric of society, and so Marie Antoinette's trip to the guillotine seemed entirely warranted. However, being one of only two surviving constitutional monarchies, present-day England is a rather unique feature of a 21st century political landscape dominated by self-governed republics. While the Queen's role in modern government is mostly symbolic, the enduring position of the monarchy in British culture is clearly observable. Anyone living in the UK will be familiar with the atmosphere of national jubilation surrounding royal weddings and of mourning surrounding more solemn occasions, such as Prince Philip's death. Yet recent controversies and the fact that The Queen now rules alone at 95 years of age give an impression of monarchical decline, and beg the question of whether the monarchy is on its way out. Through the mode of regicide, both Aeschylus and Shakespeare explored the causes and impacts of monarchical decline in 'The Oresteia' and 'Hamlet'. This made up the subject matter of my EPQ, 'An Investigation into the morality of regicide in 'The Oresteia' and 'Hamlet'".

Considering 5th c. BC Athens alongside early 17th century England, cultural differences make interpreting the morality of regicide more interesting but also more complex. As Aeschylus' Athens was a democracy, the Greek kings having been abandoned in centuries past, it would be natural to assume that a contemporary audience would deem regicide in 'The Oresteia' as moral. Yet a conservative faction, which sought to defend traditional institutions of government, was also prevalent in Athens. In the course of 'The Oresteia', set in the 12th c. BC, the event which determines the resolution of the play is Athena's founding of the traditional Athenian



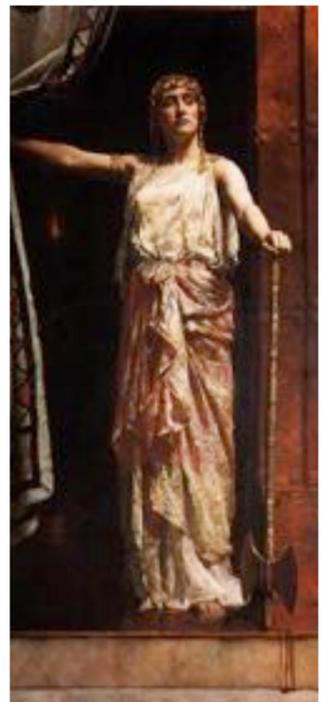
legal system, where she creates a mortal council to assist her in presiding over the trial of Orestes and all future cases. Orestes, the protagonist of the trilogy, has been put on trial for killing his mother, Clytemnestra, who killed and usurped Agamemnon, Orestes' father and former king of Mycenae. A key outcome here is that Orestes is acquitted for removing his mother and her incestuous lover Aegisthus from the throne: avenging the death of a king and returning to rule Mycenae in his stead after the trial, Orestes is seen as a positive force in restoring socio-political order. Through the association of monarchy and social order, regicide is therefore presented as immoral, despite any personal motivations to commit such an act. As the gods demanded Agamemnon sacrifice her, Clytemnestra had sought to avenge their daughter, Iphigenia, by killing Agamemnon. Another key outcome of the trial is that the gods are associated with traditional Athenian government and law; thus any attempt to replace or alter them, through democratic reform for instance, would be a direct transgression against the gods – wholly immoral in the context of Athenian society. Indeed the democrat leader, Ephialtes, had sought to limit the powers of the Areopagus Council severely, the historical parallel to the council established by Athena in 'The Oresteia'. Given that Ephialtes' reforms in 462 BC were contemporary to the first performance of 'The Oresteia' at the Dionysia of

458 BC, it would appear that, from a conservative stance, Aeschylus uses the plays to lobby political criticism against Ephialtes and any who might follow in his footsteps, Ephialtes having been assassinated in 461 BC. These observations are particularly relevant when considering that attendance of the Dionysia, a festival celebrating theatre and the god Dionysus, was mandatory for all Athenian citizens. Aeschylus presents regicide as immoral, a threat to social order, in keeping with his criticism of political change in Athens.

Taking a political reading of 'Hamlet', it is of note that England was becoming an increasingly absolutist monarchy under James I, who exulted in the Divine Right of Kings at great length in his 'The True Law of Free Monarchies'. As monarchy was promoted by James I, it might therefore be assumed that Shakespeare's contemporary audience would have perceived regicide in 'Hamlet' as immoral. However, as a foreign king from Scotland, the English people would have been sceptical of James. This is especially true given that James came to power at the 'fin de siècle' of the 16th century, when there was a belief that all things would come to an end, leading to or as a result of mass change at the turn of a century. This effect would have been magnified by the Tudor dynasty, which ruled England from 1485-1603, coming to an end with the death of Elizabeth I and then James I's coronation. As it was performed while Athens was shifting from an oligarchic to a democratic city, 'The Oresteia' is similar to 'Hamlet', being written during a period of great political change. While Shakespeare could not criticise James directly in his plays, or else be convicted of treason, scepticism toward foreign monarchs is a theme of 'Hamlet'. For instance, Hamlet's criticism of his uncle Claudius, who usurped Old King Hamlet, can be applied to broader criticism of foreign kings. Indeed, a foreign setting was often used to safely criticise the playwright's native land in revenge tragedy, a theatrical genre which 'Hamlet' clearly adheres to, as the prince's conspiracy to avenge his father is at the heart of the play; 'The Oresteia' has a similar revenge theme. These factors, in connection with popular morals, make it easier to view regicide in 'Hamlet' as moral. Despite the distance between England and Denmark, 'Hamlet' is a very introspective play, where Shakespeare appeals more to his audience's conscience through lengthy philosophical soliloquies, the best known of which begins, "To be, or not to be? That

is the question." In other well-known plays, such as the 'The Tempest', a greater degree of spectacle is employed. The audience's intimacy with Hamlet's character makes it easier to sympathise with him and so they might therefore view his regicide conspiracy more favourably. However, as the play progresses this intimacy with Hamlet also makes it easier to accuse him of mania, for instance in the scene where he speaks to Yorick's skull on the impermanence of man. Yet the complexity of Hamlet's character also makes him more human. While he is often criticised for his indecision, procrastination over Claudius' murder leading to universal doom, it is of note that like Orestes, who has Apollo as his ally defending him at the trial, Hamlet is driven by Divine Providence. Therefore, even if Hamlet procrastinates, his regicide is inevitable and moral in context, as God wills the purification of the Danish court through Hamlet. Professor Kitto's argument supporting this notion is very convincing. Yet by Shakespeare's agency, Hamlet dies; it could be argued that this serves as punishment for an immoral act of regicide. It is plausible that Shakespeare kills off Hamlet to distance himself from regicide, although it could be suggested that Hamlet is a martyr. This would suggest further veiled criticism of James from Shakespeare, as if Hamlet's death is unjust, a result of the corrupt Claudius' plotting, so too is the invasion of King Fortinbras of Norway, similar to James in that he is a foreigner who intervenes once the established royal line has died out.

One of the most valuable insights I gained from completing the EPQ was that assumptions made about cultures, while sounding plausible, are often wrong or at least not wholly representative. Hence, while regicide would seem moral in the context of 5th century Athens and immoral in the context of 17th century England, the opposite seems true upon closer observation of literary texts.



# The Plane

by Benji Dubois, Prep

Runner-up in the House Writing Competition, Lower School, 2021



Rain was pouring down, splattering the windows. I could feel the plane shaking in the air, the engine spluttering. All around me were dark grey clouds. Lightning flashed across the sky, with thunder rumbling through the valley. Furious winds blew my plane from left to right, shaking it as though a giant had caught it and was trying to demolish the plane. The Storm was one of the most vicious I had experienced. This carried on for the whole night, the clouds blocking the stars.

As I was patrolling the coast, watching for any enemy boats I noticed a black dot on the horizon, growing larger by every second. Suddenly, I saw what the flying object was, a German fighter plane. It started firing shots. I could feel the bullets hitting the wings and the plane started to shake. I knew that I had to fire. Looking at the trigger, I pressed the button and bright orange missiles shot out in front of me; the German plane started swivelling around in the air. I fired again. I watched as the missiles got closer and closer until they hit it. The plane exploded like a giant orange and yellow firework. As it blew

up, I felt a huge surge of regret as I had killed someone. I knew that I had had to do it or else I would have died, but killing another human felt incredibly sad.

As I was flying back over the sea, I saw a swirl of wind in the distance with sea rising around it. I knew instantly it was a typhoon, a dangerous tornado of wind that sucked up boats and planes. I tried to turn the wheel away from it, but the wind was too powerful. I couldn't get out of this danger loop and I felt like I was going to die. I carried on trying to steer the plane away. As I got closer, I could see rocks and parts of shipwrecks circling around in the wind.

I began praying to God, asking if he could help me. I was now in the eye of the storm with thousands of pieces of debris flying around in front of me. I could hear a massive ripping sound as the right wing of the plane got wrenched off and then the left. As I looked to the right, I saw this giant rock hurtling at me. It smashed into the side of the plane and then, everything went black...

*Inspired by a painting by Roy Lichtenstein.*

# The Muted Café

by A Ghosh, Year 7

First Prize in the House Writing Competition, Lower School, 2021

There I sat, no one around,  
For company the empty chair.  
No pin drop to be heard, no sound,  
My heart filled with despair.

Outside the weather was bitterly cold,  
Pitch black, I could not see a soul.  
My warm coat wrapped around  
But no warmth could make me whole.

My dull coffee stared at me,  
The solemn night had stolen my sun.  
I sat at a table for two  
But I was only one.

Alone I was, stuck with my thoughts  
Waiting for my dearest who would never come  
Wishing that someone was sitting opposite me  
But all I felt was numb.

The rain came crashing down over our favourite café.  
I felt morose, saddened to my core  
On the anniversary of that fateful day  
When my lifelong friend was no more.

*Inspired by a painting by Edward Hopper*



# Black Swan

by Mia Rhodes

At the edge of the lake where concrete fades,  
I leap, I twirl, I ache.  
He's perched at the bank, just under the shade.  
Now he stands beside me, observing my dance,  
His dilated eyes lost in a trance.

I knocked with caution, sobbed then spoke,  
Seductive not smart,  
Flapping my feathers, breathing in his smoke.  
All dolled up with a ceramic heart.  
His voice came closer, chin then mouth.  
A peck on the lips,  
My teeth would rip.  
Blood to choke.

The perfect white swan.  
Innocent, sweet.  
Such a frigid little girl.  
Timid and weak.  
Am I?  
He's wrong. I'll soon prove why.  
I want that role, to be that bird.  
With ruffled feathers, he touches my thigh.

Attack it! Attack it!  
I jump, fly and spin.  
Flung from arm to arm,  
From wing to wing.  
All eyes on him.  
Drowning underwater.  
Trying to swim.



He showed me his touch.  
Well?  
That was enough.  
A hiss then a gasp.  
I knew it wouldn't last.  
Perhaps that was too much,  
To rewrite the past.

This I can do.  
To perfection, below you.  
A flurry, little death,  
A rise and fall,  
A swan song in red,  
Feathers covered his bed.  
Sudden silence.  
Cool breath.  
A bodiless head.

I emerge from the lake,  
darker now.  
A black swan at last,  
All the cygnets wondered how.  
No guilt.  
Don't look back.  
No tears or love to lack.  
I held my own hand  
to take a bow.

The sun sets and my  
seeds are sown.  
Any sign of him?  
Of course not.  
All on my own.  
His little princess?  
No.  
The Swan Queen.  
Born to rule alone.



# Heartbreak

by Daniel Gratton, Year 8

How she bewitched me, so careless, optimistic,  
unknowing of the danger, which lay there disguised.  
That sickly sweet scent that could render you heedless,  
balefully disguising the spines laid inside.

I tactfully set my feet down, skin like an angel  
enough to spellbind even the purest of minds.  
I laid my heart down into the jaws of deception  
powerless, unknowing, to the spell I would succumb.

To the unassiduous eye, it remains idealistic  
yet to the one who dares to venture closer,  
it will agonise a lifetime.

It took me to unknowingly reap the sweet reward  
for the spines of heartbreak to take their icy grasp.

Constricted and drained, I lay there impotent.  
All but too late, I realised the fool I had become.  
She weakened her grasp, blossoming out, unaffected,  
cynically yet mercifully, allowing me to wheeze.  
I lay there, unmoving, regretful, in remorse,  
a husk of the man I had once upon a time been.

# Sea Glass

## by Keira Gratton, Year 11

Shared First Prize in the House Writing Competition, Upper School, 2021

**My body stiffens at the sight of it. Little leaves lazily unknowingly in the remaining swirl of tea look back. Disfigured as they may seem, the maimed limbs speak volumes to a trained eye. Annihilation. Bereavement. Eradication. Omens swimming in a happy little circle, hopping bodies of foliage as they go on their merry way. The void pressed up against the window suddenly seems all the more suffocating. Raindrops battering the walls in time with my heartbeat. Gloom rides the Welsh wind's howls as the glass pushes back in defiance. Gusting shrieks of glee as the cyclone silences the wails of seagulls one by one, plunging them under the surf. And as the blackness darkens, lights falter and flicker in the deepening chasm.**

My hands quiver as I set down the teacup, determined to look anywhere but into its murky depths; knuckles whitening as my nails dig into crescent-shaped scars. Background murmurings of other diners blend to a perverse opera in crescendo as I split open old wounds. I need pain to ground me. I flitter my gaze across the floor in a desperate attempt to avoid eye contact as the walls lean in closer. A fight to focus my vision on any diversion. Yet even as I try to scrutinise each shoe that lies in my path, I cannot distract from the churning of my innards. A beat-up brown loafer as my insides grow choppy. A creased trainer as wavelets start to swell. Suede heels as my tea begins to bubble back up my throat. And bare feet. I curl back into my overcoat as a draft trickles down my spine. The door groaning in complaint as the owner of the feet starts across the floor – angled directly at me now. Her blonde waves dripping a steady stream of brine into a growing puddle of grime being lifted off of the tiles. A little brown snake with a mind of its own. And her eyes, blue to the point of translucency, gemstones worn to the brink. They draw closer as I etch the moon into my palms. I never could have guessed that such a fair colour could incite fear. Portray an ethereality within fragility. And yet, as she pours into the seat across from me I wrestle with the urge to gag at the weakness with which her skin clings to her frame.

Breath cowers on my tongue, uneasy at the thought of unwittingly provoking it to slip to the floor. Howbeit all the while, with each blink of the lamp, hues of rainbow appear to glint right through her.

