

ST CATHERINE'S NEWSLETTER

"Be who God wants you to be, and you will set the world on fire." – St Catherine of Siena

NEWS & FEATURES

Head Girl Team

PAGE 2

Reflect & Refresh

PAGES 3-5

D of E

PAGES 6-7

Food & Nutrition

PAGES 8-9

Co-curricular

PAGES 10-11

Form Fun

PAGE 12

Sports News

PAGE 13-14

Library Updates

PAGES 15-16

Key Dates

PAGE 17



From the Headmistress

The Senior School girls responded to a pupil survey this week which demonstrated their ongoing commitment to learning and their enjoyment of the Reflect and Refresh Day – and some feedback that home is a very comfy place on wintery days! I was also very pleased that so many pupils offered thanks for the support they are receiving from their teachers.

This is not to say that the girls are not also missing the other parts of their usual school life (and especially their friends), and their suggestions about this were very welcome. I hope that over next week the early celebrations for Shrove Tuesday and opportunities for charity, will provide some colour as we head towards Half Term.

And as I write, we are all still uncertain about which year groups might return to the school site from March 8. I am sure you join me in hoping for clear guidance, and a smooth reopening for St Catherine's. In the meantime, I wish you all a happy, safe break.

With best wishes

Mrs McPherson

HEAD GIRL TEAM AND PREFECTS

News from our Sixth Form Leaders

Head Girl Team

We have planned our first lockdown School Council session, and will be looking at how we can maintain our sense of community, even though we are apart. We have also continued with our Sixth Form Instagram, where we post tips to help with rest and relaxation, and share recommendations about books or accounts to follow (@stcs_sixthformhub). We are also excited to announce the return of the Equalities Club after half term, where we will be continuing with the topic of racism - keep an eye out for future announcements! Please do join the Equalities Club classroom. After half term the Prefect Team and Chaplaincy are hoping to start a prayer session for the younger years.

This would be the perfect opportunity to have a break from your work, a moment of reflection, and the opportunity to keep in touch with the Sixth Formers. Please keep an eye out for further information. We hope you are all well and safe.



Hannah B, Jada C and Hilal S

Sports News



Victoria C - Sport Prefect

The thought of exercising in the middle of winter is difficult in the best of times, but as we find ourselves in a pandemic, exercise is more important than ever for our physical health, mental health and overall well-being. It has been well researched that exercise increases endorphins, builds stamina and makes you feel better. As we continue to cope with living in a pandemic, it's really important to get outside and do something! When it's not freezing cold or lashing with rain at 5pm, I go for a quick power walk (easier now that it is getting lighter). The best time to do this is during the extended lunchtime. If you can't go outside, there is a wide range of fitness videos on YouTube. A really fun exercise is Just Dance RaRa Rasputin - it has become a Sixth Form favourite. If you can persuade your parents to join in, some mum and dad dancing will not only give you a physical workout but a good belly laugh as well!

Drama and Music News

There is still lots being planned in both Music and Drama, despite the switch to online learning, which has been very exciting. In Music, we are planning for our musical theatre club, where we will be working on singing and dancing, using songs from 'Matilda The Musical'. In Drama we have lots to offer on our Google classroom page, where we are having a themed selfie competition each week. We are also going to be starting up a virtual play, where pupils will be split into groups and a short play will be filmed over a Google meet, so people can learn about how to connect with one another through a screen and produce an effective piece of theatre. It is so important to continue the performing arts aspects of the school, so it is really lovely to see many people continuing to get involved, and with such an enthusiastic attitude.



Emily H - Drama and Music Prefect

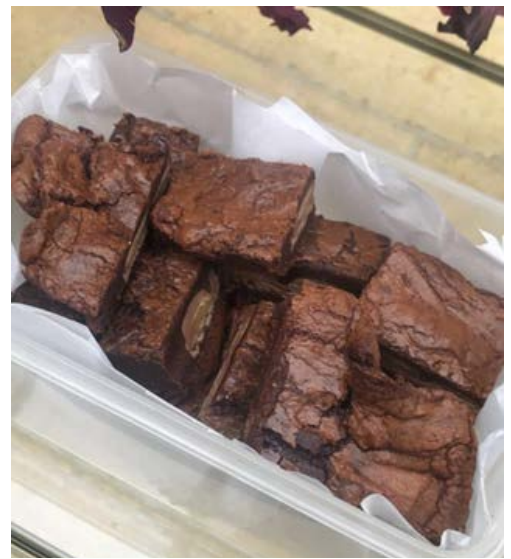
Reflect & Refresh

On Wednesday, 27 January, the school took a break from remote learning to enjoy a day to Reflect and Refresh. Girls from both Prep and Senior were given target themes chosen to promote self-care. Their activities included gaining peace of mind by completing a leftover piece of work, getting active with a walk outside, or exploring their creativity with some baking or, for the girls in school, crafting with Mrs Gillies.

