



Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Newsletter

Autumn Term

October 2023

Message from the Principal

This half term seems to have flown by! It has been a busy one, with a huge number of activities, both within and outside the classroom. The weekly bulletin for students is packed with adverts for clubs, competitions, leadership opportunities and more. Events in school have included the Post-16 Evening for Year 11 students, to support the transition to the next stage of their education or training, whilst there have also been trips out of school this term, including geography fieldwork visits to Hunstanton, GCSE citizenship visits to the Air Ambulance base north of Leicester, and a very successful Year 8 trip to France for a week.

Our new Year 7 cohort have settled in well, and can now find their way successfully around the building. The extended transition sessions helped them to fully understand the Soar Valley Way; what we mean by great EFFORT, the importance of PARTICIPATION, and the benefits of mutual RESPECT for and by all. I am very impressed that our Year 7 students can recite the school's core values, they certainly are 'Soar Valley' now!

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers that no absences for school can be authorised for holidays or other non-educational reasons. Attendance is so very important – if children are not here they cannot learn. Attendance at Soar Valley is very good and, with your continued support, will improve even further I am sure.

Finally, we wish everyone a very happy and restful half term break. [Visit the City Council's website to discover the range of free and low-cost events and activities](#) taking place in libraries, museums and other venues.

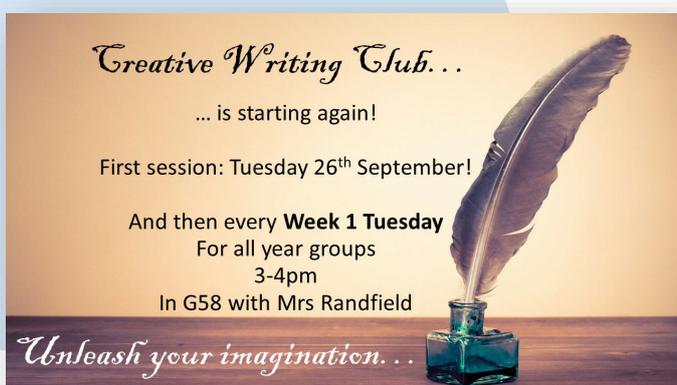
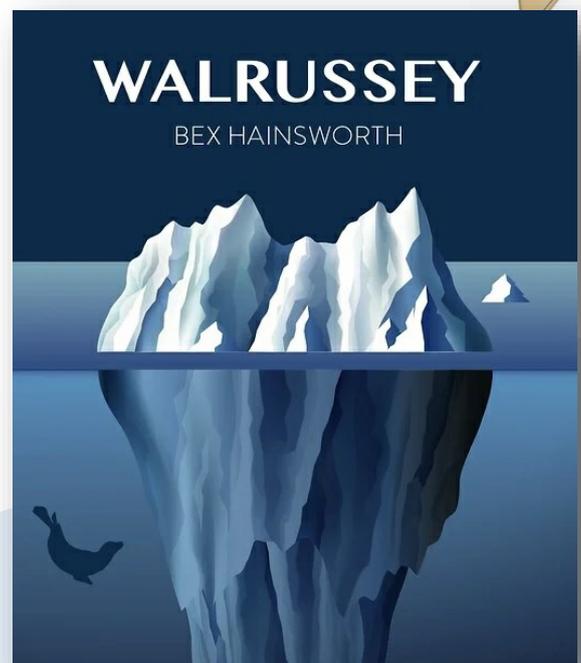
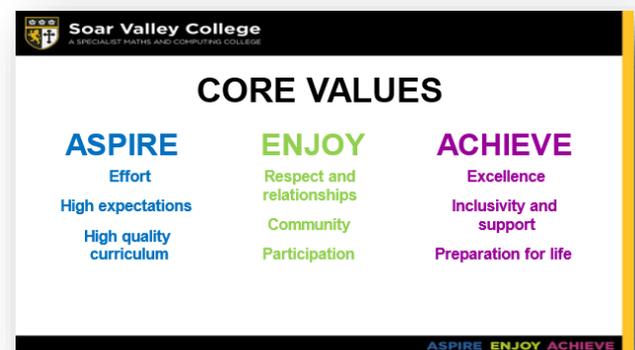
Our Very Own Soar Valley Star

We are delighted to be able to share the news that one of our English staff, Mrs Randfield, is now a published poet.