Paralysing anxiety persists to wreak havoc in my stomach. Coincidence does not appear in such empyrean forms. Fate herself has a hand in this plight. The woeful woman leans in, and I tip back in turn. The closer she advances, the more overpowering the stench of saline rot leaching from her mouth. I can almost taste the screams of tragic misadventure. I can almost taste the power. Her hand begins its slow advance across the table as I stare, transfixed by a small pond that now whirls below her. It laps at my toes as if it believes itself a small child tugging at his mother's dress. Her fingers flow around mine, droplets of water beading in their wake – desperate to keep up. Yet as I try to meet her gaze, I unwittingly peer right through bubbling rivulets and collide with a drab little man meters behind. A smile tugs at her lips as she realises my mistake. I catch the gleam of her pearls before a sombre expression washes the grin far out to sea. Her grip on me tightens, begging forgiveness. Salt spills down her cheek, pooling above her trembling lips as they mouth apology wordlessly. My palms sting as she grows icy in my grasp.

I know her. Across from me sits the ocean, in all her brilliance. "Sorry" ghosts her lips as my eyes roll from my head and splash into the loch below. A goddess draped in the sails of fallen vessels. The streams running from her eyes swell to rivers as I cradle her hands close to my chest. I can feel my heart gasp for air as I am starstruck against the rocks. I should writhe in shame at having believed such celestial grandeur a girlish delicacy. A penance of persecution for such disregard of her elegance. Yet as she presses her forehead to mine, I sense only love between us. Love and regret. And she holds me close as a wave smashes the automat into a million little shards of sea glass.



# Leicestrian Drama Overview, 2021

by A L Hulme

**Ended my review of the previous academic year with the promise that: 'whatever happens, there will be theatre, in some form, next year!' It turned out there was something prophetic in those words.**

Our initial plans for the school production in December were amended so many times -- thanks to social distancing, bubbles and various groups isolating -- that I described the finished product as being somewhere around 'Plan T'. It did happen, though, and, despite beginning with fairly humble ambitions, the project took on a life of its own, and an entire film evolved, the premiere timed to coincide with the end of the second lockdown and remote teaching. "2020 - The Year that Refused to End" was a record of

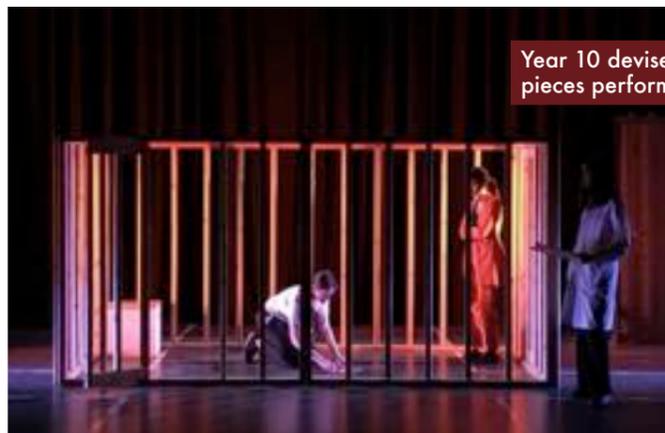
an extraordinary year, as seen through the eyes of a young couple, adapting to lockdown with the help of Netflix. There were many light-hearted moments in the film, reflecting the ability of the cast and crew to find humour – however dark – in the most unexpected places. A pandemic is clearly not a laughing matter: instead, the programmes the couple watched gave an often irreverent insight into the strangest of years. Fun was poked at media exploitation of the virus, conspiracy theorists, and the attempts to 'cash-in', and we looked at the bizarre and the entertaining alongside the more serious side of the situation. The second lockdown also meant plans for the lower

school production were put on hold, so the pupils, Miss Adams and Mr Stagg worked instead on a filmed piece, "Pride or Prejudice", a fittingly ambitious project with which to end the academic year. With around 75 pupils involved, all working in their bubbles, it was another creative and logistical triumph.

Teams, though not the perfect medium through which to teach or study Drama, became the means by which groups rehearsed, and workshops and even performances took place. Theatre trips may have been put on hold for the year, but theatre certainly was not. The Year 11 students enjoyed a virtual visit (depicted

in the photo above) by Mark Wheeler, playwright and author of the GCSE set text "Hard To Swallow", and produced some creative set design ideas, shared on the collaborative whiteboard. Prospective and current A-Level Drama & Theatre students worked online for an afternoon with The Paper Birds, whose fabulous verbatim theatre has inspired their own work. Their inventiveness and ability to work together was undiminished by the distance between them, and it showed how much we have all adapted – students and practitioners alike – during the last year or so. Our Year 11 students were particularly resilient this year, coping with the disappointment of not performing their devised work at all, thanks to social distancing rules staying in place, and having to perform their scripted group pieces virtually, thanks to the second lockdown. Despite the limitations of working with actors who were not in the same room, they showed phenomenal resourcefulness, and the finished products, including extracts from "Bouncers", "Breathing Corpses" and "The Pillowman", were so well-polished that we frequently forgot we were watching a montage of screens. Year 10 were much luckier and, having started devising under social distancing restrictions, they never had to adapt their work and were able to perform their physical theatre pieces as intended, albeit without an audience of friends and family.

Amongst the other examined performances this year were Anaya Kotecha's delayed reinterpretation of "Mrs Warren's Profession" and scripted piece from "Bull", the adaptations to the specification enabling her to apply her monologue skills, and her very powerful devised verbatim piece "A Foot in Both Camps". The latter told the story of her family leaving Uganda under Idi Amin, settling eventually in



Year 10 devised physical theatre pieces performed in May 2021

Leicester. One positive to come out of the restrictions on year-group bubbles was that the exam board allowed her to perform with her brother, OL Dilan, adding movingly to the personal nature of the work. Our Year 12 students were also able to perform their reinterpretation of "Constellations", using the highly inventive and technically challenging approach of the Headlong theatre company. Mr Stagg's expertise in the use of multi-media in performance ensured the students' ideas were realised with highly professional results. It was also another positive year for our LAMDA students who enjoyed great success in their speech and drama examinations, with the vast majority achieving distinctions.

I have (optimistically) booked our first theatre trip of the next academic year, to Curve to see "The Midnight Bell", Matthew Bourne's new ballet, and we are hopeful that many more will follow as theatres re-open and audiences return. The next school production – of "Oliver!" – has been cast and scripts issued, so we are also looking forward to a return to large-scale, live theatre in school. We can't wait to welcome you back to see our pupils doing what they love – only this time (fingers crossed), not from behind a screen!



## LGS Production 2020-2021: 2020 – The Year That Refused To End

by Shruti Chakraborty

**The school production is usually the source of buzzing conversation as the end of the Advent term approaches, however, the film "2020 – The Year That Refused To End," directed by Miss Adams, Ms Hulme and Mr Stagg, was a laudable accommodation to the unexpected circumstances in which we found ourselves last year. When bringing in an audience of hundreds of people into St Nic's – as has been done for so many years – was simply out of the question, the entire team involved in the production of this film achieved what seemed to have been the impossible by taking on such a thoroughly ambitious film project; a first for LGS – the labour of which bore truly exceptional fruit when it was streamed in February 2021.**

The film opened with a short introduction from Ms Hulme, which enlightened us to the struggles that the cast and crew had endured when venturing to strike the balance between devising something that was as close as they could get to the live-streamed play they had originally envisioned and adhering to the ever-changing Covid rules. The tone was then set with a montage of the 2020 New Year's Eve celebrations, allowing us to recall the times when we were so blissfully ignorant to what was yet to come, and the apocalyptic news clippings that seem almost of an alternate, dystopian universe delivered a sharp shock

to the system as we watched the world indifferently see 11 cases of the mystery "virus from Wuhan".

We then are introduced to a sofa, which – unbeknownst to it – is about to house a couple for the next year. The husband (Alex Laurenti) and wife (Rebecca Faust) first settle down on this sofa in March after Boris Johnson (with a lot more hair on his head and a lot fewer cases on his hands) announced the first national lockdown of many, and our couple rejoice at the prospect of "some time off work." The dramatic irony of this is incredibly distressing for us to watch given what we know now, and their trance of naïve ecstasy makes us want to shout the truth at them through our screens. The film takes us through the months of fluctuating restrictions and the different phases of lockdown, all shown to us through the eyes of the couple glued to their TV screen. There happen to be some coincidentally familiar shows, such as the riveting "Covid Street" and action-packed "I've Got Corona – Get Me out of Here!" Conspiracy theories suggested by Faye CeCovering and Han d'Sanitiser consisted of the infamous speculation over whether China was behind Covid (or even Bill Gates and his monkey, Chris?). The writers' ability to focus on the more humorous aspects of this extremely unfunny situation, while maintaining a respectful tone towards the destruction that the virus brought

about, struck the right chord in allowing us to reclaim a fraction of power in laughing in the face of the obstacles we still must overcome.

As the film approached the later months of the year that refused to end, the excerpts from actual news reports reminded us of bleaker times, such as when the UK reached one million Covid cases and the point at which the phrase “So, how’s lockdown been treating you?” had finally been reused down the phone so many times that the sound became detached from its meaning. Come December, we saw behind the scenes as “The Queen” prepared to deliver her speech on Christmas Day (an opportunity for the talents of the hair and makeup department to truly shine), and at long last we gathered on the 31st, anticipating the clock striking twelve and 2020 finally releasing us from its clutches. Nevertheless, to our dismay the year truly lived up to its name and the sight of 24:01 on the clock was enough to make us scramble to check the date and reassure ourselves that we truly had escaped that treacherous year. I was half-expecting that the film would play from the beginning again, keeping us perpetually trapped in reliving the nightmare!

The witty punchlines which abounded carried the film, and where we missed out on grandiose sets and spectacular musical numbers, we gained in receiving the intimate experience of an insight into the limitless acting capabilities and technical skills of the cast and crew involved – something usually lost in theatre that is often only possible through film. The entirety of the cast and crew involved in this project should be incredibly proud of what they managed to achieve against all odds. Although the year group

bubbles divided them, “2020 – The Year That Refused To End” is a testament to the collaboration and determination that occurred behind the scenes and proved that even with so many obstacles this year, one way or another the show must go on.



“

...even with so many obstacles  
this year, one way or another  
the show must go on



## Year 9's Virtual Trip to Iceland

by Mili Aggarwal

To conclude the period of online school from January 6th to March 5th 2021, Year 9 students at LGS were kindly given the opportunity to tour Iceland, invited to share a trip organised by Millfield School. It had all the advantages of going on a trip, for example, seeing the country and learning about it, yet excluded all the stressful aspects. Packing was certainly not an issue, and neither was catching a flight. We simply pressed a button, and just like that we were in Iceland! Although, ‘virtually’ exploring a country will never quite be the same as physically going there, it provided a really enjoyable experience, and I appreciate the amount of effort that went in.

To kick off our virtual voyage, we were introduced to a

friendly Icelandic girl named Ólafía who welcomed us to the capital, Reykjavík. She had a lovely Icelandic accent, and spoke excellent English. Ólafía explained how earthquakes have been quite frequent there lately, which was unfortunate to hear. She also explained how her second name was her father’s name, which I found quite fascinating, as it is very different here. Soon after, we were introduced to Karen, an Iceland enthusiast who was particularly keen on the south-west of the island. She referred to Iceland as ‘the land of fire and ice’ because some parts are very icy, yet there are many active volcanoes. She took us through Reykjavík, Hveragerði, The Golden Circle, and more. She also talked quite a bit about Iceland as a country. Karen mentioned that it is

known as the happiest country in the world, according to statistical survey; it has a very low crime rate, and a small population. It is super eco-friendly, and obtains heat and electricity from completely renewable sources. Iceland had the first female president, and is one of the most LGBT-friendly countries in the world. Overall, the country comes across as a really safe and positive nation, and I would very much like to travel there in the future. ‘Pette Reddast’ is the country’s beautiful motto, which means, ‘It will work out one way or another’. This is an encouraging thought, especially in our current circumstances.

When Karen took us around Reykjavík. I learnt that the city’s name means “smoky bay”, because when the Vikings

first came to Reykjavik, it was smoky as a result of the geothermal energy. I really enjoyed seeing some of the sights of Reykjavik: a beautiful church, with a unique design, the old parliament building, and a monument depicting a sun voyager called Sólfarið that displayed a really lovely message “Follow your dreams.” Our next stop was Hveragerói, known as ‘the greenhouse town’ because crops are grown there all year round. Karen proceeded to take us through a series of waterfalls. I found Skogafoss especially captivating, the way the clear blue water majestically cascaded down the crisp, green mountains. Looking at the waterfall I felt a sense of awe, which I would love to experience in real life. The Gullfoss was also a mesmerising waterfall,

part of the Golden Circle. I also thoroughly enjoyed seeing Thingvellir National Park, which sits in a rift valley caused by the separation of two tectonic plates.

Soon after, we were introduced to Simon Ross, who talked us through the geographical side of Iceland, especially glaciers. We watched a documentary which explained the formation of glaciers, and the impact global warming may have on Iceland. The highlight had to be journeying over the Icelandic highways with ‘AI’, as we watched a trip that our guide had filmed a while back. He talked us through everything he saw and how he felt. We saw several beautiful lakes, and everybody in the

video was really enthusiastic, so that it felt almost as though we were exploring Iceland with them.

Overall, virtually exploring Iceland was an educational and fascinating experience. I would very much like to experience the country in real life. The natural aspects of Iceland are stunning, and the people sound very friendly. Exploring a country through technology, is an eco-friendly, safer and time-efficient alternative to actually visiting, although, it is not quite the same experience as actually going. I would like to thank the people who organised the trip, the guides who gave us their time and Millfields School who invited us to share the experience with them.



cooking dinner in the dark, we retired for the night. Early Saturday morning we awoke and prepared for the busy day ahead of us. All day Saturday, we were guided on a challenging hike up Stanage Edge in strong winds and pouring rain, honing our navigation skills and testing out our kit. After this trying first hike, the rain let up and we were able to cook dinner as a team, feeling very accomplished. Following our meal, we were taken on another short hike in the dark to show us how different it was, and to teach us a few tricks that could help us to navigate when there were not any obvious landmarks visible. Sunday morning, we packed up our tents and bags and loaded onto the minibuses to be taken to a nearby town where we would start our next hike. This time we were sent to navigate ourselves with full packs, sopping wet equipment, and a shadow walker behind us to make sure we didn't go too far astray. After another demanding walk up Lose Hill to Mam Tor, we reboarded the buses for a very quiet journey home.