Hannah M in Year 9 created this lovely piece of art and Phoebe P treated her family with a batch of brownies. Estelle S completed her service target by tidying the kitchen after lunch. Staff too took the chance to get a little bit of a break from their screens; Mr Warner and Miss Wallace stretched their legs by taking a walk from school to pick up some coffees, while Miss Holgate-Smith enjoyed a yoga class. Everyone agreed the day left them feeling refreshed and ready to push on with remote learning towards half term.



Drawing by Eva C Year 7



Malvinka N Year 7 made these 'angel wings'



The girls produced some wonderful artistic and culinary creations



Reflect & Refresh



The girls in school enjoyed craft activities with Mrs Gillies, making cushions, keyrings and rings.

Reflect & Refresh

Chaplaincy - Candlemas

Christmas seems rather a distant memory as we come to the end of a rather cold and wet January. The Feast of Candlemas, or the Presentation of the Lord, gives us a much needed ray of light as we begin to move into early Spring. For most people, the celebration of Christmas ends at Epiphany when the decorations are taken down from our houses and packed away for another year. Yet an older tradition takes the celebration of the Christmas season right up to 2 February and Candlemas.

This Feast marks the fortieth day after Jesus' birth, when a child would be presented in the Temple in accordance with Jewish tradition. While there, they met Simeon and Anna, two devout members of the community who had long waited for the coming of God's Son. Simeon responds with joy that his hope had at last been fulfilled:

"Now, Master, you may let your servant go
in peace, according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and glory for your people Israel." Luke 2:29-32

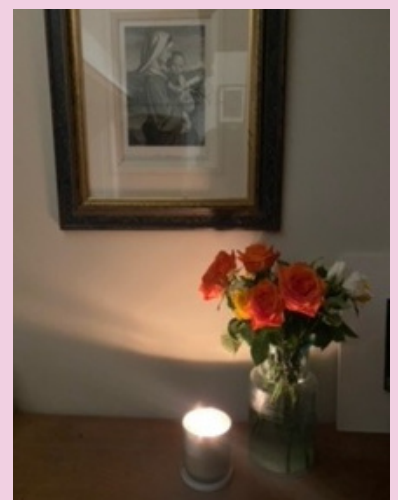
Jesus is the promised Light of the World. While Simeon may not live to see Jesus' mission completed in his lifetime, he recognises the hope that the birth of Jesus brings. We can see signs of hope around us too; days are gradually beginning to get longer, the first, tentative signs of spring are appearing if we look closely enough; distribution of the Covid Vaccine is bringing the hope of a return to school and an easing of the current lockdown.

On their retreat afternoon last week, Year 3 reflected on the idea of being 'lights' for others; recognising the gifts within each person and encouraging our light to shine out. We thought about the gifts that had been shared with us by those we love - not just material things but also the gifts of kindness, love, friendship and encouragement. We recognised the qualities each of us have and asked God to help us use these blessings to help and encourage others.

A candle loses no light when it lights another candle. May we share the light of Christ with all we meet, through the example of our compassion and faith.

Loving God,
may your light shine upon us
to bless us and warm us
into sharing your light with others
and warming our hearts with your love.
Surprise us with your joy and justice.
Help us to carry the light of Jesus in our hearts
all the length and breadth
of our nights and days.

Amen



Bronze, Silver and Gold Updates

Year 9 Bronze Award

An amazing 47 girls have enrolled on the D of E Bronze Award scheme and are now busy undertaking the various activities needed to complete their respective volunteering, physical and skills sections of the award over the next 3 to 9 months. D of E have come up with a range of alternative activities that can be completed during the lockdowns. These can be viewed at <https://www.dofe.org/dofewithadifference/activities>. The girls have also signed up with Activ Adventures <https://www.activadventures.com/> to complete the required expeditions over the coming year. Despite the restrictions that are in place as a result of Covid, the girls completed a virtual expedition training session on Saturday 23 January. This will be followed up by an after school session nearer the time of the first expedition, which will take place later in the school year. The instructors from Activ were impressed by the girls' enthusiasm. Make sure your daughters check out the Activ expedition guide at <https://www.activadventures.com/activ-guide/clothing-equipment/>.

