



End of Term Letter

Dear Students, parents and friends,

Headmaster

Earlier this month, we passed the anniversary of the outbreak of COVID 19 in the UK. It is therefore an opportune moment to stand back and reflect on what the students, parents and staff of the school have been through and achieved in that time.

In March last year, staff, students and parents moved within days to an entirely new remote way of working. Staff undertook rapid training in Google Classroom led by the likes of Mr Barwick, Mr Jones and Miss Coe and some began experimenting with the use of Google Meet. Laptops were delivered to those that needed them by Miss Gayle and our Year Leaders whilst students and parents diligently set about working from kitchen tables and bedroom desks, often with utterly useless internet connections.

At the same time, Mr Kitchen, Mrs Barton and the catering team began creating meal parcels for those families that relied on Free School Meals with Year leaders and Senior Leaders again stepping in to ferry them around South London when required. Despite deep public concern, teachers and students began returning to School in June. Teachers showed great leadership in reassuring their students that this was safe whilst students gained a renewed appreciation of the importance of education and the social connections they thrive on whilst in a school.

Teachers worked at extremely short notice to enact complex guidance on how to provide fair grades for students when exams were cancelled and senior leaders like Mr Robertson and Mr Waters worked throughout their summer holidays supporting students and families to ensure they understood rapidly changing government policy and reached the next stage of their education.

In September, students attended school in remarkably high numbers whilst teachers designed recovery curriculums to ensure all students closed any knowledge gaps that developed as a result of lockdown. Our Recovery Tutors provided expert support to those that needed it whilst Mrs Tutt and our site staff worked tirelessly enacting new cleaning schedules, replenishing hand sanitizer, laying out floor markings etc. Students and parents showed great courage and resilience as multiple bubbles were sent home at very short notice following the school identifying 31 positive cases in the autumn term.

Over New Year, Senior Leaders worked to gain a better understanding of the testing process planned for schools whilst parents and students had to pivot again to online learning when schools shut in January. This time, every teacher delivered their lessons live to ensure no gaps emerged in students' learning. Everyone involved showed great stamina and resilience in adapting to the huge increase in screen time.

Then this month, Mr Waters and our parent volunteer leaders Mr Spiers and Mr Stublely led a vast testing programme, ensuring our testing team, made up of staff, volunteers and alumni, tested 1100 students three times as schools reopened. In returning to classrooms, staff and students have once again shown remarkable commitment to education and demonstrated their appreciation of its centrality to the health of the nation. Staff are once again gearing up to undertake an enormously rigorous process of assessment design, marking and moderation to do the best by our exam year groups and pastoral leaders are again being bulwarks of support for concerned students.

Standing back like this reveals the scale of the achievement of staff, students and parents and makes staff's ability to keep moving forward with such issues as anti racism, anti sexism, curriculum design and SEN provision all the more inspiring. My thanks to you all. I am enormously proud of every student and staff member for how they have responded over the last year and I wish you a happy and restful Easter.

Jamie Bean, Headmaster, Wallington County Grammar School



Don't mess with me!



We are absolutely delighted to share with you some news of an ex-pupil, Tariq Ali. Last year he went to Sandhurst to train as an Officer for Her Majesty's Army. Last November he was successful in both his regimental selections (Scots Guard and Paras). As he came first in both he had the luxury of choosing his path. Tariq decided to "jump from planes" so is now officially assigned to the Paras and proudly wears the prestigious red beret.

In late March, at an awards event, he was the **only Officer given two awards**. The first was for being able to plan and deliver 'orders' under battle exercise throughout his time and then to top it all he has been awarded the "Sovereign Award" for outstanding academic achievement and leadership throughout his time there. This out of an intake of 250. This award has to be duly authorised in writing by Her Majesty the Queen and once that has been received he will be awarded at the commissioning parade in April. We are all so proud of him.

News from the Drama department

RSC the Dream



71 students had the opportunity to watch the Royal Shakespeare Company's live performance of the Dream set in a virtual midsummer forest. Inspired by Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, it gave them the unique opportunity to enjoy a performance that used the latest gaming and theatre technology, as well as being immersed in an interactive symphonic score which responded to the ac-

Treasure Island

Having been exploring Treasure Island whilst working online it has been very exciting to be back in the classroom. The students enjoyed being in the studio with all the technical equipment to journey into the world of pirates and buried gold!





More from the Drama department

Movie Re-enactment Challenge

Over half term, the drama department set a challenge to recreate an image from a movie. Out of a field of fantastic entries, congratulations to Barney and Raghav, who each win a £10 Amazon voucher.





