



Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Newsletter

Autumn Term

October 2022

Message from the Principal

In this, the first newsletter of the academic year, we would like to extend a warm welcome to all new families and students joining our school community. Our Year 7 students have learnt their way around the building very quickly, are now well settled into their new school and are already looking like being a super cohort. There is further information below about their induction programme, and the key expectations which have been shared with them.

The term started extremely positively with an absolutely brilliant set of results from last year's Year 11 students. There was much in the news about results nationally being lower than in 2021, but for many of the performance measures Soar Valley's were even better than last year. Early indications are that our Progress 8 figure, a measure of the progress students make from Year 7 to the end of Year 11, is outstanding and will put Soar Valley amongst the very best of schools across the country. For example, just under 500 grades 8 and 9 were obtained and approximately 45% of our students obtained at least 3 grades 7/8/9, which is a phenomenal achievement. Well done to all, and to the parents and staff who supported them so effectively along their journey.

Thank you to those parents who have volunteered their services as Parent Governor. Governors are key to the leadership of the school and it is always heartening to know that parents wish to be involved. Ballot information will be issued soon, please do register your vote.

We are advertising a few support staff roles over the next couple of weeks, including Finance Manager, Lunchtime Supervisor, Exam Invigilators, Head of Finance, so please do look on our website if you, or anyone you know, may be interested.

And finally, a reminder that school is open after the half term break on Monday and Tuesday 24th and 25th October, and then closed on Wednesday 26th October for one day, with students back in school on Thursday and Friday.

We would like to wish all those celebrating a very Happy Diwali,

Mrs J. Robinson

Bunătațe* @ SVC

Some of our Year 11 students have been using iPads to help them to communicate with and support a new student who has joined us from Romania. They have been finding out about where he is from as well as learning a few helpful phrases.

They have found using the iPads extremely useful and have supported the new student through his introduction to life at SVC.

This shows the kindness that we always expect from our students and we are proud of how these young men have supported each other to overcome barriers.

** Romanian for Kindness*



Year 7 Extended Transition

Over the past few weeks we have been spending some additional time with our Year 7 students to support with their transition and to help them to understand our expectations around the Soar Valley Way.

Students have worked hard to understand what **Effort** looks like, and have a better understanding of what we mean when we say that 'Effort is Everything' at Soar Valley.

They have also taken part in a **Participation** session, where they learnt how to use the Participation Passport, and how we expect all students to be involved in the wider life of the school.

Finally, they have taken part in a **Respect** session and learnt about how to have healthy and positive relationships and our definition of bullying and how it is not tolerated at Soar Valley.

The year group have responded very well and received lots of achievement points for their hard work in these sessions. Well done Year 7!



THE SOAR VALLEY WAY

Effort

Effort is everything at Soar Valley.

Effort is something that depends on determination to reach your learning ability. You are expected to demonstrate excellent levels of effort in all aspects of your school life, within and beyond the classroom. With maximum effort, you can expect to great things and ultimately make great progress.

How will you show excellent effort?

Organised, Diligent, Resilient, Dedicated, Committed, Reflective, Ambitious

Participation

You are expected to participate fully in the wide and rich experiences that Soar Valley offers to you. Participation in its fullest sense ranges from your academic contributions in lessons, attending a variety of extracurricular opportunities and voluntary positions and effort to support the work of the whole school.

How will you ensure you fully participate?

Courageous, Confident, Proactive, Reliable, Independent, Responsible, Enthusiastic

Respect

Our strong and positive relationships underpin much of Soar Valley's great success. Being respectful to all members of our proudly diverse community creates an environment where you, and others, feel safe and supported to achieve your very best.

How will you show respect?

Kind, Polite, Empathetic, Caring, Considerate, Thoughtful, Trustworthy

I agree to do my best to follow the Soar Valley Way

Name: _____ Form: _____

Spotlight on Attendance



It will come as no great surprise, but the more days a student attends at school, the more progress they make! This means that we should all be aiming for your child to have 100% attendance.