D of E Competition - Guess the City!



In which city was this photograph taken?

Please post your answers in the D of E classroom. Mr Cox will supply a free D of E meal to the winner!

Year 10 Silver Award

32 Year 10 girls are now enrolled on the D of E Silver Award, many of whom completed their Bronze Award last year. They are now engaged in completing the three award sections over the next few months. Lots of great activities have been planned to complete the sections, such as baking for elderly neighbours, using apps to monitor completion of various fitness programmes and enrolling on online courses. The Silver expedition virtual training was successfully delivered by Activ on Sunday 24 January. As with the Bronze training, the girls were enthusiastic and impressed the instructors. Activ will also deliver after school training nearer to the expeditions which will take place later this year. It is a good idea for the girls to check out the Activ expedition guide at- <https://www.activadventures.com/activ-guide/clothing-equipment/>

Year 11 Silver Award

Rest assured that the school is looking forward to delivering the outstanding practice and assessed expeditions later this year. With the support of Richmond Borough Council, we plan to do our utmost to get the girls out hiking and camping. The girls also need to make sure they complete the other sections to claim the D of E Certificate of Achievement, which is available to any young person who enrolls before 31 July 2021 and completes their skills, volunteering and physical sections at Bronze, Silver or Gold. The expeditions will be run by the school and plenty of staff are looking forward to joining Mr Cox on the expeditions to support the girls.

Bronze, Silver and Gold Updates

Sixth Form Gold Award

We managed to squeeze in a Year 12 Gold training session just before Christmas and we are looking forward to getting the girls out into Snowdonia and the Lake District with Hampton School as soon as we can this year. As with the other levels of the Award, the girls can get a Certificate of Achievement for completion of the skills, volunteering and physical sections. I would also like to remind the girls that the school has committed to allowing the Year 13 girls to return and complete the expeditions with us next year if that is easier for them.

As soon as we can fit in some more school sessions this year, Mr Cox will get some cooking training underway with the expedition food samples we obtained from - <https://www.tacticalfoodpack.com/> and also <https://www.lyophilise.fr/>.

In the meantime ...boots on and walking with a weighted rucksack around a local park is always a good way to get prepared up and down Broomfield Hill in Richmond Park a few times anyone? So, despite the challenging circumstances, the school motto is being seen in the girls' commitment to D of E!

Please make sure that Mr Cox, Mr Rock and Activ are kept up to date with any changes to medical and contact details. Furthermore, please make sure that the email accounts used to enrol for D of E with Mr Rock and the expeditions with Activ are regularly checked for emails. Finally, there is a Google Classroom for D of E Bronze and Silver. Please encourage your daughters to sign up as there is a wealth of information about the sections, enrolment and expedition training from both Mr Rock and Mr Cox. Mr Cox will be running a Meet drop in session in this classroom every Tuesday lunch time. He is also really looking forward to getting out on the expeditions with all of the year groups this year and finally getting his tent and stove and black hat out of storage!

If you or your daughter have any queries about D of E at St Catherine's please contact Mr Rock or Mr Cox.

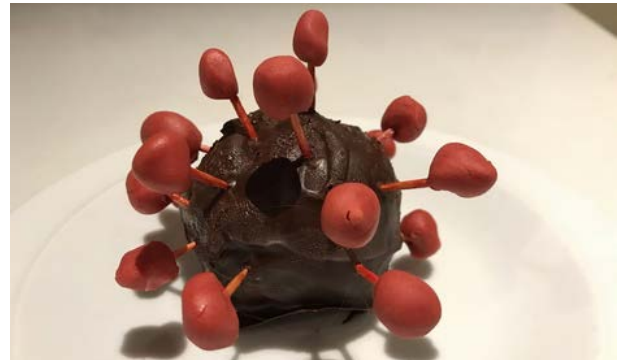


FOOD & NUTRITION

Tunnocks Teacake Challenge



Mei H-T, for her China theme, covered the teackes in white chocolate, used orange jelly for the sauce, and chocolate and glycerines for the noodles and vegetables. Were you fooled?



Eleanor R made a coronavirus teacake. Be sure not to eat this one!