It was more than a year before we set out on a hike as a team again. Over the next few months, after our training expedition, we spent our Monday lunchtimes mapping out routes throughout the Lake and Peak Districts for our practice and qualifying expeditions. All through Year 12 we continued with our individual activity sections, dedicating time to learning a skill, practicing a sport and volunteering on a weekly basis. Over lockdown, our weekly undertakings were significantly impacted, what with team sports, youth meetings and charity shop work unable to take place, to name just a few. However, all of us rose to the challenge, adapting our activities and persevering through the uncharted waters; from taking part in remote Music lessons, to running virtual Scouts meetings or playing basketball on empty courts, each of us persisted in our own way.

The return to school in September 2020 marked numerous changes, not only in our day-to-day schooling, but also in the change of pace of our

expeditions. Initially we were expecting to travel to the Lake District for our qualifying expedition, but we were unable to sleep in the same tents as other students; hence our expeditions had to take place much closer to home. Our practice expedition took place in the first week of October. With completely new teams and full packs, we were all glad to be back out in our hiking boots. We started from school and walked approximately 25km a day in the pouring rain. This expedition not only helped us to figure out what equipment was necessary for the trip but also allowed us to bond as a new team.

### “the various changes and obstacles we faced are exceptionally valuable”

Our qualifying expedition then took place during the October half-term holiday. Over four days, we walked from school to Rutland and back, a total of roughly 100km. Each day we would arrive at the pavilion early in the morning to cook ourselves breakfast and prepare for the day, before hopping on the minibus to take us to where we had stopped the previous day and continuing our journey. When we completed the route for the day, we would be taken back to school where we would pitch our tents, cook our evening meal and then take our tents down before heading home. Although the experience wasn't quite what we expected when we signed up, it was nonetheless challenging and extremely rewarding to complete. The teamwork and leadership skills founded on our expeditions and throughout the various changes and obstacles we faced are exceptionally valuable and will benefit us greatly in the future.

We would like to give a big thank you to Mr Carter, Mr Cox and the amazing team of teachers who volunteer to help with DofE. We are all incredibly grateful for your support and perseverance in getting us through our award in this challenging year.

## The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme in a Pandemic

by Caitlin Musto

**B**ack in September 2019, a keen group of students set out to attempt their gold Duke of Edinburgh award. We all knew the challenge we had signed up for, two gruelling four-day hikes in the scenic Peak District and at least a year's worth of volunteering, physical activity and practising a skill. We thought we knew what was to come, but our DofE experience was anything but ordinary.



Our first expedition into the wild British countryside was in late September. The aim of this outing was to improve our navigation and teamwork skills and to give us a taste of what was to come over the following two years. We all piled into minibuses after school on the Friday afternoon, and arrived at a tiny campsite in the Peak District at dusk. After pitching our tents and



# Introducing Miss Lovelock

## Head of Psychology

Interview by Holly Teasdale

### How are you finding Leicester Grammar School?

I am loving it! It is such a good opportunity to come in and set up a brand-new subject. I've got two great classes in Year 12 and I am really enjoying introducing Psychology to them. Every other school I have worked in, it has been established and very popular -- often the second or third most popular A-level. So, to come in and have a completely blank canvas is exciting because I can teach the subject the way I have always wanted to do. But it is hard work at the same time as I am setting up everything to try and make sure the students have a positive learning experience.

**Psychology is a new subject for A-level this year: why do you think it is so popular?** Well, Psychology is actually the second most popular A-level nationally for the first time this year - it has marginally overtaken Biology. I think it is popular because it is so relatable: who is not interested in people? It straddles the Sciences and the Humanities and also includes Maths, specifically Statistics, as we conduct research on people and then have to analyse the data. It is a subject that goes with any combination of A-levels. Probably about 15% of the whole course is Biology, so it appeals to scientists. It also appeals to people doing PE because of its biological basis. But then obviously you have to write essays so students who are doing History, Economics or English often find it interesting. Overall though, it is just inherently fascinating; we study mental illness, which is so relevant; we talk about serial killers, criminal psychology and aggression. Part of what I've been doing is trying to dispel myths. The course is not counselling and is not taken for self-help. You are definitely not going to come and sit down and talk about any of your worries in class. It is quite a rigorous academic discipline, not the soft option that many people thought it was ten or twenty years ago.

### What are your interests beyond the classroom?

I am obsessed with running and I run ultramarathons, marathons which exceed the usual distance of 26.2 miles. I have done one Ultramarathon that was 44 miles and I have set myself the big challenge for next year of doing a local Ultramarathon which starts in Rutland, travels a path all the way around Rutland and is 73 miles long. It is all cross-country; hardly any of the ultramarathons are on road. Obviously, the weather has an effect on how quick you are because of the terrain, but my aim will be to finish it in daylight. We start at 7:00 in the morning and my aim will be to finish it in maybe 14 hours. I am hoping to be able to get support from friends and family to have some people run bits of the route with me. I also like mountain biking, cycling and hiking.

**What is your favourite teaching memory over your career so far?** When I teach the topic of obedience, I cover Milgram, who devised an experiment where normal people were ordered to carry out fake electric shocks (although they did not realise that they were fake). What he found was that ordinary people will obey an authority figure if they are told to. So, what I do when I teach this topic is come into the classroom with my most serious teacher face. I have done this for many years but there was one time that was the funniest. I start off by saying very seriously, "Stand up and stand behind your desks!" and they all do it - nobody ever questions me. Then I say, "Right, stand on one leg and hop five times." They do. They then have to turn in a semi-circle anticlockwise three times, clap their hands in the air three times and shout "Miss Lovelock is the greatest!" And then one year I had this student who was about six foot, seven and I said to them all, "Now you have to sit under the desks." And my funniest memory is watching this very tall student trying to fit under the tiny desk - it just shows the power of obedience.



# Introducing Miss Hill

## Geography Teacher

Interview by Mila Vavan

### Tell us a bit about yourself.

I love to explore the world; when I was studying Geography at the University of Reading, I got the opportunity to visit many fascinating places, one of these being Iceland where I was able to see the Northern Lights. I have also had the amazing opportunity of climbing two volcanoes, Mount Vesuvius in Italy and Mount Eldfell in Iceland. At the University of Reading, I was able to study both Physical and Human Geography and I took a particular interest in studying tsunamis and volcanoes for my dissertation in final year. Since a very young age, I have been very sporty; at the age of 2 I started dancing and continued to dance for 16 years up, until I was 18. Within this time, I performed at the Royal Albert Hall and Disneyland Paris. I also played Hockey and played for Leicestershire on many occasions. Now, I no longer dance or play Hockey, but I enjoy running and cycling at the weekends, as well as

taking long walks with my two labradors, Lottie and Bonnie.

### What made you want to be a teacher?

At 14 I started teaching at my local dance school as a volunteer to children under the age of 8. Seeing the joy on the children's faces when they finally mastered a dance skill I realised at this point, how much I loved teaching. I also saw the impact teaching had on students and realised why it was so important. The reason I chose to teach Geography is very simple; I grew up living on a farm with my family which made me develop a strong interest in the landscape we live in today, especially regarding climate change.

### What do you like best about teaching?

My favourite part about teaching is showing people

how amazing Geography is and building a strong relationship with my students. Also in Geography we get the opportunity to go on field trips and put what we have learnt in the classroom into a real-life scenario. The teacher who had the biggest impact on me was a Geography Teacher who used objects in the room to model specific physical processes. The one that has stuck in my head was the time he used two books to show how plate boundaries moved and I will always remember how easy he made them sound.

### Why Leicester Grammar?

Leicester Grammar School has a fantastic reputation for creating responsible and motivated students. I was keen to develop my academic teaching and be a part of what is an amazing school.

### Name three words that describe you best:

Kind, sporty, trustworthy.

# Mr Cumming

## Careers & Geography Teacher

Interview by Nischal Mistry (photo by Mrs Hunt)



### Tell me a bit about yourself.

I am originally from Edinburgh, Scotland and spent ten years as a Navigating Officer in the Merchant Navy. I worked on many different types of vessels, including container ships and oil tankers. The last ship I worked on was an offshore construction ship helping to build windfarms off the coast of Germany. I was very fortunate to travel all over the world with the Merchant Navy, but my favourite country has to be Singapore: the food is incredible, the people are friendly and the skyline is spectacular.

### What inspired you to be a teacher in Careers and Geography?

My inspiration to become a Geography teacher was a teacher named Mrs McClelland. Her passion for Geography influenced me greatly and led me to study it at university and then take up jobs in that field. On the Careers side, whilst I was in the Merchant Navy I used to go into schools to give presentations to pupils about careers at sea. I enjoyed this role so much that I decided I wanted to be a teacher.

### How do you find the atmosphere here at LGS?

I think the first thing you notice is that the school is friendly and welcoming. There is also a great sense of purpose to allow everyone to achieve their potential.

### As a Careers teacher, tell me what factors, apart from exam results, would be on a CV that would make someone stand out?

On your CV it is important to come across as genuine and to articulate clearly why you want to work in a particular profession. Also the CV should give evidence of the skills and attributes a person has through examples, rather than just providing a list.

### Why do students choose to take Geography either for GCSE or A-level?

I think that students take Geography, on the whole, because they enjoy the subject. Many also recognise that Geography is particularly relevant to the global challenges we currently face, whether that is climate change, political instability or a pandemic like Covid-19.

### What do you think the 'fuel of the future' will be?

I think there will be many 'fuels of the future' including electricity, which we see powering electric

vehicles today, and also hydrogen, that we are beginning to utilise more as a sustainable fuel. Fossil fuels are also 'fuels of the future' as many countries around the world will rely on them for decades to come. How we use these fossil fuels efficiently (and as cleanly as possible) will become increasingly important before we consign them to history.

### If you could have any other career what would it be?

It would be something related to the motoring industry. I would love to be a car designer, but the only problem is I am terrible at drawing. I should definitely seek out the Art department for help.

### What hobbies do you pursue in your free time?

I am a keen follower of rugby, the Scottish national team in particular, but since moving to Leicestershire I have also become a season ticketholder at Leicester Tigers. Unfortunately, Tigers have lost nearly every game I have attended. I also have a passion for cars and enjoy driving through the beautiful English countryside.



# The Retirement of Mr Clayton

Interview by Lili Mephram

**Mr Clayton taught Religious Studies at LGS for 21 years, retiring in 2018. During his time at the school, he also was in charge of the Charity Committee and up until 2012-13 "The Leicestrian".**

### For how long were you a teacher?

I taught for 21 years, before which I served in the Royal Navy on a short service commission and then was a director of various companies. Now that I am retired, I live in Spain.

### What was your most memorable moment as a teacher at LGS?

It has to be the student who struggled somewhat at A Level Philosophy. However, he did not just accept it, he refused to be beaten, and did not allow me any peace until he fully understood the topic we were studying; this commitment resulted in him receiving an excellent grade. Such perseverance! He fully deserved his result, and is now a teacher (though not at LGS).

### What is your favourite book?

My favourite book has to be "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance", by Robert M. Pirsig. It tells, in fictional autobiography, the story of a man and his son, who travel from middle America to California, together with an adult couple, the travails and incidents that they encounter, and their thoughts and reflections. An excellent book that I have read several times.

### Why do you think Religious Studies is an important subject?

Quite a simple question to answer: the subject is about people, their strengths and weaknesses,

their passions and woes, their history and future. It helps people to understand each other, and helps to break down the walls that separate people.

### If you could give students one piece of advice, what would it be?

On a very wide level, it would be "Regret what you have done, not what you wish you had done" This sounds somewhat rebellious, but is not. I look back on my life, see the way that it has tossed and turned, taking different directions, and am relatively pleased that I do not have many regrets.

### Do you have any plans for the future of your retirement?

At the moment, Covid-19 has reared its ugly head, so it is quite difficult to speak of plans with any sort of confidence. If pushed, I would say that I hope to continue living my life as at present, with the lifting of all restrictions for everyone.

### And finally, in the spirit of this year's Foundation Day Essay, what is your idea of fun?

What an excellent question! I enjoy walking along the beach, with the sea lapping at my ankles, the sun on my back, and my dogs playfully running around. May I take this opportunity to thank Leicester Grammar School for making my time there amongst the most pleasurable times of my life, made possible by the encouragement of fellow staff, and perhaps most importantly, the students. Thank you, it certainly was fun.



# German Pen Pals

by Kajol Mistry

This year, the Year 9 German class have been sending pen pal letters to a school in Germany. They send and receive a letter every half term. Despite only having begun learning German in September, they have written letters about a wide range of subjects, including school life, hobbies, sports, family life and friends. Additionally, they have learned about life in Germany from their penpals, how similar the school system is, and what the towns that their friends live in are like. Their German skills have also improved by writing to a pen pal; they get to use new vocabulary; practice forming sentences and learn the language in a fun context.

I asked the Year 9s to tell me their favourite parts of the experience, and these are some of their answers:

**“The best thing about having a pen pal is talking to someone from another country and learning more about Germany and the language.”** Rhianna Jones

**“I think the best thing about having a pen pal is receiving a letter. The class have a good time reading everyone else’s.”** Henry Wright

**“The best thing about having a pen pal is that I get to know what life in Germany is like and I get a new experience. Also, I get to meet a new person.”** Rushil Patel

**“The best thing about having a pen pal is probably that it is nice to keep in touch with another person by letter, since nowadays we teenagers are on our phones a lot.”** Isaac Chi

**“I think that being in touch with someone your age in a different country is quite cool, because you can find out about what people of your age are doing in the world. This has always interested me because one day you will have to explore in the world yourself and you will meet people from everywhere across the globe.”** Vashin Kaushik

**“The best thing about having a penpal is knowing that... well, you are known by someone somewhere totally different in the world. Someone will have undoubtedly said MY name during their day. Small things can blow your mind!”** William Dalby



# Year 7 French Spelling Bee

by Harriet Firth

In the Advent term of 2019/20, Year 7 were all given the opportunity to take part in the Routes into Languages French Spelling Bee, which is a national competition for students to practise and improve their vocabulary, spelling and memory skills in a foreign language. The first stage of the competition required us to learn 50 basic French words and their spellings off by heart. We had to recite as many as we could in one minute and spell them out using the French alphabet. Each class in Year 7 held a competition and the three students from each form who could recall the most spellings in a minute were selected for the Year 7 final.