This term saw the publication of her debut collection of 28 poems entitled 'Walrussey'. A fantastic achievement for which hearty congratulations are in order!

The collection is an exploration of the impact of global warming on marine ecosystems and was written in response to the current climate crisis.

Students who have a similar ambition to write can join her in the Creative Writing Club every Tuesday after school.





The House System @SVC

House News:

The Soar Valley House system embeds a sense of community, friendship and healthy competition amongst both students and staff. As you would expect, we are always looking to develop the House system further and so this year—with four new heads of house—we wanted to ramp things up from the off-set! New this year we are dedicating a biweekly form time to all things House!

After a welcome assembly by new Heads of Houses, they then showed who has what it takes to be the best driver...Mario style! After the qualifying rounds, Mrs Richardson, Mr Hatto and Miss Kamutaundi were eliminated, leaving Miss McKillop, Mr West and Miss Underwood to battle it out in the final!

Plenty of screams were heard, particularly from self-confessed Mario Kart expert, Mr West, but ultimately, the winner was Miss McKillop – a strong start to the year for Victoria House! Mr Hatto on the other hand is off to driving school after spending his race stuck in 12th place.

A student Mario Kart tournament will be underway next half term, so let's see if the other houses can throw a banana in the path of Miss McKillop's early victory.



Some of the heads of house may have taken things a little too seriously!

House	Rank	House Points
Victoria	1	150 pts
Bradgate	2	120 pts
Watermead	3	100 pts
Abbey	4	90 pts
Castle	5	85 pts
Beacon	6	80 pts

An early lead for Victoria, but can they keep it up over the whole of the academic year ahead?

European Day of Languages

For the 2023 European Day of Languages on September 26th students once again got their competitive hats on for the Big Fat Language Quiz of the Year and to win the chance of being displayed in our cultural appreciation display of languages. Students for each House came together to share their own home languages and wider knowledge of languages from around the world.

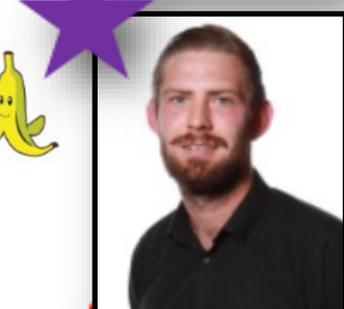
Student Council

The new House Captains took on their first major responsibility by calling the first House Council meeting of the year. With the support of their Heads of House, House Captains were empowered to represent their House's tutor groups and to make a positive contribution to the wider school. They should all be proud of the leadership they displayed.

Fund raising ideas were discussed - as were issues students wanted to explore - ready to be taken to our Head Students to keep our community thriving.



The Modern Foreign Languages Department's Jigsaw of Languages





The House System @SVC

Redesign a Book Cover

Creative students assembled to take part in the first library competition of the year. The challenge was to re-design a book cover for their favourite book. Lots of great entries were received and it was brilliant to see so many students who actively read for pleasure!

It was a tough call, but by the voting of an unbiased team of adjudicators, first place went to Beacon, with Watermead and Victoria close behind. Mrs Richardson and Miss McKillop want to thank all those who entered for their designs and cannot wait to see what you produce next with the Short Spooky Story competition.



Soar Valley Has Talent

Just as the Heads of House were getting over the Mario Kart race, they were then tasked with showcasing their weird and wonderful talents.

Did you know that Mrs Richardson is a record-breaking book stamper? That Mr West is the East Midlands crashmat surfing champion? Or that Mr Hatto is a master ball juggler?