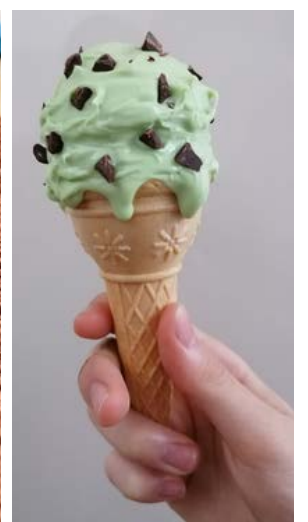
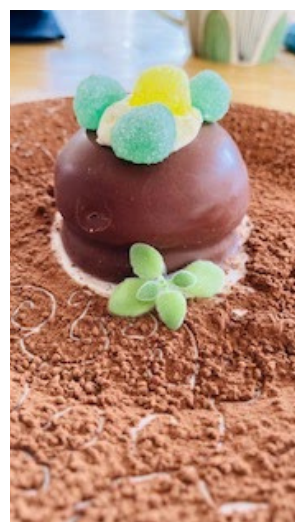


Viktoria G: I made some traditional Russian pancakes and decorated them with redcurrants. I also used two types of chocolate, which I melted and drizzled over the pancakes. I covered the teackes in fondant and decorated them.



Florence H combined the Taj Mahal with the Indian flag, using mostly ingredients that can be found in India - beautiful and delicious!

Eve R: For my beach scene, I used crushed digestives as sand, and fruit sprinkles as shells. I dyed water with blue food colouring as the sea and used squirty cream as waves!



FOOD & NUTRITION

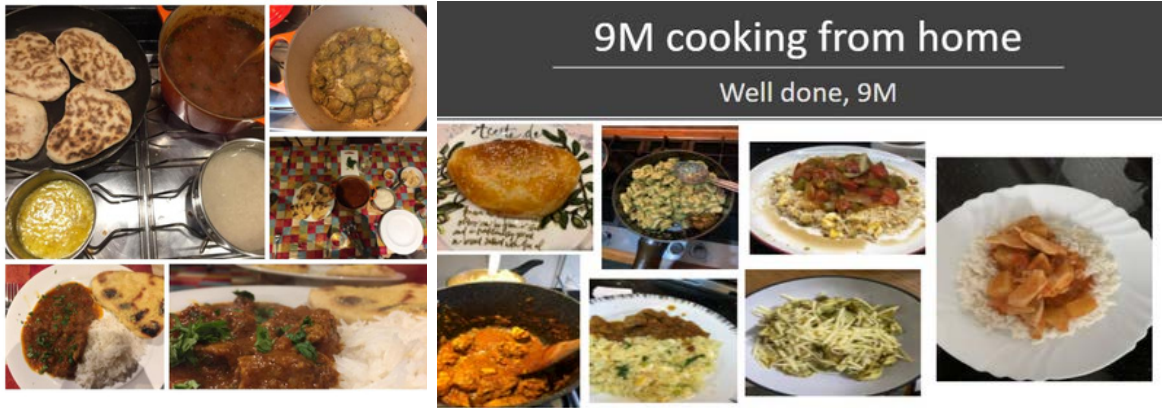
Cooking from home



Imogen F: My tea cakes are covered in fondant birds and flowers. These birds represent my experience in Dominica, where my grandparents live. Dominica is known as the nature island, and is full of wildlife. The first tea cake is a Sisserou Parrot, the second is a kingfisher leaping through the waves after a fish, and the last two are a hummingbird and hibiscus flower!



Eleanor 9T
cooked Lamb
Rogan Josh
with garlic
naan and rice
for her family



9M cooking from home

Well done, 9M



Year 8's scones - delicious!



CO-CURRICULAR

News Scientists

In the News Scientists Club we have been looking at various recent scientific findings and reports. We looked at the possibility that the Beirut blast was caused by a controversial man-made chemical. We also discussed the new and unknown signals that have been picked up from space. In addition to learning about the science behind these issues and broadening our knowledge, it has been interesting to discuss each other's perspectives on these fascinating topics. Zoe L Year 12



"It has been wonderful to see the girls' enthusiasm and commitment during the remote learning period. We now have some Year 11 members to add to the group and it has been great to hear their perspectives alongside our Sixth Form members." Mrs Eagers

Bubble 4 Art Club

Eco Society

Some of our Year 12 girls have set up an Eco Society to talk about the environment, climate and related topics. All girls are welcome to join.



I really enjoy Art Club and think that it's a good opportunity to relax and de-stress after a long time staring at a bright computer screen. It's also a fulfilling way to spend your time during break, and can help improve various skills (concentration and drawing techniques). Harini S 9M



Young Reporter

A group of Year 12 girls are taking part in the Young Reporter scheme run by the local news organisation Newsquest. Their articles are published on the website www.thisislocallondon.co.uk. Here is Rebecca N's article about her experience of working onsite at St Catherine's during lockdown.

