



Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Newsletter

Spring Term

April 2022

Message from the Principal

Last term was a long and very busy one and these newsletters give just a snapshot of what happens in the school, which is a place full of great learning and extra-curricular opportunities enabling students to pursue their interests. It is certainly not possible to capture it all, nor is it possible to celebrate all of the amazing achievements of our students, but hopefully this newsletter gives a flavour of what happens in the school.

One of the highlights of my week is always the awarding of Soar Valley Stars. These are the ultimate accolade, and result from nominations by staff for fantastic pieces of work, amazing effort, excellent contributions to the school, etc. Many students now have stars on their lanyards or blazers, representing their high levels of achievement, and last term saw a bumper number awarded. Well done to all of those who I have had the pleasure of meeting at some point so far this year, and I look forward to seeing many more during the term ahead.

Exams are drawing near for Year 11 students, and Year 10s have their mock exams in the first week of the summer term. Our students have a great approach to their studies and I know they will have worked hard over the holiday to give themselves the best chance of success. However, for Year 11 in the weeks ahead it is vital that we remember that it is very important for them to have 'downtime' too! We wish all of the students the very best in these exams.

Following the holiday we have reverted to our 'normal' school uniform, and jumpers are not permitted. These were added in as a winter item at the suggestion of students but, as the days get warmer, we now expect to see blazers only from Monday April 25th.

As always, a big thank you to parents and carers for your continued support. We are all looking forward to a successful term ahead.

Mrs J. Robinson

Principal

History Easter Egg Competition



After an egg-cellent effort from all of the students involved, the winners are in for the History Easter Egg Competition. I think we can all agree that the students did a cracking job.

In first place was Simran from Abbey House, whose depiction of Mary Seacole in the Crimean War was eggs-traordinary. The judges were particularly taken by the attention to detail, especially the scrambled eggs in the hospital beds!

In second place, and close to winning, was Janvi's egg-ceptional depiction of Mahatma Gandhi. The costume and additional details almost swung it for Bradgate House but she was pipped at the post by a worthy winner.

Third place went to Susan from Watermead House. Susan really did go the eggs-tra mile by making two entries, one of Martin Luther King and the other of Albert Einstein. The judges felt such effort deserved recognition.



Winner—Simran 8.7 with Mary Seacole



Runner Up

Janvi 8.3

Mahatma Gandhi



Third Place

Susan 7.12

Dr Martin Luther
King

The House System @SVC

RED NOSE DAY

FUNNY IS POWER

We have had another really successful year raising money for Comic Relief. The six individual houses put their rivalry to one side to pull together as one big team and, after a monumental effort from staff and students alike, we raised a total of just under £2000! The highlight of the day was undoubtedly the Bake Sale as you can see here.



Although the houses pulled together for Comic Relief, on the same day we were reminded of their strongly competitive streaks!

This took the form of the Year 7 and 8 Inter House Rowing Competition. Teams from each year group had exactly one hour to row as far as they could.

The competition was a fantastic way to get students together to promote participation and teamwork. Abbey House won both the Year 7 and 8 rowing competitions, but all of the students, whatever their house, gave it their all!

Another competition that is becoming a favourite tradition is the annual Best Joke Contest. Each tutor group submits a number of jokes that they believe are so funny that it will be impossible for the Heads of House to be able to resist laughing.

Those jokes are then delivered by the comedy genius that is Mr Springthorpe. Suffice it to say, the resulting video of Heads of House trying not to laugh is a joy to behold.

The joke that receives the biggest laugh wins. The winner this year was a knock knock joke. It really is that silly!



DISASTERS
EMERGENCY
COMMITTEE



It has become a tradition to donate 50% of the money raised to a charity of our choice. This year the Disasters Emergency Committee was selected as we wanted to support their work with people affected by conflict around the world.

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.

House Debate Competition

This term saw the House Debate Competition in full swing, with students using their oracy skills, and their understanding of rhetoric, to engage persuasively and convincingly on a topic. After some closely fought debates the winners were Watermead in Key Stage 3 and Castle in Key Stage 4.



Paper Garments Competition

The DT department ran their Paper Garments competition this term. The result was some stunning pieces of work, with teams of students working hard to bring their creations to life. The winner can be seen here along with the other entries, which are currently on display in the Design and Technology department.