In February 2020, the Year 7 final was held to select the three students who would represent Leicester Grammar School in the East Midlands regional final that was due to be held in April 2020. Before this final we were given a further 100 spellings to learn. We all spent a lot of time going over the words to become as fast as we could at reciting the words. The Year 7 final was held by Madame Nelson. The result was given to us immediately afterwards and three of us were selected (Aneya Chauhan, Siyana Kotecha and

myself). We then had to prepare for the regional final and were given a further 50 words to learn, now making a total of 200! The three of us started learning these again and spent time testing each other. The regional final was due to be held at Stamford School, in Uppingham with representatives from many other schools in the East Midlands area. Unfortunately, as with many other things during 2020, this had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 and we were unsure when the competition would be able to recommence.

Eventually when we were all able to come back to school in September 2020, it was agreed that each school could send a video of each of their contestants and the results would be sent away for assessment alongside entries from all the other schools. The regional final for LGS was held by Madame Nelson in October 2020. We found out at the end of November that the three entries from Leicester Grammar School were the top three in the East Midlands region, with Siyana



Kotecha scoring the highest mark overall. She is due to attend the National Final in the spring.

“Along with Aneya and Harriet, I thoroughly enjoyed participating in the French Spelling Bee which really helped to boost my confidence and added a lot of new words to my French vocabulary. We found that practising and testing each other during breaks was extremely beneficial (as my parents were not able to keep up with me!) and it was also very fun. I am really optimistic that the national final will still go ahead, and I am looking forward to representing Leicester Grammar in the final. Thank you to the French teachers for organizing such a wonderful and enjoyable way to improve our French” – Siyana Kotecha (April 2021).



## School Music

# During the Pandemic

by Holly Teasdale (Photo by Oliver Siddons)

**T**he way that our Music department has adapted to the ever-changing medical situation whilst keeping the spirit alive in B-wing is commendable. Despite the need to social distance and for many 'sanitisation breaks', the display of talent is no different from previous years.

The Concert on March 12th, 2021, streamed to both parents and students, was no exception. Under the newly installed Recital Room lights, there was an array of different instruments and year groups performing. To kick things off, we heard an impressive rendition of "Che faro senza Euridice" by Gluck on the flute, played by Vidi Thakor and accompanied by Mr Barker. This was shortly followed by Mrs Graff-Baker wiping down the piano which, somewhat ironically, managed to be musical in itself! The concert provided many students a chance to warm up for upcoming Music exams and GCSE performances. Micha Raja, Year 11, performed the "Jackson Street Blues" – an uplifting and

enjoyable piece to listen to. Equally, there are a number of young musicians with undeniable talent at LGS, including Luke Inchley in Year 8 who put on a great performance of "Ragamuffin Rag". Similarly, a highly impressive performance was given by year 7 pupil, Prakash Easwar on his saxophone. He played "Largo and Allegro" from "Sonata No.3" by J S Bach, which was originally written for a violin and so contains very few rests – little things that are so very important for saxophone players! The music on offer is always varied and shows off the wide skillset of the pupils. Rishan Raja's rendition of Ed Sheeran's "Supermarket Flowers" was a beautiful performance, forming a nice contrast from the more classical pieces of the evening. A personal favourite and the final performance of the evening was Lucy Weston on her trombone playing "Summertime" by Gershwin – a jazzy and positive way to end an enjoyable evening. It would be impossible not to be inspired by the Music department's adaptability and their successful efforts to keep everyone smiling.

## 2020-2021

# House Music

by Holly Teasdale

**H**ouse Music this year looked far from the usual event, where different orchestras and musicians gather in St Nick's one evening with an audience of parents and students. Instead, House Music was adapted and the range of musical talent in the school was still able to be displayed. The first competition encouraged students to submit either an audio file or a video of themselves performing, whether it be singing and dancing or playing a musical instrument. The second competition,

showcasing the creativity among the students, involved creating a new album cover for an existing track that represented the feeling of summer. Instead of gathering in the school's hall to watch various students perform, the video and audio files were played during Friday morning's House Assembly, after which the students were encouraged to vote for their favourites. It always takes a great deal of courage to stand up and perform and this year was no different.

The Video section of the competition was won by Kee-Kiam Soh in VCs, with a medley of songs from "Pirates of the Caribbean" performed on the piano. Second place was awarded to Rishan Raja in Masters; Rishan also presented a medley of popular songs on the piano. Both performances were amazing and demonstrated strong talent. The Audio section was won by Boris Dring in VCs, with second place going to Lauren Ng, also from VCs.

In the Album Art competition, there were a range of different art styles, from coloured pencil to digital art. Isla Morris (Dukes) created a digital cover (see blue cartoon composition, right) that was a great interpretation of the brief and was specially mentioned, alongside Simone Nehra's (Judges) beautiful cover (see top photo on right) and Harriet Firth's (Dukes) that used shape and colour very cleverly. The winner of the Album Art competition was Dhanya S Ramen in Dukes. She designed a colourful and arresting album cover for Bruno Mars' 'Count on Me' (lower right corner), which reflected both the idea of summer and the meaning of the song in the artwork. 2nd place went to Adhidav Ghosh in Dukes for a cover to Jason Derulo's 'Colours'.

In the overall House Music competition, VCs came out on top with the descending order as Dukes, Masters and Judges. VCs and Dukes did particularly well since they had so many entries, which clearly shows that participating in house events is sometimes even more important than winning. Once again House Music proved an enjoyable event that, despite restrictions, still managed to show off all of the talent here at LGS.



## Featured Musician:

# Annabelle Onions

Interview by Holly Teasdale



**A**nnabelle plays the clarinet and is taking her Grade 8 examination next term. She also sings in the school choir and performs with the school orchestra.

### What is your favourite thing about music?

When playing individually, I enjoy the escape music gives me, as I do not have to think about anything else that is going on in life and can just focus on the piece. I'm currently working on Bernstein's Sonata for Clarinet and Piano as well as the Clarinet Sonata in E Major by Brahms. Overall though, the best thing is the friendships and sense of community you gain from playing music with others and taking part in something bigger. In particular, I love it when an orchestra comes together after weeks of rehearsal and suddenly a piece sounds so much more alive than it did originally.

### If you could play any instrument in the world what would it be and why?

I really love the sound the cello makes and most of my favourite pieces of music have big cello parts, so I would probably choose that. On the other hand,

I think that if I had learned piano when I was younger I would find a lot of music theory easier.

### What has been your favourite memory being involved with music at LGS?

Definitely the concerts. The music community at LGS is amazing so any time spent in B wing before and during concerts has been really fun. If I had to pick one moment in particular, I would probably say the Christmas concerts at the Junior School and various nearby primary schools as it was really nice to see how much the younger children enjoyed our music and hopefully we managed to inspire some people to start playing.

### Do you have any plans to continue playing after you leave school this year?

I really want to join an orchestra at university and hopefully will join a choir as

well. (Although I am not really a singer, I do enjoy singing with others). Also, I am planning on continuing practising my instrument and skills in my own time, as well as learning some pieces I have always wanted to play. I am really looking forward to finding some other clarinetists as well, as I would love to take part in a clarinet quintet.

### What advice do you have for anyone starting out playing clarinet or wanting to get involved in school music?

Just go for it! The music community at LGS is so welcoming and it really gives you an opportunity to make friends in all years and have so much fun. Also, if you want to learn an instrument, make sure you enjoy it, as it is much easier to improve and get to higher levels if you actually enjoy practising.



## Youth Brass 2000

by Jennifer Ewington

**Y**outh Brass 2000, led by Chris Jeans, comprises musicians from across Leicestershire and Northamptonshire under the age of 19. Band members from LGS are Frederick Klimowicz (U6th), Jennifer Ewington (Y10), Daniel Kolka (Y8) and Jack Strong (Y8).

Similarly to us all, Youth Brass 2000 was hit dramatically by the Coronavirus pandemic in the past year. As National and former European champions we had prospects of European championships in Lithuania, a summer tour of Austria and various competitions throughout England; however, every single one of these events was cancelled. Despite this, as far as restrictions allowed, we continued to rehearse safely. At first we had to rehearse in smaller groups outside, battling typical English weather

throughout the winter; however now, after another break throughout the second lockdown, we are able to rehearse in a well-ventilated gym hall while socially distanced. Whilst it has been a challenging year for the band, we look forward to a possible mini-tour this summer within the UK and hope that next year we may be able to travel internationally once again. (Photos are from our most recent competitions.)





## The Prep Class Gamelan Performance

by Holly Teasdale

Over lockdown the Prep class learnt about and researched Gamelan from Indonesia (particularly in Java and Bali). Gamelan is a type of music, but it is never referred to as Gamelan music as it is an entity in itself. The Prep started out by creating posters about Gamelan and how the orchestras work. It was also important to understand the spiritual aspects of the music before attempting to play it. In Gamelan, you have to take off your shoes as a sign of respect and you should never step over an instrument. This is a very important rule as it is believed that the instruments have a tie to heaven and if it is stepped over, the tie is broken.

The class then had a go at creating the 'Balungan' which is the core melody, using the school's Glockenspiels and Xylophones. After learning the basics of Gamelan, they had a go at creating a Gamelan Orchestra. This involved creating a Polyrhythm (two or more parts played at the same time). Since at LGS, we do not have Gamelan instruments, the Prep replicated the sounds of the Kempul, Saron, Slentem, and Gong Ageng with the instruments in the Recital Room – although we are lucky enough to have a real Gong.

With only 15 minutes to prepare, Prep put on a wonderful performance. According to the students, the best part was hitting the drums and banging the gong, but the most difficult part was playing the Saron. Mrs Else recorded their performance, and the rest of the school were able to enjoy it through the School's newsletter, "LGS Together".

May 2021

## Our Science Teachers in their Masks



# A Prize-Winning Essay on Coronaviruses

by Rameen Masood (Foxcroft Essay Competition, 2021)

Discuss the biological factors that can account for such a contrast in impact of two such closely related viruses.

It is hard to map the biography of human coronaviruses, but Zhu, Lian et al (2020) explain that before 2003, two human coronaviruses were identified. These exhibited mild symptoms such as the common cold. It was only recently that outbreaks of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) as well as the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) have revealed another side to the threat of human coronavirus infections. The once unidentifiable forms of coronaviruses have metamorphosed into brutal entities now imbued with high pathogenic properties and the power to cause millions of deaths worldwide. To demystify the behaviour of coronaviruses, it is important to understand the biological factors that make them so distinctively different. Coronaviruses are enveloped viruses with a positive-sense, single-stranded RNA genome (ranging in size from 27 to 33 kb). All coronaviruses consist of similar structures and have the ability to stick to surfaces. Both HCoV-OC43 and SARS-Cov-2 are identified as beta coronaviruses; however HCoV-OC43 specifically belongs to the Beta-CoV Lineage A group, and SARS-Cov-2 belongs to the Beta-CoV Lineage B group.

## Cell Entry Mechanisms

HCoV-OC43 is able to enter human cells through the caveolin-1-dependent pathway of endocytosis. Caveolins are the integral membrane proteins that constitute the membrane components of caveolae. In addition, the virus-containing vesicles present at the cell surface undergo the process of scission which further enables them to successfully penetrate the human cells. Scission is the process which

results in the breakage of a chemical bond and then splits it into two smaller chains which can penetrate more easily in comparison to a long molecule. It is interesting to note that host factors such as interferon-inducible transmembrane proteins (IFITMs) which, with the support of a variety of their antiviral functions, hinder the entry of certain coronaviruses, in fact, promote the entry as well as infection of HCoV-OC42 into human cells. IFITMs belongs to the interferon-stimulated gene (ISG) family involved in resisting and controlling pathogens, mostly by impacting the early and the late stages of the virus life cycle. Once HCoV-OC43 has managed to penetrate the cell successfully, the infection begins due to a stress response induced by the endoplasmic reticulum. As the endoplasmic reticulum has links to the nuclear membrane and constitutes a large part of the cellular transport system, it plays an imperative role in the synthesis of many different chemicals. Consequently, when the endoplasmic reticulum reaches its maximum potential in processing, unfolded proteins begin to occur, initiating a stress response. Some studies have indicated that the cellular receptors for HCoV-OC43 are currently unknown. However, it is understood that sialic acids are the coreceptors found in HCoV-OC43. This interaction with the receptor can enable binding to successfully occur.

On the other hand, SARS-Cov-2 enters the human cells through the virus surface spike protein.

The spike successfully binds to the ACE2 receptors present on the surface through the receptor-binding domain (RBD). The S protein present in SARS-Cov-2 exhibits a high affinity to angiotensin converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) receptors and this is considered a likely contributor to the fast spreading of the virus.

C-type lectin receptors also play a role in SARS-Cov-2. In fact, a recent study has concluded that the presence of a sugar-based receptor (C-type lectin) encourages entry into the cells with the ACE2 receptor. [7] The C-type lectin receptors (CLRs) enable the cells of the body to communicate with each other and this is quite beneficial when it comes to activating the immune response. The C-type lectin receptors bind to the spike sugars present in SARS-CoV-2 and this adhesion is indispensable when it comes to attaching to the ACE2 receptor. Additionally, proprotein convertase furin also plays a part in activating the entry of SARS-Cov-2. Proprotein convertase furin is useful and, in fact enables efficient cleavage, when the SARS-CoV-2 acquires a polybasic cleavage site (PRRAR). This is imperative to consider as cleavage increases the infection and is therefore considered to be paramount in the evolution of SARS-CoV-2. This means that the presence of furin can be linked to the increased transmissibility of SARS-CoV-2. Moreover, the RBD present on SARS-CoV-2 is less exposed to the surroundings and is essentially hidden in the spike protein, which further increases the chances of a

successful cell invasion.

## Accessory Proteins

According to the genetic and antigenic criteria, there are three main categories in which the coronaviruses can be classified. [9] HCoV-OC43 is found in Group 2, whereas SARS-CoV-2 is located in Group 3. HCoV-OC43 and SARS-CoV-2 are both composed of the structural proteins spike (S), envelope (E), membrane (M), and nucleocapsid (N). Furthermore, in HCoV-OC43, there are two accessory proteins situated between these structural proteins known as ns2a and ns5a. The nonstructural protein 5A (NS5A) is imperative in the formation of endoplasmic reticulum-derived double-membrane vesicles which again enable efficient viral replication. In contrast, SARS-CoV-2 encodes the following nine accessory proteins: p3a, p3b, p6, p7a, p7b, p8, p9b, p9c and 10. Nevertheless, another study conducted using DNA nanoball sequencing illustrates that there are only five accessory proteins present in SARS-CoV-2, namely p3a, p6, p7a, p7b and p8. Therefore, the exact number of accessory proteins in SARS-CoV-2 is currently debatable.