Empty Chairs at Empty Tables - the tale of an onsite pupil

When the Prime Minister addressed the nation on 4 January, it felt like groundhog day. Exams cancelled, schools shut, not to mention the immense stress put on the NHS. The closing of schools was particularly nerve-racking for me; as a member of the infamous GCSE class of 2020, I was scared of the cycle repeating itself.

Particularly for me, uncertainty is an incredibly intimidating fear. Since beginning Reception at the age of four, I have had an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan). This document outlines my special educational needs, and the provision a local authority must put in place to help. It also means that I qualify for onsite learning. That being said, I completed the first lockdown online. My GCSEs were cancelled and at that point it seemed that the best option was to attend school from the safety of my own home. But now that I've just embarked on my A-Level journey, and considering the lack of focus, motivation and stability I felt last year, we felt that it would be in my best interests to work at school.

My condition makes it paramount for my mental health to have stability and routine (thanks 2020, you really made my life easy), both of which are aided by being at school, the place I associate with learning and where I can easily access pastoral care.

On Monday 11 January, my first day onsite, my school completed its first day of weekly lateral flow testing, carried out completely by dedicated teaching staff. While it is not in the job description, desperate times called for desperate measures.



Twenty minutes after a slightly uncomfortable nose and tonsil swab, I got an email from the NHS Track and Trace telling me that I was in the clear. I even got a pack of Haribos too, which was an unexpected bonus.

Ironically, the classroom where I work and where I am typing this up right now, is the room where I usually spend most of my lessons. Now I get to spend all of them here, albeit online.

For me, the most bizarre thing is seeing school, which is usually buzzing with excitement, deafeningly quiet. I definitely have found that being onsite has benefited me greatly and I have been able to focus better on my work.

I am extremely thankful to all the teachers who have been able to make this happen. I have the utmost respect and gratitude for teachers. All of them have been truly going the extra mile to keep the community atmosphere alive, even when we are apart.

Lastly, always remember, we can do hard things. Online school may seem daunting, but it is just something we have to do to protect the lives of our community. After all, the quicker we pull together to stop the spread, the quicker we can be together.

FORM FUN AND QUIZZES

9S Fun Fridays

Mrs Stevens has been organising Fun Fridays with 9S, with a challenge each week:

Week 1 wear a red top;
Week 2 make a paper hat;
Week 3 Origami animals;
Week 4 be fabulous - bows, flowers and ribbons in our hair. This week it is bring your co-worker to school (pets or cuddly toys!).



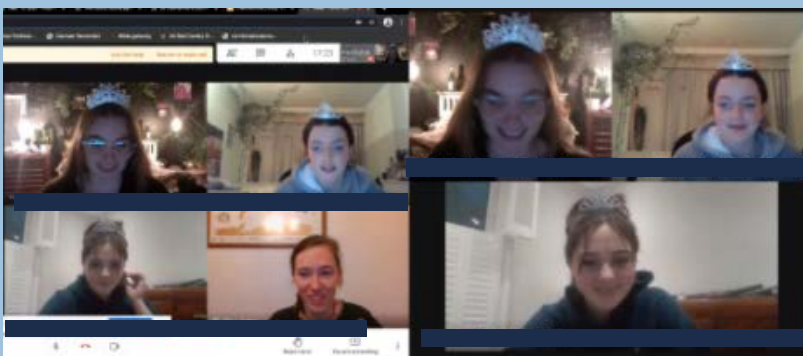
Form Time has never been so much fun!
Activities to raise a smile on a lockdown Friday.



9S's Origami animals

Year 10 Quiz Night

Two teams entered the Year 10 quiz after school on Tuesday this week. It was a tight contest with 5 rounds on: general knowledge, Disney, St Catherine's, The World and Music. In the end the result was very close with Olivia A, Jasmin D, Maree C and Farrah R being crowned the winners despite their lack of tiaras! Well done to all the girls who participated.