In most other aspects of life, a score of 90% usually results in praise and celebration, for example in a test. However, 90% attendance at school is far from desirable.

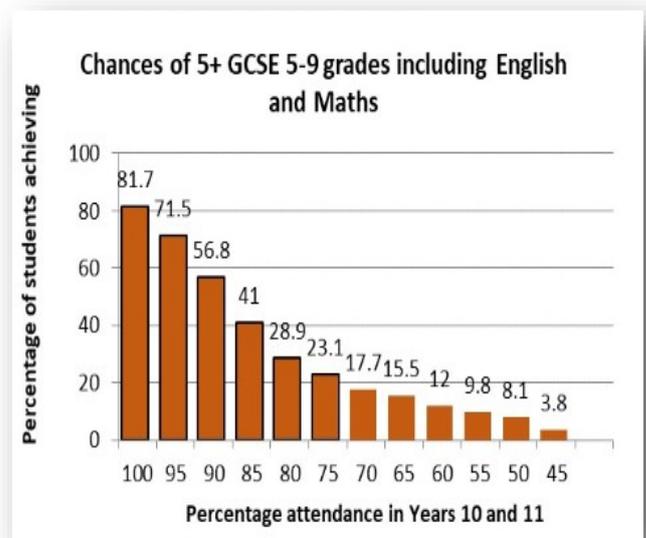


MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
		?							

90% attendance actually equates to your child having half a day off each school week. So, 90% attendance for each of the **5 years at secondary school** is the equivalent of missing $\frac{1}{2}$ a school year and we can all imagine the impact this would have on a child's education.

In fact, the evidence shows that missing just **17 school days** a year (and that is having an attendance of above 90%) results in a drop of an **entire grade at GCSE**.

So, whilst it is tempting to think that 90% attendance is good - it sounds good after all - in reality even 90% attendance is likely to lead to reduced progress. The graph on the right shows a 25% difference in the chance of achieving the required standard of 5+ in maths and English between those attending 100% of the time and those attending 90% of school days. And you can see for yourself how quickly the chance of doing your best falls as attendance drops.



In future editions of our school newsletter, we will be sharing the importance of outstanding attendance coupled with some helpful top tips to ensure your child attends every day.

1

Illness

Only keep your child off school for genuine illness. If your child has a cough, headache etc, send them in to school. We will look after them and contact you if they get any worse.

2

Medical Appointments

Avoid making medical appointments during the school day. We know this can be difficult sometimes but it is vitally important that doctor's and dentist's appointments are made beyond 3pm.

If you have queries about your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us and request to speak to your child's Associate Head of Year. We will do all we can to help to support them into school.

Leadership Opportunities

Student leadership is an important part of the vision for our school and our commitment to providing opportunities for the students. We have high aspirations for all students and believe that developing them as leaders plays a key role in improving their life chances.

We provide many exciting opportunities to undertake leadership roles where students gain valuable knowledge and experience. Our student leaders also perform a crucial role in the student voice process and have the opportunity to meet regularly with the Senior Leadership Team and affect real change in the school.

The main aims of our student leadership programme are:

- to empower students to work in partnership with staff towards shared goals;
- to enable creativity to flourish as the school community benefits from the wealth of experiences, ideas, skills and sense of fun that students bring;
- to provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills through a variety of inspiring, challenging and valued projects which impact positively on learning, teaching and well-being for both students and staff.

All student leaders are expected to model excellent behaviour, attitudes and values and to act as ambassadors for other students at all times. In order to become a member of our student leadership team there is a thorough recruitment process and supportive training is then put in place.

