



Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Newsletter - Issue 3 March 2021

Message from the Principal

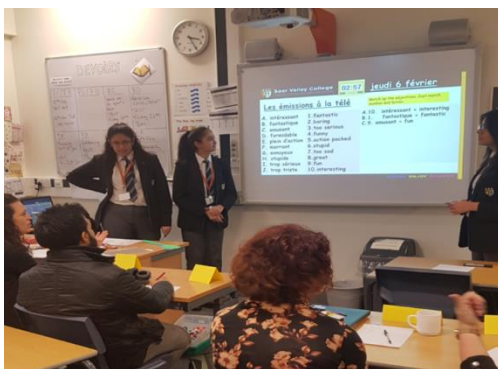
Well, this has certainly been a term like no other, and I am very grateful to all parents and carers for your support of the school and all we are trying to achieve in these different times. Your support for the home testing programme has been phenomenal, and the best in the city! It means that almost 95% of our students and almost all staff are testing twice a week, and are able to identify asymptomatic cases quickly, making the school a safer place for everyone. It does mean we have had a small number of positive cases over the last week, but better that these are identified. Students and parents have been brilliant at reporting positive results promptly to us at school, which has been very helpful.

The return to learning at school has been very calm and students have been keen to work hard in classes. We have also been able to introduce some extra-curricular activities gradually, in year group bubbles and structured ways, some of which you can read about in the articles below.

There is a clear plan for those in Year 11, who will be undertaking further assessments after the Easter break which will contribute towards their Teacher Assessed Grades. Year 11 students can be confident they will be awarded a valid and reliable grade, after much moderation and standardisation in school.

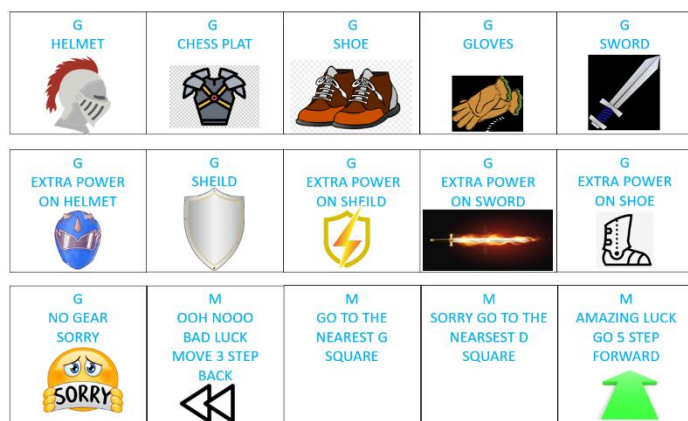
And finally, the Governing Board have also asked that I pass on their heartfelt thanks to everyone involved with the school – parents and carers, students, and staff – for the fantastic support and hard work over the last few months. It has been a challenging time for many, but one which I know we have navigated extremely successfully, and will continue to do so.

Language Leaders @ Soar Valley



The Modern Foreign Languages Department at Soar Valley is very proud to host the Language Leaders programme, a nationally recognised and endorsed qualification. The programme allows students the opportunity to utilise their French or German skills to plan, create and deliver lessons to staff, peers and younger students. We are so proud that, despite lockdown, our Language Leaders successfully created recorded lessons and support materials for Year 7 students. They also shared videos discussing their experience of learning languages and reasons why they chose to study languages at GCSE. The Language Leaders have not only managed to develop their leadership skills, but also their technology skills in this ever-changing environment, adapting so impressively to the current climate.

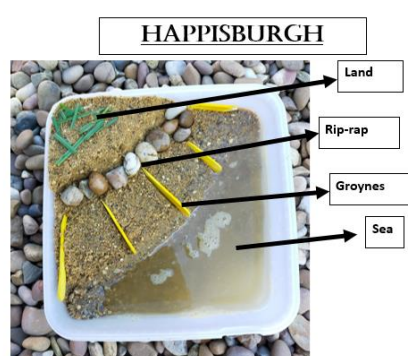
Creative Geography



To help students spend time away from their screens during the period of remote learning, students in Years 7 and 8 were asked to show their knowledge and understanding in more creative ways.

In the Year 7 unit on 'The Restless Earth', students had the opportunity to apply their knowledge of the types and effects of volcanoes by creating a piece in any way they chose. They came up with a

variety of ideas from 3D models, board games and even a volcano made entirely from socks!