Normally, accessory proteins are associated with viral replication in vitro; however it has come to light that they also have the capacity to demonstrate functions present in virus-host interactions during coronavirus infection in vivo. It is a distinction of accessory proteins that they vary in number, location and size in the different groups of coronaviruses and are considered to be involved in pathogenicity in the natural host. To some extent, the accessory proteins play a role in the host cells. In fact, there has been a report which explains that SARS-CoV-2 ORF8 has previously bound to major histocompatibility

complex which perhaps expresses that SARS-CoV-2 ORF8 enables immune evasion. The accessory protein, ORF8, is evolving quite rapidly and studies have revealed its increasing interference with immune responses. This is considered to be a potential catalyst in the spread of SARS-CoV-2.

## Viroporins

Viroporins are virus-encoded proteins which manifest elements of virulence and whilst they are not crucial for virus replication, the hydrophobic proteins tend to form pores that enable ion transport across the cell surface membranes. The HCoV-OC43 protein (encoded by ORF5) does not share a noticeable connection with the other CoV viroporins, in terms of both sequence and domain topology. On the other hand, the viroporins present in SARS-CoV-2 can activate NLRP3 inflammasome, which accentuates the inflammatory response. The rise in the inflammatory response is an imperative contributor towards disease and plays a fundamental role in cases of severe SARS-CoV-2. In fact, there have been cases of some patients infected with SARS-CoV-2 developing a cytokine storm. Additionally, pro-inflammatory cytokines are a type of protein messengers that encourage inflammation and therefore their increased presence leads to more immune cells (which can include neutrophils and macrophages). Furthermore, these then destroy the white blood cells, causing organ failure and ultimately death.

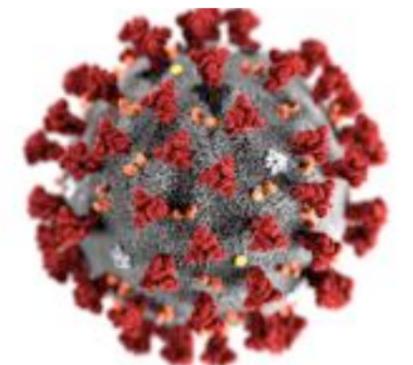
## Immunity and Circulation in Population

Immunity also plays a vital role when it comes to determining the impact of a virus. SARS-CoV-2 is more contagious than HCoV-OC43, as it has never been exposed to the immune systems before. HCoV-OC43 has long been circulating in the population, and as our bodies

have been exposed to HCoV-OC43 for some time, they have developed considerable antibodies. Nevertheless, SARS-CoV-2 is a novel virus, so it is a virulent disease which the human body has never been previously exposed to. On the other hand, the emergence of HCoV-OC43 is thought to be connected to BCoV and is thought to have emerged roughly 120 years ago from BCoV; in fact, its discovery dates back to around 1967. Consequently, SARS-Cov-2 has led to more cellular damage as well as the production of an increased number of inflammatory cells. Therefore, people with reduced immunity, especially those on certain medications or the elderly, are more vulnerable and susceptible to the attacks of this virus.

## Conclusion

The timeline of coronaviruses indicates that their outbreak is not something new: they have been existing, albeit silently, in our world for some time. The Covid-19 pandemic has heavily influenced the health, economic and social aspects of our world and to combat this disease, we need to discover antibodies that can act as antagonists to the biological structure of SARS-Cov-2, before mutations become rampant. There are many disparities between HCoV-OC43 and SARS-CoV-2 and by studying these as well as other similarities and differences between coronaviruses, there is hope that a treatment or vaccine for a multitude of such virus strains can be invented in the not-too-distant future.



# Studying the History of Science with Dr Ainge

by Rabiah Ahmad

Members of the L6th now have the opportunity to take 'Aspire' short courses to broaden their knowledge of different subject matter outside of their usual curricula, one of these being 'The History of Science' course facilitated by Dr Ainge. Through his course, students have learnt more about significant scientific figures and breakthroughs. Dr Ainge was frustrated at the lack of historical context to the science taught in school – beyond briefly learning about figures like Mendeleev, there is limited understanding of the situations surrounding some major scientific discoveries. Ultimately, scientists study the world around them to generate findings which have shaped and expanded our perceptions over time. However, the social and political climates in which these discoveries have occurred has had a significant effect. For instance, the perception of the 'Dark Ages' was itself influenced by political authorities: following the fall of Rome, this era of prevalent Catholicism was cast as a time of scientific ignorance, despite discoveries made in fields such as astrology and cosmology. These discoveries could be seen to have paved the way to the 'Scientific Revolution' that followed.

Understanding social and political factors also allows us to recognise where science has gone wrong: a memorable session explored the catastrophic capabilities of science, through events surrounding the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear bombings. Leo Szilárd was a physicist who moved to the USA in anticipation of World War Two, where he made breakthroughs in nuclear science. He realised that relatively small quantities of uranium could be responsible for nuclear chain reactions and demonstrated this experimentally. However, he quickly grasped how sinister this discovery would be, and informed the US government of his research to ensure that they would be able to secure powerful nuclear technology before Germany. After the Manhattan project was underway, Szilárd's scientific credit allowed him to be involved despite political reservations about his German citizenship, evidencing a clearer separation of science from politics in more recent history. Nonetheless, he directly warned of the severity of the implications of nuclear weaponry, such as inciting a nuclear arms race with the USSR. The government still overrode these scientific protests,

leading to the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with devastating civilian fatalities and the lasting effects of radiation. Fortunately, Szilard's continued advocacy after the events meant that amendments were made to the Atomic Energy Act to prevent the military from controlling the use of nuclear weaponry, in favour of civilian (government) control.

We looked at how the role and status of scientists has changed. An example is alchemists, seen as the predecessors of the chemists of today: whilst they had a reputation for their determination to turn common metals into gold, they also had some skill. From their investigations, our knowledge of science has gradually evolved, and we now understand the construction of matter at a subatomic level – which explains why lead could not be turned into gold. This now-known fact came from an idea that needed to evolve over time, otherwise our understanding of what is around us would have been severely hindered. At one time, any suggestion of the universe not being organised with the Earth at the centre and the other planets and stars orbiting around it would have been dismissed as heretical and blasphemous. But without accepting this new idea, we would have neither our present understanding of the universe, nor our physical ability to explore space. The practicals which we are accustomed to at school were once the cutting edge of science, with practices such as distillation and titrations once reserved for the scientists of their period, but now they are something which we all experience. Although the global rate of technological development is thought to be slowing down and plateauing, patterns of scientific progress fluctuate throughout history and so we could return to an incline as advances are made by forthcoming generations of scientists, including the development of immunisation from when Jenner recognised the ability to vaccinate and Pasteur first understood pathogens, as well as in climate science.

If you are interested in exploring the History of Science further, "Crash Course: History of Science" is available online at [www.thecrashcourse.com](http://www.thecrashcourse.com) with a series of short videos presented by Hank Green, where you can learn about alchemy, nuclear weapons, pathogens and more. A special thank you to Dr Ainge for delivering this excellent course.



# Introducing Mr Lawrence

## Biology Teacher

Interview by Ali Khan, Year 10

### What inspired you to pursue a career in teaching?

I tutored my brother through his school years and he's gone on to do really well, but I think I was just a bit of a know-it-all! I love to explain how things work. I remember I had an amazingly good teacher when I was in Year 7 - Mrs. Sailes, I can still picture her – and she really inspired me. When it came to the end of my degree, and I was thinking about where I wanted to go with what I'd got, teaching was just a natural progression. I did my teaching degree initially from a love of the subject of Biology, and then I never turned back.

### What has been your most memorable moment in a classroom so far?

Once I was on holiday and found myself in a classroom in.... Mombasa, Kenya! I just walked into the room as a random holiday-maker, and was sprung upon by someone I've never met before saying "Could you just explain this to these students?" and suddenly I found myself scribbling a couple of things on the blackboard, explaining respiration! I was absolutely astounded by their questions, and the quality of their English.

### Who would you invite to your dream dinner party?

David Attenborough. We have met, and I got to ask him a question, but I've not got to sit down with him properly. He's amazingly charismatic, amazingly inspiring and has had the most interesting life. Carl Akeley, who started his career in the 19th Century as a famous hunter in Africa who had spent his life learning to shoot and kill, and about half-way through his life he just completely changed, suddenly finding the value of the natural world, becoming one of the great conservationists of his age. Probably Alfred Russel Wallace as well: I'd love to chat to him to see how he felt about Charles Darwin kind of copying his evolution theory. They had both come up with the idea: Darwin had been sitting on it for years, and Wallace was a friend of his and had the same idea,

so sent Darwin a letter saying "What do you think of this idea?" Darwin kind of panicked and published his book, terrified that Wallace would gazump it! So Darwin did come up with it first, but Alfred Russel Wallace is probably as near as you can get to Indiana Jones in the Biology sphere. He did proper exploring, was out there in the jungles with his fedora hat.

I suppose all three were pretty adventurous guys who spend a long time in jungles.

### For you, what is a dream achievement?

One thing I would love to do would be to travel down the Amazon River. I've been to rainforests, I know how they are both the best places and the worst places you can go! There are insects everywhere: everything wants a piece of you; there are bees that land on your eyeball and try to drink your tears – known as sweat bees – as they can't get any salt from the jungle. There are leeches trying to grasp you from the ends of branches. But it's also amazing, sitting in a two-person canoe or even a kayak with a long-lensed camera would be an unreal experience. I'd like to spend maybe a month, go down there, meet some natives. I do worry about the danger of it though: political unrest, and lack of infrastructure in some places means that you would be days away from a hospital. If someone said to me to go tomorrow, I would jump at it but with my heart in my throat and sweaty palms.

### What advice would you give to students currently in school?

Always give your best and don't rest on your laurels, since there always comes something unexpected and, if you're not giving your all, things might not turn out the way you want them to do. Also appreciate the people in life who are on your side, who are there to help you. They are more valuable than you could ever know, and there aren't as many people like that in the world as you would think.

## Farewell to Mrs Sains

**M**rs Sains has taught at Leicester Grammar School from the autumn of 1985 and in the last few years has worked part-time at Stoneygate (with a few supply sessions at LGS), retiring fully in the summer of 2020.

### Did you ever teach anything other than Maths?

While my academic subject is Maths, during my time at LGS I have been involved in many aspects of the school life, as are all the teachers. I accompanied many other departments on school trips which expanded my own education and knowledge. I also tackled teaching knitting and Family History to various year 11 groups, as part of their PSHE.

### Why did you choose Maths teaching as a career?

I do not feel that I chose teaching as a career but that it chose me: I used to “play” school with my younger brothers and sister from a very early age. Initially I considered Primary teaching but as I learnt more Mathematics and saw its beauty, I just wanted to spend time helping others to see that too. I have never been bored teaching Maths, as every pupil brings their own understanding to the subject and needs to be helped in a different way, so that there are always new challenges.

### How has the school changed over the years?

There have been many changes to LGS since I started in 1985. The most obvious being that it is now much bigger than it was then, and the school physically moved buildings from the city centre to Great Glen. The changes in technology are probably even more dramatic: moving from blackboards and chalk, “Banda” sheets and no calculators to interactive whiteboards, colour photocopying and being surrounded by IT. When I first started teaching I could never have conceived of the concept of “teaching remotely” as I did in my final term because of the pandemic.



### What are your happiest memories of LGS?

I have so many memories of teaching at LGS, but the happiest all involve pupils. Seeing the joy on the faces of students who managed to pass (through their own hard work and determination) their GCSE despite it seeming an impossibility. Hearing the word “WOW” as another sees the beauty in Maths during a lesson. Seeing former pupils choosing to teach Maths at LGS, and elsewhere, and knowing that I have helped to inspire others to want to pass that understanding onto the next generation.

### Which activities are you doing in retirement?

In retirement I am enjoying having more time to spend in my garden, reading and finding more out about my family history. I may also continue to indulge my passion for passing on exciting new mathematical ideas to anyone who will listen!



## Introducing Miss McCleery Maths Teacher

Interview by Gargi Nisal

### What inspired you to become a teacher?

When I was younger, I had a very positive experience being a pupil; I had a really good relationship with my teachers, I really enjoyed extracurricular activities. As a teacher, I wanted to have that same relationship with my students, giving them the same experience I had; I really enjoy working alongside young people. I also love Mathematics, especially algebra.

### What advice would you have for people struggling with Maths?

I would say don't panic, but persevere. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you don't understand something; there's no shame in not getting something right off the bat. Break things down logically and rationally to help you work through problems; take certain aspects of the question, deal with them first, and then you can move forward.

### What are the advantages of studying Maths?

Well, first of all, it is great fun! Second of all, it helps you develop and hone skills that are desired by employers and universities; for example, it helps you think analytically, it helps you with your problem-solving abilities.

### What has been the highlight of your teaching career?

Getting to know the pupils inside and outside the classroom has been great; I coach hockey as well, and that has allowed me to engage further with the pupils. I also love it when a student doesn't get something straight away, but then they have that lightbulb moment and they suddenly understand what I am talking about - I would say that is an incredible moment for both the student and the teacher.



## Introducing Mr Wesson Physics Teacher

Interview by Rameen Masood

### Have you always wanted to be a Physics teacher?

No, for many years, I worked as a research and development engineer in the foundry industry in Sheffield. But then came the recession and the lack of investment into our manufacturing and engineering sector required me to find something else to do. I suppose I could have moved to China or London, but I am not sure which of the two is more unpleasantly overcrowded.

### How has your journey as a teacher been so far?

Quite interesting indeed. I have been a teacher for six years now with all the ups and downs of OFSTED stresses and exam successes.

### What advice would you give to someone studying Physics?

Practice your Maths skills and be sure to check out the documentaries section of BBC i-player!

### What importance does Physics hold in the world today?

Physics is as important as it has always been. It equips us with the skills, knowledge and understanding of our world and so plays a key role in shaping the future. Furthermore, it is the fundamental way we explain our physical world; however, it does not become more or less relevant with people's interest. A rock still falls at the same rate due to gravity irrespective of how many people care.

### Which scientists/ physicists have inspired you?

Robert Hooke. He had a hand in all sorts of fundamental Physics and Chemistry discoveries around the 17th century which have heavily influenced people's lives. I think, my least favourite has to be Thomas Edison. He was an overrated charlatan: a lot of his innovations were copied from other, more intelligent scientists.