House Leadership

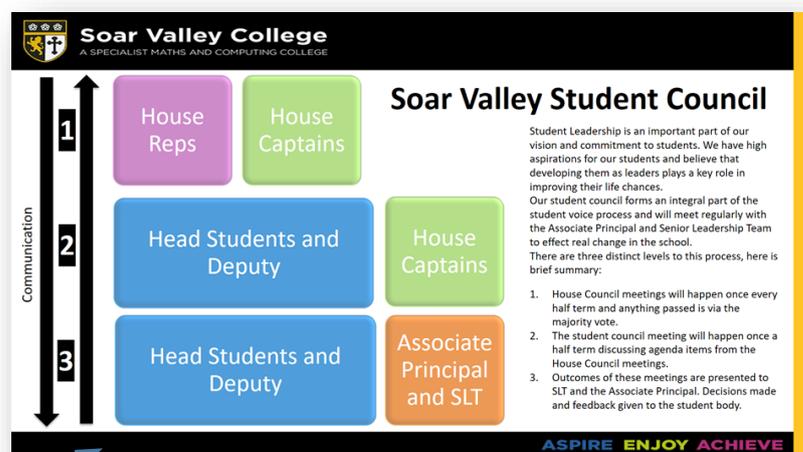
There is a thriving series of Inter House Competitions, which encompass all areas of school life from the academic and artistic to the sporting.

Competition between houses is a healthy one with our students taking great pride in their own achievements, whilst respecting the successes of other houses.

Every student - and every member of staff - belongs to a House and each House is led by a dedicated member of staff known as the Head of House.

Each House also has two House Captains (elected members of the student body) who lead separate House meetings across the school to ensure that student voice is represented. They are also responsible for organising their House teams, helping advertise the competitions and leading House assemblies. The House Captain is a very important role!

There are also House representatives from each form who help organise and rally their form entries into the competitions.



Head Students @ Open Evening

It was really fantastic to be able to return to a live Open Evening this year after the interruption brought about by Covid.

As ever, on the night the best advertisement for what we do at Soar Valley was our students! There were lots of young people around on the evening greeting parents, handing out flyers, helping in departments, or being around to staff the information points dotted around the building.

Our Head Students were amazing on the evening, with Umaimah, Ayub and Mdjema given the responsibility of speaking in front of the parents as part of the Principal's talks. They did us proud, speaking with confidence and pride about their time at Soar Valley College. Well done to all three and thank you to all of the other students who volunteered their time.



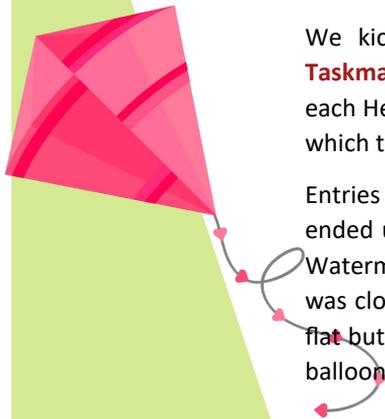
The House System @SVC

STOP PRESS: As we go to "print" the rain delayed Interhouse Tug of War competition has just taken place. We are pleased to announce that this year's winners are **Castle**, who register their first victory of the year!



We kicked off the House competitions this year with a staff **Taskmaster** style competition for kite flying. The challenge was for each Head of House to film themselves flying a kite in the park after which their House takes its name.

Entries were varied in terms of actual kite flying skill - some kites ended up in the bin - but Miss Underwood's pro kite flying skills in Watermead Park had her soaring into the gold medal position. This was closely followed by a fantastic effort from Miss Patel on a very flat but windy Victoria Park, claiming second, and an inventive kite/balloon in a carrier bag from Mr West and Mr Patel for Beacon.



The other three Heads of House did not fair so well: Miss Wood's kite ended up in the bin, Miss McLoughlin had an unfortunate encounter with a rat, and Mr Maggs didn't even make it to Bradgate Park! There's always next year.



The Decibel Challenge

The first House assemblies of the year kicked off in style with students taking part in the **Decibel Challenge**. The aim of the challenge is for students to shout their House name as loudly as possible in order to register the highest score on the decibel meter.