News from the Art Department

January brought us the challenge of teaching and learning art remotely, but pupils have adapted well and produced some excellent work. Year 11 are doing a great job of adding to their coursework portfolios and handling the disruption to their studies with creativity. Unfortunately, exam board guidelines prohibit us from sharing their coursework online! Year 10 continue to create excellent project work with some striking pastiches produced by Daniel Kim, Necasius Cadilas and Harit Saravanan.



Year 9 have embraced digital art work by utilising online editing software to pastiche the artwork of contemporary painters and develop their own response. Ryan Patil produced this piece:





More from the Art Department (cont)

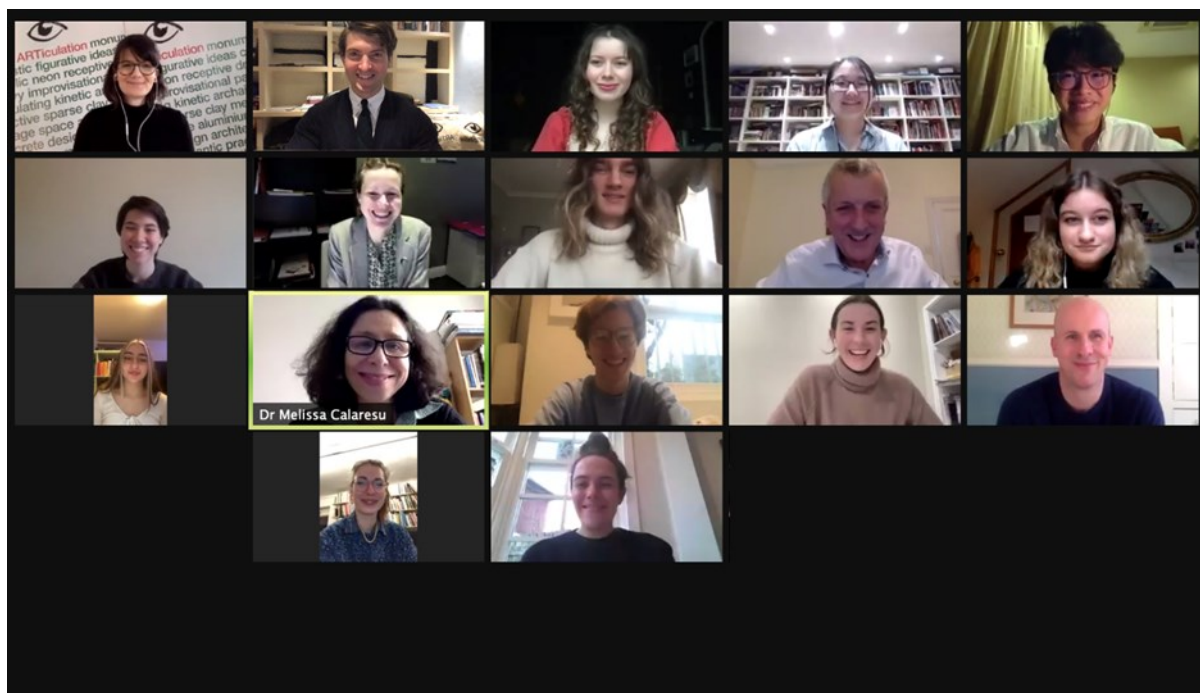
Year 7 and 8 work will be featured in the next newsletter, but they have all been flexible and inventive in their response to the lockdown producing work outside of lessons, animated advertisements, photo editing and perfecting their portrait drawing skills.

Bibi Fox Harris (U6 Ruskin) made it to the semi finals of the national Articulation public speaking competition. Bibi presented the work of Fiona White, who she discovered when viewing the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition online. Bibi's presentation demonstrated her excellent critical understanding and she was very assured in her delivery of the presentation. Unfortunately Bibi did not make it to the final but she was highly praised by the adjudicator, as described in this summary from Roche Court Educational Trust who organise the event:

The adjudicator, Dr Melissa Calaresu, congratulated all speakers for so brilliantly engaging with their selected artworks, stating how much she had learnt throughout the course of the afternoon and praising them all for how beautifully their presentations had been delivered.

Dr Melissa Calaresu praised Bibi for her incredibly interesting choice of subject, describing it as 'brave'. She congratulated Bibi for making contact with Fiona White and for her close analysis which beautifully dissected all of the elements and use of different media, and for its relevance in the face of climate change.

We are very proud of Bibi's effort and look forward to our participation in the competition next year. Roche Court have done an excellent job in running the competition virtually and enabling speakers to share their work from a variety of living rooms, kitchens, bedrooms and studies.