## Introducing Mr Kaleem Chemistry Teacher

Interview by Svaraji Odedra and Aditya Mathur

### Tell me a bit about yourself.

I've been teaching for about eleven years now. I have worked across the country, starting in a state school at Reading, and have worked in Peterborough as well. I had a short career in the industrial side of science, working for the blood bank in Cambridge, where I did some non-diagnostic blood testing for research projects, while completing some scientific research into cancer and DNA vaccines, which are coincidentally a hot topic in 2020. Two years ago, I came back to Leicester, and I have been teaching all three Science disciplines throughout my career. At LGS I am currently teaching Chemistry and a little Biology. I'm just fascinated with explaining the world to students. The chemistry of reactions going into atomic theory genuinely fascinates me.

### What attracted you to Leicester Grammar School?

My sister, actually! She is a former pupil, so obviously she gave a very good review. Having grown up in the area, I went to Beauchamp College, so I heard good things about the school. It is a place I was interested in working at for quite a while.

### What advice would you give somebody struggling with Chemistry?

The Chemistry department are very supportive to people who are struggling. We have a Chemistry clinic on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the school and if anyone has any issues, they can attend. There is also a wealth of internet resources available to all students; TedEd is a very good resource for learning about various concepts in science, and so too is Crash Course Science. Both are available on YouTube.

### Other than Chemistry, what other subjects and pastimes do you enjoy?

I'm a big fan of Economics for many reasons, for example the Covid-19 pandemic. When scientists are explaining a solution or coming up with an idea to combat the virus, they must consider the social factors and the economic side of the way the world works.

“

I'm just fascinated with explaining the world to students.

So, I like the idea of studying Economics and looking at how that fits in with scientific decisions. I have been trying to learn French for a few years now and I am thoroughly enjoying it. I also enjoy a bit of sport, especially rugby and basketball.

# Should we Stop Recycling?



by Rabiah Ahmad

## Recycling is a complex process, and its environmental benefits require a deeper cost-benefit analysis.

If I asked you to tell me the three 'R's for saving the planet, I imagine you would find it quite easy: reduce, reuse, and recycle. This mantra has been taught to many of us from a young age to educate us on environmental issues and encourage us to make planet-friendly decisions within our everyday lives, reduce waste and prevent our items from going to landfill. However, whether you diligently follow recycling rules and are responsible about where you dispose of your rubbish, or whether you find recycling a chore and would rather believe that these seemingly small actions do not really count for anything, the implication that it is all in vain goes against what we have been taught and is both shocking and confusing.

Why are there doubts about recycling in the first place? Recycling is a complex process, and its environmental benefits require a deeper cost-benefit analysis. Materials like glass are arguably less environmentally damaging to produce, being made from silica found in sand, but the complete production process still requires energy, whereas recycling avoids this and offers the opportunity for it to be repurposed instead. On the other hand, the benefits of recycling materials such as aluminium may be more widely accepted, although the relatively small amounts of metal recycled fail to meet the demands of wider industry, and so they may not be eligible for recycling everywhere due to

the costs incurred for a limited output. There is also the risk of contamination, where impurities within the materials being recycled prevent them from going through the process and exacerbate costs, or impurities enter the recycling stream and potentially find their way back into the recycled products. The risk of their toxicity imposes limits on the use of recycled materials in some cases and increases the demands for human monitoring as the machinery cannot always be reliable when automated, adding extra costs. Even recycling paper can have its drawbacks as, although it is a straightforward and cheap process practised widely, it can create "paper sludge" from the remnants of chemicals extracted from commercial paper. These may be burnt, contributing to air pollution, or could leach into the environment if disposed of without caution. Despite this, the recycling of paper can help to reduce the demand for tree harvesting, which some argue is not an environmental issue, as dedicated paper farms are not animal habitats and the replenishment of these farms should restore the carbon sink. But using land for this purpose results in inevitable habitat removal and ecosystem disruption, and the long process of tree regrowth may not be enough to offset the carbon releases. Furthermore, recycling paper also saves the use of water and fossil fuels through its production life cycle, and recycled paper generally remains optimal for use and has a comparatively good recycling lifespan before it degrades.

Perhaps the most notorious culprit for recycling uncertainty is plastic. Out of over 40,000 types of plastic filed into seven categories, only two

categories are widely recyclable. This may explain the relatively low proportions recycled in some countries; however, these two types are actually some of the most widely used everyday plastics, including sauce bottles and milk cartons. (Check your local recycling guide to find out more.) Making plastic relies on fossil fuels which are a finite resource, and releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change and global warming. When recycled, plastic degrades, which reduces its longevity and varieties of use, so that it may have to be mixed with new plastic for certain purposes or used to make lower quality materials. The argument again is that the costs of recycling are not returned by the result. There are also some environmental costs to recycling in general, due to the transport and energy it requires, but by preventing material from going to landfill and instead returning it to the economy, there are at least some returns for the waste industry and a decrease in the use of landfills, an environmental hazard producing greenhouse gas emissions, spoiling habitats, and risking chemical leaching into the soil.

Some think that recycling will simply end up in landfill, regardless of our efforts. The risk of this occurring might be due to increased costs of having to sort through recycled materials where there has been incorrect disposal of materials caused by a lack of knowledge of local rules or perhaps by the misidentification of material. Some items cannot be recycled easily due to being made of potentially hazardous materials or composites (materials with different chemical and physical properties within them) which cannot be separated by standard processes. Examples include batteries, coffee pods, takeaway cups or even some toothpaste tubes, but there may be specialist recycling services available to dispose of these including collection services or drop-off points at supermarkets, or you could use alternatives such as reusable coffee cups – which can allow you a discount in many cafés.

Some have wider concerns for the global environment. After China introduced policies in January 2018 meaning it would no longer buy recycled plastic scrap unless it was at least 99.5% pure, the UK was left with 94% of its plastic and this led to an increase in incineration rates – a largely inefficient process that releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. It also led to it being redistributed elsewhere with countries such as Malaysia absorbing these overspills for a period of time, taking in around 68% more tonnes of plastic than it had in the previous economic year. However, Malaysia is one of the countries with the most plastic pollution in the world across its oceans and coasts, and it soon retaliated declaring it would not be left

with the world's waste and also would send back tonnes of non-recyclable contaminated plastic waste to countries including the UK, which had been smuggled in to illegitimate facilities – sending contaminated waste is an offence, observed in the past with companies such as Biffa being fined for sending household waste labelled as paper to China. Changes in global policies and environmental obligations have contributed to decisions in the UK to push for 50% of its household waste to be recycled by 2020 – the COVID-19 situation meant that these have been delayed to some extent, but data from 2018/19 showed that whilst Wales had surpassed the 50% target, England was still falling behind. DEFRA set targets at the end of 2020 for the following two years which plan for increases to continue, but at a higher rate for the recycling of most materials, except for wood (which is expected to decrease in lieu of the growth of biomass burners using wood waste and also to reduce market pressures, which could be suggestive of the economic prohibitions of our recycling system). Nonetheless, countries like Japan, South Korea and Germany have significantly higher recycling rates and more efficient systems than we do here in the UK, which could be another difference causing recycling scepticism as certain effective policies seem to require consumer efforts but also retailer co-operation – which does not include employing recyclability as a branding technique to “greenwash” products and instead encourage over-consumption.

DEFRA's 25-year plan also includes measures to eliminate confusion over household recycling waste and to make all plastic packaging recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025, to prevent avoidable plastic waste. Above all this however, the 2011 Waste Regulation for England and Wales has prioritised preventing the initial creation of waste within its “waste hierarchy”, then preparing waste for reuse, and finally recycling. Reduce, reuse, recycle: the three appear in this order for a reason! The scientific consensus is that we should continue to recycle and adopt better habits of learning what we can and cannot recycle, rinsing out our bottles and containers where possible to remove at least most contaminants, and being appropriately selective about what we recycle. However, to eliminate our doubts and further reduce energy consumption from the waste disposal processes – including from waste exportations – we must focus on the roots of the problem by preventing waste where we can, which includes being conscious of our consumption and promoting the reuse of items wherever we have the privilege to do so.

# Mr Willis Says Farewell



**I had given up teaching in 1986 after three years in the London Borough of Brent. Battling on a daily basis with children who didn't have their books, pen, pencil or any inclination to listen to what you were trying to teach them was a baptism of fire that had pretty much extinguished all my enthusiasm for a teaching career. I was (reluctantly) on the supply list for Leicestershire and received a call from John Higginbotham (the first Headmaster of LGS) and, in his unbelievably posh voice, he asked me to cover some Biology maternity leave. He was quite persistent and I took up the role on a part-time basis as it would at least “bring in a few extra pennies”. The rest is of course history, as I discovered children that actually wanted to learn, were polite and well-mannered -- the teaching experience was a world away from what I had experienced in London. The Election “circus” of 1987 saw me have the surreal experience of Margaret and Denis Thatcher in my lab at school and little did I realise that six Prime Ministers later I would still be at LGS.**

So here we are 34 years later and my final total stands at 102 terms, four Headmasters, eight bursars/business directors, several thousand pupils taught and quite a few school puddings consumed (anything with custard is a favourite). The school is a very different entity than that which I joined all those years ago. Much of it for the better,

but also some of it not so, with greater workload, increased parental expectations/demands, league table competition and the day-to-day pressures of simply keeping up with the ever-changing demands on teachers, all taking their toll. The last year has, of course, been incredibly challenging for everyone but I think our school has done an incredible job and provided our pupils with the best possible experience under these extreme circumstances.

The Junior School was taken on board during the “Sugden years” and their Year 6 classes used to visit the Senior School on Tuesday afternoons to spend half the time with me in Science, and half the time doing some Design/Art. It was after one such session that I ventured back to the Staff Room in Peacock Lane to witness those unforgettable images of 9/11 on the TV there, images that have stayed with all of us for the last 20 years. Assemblies used to be for the whole school in the Great Hall of the St Nicholas building, before transferring to the Cathedral when the school numbers expanded. Because of this regular attendance, my wife and I were able to get married in the very special surroundings of Leicester Cathedral back in 1995, and also both of our children were christened there.....beautiful memories.

I became Head of Vice-Chancellor's House in 1989, a post I held until 2017, and took on the role of Senior Housemaster in 1998. It was always my philosophy that House events should be fun and not just competitive, and over the years I added Chess, Karaoke, 5-a-side Soccer and Darts to the established competitions on the House Calendar. I've been responsible for House General Knowledge since 1997 and have been producing Friends Quiz Nights since the turn of the millennium. I think I was actually the first person to address the entire school, even before the HM, during our very first House Meeting on the new site in St Nicholas Hall back in 2008. I was very definitely the first person to trigger the smoke alarms and cause an impromptu fire drill in our first year at Great Glen. My Laser Spectacular with the Prep, involving smoke machine, meant that I was “guilty as charged” and, predictably, never allowed to forget it from then on.

My teaching commitments have changed a lot during my career here. Having started as a Biology teacher,

with classes up to A Level, over time I realised that most of my enjoyment came from teaching the younger age groups. Around 1994 I therefore became the “Utility player” for the Science Department, concentrating on KS3 teaching of all three Sciences as required, but with responsibility for the Prep and Year 7 curriculums. I have really enjoyed inspiring a love of the subject in all the classes that I have taught and particularly relished introducing the National Space Centre to our Year 7 curriculum back in 1999. Simulated Challenger missions to “Rendezvous with a Comet” have been experienced by every Year 7 class until 2018 and will no doubt still be recalled with affection by many an ex-pupil. I was actually helping to create a replacement activity at the Space Centre which would have been a worthy successor to Challenger, but the pandemic put a spanner in that, although I’m sure that something will eventually be in place there in the future.

School Trips were very varied during my early years and I experienced the delights of skiing on a regular basis, along with Summer Water sports, Trips to Alton Towers and Drayton Manor Park, amongst many others. In the “King years” such trips were deemed as “not educational” and the fun factor was diminished. It is pleasing to see that such trips are now coming back (Covid permitting) and I’m sure the children will enjoy the educational experience of simply being on a residential school trip with their friends.

It’s impossible to recount every memorable moment from my time at LGS, but some things definitely stand out more than others. The Royal Visit in 2008, when the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh officially opened the new buildings, would be an obvious one for a start. The “Bomb scare” at the old site would certainly be another. At the height of tensions about IRA plots and so forth, we had a seemingly abandoned car with Irish plates in the main school car park. After evacuation, the Emergency Services, Police and Bomb Disposal unit were all gingerly assessing the car when the owner casually walked back to it with shopping from what is now High Cross. He announced that he was the boyfriend of one of our “soon to be incredibly embarrassed” colleagues! Another standout memory comes from the Knebworth Silver Clef Awards Winners Concert of 1990. It had a stellar list of performers featuring Paul McCartney, Genesis, Dire Straits, Eric Clapton, Cliff Richard & The Shadows, Elton John, Status Quo, Tears for Fears, Robert Plant & Jimmy Page and Pink Floyd topping the bill. I was part of a massive crowd of 120,000 people and yet on my

way to the toilets half-way through the day I literally bumped into a person who said “Hello Sir!” and who I would be teaching during the following week! What are the odds of that I wonder?

I have always liked to have a bit of fun at school and have supported Red Nose Day every year (apart from 2021) by having my classes sponsor me to dress up. There have been some fairly outrageous costumes over the years, but my favourite would either be my Madonna outfit of the 90s, or my Teletubby on scooter of more recent times – a great way to get around the school’s corridors. Talking of costumes, I have very fond memories of dressing up to perform at School Variety Shows. We had a Science department ABBA tribute; I’ve been a poor man’s Kate Bush and an overweight ballerina on a couple of occasions. I even have some video footage of one or two of these performances, at which both of my children remarked, “You’re just too embarrassing, Dad!”

School Drama has changed massively too, from my personal low point of “Dr Faustus” (3½ hours of sheer tedium) to my personal high point of “We Will Rock You” – a triumph featuring music from my favourite band. Speech Days are now in situ at school of course, but they started at De Montfort Hall with the most boring speech you could wish for, by the late Leon Brittan MP. David Starkey (the TV historian) came very close with his ridiculously controversial comments at another Speech Day, so it is now refreshing to have OLs coming back to address us quite often on Speech Days in Great Glen.

