

@oakwood

December - 2020



Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce our most recent @Oakwood.

Despite the huge challenges posed by Covid, it has been really heartening to see that our students and staff have been able to carry out a number of worthwhile and interesting activities since September.

My grateful thanks to the Publicity Team for making it happen.

Mr K.W. Moody - Headteacher

STRIVE

AND

SERVE

Sixth Form Prefects 'Step Up' to the Challenge of Charity Fundraising

As is tradition within the school, each year the Senior Prefect Team in Year 13 selects two charities to support – one local and one national charity. This year, we have chosen to support Maidstone Homeless Care & Mind.

Both of these charities have been significantly impacted by Covid-19, with a dramatic increase in demand for their services seen since the beginning of the first-lockdown, alongside the reduction of funds raised for these organisations, due to the cancellation of a number of fundraising events. Supporting these charities through fundraising events is vital at this time.

'Step Up' Challenge. During this time where we may be kept physically apart, the Prefect Team wanted a way to run a competition to allow for engagement across the year-groups. With the aid of our ever benevolent mobile devices, we challenged the school during the month of November to move as far as possible, counting participants' steps using the technology already on their phones. At the end of each-week, all participants received a weekly-update, detailing who had completed the most steps. Through sponsorships, students raised over £150 for both our causes – a great start towards our fundraising goal.



Non-Uniform Day. Something that Covid-19 has not impacted is the possibility of running a non-school uniform day. On Tuesday 15th December, students were permitted to swap school-uniform for the attire of their choosing, in exchange for a donation of £1 towards the school's Charities. In theme with the massive contributions made by key workers across the world towards combatting and operating within the Covid-19 pandemic, and in celebration of both the LGBTQ+ community, students were encouraged to wear rainbow-themed attire. The option, of course, remained open for choosing Christmas-jumpers too! Students took the opportunity on mass to ditch school-uniform, in place of more colourful and festive attire.

Looking towards Next Year: As the term is drawing towards an end, the Christmas Break will allow the Sixth-Form Prefect Team the opportunity to draw upon the experiences that we have gained over the Autumn Terms towards our fundraising endeavour. There are a number of reasons to be optimistic for 2021 – with the development of Covid Vaccines, the COP Climate Summit in Glasgow, and a renewed sense of community, gained from the pandemic. Covid-19 has been a challenge for us all, but it has shown us that there is a new way of doing things, something that we would like to grow-upon within the New Year within next year's fundraising.

All of the Sixth-Form Prefect team would like to take this opportunity to thank students, parents and guardians for their continued support towards our fundraising effort within the school, and wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Amnesty International: Write for Rights Campaign 2020

Sometimes a letter can change someone's life. That's the premise of Write for Rights, Amnesty International's global letter-writing campaign and the world's biggest human rights event.

Every December, Amnesty supporters across the globe will write millions of letters for those whose basic human rights are being attacked across a two-month period. It is especially poignant this week as Thursday 10th December marks International Human Rights Day.

Their collective impact was undeniable. In 2019, more than 6.5 million appeal letters and messages were sent during the Write for Rights campaign. For example, last year, more than 765,000 messages were sent in support of Magai Matiop Ngong, who was sentenced to death in South Sudan at the age of 15. Each one of these highlighted his case and the illegal use of the death penalty against children. This gained real results as in July 2020, his sentenced was quashed. As a result, Amnesty International have chosen 12 more deserving case studies to support for this year's campaign and we have shared this with Y7-11 in form time, through their awareness day activities.