If these talents don't astound you Miss Underwood showcased her mind reading genius, Miss McKillop demonstrated why she is the National Champion for saying the alphabet in reverse and Miss Kamutaundi proved herself as a KPOP dancing legend. *



COMING SOON

The curtains will soon be open for students to show their own unique talents in Soar Valley's first virtual talent show! Singing, dancing and acting? Awesome jokes, football tricks or impressionist? Who knows what the impressively wonderful students of Soar Valley College have up their sleeves.

Inter House Sport

Time for all things sport, and the first inter house competition of the year: basketball!

Competition has been fierce so far, with all teams being very strong. The games have been contested in good humour, with proper sporting spirit, and, in true Soar Valley style, with lots of **EFFORT** being put in by all students. Whilst some of the dribbling techniques were questionable, it was lovely to see the students enjoying themselves.

The results from the first three rounds are extremely tight, but currently Bradgate lead the way, followed by Beacon, Watermead, Abbey, Victoria and finally, Castle. However, you've got to be in it to win it, and Year 11's time to shine is up next. It really is all to play for!

* Some talents may have been exaggerated!





Your PASSPORT to SUCCESS

At Soar Valley we are clear that **EFFORT IS EVERYTHING**. Participation in extra curricular opportunities and House competitions is a great way to stretch yourself and make the extra effort needed to push beyond what you thought was possible.

Competition Winners Visit Parliament

Three of our Key Stage 4 students enjoyed a trip to Parliament on Tuesday 12th September. The students were selected to go on this trip as they had won a letter writing competition, where they wrote outstanding letters to their local MPs about concerns within the community and suggestions about how to make improvements.

Our students joined students from four other Leicester City schools for a full day in London where they were treated to a tour of the Houses of Parliament followed by an open top bus tour where they got to see all the sights of London. It was a fantastic day and a great opportunity for our students to learn about the workings of our democracy.



Year 7 Morning Mile Club

Every Monday morning, a dedicated group of Year 7 students can be seen completing a 'Morning Mile' with their Head of Year, Mr Wade, and Associate Head of Year Mrs O'Flynn.

The Year 7 students involved have been completing four laps of the cricket pitch at the front of school to help them to keep healthy and to feel ready for the day ahead. During the walk the Year 7s have been able to talk to Mr Wade and Mrs O'Flynn about how they are settling into Soar Valley College, ask any questions they might still have about school, and talk to other Year 7s and make some new friends!

This has been a really enjoyable experience for all involved and is a great way to start the week. Our thanks go out to Mr Wade and Mrs O'Flynn for both the idea and the stamina to see it through every Monday of the year so far.

Any Year 7s who participate are able to gain hours towards their **Participate Passport**, so keep up the hard work!



Thursday Morning Science 6 Mark Club

Thursday mornings this term have seen the Community Lounge before school full of Year 11 students getting a head start on the day, and on their science GCSE. Miss Yadav, Director of Science, has been running sessions for students who want to maximise their mark on the longer questions in the science examinations. So, they grab a bagel and a drink and get down to some hard work. Well done to these students for living and breathing the SVC mantra that **EFFORT IS EVERYTHING!**



Normandy Trip

On 25th September 40 of our Year 8 students found themselves on a ferry on the way to France for the Normandy trip.

Apparently, the highlight of the crossing was Mr Oxspring winning the Jukebox Bingo competition, although his face does not betray his obvious excitement at winning a Brittany Ferries visor!

After a spectacular sunrise on the first morning the students launched into a week full of different activities. There was archery and fencing to have a go at, a climbing wall to scale, and the chance to undertake team building exercises that involved walking around the woods in blindfolds and being sprayed with water pistols by the staff!

And of course there was the beauty and majesty of some of the most famous places in France. Students visited Mont St Michel—a favourite of school trips for many years—as well as Chateau de Fougères where a castle has stood for over 1000 years.

As you would expect, the students were a credit to Soar Valley College and a great time was had by all involved.