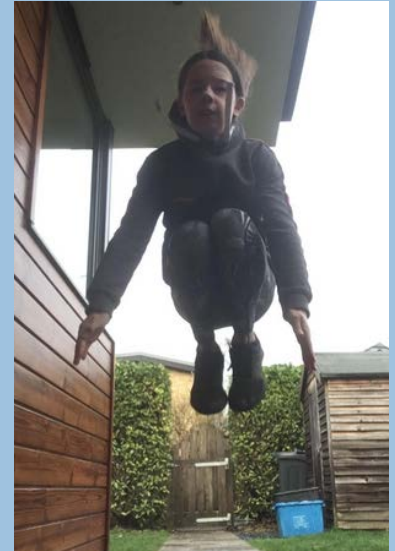
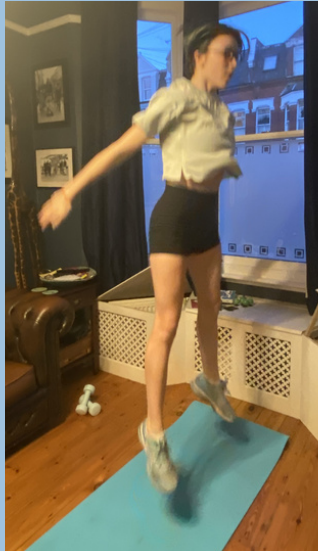


SPORTS NEWS

PE from home

Great work from Molly L in Year 12, who is top of the PE Challenge scoreboard for Bubble 5.

Mei H-T in Year 8 has been learning some new football skills. Here she is practising the stepover.



PE Challenges

The PE Department wish to congratulate all those students who have sent in videos/results of their challenges. We wish to praise you all for your great efforts, in addition to presenting the results of those students who have achieved top scorers:

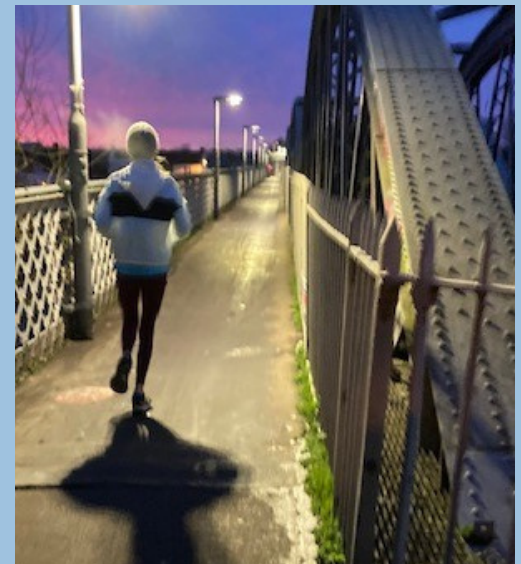
Challenge	Yr7	Yr8	Yr9
Holding the Plank position (strength)	Sienna H: 2.25 mins	Emilia N: 2.35 mins	Bella C: 2.28 mins
Holding the Chair Sit position (strength)	Sienna H: 1.52.51	Lilly G: 2 mins	Freya H: 1.26
60sec Speed Bounce (forward back) (Agility)	Imogen F: 85	Alice M: 114	Freya H: 63
Speed Bounce side to side. (Agility)	Amelia L: 64	Emilia N: 75	Eleanor R: 63
4 min squat challenge (muscular endurance)	Ongoing	Alice M: 114	Estelle S: 98
1 min Shoulder taps in plank position (endurance)	Claudia M-S: 64	Ongoing	Ongoing
Twist and shout	Sienna H: 26	Emilia N: 25	Mei H-T: 26

We encourage all students to send in their challenge scores, in addition to completing the exercise sessions posted in their PE classrooms. Many students have taken opportunity to go out running. One student in Year 7 deserves a special mention:

Phillippa C 7C:

27.1.21
5km in 27.17 mins, my fastest km was 5.10 mins and my average pace was 5.28 mins.
29.1.21
4.21km in 23.17 mins, my fastest km was 5.22 mins.

Chloe W in Year 7 enjoyed Mrs Healey's power session netball workout. It is great to see our pupils keeping active.



Eve R in Year 8 has been enjoying yoga and early morning runs. Well done, Eve, and what a beautiful view of the river!