Teaching Games or PE at the old site involved bus journeys to Western Park, Abbey Park, Aylestone or Evington, or pupils trooping by foot to facilities at DMU for badminton or basketball. Having such brilliant facilities on site at Great Glen was a revelation after such logistical challenges, but Staff football in the new Sports Hall has never been quite as enjoyable as the Thursday evenings we had at Sports Leagues, Freemans Common, where we often continued to play through all the holidays. LGS has been a massive part of my life, but all things must come to an end and the time is right for me to “hang my boots up”. I have made lots of valued friends over the years and had the pleasure of guiding thousands of youngsters through their formative years. It has been a privilege to teach at Leicester Grammar School and I would like to think that I have played some small part in making the school the success that it is today. Many, many thanks to all my colleagues (past and present) and everyone I have had the pleasure of teaching. Good luck and see you again sometime.

## 2020-2021 Sporting Colours

Sport	Half Colours	Full Colours
Athletics		Nahbi Odeh
Badminton	Patrick Wang	
Cricket	Vashin Kaushik Kavir Mackan Aidan Major Saurav Thakrar Amy Worliding	Vivek Bulsara Will Earland Rohan Kelkar
Hockey	Sian Brewin Evie Clothier	Chiara Bensi Roshni Francis Alexia Scudamore
Netball	Gracie Fraser Poppy Page Antonia Veary	Sian Brewin
Rugby Football	Finlay Dainton George Impey Rohan Kelkar Thomas Kemp Alastair Milner Nahbi Odeh Carl Stahl	
Tennis	Sam Chapman Sophie Pounds	Prianka Dhokia Oscar Holmes Tabitha Holmes Eshan Jariwala Emily Pollard Anisha Sood

# Mr Howe Says Farewell

**W**hen I arrived at LGS in 1988, I never imagined that I would be saying goodbye at the close of my career from the same school in 2021. I was very grateful for the confidence shown in me by our founding Headmaster, John Higginbotham, when he appointed me and my initial plan was to stay for five or six years. On arrival, I was presented with a box file, which had four sheets of paper in it and an academic year diary. No work scheme, fixture list, department handbook, or policies. Leicester Grammar School was developing from very humble beginnings, but it was soon obvious that its special atmosphere was to have a very profound effect on my teaching career.

I joined a small department (just three of us) and a school with a real pioneering spirit and aim to provide the very highest standards both academically and in the personal development of its pupils. I am often asked why I have stayed at one school for 33 years and the reason is that there have always been new challenges and opportunities to develop; everything was new, fresh and exciting. Over many years, I have been fortunate to have superb colleagues to support me. Their dedication, excellence as teachers and professionalism have inspired our pupils to compete and achieve against schools with far greater history and sporting heritage. It was always my aim to appoint staff of the very highest quality and I am proud to say that they are people who I both admire and am immensely proud to call lifelong friends. For me that is the essence of why the school has been so successful in such a relatively short space of time when compared to other more established independent schools and local rivals: the combination of fantastic staff who have been able to inspire and develop pupils to give of their very best.

As some may remember, my first 20 years at LGS was mainly spent on buses. Some great memories of the Alan Smith double-deckers: up to 12 buses a day arriving and leaving school for lessons, fixtures and co-curricular activities; cadging a read of "The Sun" on the way to Games and travelling all over the city to 23 different venues to drive forward Sport and PE. (Clearing my office out, I did find my set of keys to the various facilities.) Once we arrived at Western Park to find that someone had crashed their stolen Ford Escort into the changing rooms and set it on fire. We would watch the local police chasing youths on stolen motorbikes



Photo by Mrs Hunt

across the rugby pitches. I recall the jog to De Montfort University Sports Centre and the walk to St Margaret's Baths or St Margaret's Pastures when the buses hadn't turned up. We did Cross Country at Bradgate Park, with Games at Glenfield Hospital -- dealing with naked in-patients joining your lessons. A particularly memorable journey was on the way to the University fields at Manor Road, seeing a young man driving his uncle's yellow Ferrari 360 down Manor Road whilst being chased by the police and crashing it into our bus. I remember the indoor nets at Grace Road with Mr Cawston teaching the art of Leg Spin. Sports Leagues at Freeman's Common became a second home and, of course, there was Staff Cricket; competing as Greyfriars in the Leicestershire Midweek Leagues provided great entertainment. Campcraft and Hill Walking for GCSE and A Level in the Peak District was a great favourite with staff.

The very first school Sporting Tour was in 1989, taking the school's first County Rugby Cup winners to Shropshire and North Wales, followed shortly afterwards by the school's first overseas Sporting Tour in 1991 to the Netherlands for Rugby and Hockey. We left school at 5.00 a.m. to drive up to Birkenhead to enter the North of England 7s. Our first southern hemisphere tour to Australia in

1996 was a huge step forward for the school and I know Mr Thacker still remembers the hours spent being a car park attendant or digging out cellars as part of the fundraising effort. This was followed by school sporting tours to South Africa, Canada, Sri Lanka and - a particular favourite - the school's first International Cricket Tour to Barbados in 2014, alongside Mr Potter and Dr Crawford. I had the joy of leading multiple ski trips to France, Italy and the USA, fantastically supported by Mr Willis. We both had what we still rate as the best days skiing ever at Serre Chevalier.

The school had our first International Representative athlete, Paul Aucott, in 1990 - which was actually in swimming, and it was great to see him not long ago bringing his own child to use our pool. I was delighted that Girls' Hockey provided us with our first Schools' International win (for Lucy Beavon) in one of our major games in 1996, quickly followed by a very youthful Harry Ellis as our first Schools' Rugby International in 1998, who then went on to a stellar rugby career and returned to become a colleague at LGS, alongside Nikki Ward (now Laybourne). To have contributed just a small chapter to those successes gives me great pride. LGS's first National Finals competition was reached in Mixed Tennis in 2005 at Bolton, and we finished as runners-up. This certainly started to get us noticed as a school and my becoming an ISI Team Inspector in 2001 provided yet further motivation to develop our sporting offer.

I was particularly proud when Sport England introduced their benchmark system in 2003 and we became the first independent school in the country (and one of only eight schools nationally) to be awarded a Sportsmark Gold with Distinction for the quality of our Sport and PE provision. This was a great reflection of the hard work, time and commitment shown by staff. It would of course be remiss of me not to mention the most enjoyable school trips I have done - to France with the Prep class, superbly organised by Miss Mould. I particularly relished the amusing postcards some sent home.



“

The main reason for the school's success has been the staff - their knowledge, commitment and professionalism

The move to Great Glen has, of course, taken the school forward with a huge leap: high-quality facilities all on one site, no buses and future opportunities for expansion. The PE department now has nine full-timers and three part-time specialists, supported by so many colleagues from the academic staff, whose time and commitment have been hugely valued. The relocation also allowed us to host Leicestershire's inaugural School Games, involving schools from all of the educational sectors competing against each other. Having been both a student and a teacher in the state sector, this integration continued one of my aims when I first arrived at the school: to establish strong working relationships with all local schools. Mr McCann at Lancaster Boys was hugely supportive in those early days after my arrival and I was delighted when he subsequently joined the staff at LGS. However, part of me still remembers with great fondness the old site in the centre of the city and marvels at how we actually made things work.

A final thank you to my colleagues. I've had great fun and I am immensely proud to have worked with you. Without you, nothing would have been possible. The main reason for the school's success has been the staff - your knowledge, commitment and professionalism in providing our pupils with such fantastic opportunities. An excellent staff is a school's greatest asset and I hope you all understand and appreciate your worth in that respect.

I look forward to the school enjoying a long and prosperous future.

## Tom Ellis Cross Country Challenge

In the summer term 2021 we had the inaugural Cross Country Challenge, held in memory of former pupil, Tom Ellis. It was fantastic to see the whole school taking part. Congratulations to this year's winners: Lucy Free and Daniel Gratton in Y8, Shayan Gadhia in Y9, Emily Pollard in Y10, Tom Dixon in Y11 and Antonia Veary in Y13.



## Introducing Miss Jeffries Head of Hockey

Interview by Lucy Weston

### How did you first get into teaching?

I knew that I wanted to become a teacher when I was in school; however, I was caught between two careers, either teaching or physiotherapy. And when I went to university, I went off and did physiotherapy. After I finished physiotherapy, I realised I actually was not that keen on it and I then got a year's experience at Marlborough College and loved it there. After working as a physio for a little while as well, I then decided to go into teaching again and so did my teacher training at Oakham School.

**Why is hockey your chosen field, specifically goalkeeping, and how long have you been playing it?** Both my parents played hockey, so I really was brought up in a pram on the side of a hockey pitch going with whatever parent had the closest away game or home game. I have been playing myself since I was six, and been playing in goal since I was ten, which is 17 years. That is probably why hockey is my chosen field and I have been lucky enough to play at a very good level.



### If you were not a teacher, what other profession would you like to have?

I did enjoy my physio but maybe I would rather be in a sporting environment rather than in a hospital environment. I did not get on with that kind of medical environment, so maybe I would be a sort of sport-specific physiotherapist.

### What else do you do in your spare time?

I like going on country walks, having pub lunches and socialising with friends when I get the chance. And that's about it really. It is all I have time for, and then it's back to school again, doing the other things I love, teaching and playing hockey.



## Cycling for Brain Tumour Research and The Epilepsy Society

Congratulations to Mr Davies, Head of PE and Games, on raising over £6,600 for Brain Tumour Research and My Name's Daddie. In the May 2021 half-term he completed an epic 455 mile bike-packing adventure from coast to coast of Britain in memory of his brother and also of former LGS pupil, Tom Ellis.

Well done too, to Y10 pupil, Rahul Subramanian who has cycled and run 127 miles in 10 days to raise £302 for the The Epilepsy Society - another amazing feat!



# 2020-2021 Hockey

By Miss Jeffries

In the Advent term, it was really pleasing to see the girls back out on the hockey pitch after an extended period away from the sport. Although the pandemic prevented us from playing fixtures, the girls showed great commitment and energy. This year's House Hockey ran in year-group bubbles, with Dukes winning the Year 7, 10 and 11 competitions, Judges winning the Year 8 competition, VCs winning the Year 9 competition and Masters winning the year 13 competition.

In November LGS were invited to take part in a virtual hockey fixture competing against five other schools on the execution of hockey-based

skills. Daya Kaur was awarded 1st place in the Year 6 5m Slalom; Roshni Francis was awarded 1st place in the Year 12/13 Hitting Accuracy; and Year 6 Prep were awarded 1st Place in the Year 6 5m slalom team challenge.

To finish off the term Sain Brewin in Year 13 organised a charity mixed hockey tournament which saw most of the Year 13 boys and girls competing.

This year LGS launched Boys Hockey. Although lockdown prevented us from returning to school, it was brilliant to see the Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 boys getting

involved in hockey during our Festival of Sport. Throughout the Trinity term, many of the boys have continued to enjoy playing at our Hockey Academy sessions after school.

Many individuals have represented at county level and played in the National League. Well done to Evangeline Clothier and Zachary Laurenti on their selection for the Performance Centre. In addition, congratulations to Anna Kendall and Sophie Levy who have represented Leicester City Hockey Club in the National League - a fantastic achievement. Joseph Khalid has been selected for the UK Lions U14 training squad.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of staff and students involved in hockey this year, for their unrelenting enthusiasm and energy. Those leaving the school, I hope you have enjoyed your time playing hockey at LGS and continue to play hockey wherever your future takes you.





## Star Hockey Player: Anna Kendall

Interview by Tara Bahra

### How has Covid-19 affected your hockey?

The 2019-20 season was cut short in March 2020 by one game, which unfortunately meant that the Leicester 1st team just missed out on being promoted to the Premier Division on goal difference. I managed to start playing again in August 2020, with the league starting in September. However, only six games were played before we went into another national lockdown, resulting in the 2020-21 season finally being abandoned. However, we are now (in May 2020) playing a friendly mini-tournament, which I am enjoying and this has allowed me to get back into playing. I am hoping we get a full 2021-22 season.

**How has hockey influenced you to be the person you are today?** Hockey has taught me about discipline. You have to have the same discipline in training, so that you can be prepared for matches. You can see the benefits of preparation and working hard. Playing hockey has made me more confident and it has shown me the benefits of teamwork.

### What is the best part about playing a match?

The best part is the intensity. You are always under pressure from the opposition and have to react very quickly. The game is very physical, and you have to give it your all. I enjoy a competitive atmosphere.

**What are your major highlights in your hockey journey so far, and do you have any goals for the future?** My major highlight would be my debut for the Leicester 1st team in February 2020 against Ben Rhydding where we won 2-0. I hope to maintain playing at a high standard and to continue playing at university.

**How do you handle the pressure associated with playing at a high level?** Leicester 1st has a lot of older and more experienced players, including Mrs Laybourne and Miss Jeffries. They have been very helpful in guiding and supporting me. However, you have to be prepared to learn from your mistakes and take on board constructive criticism in order to improve. Before a game I will always feel nervous, but that shows how important it is to me.

# Tennis at LGS

by Mr G D Davies and Mr L Godsmark

As has been the case with all sports, a great deal of tennis has been missed in the last 12 months, however, that has not stopped our tennis programme from thriving and developing. Our head tennis coach, Mr Luke Godsmark, continues to work tirelessly before, during, and after the school day to help develop the array of talent that we have at LGS.

Despite the challenges COVID-19 has presented, our pupils have enjoyed a number of successes this summer. The u13A boys' team have qualified for the regional rounds of the national competition, which will be played in September. The u13A girls' team lost to a strong Twycross House team, but shows a great deal of promise. The u15A boys' team reached the final of the county competition, losing narrowly in a tie-break set to

a talented Ivanhoe College team. We are excited to see how this team, made up of Kai Johri, Nikhil Shrivinas, Filip Cupac and George Stimpson, develops in the coming year. The u15A girls' tennis team also reached their county final, but suffered the same fate as the boys, losing narrowly in a match tie-break and missing out on a place in the Regional Finals. The team included Emily Pollard and Tabitha Holmes, both of whom have had outstanding individual seasons competing in British and European Tour events.