Card Gaming Tournament

On 5th October the Soar Valley College Card Gaming Club proudly hosted its first ever tournament. On the day there were two competitions, one for *Magic: the Gathering* and the other for *Yu-Gi-Oh*.

Given the popularity of the games it came as no surprise that all of the available slots were filled with competitors. And so, come the start time, we saw an epic clash involving 20 players!

Winning through to the final for Yu-Gi-Oh were: Danamrit Singh (Y11 – Watermead), Udai Singh (Y9 – Abbey), Yodh Bhandal (Y7 – Watermead), and Krishan Dattani (Y9 – Castle).

Our strongest Magic players included: Muhammad Mahmood (Y9 - Watermead), Bhavya Sagar (Y10 – Castle), Jai Khushalbai-Rietdyke (Y9 – Victoria), and Saiyam Rathod (Y10 – Castle).



The tournament was concluded on 12th October, and so hot off the press we can announce that the winners were:

Udai Singh (Abbey)

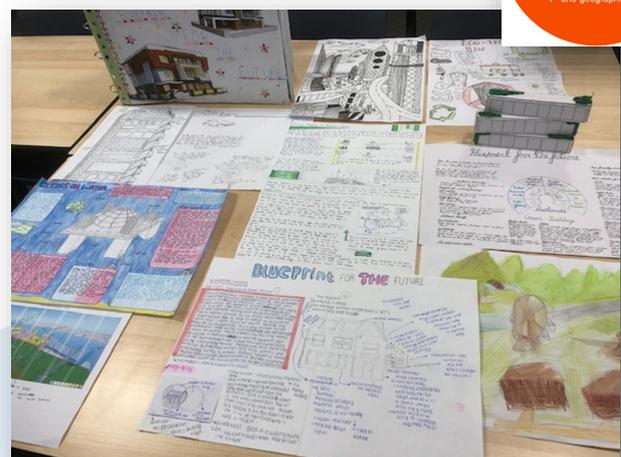
Jai Kushalbai-Rietdyke (Victoria)



Young Geographer of the Year

Our budding geographers were invited to enter a national competition by the Royal Geographical Society. Their task was to design and create their own *blueprint for the future* with new technologies and futuristic strategies to revolutionise our Cities of the Future!

We are extremely proud of the efforts of our KS3 and KS4 students and wish them the very best of luck. The winners for the Young Geographer of the Year will be announced next month.



What else is going on @SVC?

Dr Bike

Soar Valley College is once again working with Sustrans (a sustainable transport charity) to encourage students to walk or cycle to school. On Thursday 28th September two representatives from Sustrans Leicester visited the school as part of the 'Dr Bike' initiative. This enabled a number of students who cycle to school on a regular basis to have a FREE bike maintenance session on their bikes in preparation for the winter months. This was a great opportunity for students to have minor repairs carried out on their cycles.

The session was part of our preparations for 'Walk and Cycle' week at Soar Valley College (Monday 2nd – Friday 6th October) where students had the opportunity to record their distance and time walking or cycling to school. There were 'Free your Feet' badges on offer to students who participated and the opportunity for some students to gain a Soar Valley College sustainable water bottle for the highest number of minutes or distance walked or cycled.



Live 'Macbeth' Screening from the RSC

Students studying Macbeth as one of their GCSE English Literature texts had the opportunity to take part in a live lesson streamed from Stratford Theatre. The lesson, led by the actors and producers at the Royal Shakespeare Company, explored two key scenes of the play. Students got to see how they rehearsed and experimented with the performance on the stage and also hear from the actors about playing the roles of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. It was an excellent opportunity to see the play performed and to hear from the experts!

Air Ambulance Visit

GCSE citizenship students were offered an amazing opportunity to visit the Air Ambulance charity base in Nottingham. The trip allowed students to learn about how charities are funded, how they operate and the amazing lifesaving work the Air Ambulance team undertake. The students found it to be an extremely interesting experience and managed to see the helicopter in action on its way to save lives.