Year 8 students demonstrated their understanding of coastal processes and management by designing and justifying the most appropriate coastal management strategy for Happisburgh.

I have chosen groyne as they would absorb the wave energy preventing the sediments to erode and trap the sediments but also rip-rap to protect the soft land cliff as it would have it would prevent the waves from crashing and eroding the cliff. This indicates that it would reduce the hydraulic action and abrasion.

I have decided not to place a sea wall as the coastal protection because the sea walls are expensive and the beach covers large scale, so for this reason I did not create sea wall as a defence. This coastal protection will protect Happisburgh as the groyne and rip-rap will limit the power of wave by absorbing the energy, so it would not reach the cliff decreasing the amount of erosion from occurring and due rip-rap, the soft cliff will be protected.

Library News: World Book Day and Beyond

Thursday 4th March was World Book Day, a time where we celebrate books and all things reading. At Soar Valley we ran a week of activities, including getting inspiration for our future reads and learning about creative writing in online workshops, and competitions like the Big Book Quiz. One highlight was the House competition, where students were asked to create a scene from a favourite book using only items found in the kitchen.



Author of the *I am... Emily Knight* books, A. Bello, even recorded a very special author talk for our students. She talked about her writing, what it's like to become an author, and even offered some advice for budding writers. It is fascinating to be inside the mind of an author! Students can access this recording online via the library system.



Congratulations to all the students who took part in World Book Day activities this year. Staff were really impressed with the high quality of your contributions and your enjoyment of reading.

Next term, we are looking forward to shadowing the Carnegie Award. This book award is the biggest celebration of children and young people's books written in English, and we will be recruiting a team of Year 10 students to read the shortlisted titles and submit our vote for the award to the national judges. We are looking forward to getting stuck into the great range of books on this year's list!

We will also be celebrating our own book award, Soar Valley's Best of the Best award. Our shortlisted books are still available to read and voting will finish on 28th May, so you still have time to choose your favourite. Which of the six books on the shortlist will be Soar Valley's Best of the Best?

Drama Updates



Over the lockdown session, Year 8 students spent some time learning about different types of performances, most recently exploring puppets in performance. Prior to Christmas, the students were given the chance to use full-sized puppets in lessons and considered how they can communicate using non-verbal communication skills and lighting/sound.

The groups were exploring the various skills required to perform and bring a puppet to life for an audience, with many of them then creating a final short video of their own puppets performing.

Year 9 students have been focussing on the skill of special effects make-up. This is an option of specialism in the BTEC in Key Stage 4. Students created fake injuries on their hands and fingers to create a believable injury.

Students thoroughly enjoyed using the materials and experimenting with the fake blood and injury wax. It was interesting learning about the different stages of bruising and appreciating that, to do the job well, you need to do research, practice and follow guidance from a director. Many of the students created very realistic injuries and enjoyed fooling their friends following the lessons. Don't worry, no students were harmed in the making of these lessons!

Arts Award

A small group of students in year 7 are exploring the Arts in some of their lessons and have been participating in workshops to learn a variety of skills. They will be creating presentations about what they have learnt and evaluations of the skills they develop. When they have completed their journey, they will be nominated for assessment to receive the Bronze Arts Award.



What is it?

The Bronze Arts Award is a unique qualifications that supports anyone aged up to 25 to grow as artists and arts leaders, inspiring them to connect with and take part in the wider arts world. Young people take on challenges in an art form, participate in arts activities and experience arts events whilst becoming inspired by artists and through leading others. The Award can be based around any arts or media activity and reflects many different interests and ambitions. It encourages individual development whilst also helping young people define their creative futures.

This first few weeks of the sessions, will see our group participate in stage combat workshops, as well as learning to create for an audience. Soon after this the group will look at Arts inspirations from a variety of fields and learn presentation skills as they hope to inspire others to find out more about their chosen Arts person.



Changes in Drama



Over the lockdown period, the drama studios underwent a few mini transformations, with manual lighting desks and sound desks being reinstated. This allows students the chance to learn how to programme and operate sound and lighting in a performance setting. It means that at Key Stage 4, students can select a technical skill as their assessment option. Students are able to work independently and create programmes for their own work which they can then run live for an audience.