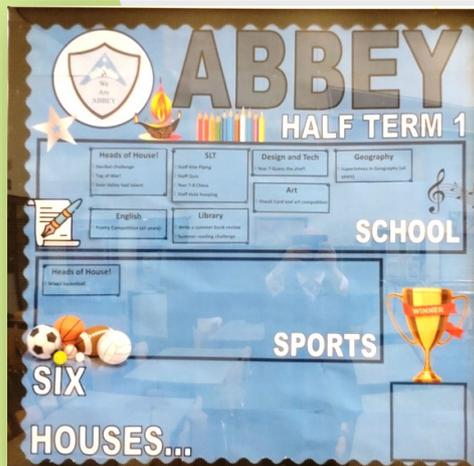
Victoria were clearly the loudest on the day, with Castle just pipped at the post. In the process each House smashed the school record: what a noisy bunch! Languishing in last place was Bradgate, come on Mr Maggs!



And Finally...

Thank you to Miss McLoughlin for all her hard work creating the new House notice boards in the Dining Hall.

For each half term information will be shared on these boards about what competitions and activities are due to take place.



We will also display here our ongoing total for hours of participation across the school.



Coming Up Next Half Term

- The Interhouse Staff Quiz
- Mixed Basketball
- Soar Valley Has Talent
- The Chess Championships
- Diwali Card and Art Competition
- The Staff Hula Hoop Challenge
- Drama's Design a Costume Challenge
- 'Guess the Chef'
- Taskmaster 2 - Pumpkin Carving

LIBRARY NEWS

If you would like support with encouraging your child to read for pleasure then please contact our library.

Bookbuzz

Bookbuzz is Back!

Year 7 students at Soar Valley College are in for a treat later this year. The school have signed up for an amazing initiative called BookBuzz, which means every Year 7 will receive a free book! With research finding that children who own their own books perform better across the curriculum, it has never been more important to get new and exciting books into the hands of our students.

Year 7s have used their recent library lessons to choose which of the 17 brand new titles available they would like to take home. The books should arrive in the next couple of months, but already the excitement is building! We can't wait to see which ones are the most popular.

If you would like any support on encouraging your child to read, please feel free to get in touch with our library.



Books and Biscuits

This half term has also seen the launch of our new book club, *Books and Biscuits*. Students have been taking part in book discussions, making bookmarks, and taking part in a book quiz – and of course, sampling a range of sweet treats! Members of the club have been helping recommend their favourite books to others, so look out for their signs on the library shelves.

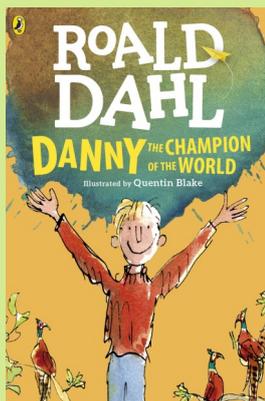
Books and Biscuits club runs on Wednesday lunchtimes, and students from all year groups are welcome to join.

Student Library Assistants



This term, our brand new cohort of Student Library Assistants has been taking up their roles and supporting the work done in the library. Students from Year 8 and above were chosen at the end of last year after an extensive interview process, and will be involved in the everyday running of the library.

If you need book advice from them, be sure to look out for them in and around the library. They wear green badges and are always open to helping others and giving book recommendations.

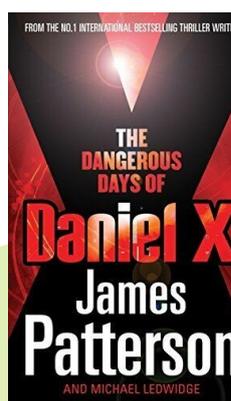


Review by Morley (8.12)

This book is about a boy called Danny. He lives in an old caravan with his dad., and believes that his dad is the most fabulous and exciting dad ever.

But one day, Danny finds out that his dad has been breaking the law. Even worse, Danny must join his father to pull off an evil plot against Mr Victor Hazell.

I think that people will enjoy this book because it is full of comedy, and laughter but also a fair bit of drama.



Review by Rajveer (9.12)

Fifteen year old alien hunter, Daniel X, is on a mission to finish the job that killed his parents: wiping out the world's most bloodthirsty aliens.

Occupying slot N°1 on the list is The Prayer, Daniel's ultimate target. Able to transform and create matter, and to use telepathy, Daniel's got more than a few tricks up his sleeve.