Year 7 Language Ambassadors

Our Year 7 Language Ambassadors met this half term for another exciting Culture Club session. This time the focus was on the tradition of April Fools' Day. They looked at the history of the day and how it is celebrated as *Aprilscherz* in Germany and as *Poisson d'avril* (literally April fish) in France. They had a lot of fun playing tricks on each other!



Year 9 Language Leaders

Our Year 9 Language Leaders, having delivered their first teaching session to staff, are working hard on the next stage of the programme. They are now working towards teaching a lesson of French to students in Year 7. They are certainly working hard in their teams on coming up with innovative ways to deliver the content.

Creative Writing Club

This half term saw the English department run a House Short Story Competition. Bradgate House were by far the most enthusiastic participants, submitting a number of stories for consideration, followed closely by Castle and Beacon. The three overall winners were Lakhan Sisodiya (7.2) for Beacon House, Alicia Lad (7.10) for Castle House and Susie Adamczuk (7.3) for Bradgate House. Well done to everyone who participated; picking the winners was no easy task.

LIBRARY NEWS

If you would like support with encouraging your child to read for pleasure then please contact our librarian, Ms Codling

World Book Day

On 3rd March Soar Valley celebrated World Book Day. This was the 25th year of the event which celebrates everything about reading for pleasure. As well as the craft and writing activities on offer in the library, staff got involved by taking photos of their home bookshelves and filming themselves reading from favourite books while wearing masks. It was up to the students to deduce the owners of the shelves and work out the identities of the Masked Readers!

On World Book Day itself, some staff members dressed up as famous book characters and had to find their pair – another character from the same book! Congratulations to the Year 10 students who managed to spot and correctly identify all the characters around the school throughout the day.

Students also received their World Book Day token to spend in bookshops, and those in Key Stage 3 had the chance to look at some of this year's special £1 World Book Day titles in their library lessons.



Author Visit for Year 7

In February, Year 7 students were treated to a talk from Savita Kalhan, author of *That Asian Kid*. Savita spoke to the whole year group about her reading habits, her writing, and what it takes to become an author. Before becoming a writer, Savita was an English teacher but she revealed that this didn't stop her from writing a 600,000 word epic fantasy story... by hand!

That Asian Kid has been shortlisted for various prizes and won the Warwickshire 9 Book Award 2020, and students were able to hear Savita read an extract from it. After the talk, a group of students were able to meet Savita and get her autograph.

In other news...

There are two book awards currently running across the school. Reading Rampage is continuing for Year 7 and Year 8 and students have until the end of May to read the 12 nominated books and vote for their winner. Students who complete reviews of the chosen books will earn points for their house. Beacon are currently in the lead – but will they stay there?

This term we have also launched our book clubs at lunchtimes, and for the next couple of months attendees will be shadowing the Carnegie Medal. This famous book award has a shortlist of 8 books, and students taking part will be asked to vote for a winner in May. We will also have regular discussions and debates about these books leading up to the vote! Junior Book Club (for Year 7 and Year 8) runs on Monday lunchtimes, and Senior Book Club (for Year 9 and above) is on Wednesday lunchtimes. There is still time to take part and any interested students can find out more in the library.

Finally, we have been able to expand the library's opening times. Students can now use the library for choosing books and quiet study before school every day from 8am, after school until 4pm, and throughout the week at selected break and lunchtimes. Importantly, this means Years 9 and above have access to the library for revision every lunchtime – and we have copies of important revision guides to borrow too.

LIBRARY NEWS

Shadowing the Carnegie Special

This year our librarian Ms Codling is a regional judge for the Carnegie Medal, a prestigious literary award dating all the way back to 1936 and previously won by such authors as Anne Fine, Philip Pullman and Terry Pratchett. Our Creative Writing Club interviewed her to find out more...



Q: What inspired you to become a judge for the Carnegie Greenaway Award?

A: I worked with a brilliant librarian who was a previous judge and she encouraged me to take part in the judging process.

Q: Have you judged any other competitions or awards?

A: No, this is my first year as a judge.

Q: Are you paid to be a judge?

A: No, there is no salary, so you really need to be someone who likes reading a lot of books.

Q: What do you think makes a good judge?

A: As I say, you need to really enjoy reading, be excited about the competition, and have lots of time available to tackle the longlist.