Sports News

PE extra-curricular activities have restarted, with 4 different sports available to each of Year 7, 8 and 9. So far 164 students have signed up, which is fantastic, with Year 9 *just* in the lead in terms of numbers participating. With the number of opportunities for physical activity so limited in the last 12 months, this is a great chance to have some fun, develop new skills and increase fitness levels



The Soar Valley House System

The competition continues with a positive and resilient spirit. Despite the ongoing restrictions, the Heads of House and House Captains are working tirelessly to deliver a range of exciting House competitions that appeal to all students. The amount of student participation and strength in unity that all involved in the House system have shown over recent weeks has been inspirational to see.

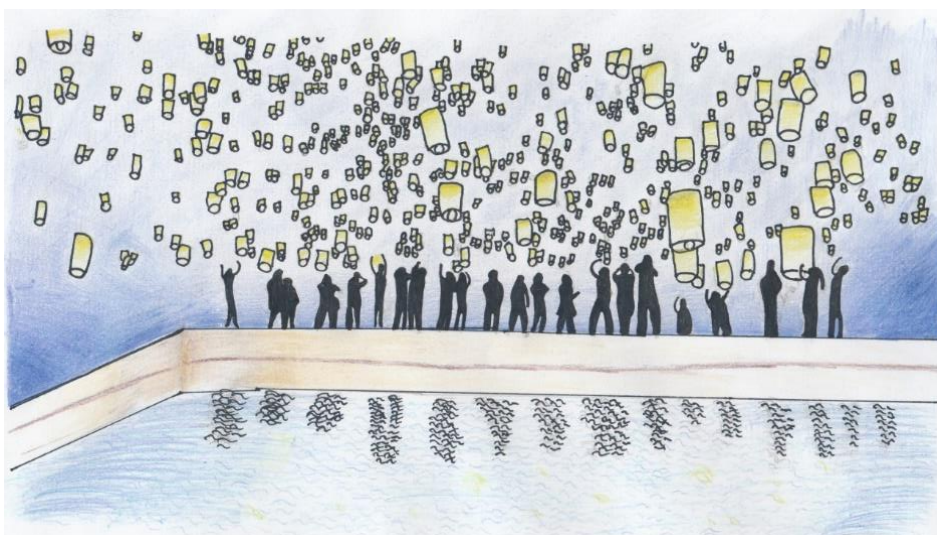
Since our last update, the Heads of House took full advantage of the weather and encouraged our students to get out there and be creative, including with a snowman competition!

There was a House quiz during a live tutor period, in which all form groups competed against each other to solve numerous catch phrases, riddles and dingbats, with Watermead taking the coveted first place.

Holocaust Memorial Day

This year's Holocaust Memorial Day (27th January) encouraged all of us to reflect on the terrible events (the dark), but also the wonderful ways individuals and communities help each other (the light).

Students were challenged to create a piece of artwork (using any medium, such as photos, collage, drawings etc.) to show light overcoming darkness. It could relate to the Holocaust or more recent times. We had some fantastic entries but the winning submission was a lovely visual representation from Irmanpreet, which is shown below.



Comic Relief

Students were asked to write down their best joke, and we have seen some absolute crackers! The student House Captains have met recently and decided on the best five jokes to represent their House. These will then be read out to the Heads of House, and the winning joke will be based on the reaction of this group of staff. They have recorded the joke-telling saga and we await with baited breath the outcome, which will be released soon for Comic Relief. A sneak peek...

Why did the banana go to the doctors? It wasn't peeling well.

Did you hear about the mathematician who is afraid of negative numbers? He'll stop at nothing to avoid them.

Did you hear about the actor who fell through the floorboards? He was just going through a stage.

The leader board....

Currently the overall totals put Abbey in the lead, but this is a rapidly changing picture and with only a few points in it, participation will be the key factor. There are many competitions still to go, so get your entries in and score some points for your House!

Coming up soon...

- Year 10 table tennis
- Superlatives in Geography
- Chess
- The annual House debating competition

House	Rank
Abbey	1
Beacon	2
Victoria	3
Bradgate	4
Watermead	5
Castle	6

Dates for your diary



Parents' Evenings

Year 7	May 6 th 2021
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Term dates

Summer Term begins	Monday April 12 th 2021
Summer Half Term break	May 31 st – June 4 th 2021
Summer Term ends	Friday July 9 th 2021