A book packed with really enjoyable suspense and thrills!



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.

RE: Spirited Arts Competition

In the Summer Term of last year a small group of Year 8 students (now in Year 9) entered 'Spirited Arts', a national competition encouraging students to express spiritual or religious ideas through artwork.

The students involved created a wonderful piece of art around the multicultural and multi-religious nature of Leicester over several weeks, working hard with Miss Sheikh and Miss Wayne to produce something of excellent quality.

Well done to Dhruvika Tandel, Krittika Mukes, Diya Moreshwar (all of 9.2), Idris Ashkir (9.5) and Dhrutika Tandel (9.10) for their fantastic effort and brilliant teamwork!



Geography Superlatives Competition

The Geography Department were blown away by the amazing entries in this year's Superlatives competition. It was clear that some of the students had spent many hours working with a variety of materials to get their models just right.

1st prize went to Simran (9.7) for her model of the Angel Falls in Venezuela, which, with a 979m drop, is the tallest waterfall in the world. The judges commented, "This model was geographically perfect, showing the hard rock overhang coupled with a plunge pool. The rock surfaces have been perfectly sculpted."

Joint 2nd prize went to Sukhbir (9.7) and Aniaya (7.3). Sukhbir's model of the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world at 828 metres (2,716.5 feet) and more than 160 stories, shone like the real thing in all its glory with a careful coating that gave it a glass-like effect. Aniaya produced a model of Mount Everest, Earth's highest mountain above sea level at 8849m. The model had cleverly created textures, showing striated rock and snow streaking from the top. Aniaya also produced some outstanding research to complement the model.

3rd place runners up were:

Vrushit (8.1) who created a model of the Transamerica Pyramid, the second tallest earthquake-proof building in California, using lollipops and Blu Tack. Vrushit even managed to cross-brace his building securely.

Maney Mehra (8.1) and Maheraz Anvar (7.7) both created impressive models of the Burj Khalifa using a fantastic rolled paper effect to illustrate its unique shape.





The Sound of Music(als) Returns to Soar Valley College



Following an extended absence due to Covid we are delighted to announce the return of the Soar Valley School Production.

The drama and music departments are well underway with rehearsals for their latest extravaganza - Matilda!

After an exhaustive and exhausting audition process the cast of over 40 students has been announced and rehearsals have begun in earnest.

Described as “a gleefully witty ode to the anarchy of childhood and the power of imagination” Matilda is the story of a girl who dreams of a better life and the children she inspires which will have audiences rooting for the "revolting children" who are out to teach the grown-ups a lesson.

We're not sure if we can think of a better show with which to return and cannot wait for February to see it all come together in three nights of utter brilliance!

Enthusiastic Response to Language Leaders Opportunity

The MFL department has chosen 16 Year 9 students to undertake the role of **Language Leaders** for the year ahead. The programme is facilitated by the organisation 'Routes into Languages' and upon successful completion students receive a nationally recognised certificate of achievement.

The programme aims to help students build their confidence whilst gaining leadership skills through teaching younger students.

Students selected for the programme attend planning sessions after school where they work collaboratively to create lessons which will then be delivered to Soar Valley staff, Year 7 classes and students in our local primary schools.

In addition to this programme for Year 9, the department has selected two Year 10 Language Mentors.



European Day of Languages 2022

To celebrate 2022's European Day of Languages, students in Key Stage 3 were invited to take part in a Treasure Hunt! This House competition challenged them to find the answers to questions about Europe and famous Europeans hidden all around the school.

The overall winners with the highest number of successful entries was Watermead House and the random winner picked from all the entries was Drashtika Ramesh 7.3., who gets a selection of European goodies. Well done to all who took part!

Extra Curricular Offer 2022:

There is always a lot going on at SVC and this year's extra curricular offer is packed full of opportunities to get involved and find your passion. All the activities available are listed in the Curriculum section of the school website.