Our senior girls' and boys' teams have enjoyed another successful season competing in the Aberdare Cup (girls) and Glanville Cup (boys) for a place at the National Finals in Nottingham. The boys did fantastically well, beating Repton School to reach the Regional Finals, where they met Trent College. As has been the trend this year, the boys lost on a match tie-break, however, given

their profile, they were invited to the National Tennis finals at Nottingham Tennis Centre. This is a significant achievement of which the players, Eshan Jariwala, Matthew McKinnon, Luca McKinnon, Fergus Smith, and Sam Chapman, can be very proud. The u18 girls' tennis team unfortunately lost their second round match to Warwick School. This summer sees some key players leave the school, with both Prianka Dhokia and Anisha Sood looking forward to university next year. It cannot be overstated how much time and commitment has been given by these pupils, helping the school reach numerous regional and national finals over the last six years. We wish them and all leaving tennis players all the very best in the future. (The photo in this article dates from summer 2019, in the absence of more recent photos, but does feature Prianka and Anisha.)



From left to right, Mr Davies, Prianka Dhokia, Emily Pollard, Anisha Sood, Tabitha Holmes, Max Marriott-Clarke, Victor Wiles, Oscar Holmes, Eshan Jariwala and Mr Godsmark.

# 2021 Cricket Report

by Mr L. Potter, Master in Charge of Cricket



**F**ollowing all the Covid issues that have so hampered school sport for the last 18 months, it has been a pleasure to have nearly a full cricket season this summer. All year groups have played a combination of internal fixtures within their bubbles, Inter-school friendly fixtures and County cup fixtures. Each team has had a training session after school, as well as their normal games afternoon each week and this has allowed real development of techniques, ability and know-how.

The summer began with the GPL (Grammar Premier League), a 2 week 10 over competition for all year groups that was keenly competitive and very enjoyable. A large number of players were given the opportunity to show what they could do before representative teams were selected and it proved a good way to begin the season. If time allows we will look to produce the same competition next season. Fixtures against other schools were allowed two weeks before half term and from that point on all the school's A teams played at least a fixture a week alongside a number of B team games.

The u11 team played as a combined side with the Year 6s at LGJS and only managed a couple of fixtures. Enthusiastic and promising cricketers within the group include Rory Stimpson and Matty Wilcock, both representing the A team and Rory playing for the County side. At u12 level, the team quickly gelled into a competitive

unit that made it through to the County Cup semi-final. They lost to Loughborough Grammar School, who had a young player score 100 to take them home, but without that innings the game could easily have gone the other way. Captain Arav Sharma spent nearly all season injured with a broken thumb sustained early on, dropping a caught and bowled. He will come back even stronger as he is a nice young player. In his absence, Vishy Sankar organised the team well and produced runs and wickets for the team. He put in the best performance, with brilliant bowling against Rushey Mead, taking 7 wickets for 4 runs, with the innings finished when he took 4 wickets in 4 balls, all bowled. In the previous game, he also took a hat-trick, so there is an attacking fast bowler of the future here. Muhammed Salleh batted with technique and

courage and Sam Wildman is developing into a good all-round cricketer. Others, such as Tilak Chavda, Barnaby Charles, Prakash Easwar (Off-Spin), Adhidev Ghosh, Alessandro Gundle (W/K), Aarav Jaiswal, Harvir Johal, Veer Kanabar, Aryan Pala, Arjun Sandhu, Jaden Smith and Rayyan Tariq, all show real potential if willing to work hard.

The u13s are a squad of excellent ability and real enthusiasm, who will form part of a very impressive 1st XI in the future. They are built around a very experienced spine of four or five good cricketers for their age. Anav Rai is the County wicketkeeper and a hard-hitting batsman of real quality; he scored a magnificent 111no in his county age group debut and two scores of 80 plus

for the LGS u13s. He also bowled medium pace for the team with excellent results. Captain Ronak Rajasheka showed himself to be a player of fantastic promise, bowling his leg spin impressively and batting with technique and class to take the team home on more than one occasion. He also showed great tactical awareness, in leading the team to a number of impressive victories. Arvind Kulkarni is a cricketer of passion and ability, as a fast bowler should be. He has bowled some spells of real quality and again represents the County, as do the other three in this list. Arvind is a batsman of very impressive technique, who can only come into his own even more when he grows and his weight of shot becomes heavier. This will happen very soon. Many others show the potential to be excellent young cricketers in the future, so this side could develop into one of the best.

Young cricketers, such as Daniel Weston (W/K and Batsman), Andrew Uhegwu (Fast Bowler), Roshan Subramania (bowler), George Stimpson (bowler), Jasper Mayer (bowler and hard-hitting batsman), Arnav Saluja, (all-rounder), Hatim Faizi (fast bowler), Daniel Kolka (bowler), Adam Hyatt (All-rounder), Leo Hastings (all-rounder), Finlay Fitzpatrick (all-rounder), Neel Choudhary (Off-spinner), Arnav Bhavsar (excellent batsman) and others, will progress very well. The u13 XI had many excellent wins against good sides, such as Bilton Grange, Loughborough GS and Northampton School for Boys and will be a force to be reckoned with in the future.

Vashin Kaushik led the u14s this season with distinction, both as Captain and as an

all-round cricketer. He opened the batting with another impressive young cricketer in Keshav Sthanakey and they combined to put the team into winning positions in all of their games. They both bowled successfully, with Vashin opening the bowling for both the year above and the u14s. These are two very fine cricketers with excellent attitudes and they both have good futures in the game. Anish Das is another good cricketer with both bat and ball and has really matured this year, showing determination to perform alongside obvious ability. Others, such as Charlie Barkworth, Rushil Patel, Rohan Gohil, Arlo Gilligan and Nikhil Shenoy, need to commit to developing their game to the full and they can be very nice cricketers. I hope they



Back Row: Mr J.T. Hunt (Coach), R. Subramanian, K. Sthanakiya, O. Jozsa, A. Das, G. Wadhwa, V. Patel, Mr L. Potter (Coach)  
Front Row: V.A. Patel, N. Corry, V. Kaushik, O. Bunce, K. Mackan, A. Major, O. Mason, O. Dunford



Old Boys' Team: CWH, Tim Spencer, Tom Smith, Zain Rizvi, James Scudamore, Will Hunt, Robbie Scudamore, Patrick Sadd, Daniel Scudamore, Sachin Abeysundera

will be willing to do this in the next couple of years. The u14s made it through to the County Cup Semi-final, where they met Oakham School. Missing Kaushik and Rai through injury, the team were stretched and, even though they competed very well, they were not able to move onto the final. Let's hope for real commitment next summer and lots of enjoyment from playing and training.

The u15s are very much the team of the season, with a County cup win against Oakham School, followed by a run in the National cup that (at the time of writing in early July) is still going. They won all their fixtures and are a team of real ability and passion, with a willingness to work hard for results and never give in until the last ball is bowled. They have many excellent players, starting with Captain Kavir Macken, who scored two 50s in the National cup run and bowled his off-spinners superbly. He has worked so hard on his game in the last 18 months that he deserves every bit of success and it was good to see him earn a County call-

up for the first time this year. Ollie Mason has been a super spin-twin for Kavir, bowling his slightly quicker off-spin alongside him and bringing the team back into games through some impressive spells. He has also shown a sound but aggressive mindset to the number 3 position, with his left-handed batting. Oliver Bunce has played a couple of match-winning innings against good quality attacks, hitting the ball extremely hard and cleanly and showing his obvious ability. He fields with real intent and his bowling should continue to develop with more exposure. The most improved batsman in the team is Otto Jozsa, who hit a match-winning 78 and other important innings that took the side home when it was under pressure. Otto has always been able to hit the ball hard, but he is now also playing much straighter and being more selective. Aiden Major continues to be a top-class wicketkeeper for his age and his batting develops at a steady rate -- he played one

or two fine innings. Ned Corry has developed a great deal as a bowler beginning to show greater consistency and pace and is going to be a more than useful swing and seam bowler in the future. He is a great trier and clearly mirrors the never-say-die attitude of the team. Others, such as Oliver Dunford (off spin and hard-hitting batsman), Vivek Patel, Ved Patel, Gautam Wadhwa and Rahul Subramania, all played their part and will continue to progress. The three Year 9s, Vashin Kaushik, Anish Das and Keshav Sthanakey, were very important members of the County Cup and National team and are very good young cricketers, even when they play a year above their age group. It has been a difficult time for Sidhartha Das, our tall fast-bowling all-rounder; he has had a side injury that has not allowed him to play for six weeks and we wish him well and hope he is available next season to add even greater depth to the team. The u15s will play either Denstone College or Shrewsbury School

in the Midlands final on September 2nd and the winner of that will represent the Midlands in the National final at Arundel Castle on September 5th. They have done so well, but have the opportunity to really do something very special if they can win their way to the National final, alongside the champions of the North, South, West and the Midlands.

Unfortunately, the 1st XI were unable to start their fixtures until after half term, due to assessments, and then had more than one fixture cancelled, due to covid and strike action (both at other schools). During this time, many of the team committed themselves to extremely worthwhile nets and training to develop their skill sets and prepare themselves for the cricket to be played. The attitude from all involved was superb. A super win against Kings School Grantham came first, with Jai Modhvadia scoring an exciting 51 and others chipping in to take the team home after a dominant bowling and fielding effort. The MCC brought a very strong team to LGS next and, even though we had a very good bowling and fielding performance, led by an excellent bowling spell from Rory Pateman (2 for 30), we struggled when it came time to bat. The wicket began to bounce and take spin and the MCC spinners out-classed our batting line-up and, after a sound start to 30, we lost 6 wickets for very few runs, when the spinners entered the attack. The MCC won easily, but once again it was a pleasure and an honour to play the greatest sporting club in the world. Our last game was against a very strong Old Boys XI. Will Hunt, one of the best players to ever represent the 1st XI, put together a team that had six former 1st XI captains and was always going to

be a very difficult challenge. It was such a pleasure to see so many former players and they really did put in a super performance, showing how much they had progressed over the years. Will Hunt scored a hard hit 65, Theo Rashid 48 and Daniel Scudamore a quickfire 58. The OBs finished on 229 for 5 off 30 overs. The 1st XI were never in a position to compete with a score like that, but a number of players chipped in to take the score to a reasonably respectable 157 for 7 off 30 over. Captain Rohan Kelkar scored an attractive 27, after keeping very well and Finn Carnduff top-scored, with a hard hit 42 no. We are hoping this fixture will happen on an annual basis, because it is not only an excellent test but also a super social event.

“  
It was such a pleasure to see so many former players in the Old Boys' Team and they put in a super performance

We say goodbye to a number of excellent cricketers this year, none more valued than Rohan Kelkar. He has captained the 1st XI for two years and is a useful bowler, as well as a top-class batsman and wicket keeper. Committed and reliable throughout his time at LGS, he will be greatly

missed. Will Earland, (Vice Captain), Vivek Bulsara (Captain of Cricket), Saurav Thakrar and Alastair Milner have been excellent members of the 1st XI, and given a great deal to cricket at LGS. We wish them well for the future. Many good players are coming through and we look forward to the L6th and Year 11 being joined by the successful Year 10 cricketers to make another good 1st and 2nd XI in the coming summer.

Every year, there are a good number of people to thank for all they give to LGS cricket. This includes the staff that have taken practices and teams this season: Mr Hunt u15s; Mr Howe u14s; Mr Stubbs u12s; and Mr Smallman, Mr Ellis and Mr Thacker, who took many after-school practices. Our grounds team do a fantastic job and, during a quite difficult time, Michael Hood and his team deserve our thanks. The catering continues to be super, and Lou and her team are always so helpful. We have a scoring team that show a real interest and help all staff and teams so much. Jasraj Dhami, Isaac Callaghan, Ben Rissbrook and Jack Strong have all been committed and will be taking their level one scorer's award this winter. A last goodbye goes to Mr Howe, retiring this year after many years as the u14 manager and a supporter of cricket throughout his time at LGS. We now look forward to more progress at winter training and a full season of cricket next year with lots of sunshine.



# Girls' Cricket

by Miss Feeney

**W**hile the sporting year has been somewhat disrupted, it has been great to see plenty of Cricket being played. Our pupils have continued to enjoy a variety of cricket opportunities at school, and it has been great to hear of pupils' ongoing successes outside of school, representing their clubs, the County and Academy sides.

We started the year with half a term of Cricket. It was great to see the pupils quickly regain their skills and enjoy playing the game again, having missed out in summer 2020. The summer Cricket season began in Trinity 2021 with the Leicester Grammar Premier League. Girls in Years 7 to 10 each represented one of the four GPL teams and played a tournament, creating some exciting match play. We were then able to begin playing the first sporting fixtures of this academic year. Squads in all age groups played at least one fixture, against another school or a different LGS year group. The 1st XI had another successful season, winning an exciting and very close match against Oakham School by only two runs, and losing a competitive match against Rugby School.

An addition to the fixture calendar this year was some intra-school fixtures, with matches played between different year groups. This led to some very closely fought matches, particularly between the u12s and u13s, and the u13s and u14s. It also gave some of the u15s their first taste of hardball cricket, winning a competitive match against the u17s. This is certainly something that we will look to continue to include as part of our fixture programme in the future. Finally, we have had plenty of House Cricket going on this year, both at the beginning of the year and in the last couple of weeks of the summer term. Approximately 200 girls represented their House and, as always, they showed great team spirit and played their best cricket to compete for their House. Overall, this year has seen Cricket played at all levels, allowing many pupils to experience and enjoy playing the game. Thanks go to all of the staff and pupils involved for their efforts, and we will look forward to another exciting Cricket season next year.

## Star Cricketer, Rohan Kelkar

Interview by Ali Khan

**W**hat first sparked your passion for cricket?

I joined my friend at a training session at CCA in Year 1 and immediately fell in love with the game.

**What would you say is your biggest cricketing achievement?**

Perhaps getting my first 1st XI cap for the school in Year 9, or winning the National County Competition with Leicestershire U-17 for two years in a row.

**Do you ever find it difficult to juggle cricket with academics?**

Yes, it does get very difficult because the training sessions at county or club often go on until late in the evening, and are often quite far away as well. When the season starts, the whole of Saturday and most Sundays are spent playing matches. But managing my schoolwork is necessary and important.

**How has cricket positively impacted your life?**

Playing cricket has taught me the importance of teamwork and developed many other soft skills. You have to become mature playing in an adult



team from a young age, in my case Year 8, and learning from teammates with much more experience than I has only improved my own game. Playing cricket has allowed me to travel and improve in different conditions, such as playing in India, as well as leaving my comfort zone and pushing myself.

**Do you see cricket as something which you would pursue in the future as an adult?**

I think I will continue cricket in a social way in my adult life - it is such a good sport and a healthy hobby to have.

# **Celebrating Ambition, Opportunity and Community**



[leicestergrammar.org.uk](http://leicestergrammar.org.uk)