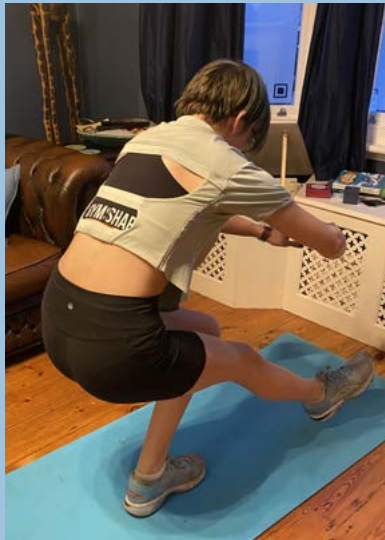


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Challenge	Yr7	Yr8	Yr9
Holding the Plank position (strength)	Sienna Hazell: 2.25 mins	Emilia Noel: 2.35 mins	Bella Copus: 2.28 mins
Holding the Chair Sit position (strength)	Sienna Hazell: 1.52.51	Lilly Grist: 2mins	Freya Himes: 1.28
60sec Speed Bounce (forward back) (Agility)	Imogen Favier: 85	Alice Mote: 114	Freya Himes: 63
Speed Bounce side to side. (Agility)	Amelia Lewis : 64	Emilia Noel: 75	Eleanor Rowbottom: 63
4 min squat challenge (muscular endurance)	On going	Alice mote : 114 squats in 4mins	Estelle Shaw: 98
1 min Shoulder taps in plank position (endurance)	Caudia Mindon- Seco: 64	On going	On going
Twist and shout	Sienna Hazell: 26	Emilia Noel: 25	Mei Hammond-Tse: 26

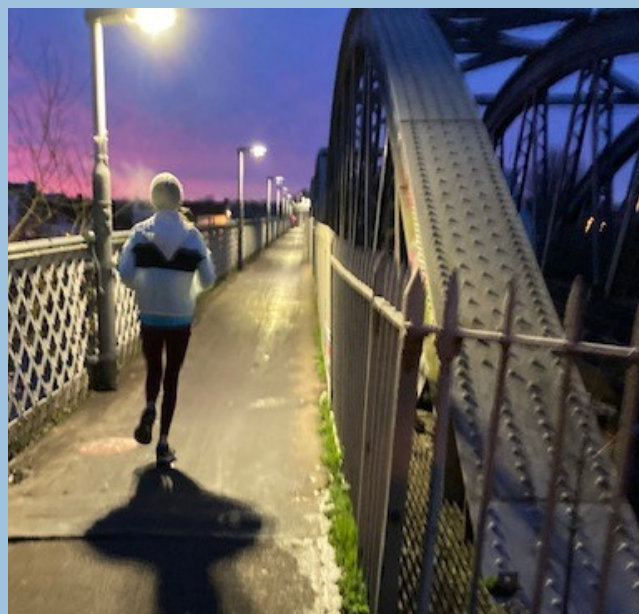
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Phillippa Clark 7C:

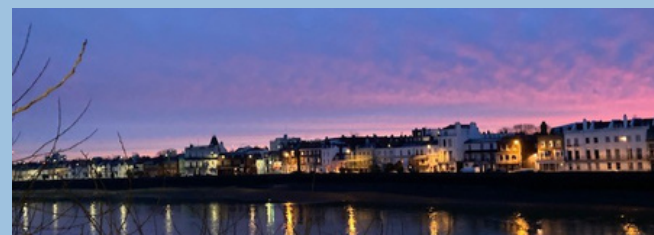
27.1.21
5k in 27mins 17secs my fastest km was 5min 10secs and my average pace was 5min 28secs

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4.21km in 23min 17secs my fastest km was 5min 22secs and my fastest was 5min 22secs

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SPORTS NEWS

Keeping active



The girls who are permitted to be on site have been diligently carrying out the tasks set by their PE teachers. Here are the Year 7s enjoying the Hip Hop routine set by Mrs Healey



Press Ups and Squats Challenge

Some classes in Year 10 and 11 were set the challenge of seeing how many press ups and squats they could complete in one minute.

Year 10 results:

The 1 Minute Squat Challenge: 1st Place - Isabella H, 2nd Place - Arabella N, 3rd Place - Srishti S

The 1 Minute Press Up Challenge: 1st Place - Srishti S, 2nd Place - Ella R, 3rd Place - Gimeto N

Year 11 results:

The 1 Minute Squat Challenge: 1st Place - Isabella W, 2nd Place - Tabitha P, 3rd Place - Isla D

The 1 Minute Press Up Challenge: 1st Place - Anika S, 2nd Place - Isabella W, 3rd Place - Isabella V H

Amazing effort from all who took part and a great benchmark to try and beat when they take on the challenge again!