Q: How do you get hold of the 148 nominated books?

A: The publishers send them directly to my house.

Q: Where do you keep all of these books?

A: I have a set of shelves especially for them. I put them on the shelf with their spine facing the wall and turn them round once I've read them – this way I can easily see how much progress I'm making!

Q: What is the longest nominated book?

A: The longest book is about five hundred pages.

Q: Who nominates the books for the award?

A: The books are all nominated by librarians.

Q: What are your favourite genres to read? Did this influence your decision as a judge?

A: I am a big fan of books centring on real life issues and modern events, but as I judge I have to keep an open mind and I'm enjoying reading books I wouldn't usually choose.

Q: Is there a genre of you dislike?

A: I'm not really a fan of fantasy, I prefer more realistic fiction.

Q: How do you decide which books should be longlisted and shortlisted?

A: The judges email each other and are having conversations all the time. We generally decide whether a book is a 'yes', a 'no', or a 'maybe', and go from there.

Q: How do you decide what makes a Carnegie Greenaway Award-winning book?

A: We're actually sent a very detailed list of criteria to help us decide. You need to read the whole book before you make a judgment and then decide if it meets the criteria.

Q: Was there a book which you liked that wasn't nominated for the award?

A: Yes, I was really surprised that 'The Outrage' by William Hussey wasn't nominated.

Q: Do you have a favourite book that you think should win the award?

A: Unfortunately that information is top secret – judges have to keep all opinions amongst themselves until the winner is announced.

A huge thank you to Ms Codling for allowing us a look behind the scenes of such a prestigious award and the judging process involved in picking a winner.

Alumni @SVC

The joy of being able to have ex SVC students join us to deliver careers related talks is that we get to celebrate how far they have gone in their chosen field in the years since they left us.

Our latest talk was from Chelsea, whose career in nursing continues to go from strength to strength.

Any ex students wishing to be part of our growing alumni association should contact us at

careers@soarvalley.leicester.sch.uk. We would love to hear from you and our students would benefit from hearing your story.



Dates for Your Diary

Parents Evenings	
Year 7	Thursday May 5 th
Term Dates	
Summer Term begins	Monday 25 th April
Summer Half Term Break	May 30 th – June 3 rd
Summer Term ends	Friday 8 th July
Other Events Next Term	
Year 10 Exams	W/B April 25 th
Celebration Evenings	W/B June 20 th
Year 10 WOW Week	W/B July 4 th
Sports Day	July 5 th

Careers @SVC

It's been another packed and exciting term for the careers team at Soar Valley.

We are fresh from delivering a range of activities linked to National Careers Week 2022, including hosting a broad range of visitors who came into school to talk to students during their assemblies.

- Year 7 had the chance to quiz their visitors in a game of "Guess My Job". This allowed them the opportunity to find out more about their specific jobs, which were interesting in their own right, as well as the wider world of work.
- The Year 8 assembly encouraged students to reflect on the transferrable, employability skills which are being taught day in day out within the curriculum.
- Year 9 heard from Gateway College who spoke to them about preparing for their future. This was a timely assembly given that Year 9 are in the middle of making their options choices for Key Stage 4.
- Year 10 heard from Project Ask who spoke with students about apprenticeships at Post 16 and beyond.

Throughout the week students took part in subject specific, careers related, In and On tasks when they arrived at lessons. They were asked to reflect upon the key employability skills that are being practised within lessons at Soar Valley College.

In the meantime, Year 11 students have been busy attending college welcome events and guidance meetings, which is all part of them securing their college and sixth form places for next year. Please do continue to encourage your child to check their emails and their PS@16 application form for updates. Don't forget, if you have any concerns then we are here to help.

In other news:

We are also pleased to announce that our Learning Resource Centre has updated its careers section, which now contains an even wider selection of books for students to access. Please do encourage your child to pop in and have a look: these books may inspire students to think about a wider range of potential careers when they imagine their future!

Our Year 10 students are beginning to look forward to the upcoming World of Work Week which will take place during the last week of the summer term. Students have had one tutor period about WOW week and are now busy making their choices for industries about which they want to find out more.

And finally, the careers team at Soar Valley College are looking to work with parents / carers to help develop and evaluate our ever evolving careers programme. If this is something that you think you might like more information on, then please do email us at careers@soarvalley.leicester.sch.uk.