For example, just look at what's on offer on a Tuesday every week. There's a range of sporting activities available; academic clubs in science, design technology and computing; homework, tuition and support clubs in a variety of subjects; cultural pursuits in MFL, the arts and English; learning new skills such as British Sign Language; or simply getting together with other students to play chess.

We are proud of our offer and would encourage all students to get involved!

Tuesday	Indoor Cricket Geography Study Support Chess Club Science Crest Award Microbits programming Textiles Club Maths homework Club Netball Club Boys Fitness Club Sports Teams Fixtures GCSE Citizenship Catch up Ukulele group Taiko drumming BTEC performing Arts support Culture Club Library homework club British Sign Language for Beginners STEM Club Creative Writing Club Clay Club Chess Club GCSE Computer Science support GCSE Tuition - English
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It's been a busy start to the term in the PE department, with extra curricular clubs, training and fixtures taking place throughout the week. Find out more by following @SVCPhysEd on Twitter.

Primary Festivals Underway

The first two of our ten primary school festivals this year have taken place this half term.

The first of these saw 50 Year 5/6 pupils from Mellor, Rushey Mead, Sandfield Close, Taylor Road and Wyvern primary schools spend the afternoon at Soar Valley to take part in a tag rugby festival.

The second saw a further 50 Year 5/6 pupils taking part in a hockey festival.

Both of these highly successful festivals were very well supported by our new cohort of Year 9 Sports Leaders. This group of 24 students have signed up for an hour of training each week, helping them become more confident, better leaders. They then get to put this training into practice at our primary school festivals. These students are shaping up to be a fantastic group of leaders and should be very proud of the progress that they have made already.



A Great Start to Extra Curricular Sport

We have had a really positive start to our extra-curricular PE clubs this year. Students are in the fortunate position of being able to choose from 17 different activities, including a breakfast club every day of the week, as well as having the opportunity to represent the college in a variety of fixtures in a range of sports.

On top of the obvious physical benefits of doing some extra sport, students that attend can also see an increase in their confidence levels and a positive change in their mental health.

As an added bonus, numerous studies show that students who take part in extra-curricular activities achieve better results in their exams. Winner!

At the end of each week this half term, a staggering 510 students have either arrived early or stayed late to take part in a session. Well done - we are proud of each and every one of you.



Careers @SVC

It has been a very busy half term for Careers Education at Soar Valley College.

Year 11 are now well underway with their college application process and are beginning to make their choices for Post 16 education following extensive research and preparation.

Our annual Post 16 Options Evening was again a great success on Wednesday 5th October as we welcomed more than 30 providers from across the city and county to talk to our students and their parents. Representatives from local colleges, universities, apprenticeship and independent training providers set up their stalls and marketing material to help support our students with making their decisions about life after Soar Valley.



Dates for Your Diary

Parents Evenings	
Year 9	November 17 th
Year 11	January 19 th
Year 8	March 2 nd
Year 10	March 23 rd
Year 7	May 4 th

Term Dates	
Autumn Half Term Break	October 17 th – 24 th
School Closed	Wednesday 26 th October
Autumn Term ends	Friday 16 th December
Spring Term begins	Wednesday 4 th January
Spring Half Term Break	February 20 th – 27 th
Spring Term ends	Friday 31 st March
Summer Term begins	Monday 17 th April
Summer Half Term Break	May 29 th – June 5 th
Summer Term ends	Friday 14 th July

Other Events This Term	
Year 7 Settling In Evening	Thursday 27 th October
Year 7 Reports home	Thursday 27 th October
Year 11 Reports home	Friday 28 th October
Year 8/9/10 Reports home	Friday 18 th November
Year 11 Mock Exams start	Monday 21 st November



After half term, we look forward to our apprenticeship workshop delivered by Project Ask to those students who want to pursue an apprenticeship as their Post 16 pathway.

Should you require any further information about careers education at Soar Valley, please do email us at careers@soarvalley.leicester.sch.uk

Cambridge University Visit

We were really pleased to welcome students from Cambridge University last month to talk to some of our Key Stage 4 students about the application process and university life at this prestigious place of study. They were able to bust some myths about Cambridge and students found the session really useful.