Post 16 Evening

Post 16 Evening is a very important event for Year 11 students as it helps to support them into the next step in their education or training.

We were grateful to have (a) a huge range of providers on site on the evening, able to take students through various types of further study, including A Levels and other Level 3 qualifications, as well as apprenticeships and bursaries and (b) excellent support from both students and parents. Thank you to all involved on the night, and particularly to our amazing careers team for the huge effort that goes into its organisation.

What else is going on @SVC?

Geography Fieldwork

A Game of Two Halves



On the 15th and the 20th of September this year our Year 11 geography students set off to Hunstanton in Norfolk to undertake geography fieldwork in preparation for their exams at the end of the year.

A compulsory requirement of GCSE geography is that all students carry out a geographical enquiry for both the physical and human components of the course.



A variety of data collection methods were used to help students assess whether the coastal management strategies at Hunstanton are effective and whether the town is sustainable all year round.

The field work extends the knowledge and understanding taught in class on coastal landscapes and urban futures.



It would be fair to say that one of the groups had considerably better luck with the weather than the other did.

On the 15th the sun shone and students found themselves experiencing the glory of 'Sunny Hunny'. On the 20th...well, not so much!

Whatever the weather however, the students were an absolute credit to the school and took it all –sun or rain—in their stride.



Venue	Shop open date (2023)	Shopping slot take place between	Address
Forest Lodge Academy	Wednesday 11 October	3.30pm – 5.15pm	Charnor Road LE3 6LH
Babington Academy	Thursday 12 October	10am – 1pm	150 Strasbourg Drive LE4 0SZ
Soar Valley College	Friday 13 October	3.30pm – 5.15pm	Gleneagles Avenue LE4 7GY
Orchard Mead Academy	Saturday 14 October	10am – 12.45pm	Keyham Lane West LE5 1RT
Evington Leisure Centre	Sunday 15 October	11am – 1.30pm	131 Downing Drive LE5 6LP
Leicester City Football Club	Monday 16 October	10am – 1.30pm	King Power Stadium LE2 7FL



Dates for Your Diary

October Pop Up Pantries

Leicester City Council is once again working in partnership with Samworth Brothers to give eligible families the opportunity to access pop up pantries in the run up to the end of this half term. We are proud to once again provide a venue to support this work. Those eligible will be able to shop for groceries to be used over the October half term holiday.

Support for Charities

This term saw two fundraising campaigns at Soar Valley.

Throughout September students sold ribbons and badges in aid of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

The generosity of the students that bought a badge or a ribbon, and the desire of the students selling them to support such a deserving cause, is a credit to their sense of citizenship and willingness to go above and beyond for those in need of our help.

In total we raised over £300.



Friday 29th September saw staff congregating in the Community Lounge before the start of the day to take part in the Macmillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning.

Thanks to the addition of an inter House staff quiz the room buzzed with an equal mix of concentration, frustration and inspiration [as in inspired guesses because some of the questions were impossible].

In the end croissant were eaten, money was raised and Watermead were declared the winners!

Parents' Evenings

Year 9	16 th November
Year 11	18 th January
Year 8	29 th February
Year 10	21 st March
Year 7	2 nd May

Term Dates

Autumn Half Term Break	16 th – 20 th October
School Closed	13 th & 14 th November
Autumn Term ends	21 st December
Spring Term begins	8 th January
Spring Half Term Break	19 th – 23 rd February
Spring Term ends	22 nd March
Summer Term begins	8 th April
Bank Holiday	6 th May
Summer Half Term Break	27 th – 31 st May
Summer Term ends	12 th July

Other Events Next Half Term

Year 7 Settling In Evening	26 th October
Year 7 Reports home	26 th October
Year 11 Reports home	27 th October
Year 8/9/10 Reports home	16 th November
Ex Year 11 Celebration	23 rd November
Year 11 Mock Exams start	27 th November
Year 11 Mock Exams finish	8 th December
Christmas Concert	13 th December