Despite the challenges of the last few months , we are so grateful to all the staff who continued to find creative ways to enable clubs and societies to continue through lockdown. Feedback from students has been so positive in that they found it a great support as well as having fun things to do over the last few months.

Our Enrichment programme for Sixth Form also continued and we used the opportunity to offer a series of Career Chats from a wide range of speakers, many of whom are alumni of the school. It was so fantastic to hear their stories and share their successes. We thank them very much for their time.

Mr Barwick

Scout news

We have continued to engage with the 16th Wallington Scout troop, which in February included an impromptu snowman/"snowblob" building challenges. We are delighted that Societies and Club sessions have started again and we look forward to lots of activities in the summer term. We started back with some Ultimate Frisbee and have a Easter Egg Treasure Hunt to finish off the term.

Mr Nicholson, Scout Leader





Debating Successes

Despite the challenges of debating during Covid, our debaters have recently done us proud in a number of external competitions.

Cambridge Schools: 30th January

A big well done to all our debaters who participated in today's Cambridge Schools Debating Competition. They were...

Team 1: Max Husaini and Jack Gardiner

Team 2: Blake Husaini and Jack Barwell

Team 3: Rohan Sathymoorthy and Sam Blake

Team 4: Henry Merivale and John Stokes

It was a tremendously competitive field, with some of London's top schools in attendance. The boys debated in a gruelling four rounds, questioning whether all schools should be made co-educational, whether the private ownership of culturally significant art should be allowed, whether we would be better off if soldiers had no fear, and whether maximum incomes should be capped in relation to those of lower earners.

Although none of our teams made it through to finals day, I would like to congratulate Henry and John on taking 2nd place in a difficult round against much older debaters. I would also like to congratulate Jack and Blake for their first round win against King's College, Dulwich College, and Eltham College. Finally, a big well done to Blake, Sam, and Rohan on taking part in their first external competition.

KCL Schools: 6th February

A big well done to all our debaters who participated in today's KCL Schools Debating Competition. They were...

Team 1: Max Husaini and Jack Gardiner

Team 2: Marwan Abdel-Razek and Jack Barwell

Team 3: Jabir Laassri and Elliot Nomafo

Team 4: Ken Tu and Simi Bejide

We had the opportunity to go up against schools from all over the world, debating against teams from countries such as Estonia, Bulgaria, Zimbabwe, the US, and Pakistan. The boys took part in four rounds, on the following motions: TTHW BAN ALL ADVERTISEMENT OF CONSUMER GOODS AND SERVICES, Jabir and Elliot won their debate in this round. TTH SUPPORTS THE GERMAN MODEL OF ACADEMIC STREAMING, Max and Jack won their debate in this round, TH PREFERS A WORLD WHERE ALL WORKS OF FICTION ARE PUBLISHED ANONYMOUSLY, Simi and Ken won their debate in this round and finally TTHBT IT IS LEGITIMATE TO AVOID TAX IN A DICTATORSHIP.

I would like to congratulate Jabir for being among the top novice speakers of the day. I would also like to congratulate Ken and Simi for coming extremely close to breaking for the novice final on the day.

ICYD: 20th March

Our junior debaters performed very well recently at the London round of the International Competition for Young Debaters. The Teams were...

Team A: John Stokes and Timothy Mazela, Team B: Ibrahim Ali and Selassie Senna-Cofie, Team C: Micah Fletcher and Henry Merivale and Team D: Toby Ou-Yang and Jermaine Adu-Poku. The boys gave up their entire Saturday to debate in four rounds on banning the use of sensational and emotional messaging by charities, on punishing sports clubs for the behaviour of their fans, on penalising companies that favour the use of machines over human employees, and on getting rid of trial by jury. Well done to Micah and Henry for winning their debate in the 2nd round. Although none of our teams are advancing to the national final this year, I know that all the boys learned a lot and became better debaters because of this experience,

To wrap up, I'm so impressed by the dedication our debaters have shown to coaching and competitions in spite of lockdowns and restrictions. It's been a pleasure and a privilege to continue this tradition at the school, and I look forward to many more challenging discussions in the future.

Ms Boland



Classics Beyond the Classroom

I've been so impressed with the dedication of our Classics and Latin students in entering external competitions during lockdown. It's been a real joy seeing the passion and independent interest our students exhibit on a regular basis.

Well done to Oscar Sims (Y11) and John Stokes (Y8) who recently entered the Leeds University Classics competition. John gave a speech on why Heracles should be considered the most important icon from the ancient world, and Oscar gave a stirring reading in Latin of the story of Romulus and Remus. We look forward to hearing how they got on in the coming weeks.