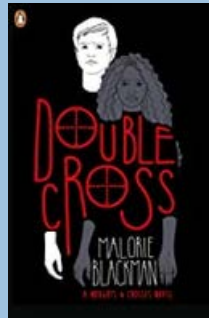
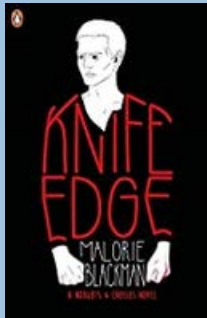
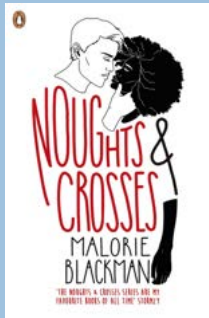
The snow at the end of January provided another opportunity for some fun in the fresh air. Ellie H in Year 7 managed to make this enormous snowball in Richmond Park, and we love Srishti S's very cheerful looking snowman.

LIBRARY UPDATES

Book Clubs

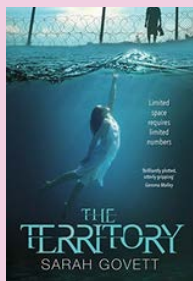
Year 7 Book Club

The Year 7 Book Club read *Noughts and Crosses* by Malorie Blackman over the Christmas holidays and thoroughly enjoyed it, so much so that they are reading the rest of the series in their own time.



Malorie Blackman

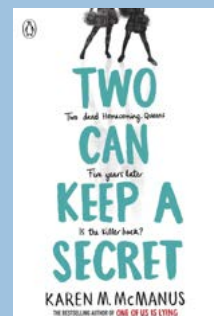
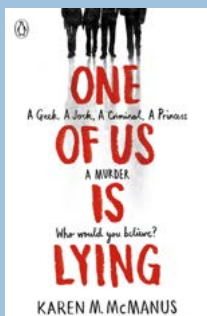
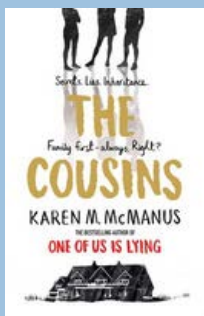
The Year 7 Book Club are now reading *The Territory* by local Richmond-based author, Sarah Govett. This is the first instalment of the trilogy about a dystopian vision of the UK 40 years in the future, in which climate change has caused half of the UK to be transformed into a disease-ridden swamp. To conserve the healthy areas, all fifteen year olds are sorted into those who can remain, and those who are condemned to living in the Wetlands.



Sarah Govett

Year 8 Book Club

The Year 8 Book Club are reading *The Cousins*, the latest best-seller by American Young Adult author Karen M McManus. Karen has written some of the most popular YA novels of recent years, which are suitable for age 13+



Karen McManus

"Reading is an exercise in empathy; an exercise in walking in someone else's shoes for a while." - Malorie Blackman, author of Noughts and Crosses

The Storys are the envy of their neighbours: they are rich, beautiful, and close. Until it all falls apart. The four children are suddenly dropped by their mother with a single sentence: You know what you did - The Cousins by Karen McManus

LIBRARY UPDATES

World Book Day Preview

World Book Day falls on Thursday 4 March this year, and, just as we did last year, we are planning a week-long celebration. Our theme this year will be 'Journeys', which will include an exploration of why journeys make good stories, and how books can help us to discover other cultures, countries and experiences. We are also going to be looking at empathy and how reading helps us understand others, particularly those whose experiences are different from our own

We have arranged for online author visits from the following authors:

Beverley Naidoo, who will be speaking to Years 7 and 8;

Jasbinder Bilan who will be speaking to Year 7 (and also Years 5 and 6 in a separate session); and

Bali Rai who will be speaking to Years 9 and 10.

It would be wonderful if pupils could read some books by these authors over half term.

There will be a variety of other activities taking place for all year groups throughout the week, including dressing as your favourite book character, Drop Everything and Read, and Secret Reader.



"The sheer joy of being able to dive into a book and escape to a land of adventures is unlike anything else" -

Lauren St John

"When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young." -

Maya Angelou

"Books enable you to discover new worlds, meet new people and learn about the past, they also have the power to develop empathy, and give you the skills to succeed in life."

- Cressida Cowell

KEY DATES

Tuesday 9 February: 'wear blue' day to recognise St. Josephine Bakhita, patron saint of Human Trafficking

Thursday 11 February - Year 9 immunisations (see separate communications from Mrs Simpson)

Thursday 4 March - World Book Day

Monday 1 March - Friday 5 March - World Book Week

You can keep up to date with all of our St Catherine's news on social media:



@stcatherinessch

And finally.....Skipping challenge! Please see this message from Millie F in Year 12



<https://twitter.com/stcatherinessch/status/1357615133678313472?s=20>