We had 6 students from year 7 and 8 who entered the Lytham St Anne's Classics Competition. Students were asked to put together a 15 minute presentation on which day in the ancient past they would travel back to, and why. The entrants were Seán Leahy, Praise Riley-Poku, Aditya Sajeev, Toby Ou-Yang, Lackshin Wickramasekera, and John Stokes. The boys presented on topics as diverse as the Great Fire of Rome and the burning of the Library of Alexandria. I thoroughly enjoyed each and every one of their projects, but John Stokes (Y8) was chosen to represent the school at a national level for his presentation on the trial of Socrates. The judges praised the wealth of information he included, as well as his dynamic presentation style. He was among those highly commended by the panel, and received a book token as a prize.



WHAT OCCURED ON THE 23RD JULY 64 CE?





Some year group news:

Sixth Form

The last term has been a difficult yet pleasing one for the Sixth Form, with so much education taking place remotely. The students were magnificent in making the most of the online provision and have continued to excel.

This is reflected by the fact that 17 students currently hold offers to study at Oxford or Cambridge next year, whilst we also have students who have been interviewed by Harvard and Yale and are still waiting to hear if they will be offered a place. Many others have offers to world leading institutions such as Imperial College London, Durham and London School of Economics to name but a few, such is the calibre of the current Upper Sixth.



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



HARVARD
UNIVERSITY



Lower Sixth university and careers prep will now begin for all students following the Easter break whilst those hoping to apply to Oxbridge have already started preparing their applications.

Additionally, Lower Sixth form will be busy next term participating in days off timetable focussing on anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-drugs education, as well as completing academic Independent Research Projects that culminate in presentation days where each students presents to parents, alumni and staff for 15 minutes each.

Mr Robertson, Director of Sixth Form

Year 10

Given the situation with Coronavirus and a change in governmental policy, we have had to significantly change how work experience is running for Year 10 this year. During the period of school closure and lockdown we used Thursday's games sessions to offer careers presentations with questions and answers from past alumni of the school.

More exciting careers based activities are coming for Year 10 next term, along with a dedicated 'careers week' on 14 June.

Mr Davies, Year leader



PHYSICS IN THE SIXTH FORM

The senior physics challenge is a competition run for students in year 12 by the British Physics Olympiad and Oxford University. It is designed to challenge the very best sixth form physicists around the country. Despite Covid, the competition went ahead in a slightly different online format and 23 WCGS students entered the competition.

Their results were exceptional this year with 7 bronze awards, 9 silver awards and 6 gold awards. Gold awards are given to students in the top 15% of entrants nationally who demonstrate excellent problem solving skills, lateral thinking and interest in the subject. Special congratulations should go to the students awarded a gold award who were: Muhammad Nauman, Raku Premkumar, Anderson Muirhead, Olivia Renouf, Dermot Hartley and Aryan Amist.



Careers Programme at WCGS

Our comprehensive Careers programme can be found on our website. For students in the Sixth Form we issue a weekly Careers Catchup which outlines all the latest news, events and work experience opportunities from leading universities and employers. This emailed to parents, carers and students. We are also sharing this with Year 11 so they can see the kind of opportunities that we source and share in the sixth form.

We worked hard to ensure Careers provision was offered despite lockdown. As part of Sixth Form enrichment we offered a series of Career Chats covering a wide range of careers from banking to law, medicine to media, sports marketing to the civil service. Many of our guests were alumni of the school and it was lovely to hear their stories. Thank you to all our guests you certainly made a difference to our students.

Year 11 have continued to see our independent Careers Advisor via zoom if they have wanted it. Meanwhile, Year 10 have been offered a number of career opportunities this term including the chance to apply for virtual work experiences which many have been very successful in. We will continue with our programme to support students experience the world of work in a different way from the traditional work experience which will include our special Careers Week in June.

Ms Proctor, Careers Lead



And finally—

Some words of beauty and wisdom from our Poet Laureate, Harishaanth Premadas

Tranquillizing love

I woke up
heard its screeching
Then it whispers:
“We will keep you - little one”

I don’t feed the devil
but he feeds me.
It’s a beckoning communion,
the pomegranates are too tasty.

They treat me,
like an extra arm:
“You are us”
Having cut out my tongue.

They roll over and clutch my
ears
and whisper
“We will keep you - little one.”

That’s when I saw you
in your tempting white hood
I wondered if I had a chance
Maybe God knows “never”
Yet I feel like flying
Feel like flying.

You woke up
heard me screeching
And so I whisper:
“I will keep you - little one.”