Just some of the names in the 2020 case studies

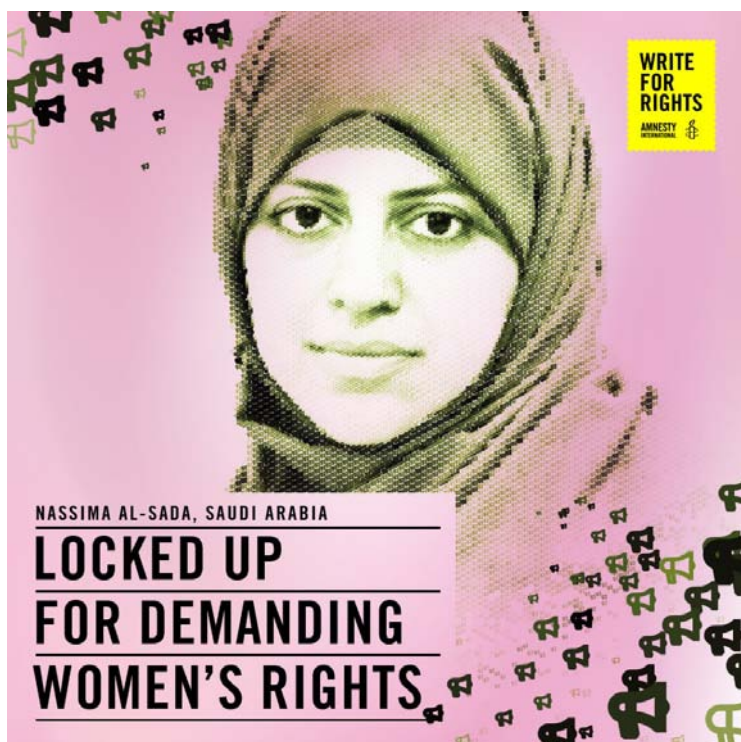


which we have been writing messages of solidarity and letters to advocate change to include:

Germain Rukuki is serving a 32-year prison sentence for his peaceful activism in Burundi. On 26 April he was found guilty of sham charges including 'rebellion' and 'threatening state security'. His previous association with the NGO Action by Christians for Abolition of Torture (ACAT-Burundi) was used against him. Just weeks after his arrest, Emelyne gave birth to their third son, who Germain has never met: "Thanks to all of you who are fighting for my freedom. I can feel the pain my little boys are feeling... the pain of my friends and wife. However, this pain which highlights a notable injustice was worth it. I'm not going to give up fighting for human rights."

Similarly, 22-year-old poet and student leader Paing Phyo Min, also known as De Ya, is serving six years in prison for taking part in theatre shows in Myanmar. He was imprisoned for his freedom of speech: "We may be imprisoned but we will not be deterred from speaking our minds as young people with love for our democracy and culture."

Every year, real change happens because of your letters and actions. Write a letter, change a life was a huge success in form time with students writing letters of solidarity and signing petitions for this year's causes. If you would like to get involved, please read the case studies for yourself here, with more information on how to get involved in helping to alleviate these individuals' plight through your kind words: https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2020-10/W4R%202020%20booklet%20FINAL%20singles.pdf?w9awfSN_pTf8a6bkk1pBob1HN13zGkDu=



Breast Cancer Now Charity Run

breast
cancer
care

breast cancer
now

Throughout the month of October a group of year 13 students organised a sponsored run for the charity Breast Cancer Now.

They chose to support the charity as it conducts world leading research and support to help combat breast cancer. Around 55,000 women and 370 men are diagnosed with breast cancer each year in the UK. The students aimed to raise £1500 within the month of October and collectively run at least 50km within 1 hour on the day of the event. They smashed their target. The group ended up raising £2640 within the month, and running a total 102km on the day of the run.



BREAST
CANCER
NOW

The research
& care charity



UK Bebras challenge

In November, Computing students from across years 7-13 took part in the UK Bebras challenge competition.

Further information can be found here:
<https://challenge.bebras.uk/>

The aim of the Bebras Challenges is to solve as many problems as you can in 40 minutes. The problems come in three levels of difficulty: A, B and C. The "A" problems are the easiest. "C" problems the hardest.

The difficulty of a problem determines how it will be scored. The scoring rules are as follows:

Difficulty	Correct	Incorrect	Unanswered
A	+6 points	0 points	0 points
B	+9 points	-2 points	0 points
C	+12 points	-4 points	0 points

Year 7 students participated in the Junior category, Years 8 & 9 in the Intermediate category, Years 10 & 11 in the senior category and years 12 & 13 in the Elite category.

Results

- All 160 year 7 students participated in the Junior category, and 43 were awarded a distinction with William Page from X7 being awarded best in school.
- 286 students from years 8 and 9 participated in the Intermediate category. 74 students were awarded with a distinction and Leo Atkinson from X9 was awarded best in school.
- 68 computing GCSE students across years 10 and 11 participated in the senior category and 18 were awarded a distinction with Joe Castle from X11 being awarded best in school.
- 18 students participated in the Elite category, with 8 achieving distinction and Sam Whitehead from year 13 being awarded best in school.

70 students from OPGS were placed in the top 10% nationally in the Bebras challenge and were awarded a gold certificate.

The top 10% students are invited to compete in the Oxford University Computing Challenge. This is a competition organised by the department of Computer Science at Oxford University.

We hope to run the next round in school, but this will be dependent on being able to safely room the students according to whatever risk assessments may be necessary at the time. The provisional dates for this competition are:

- Round 1: 22nd - 26th February

Round 2: 18th March

Further information, including advice on how to prepare, can be found at: <https://oucc.uk/>



Where I'm From Poem

As part of their 'Identity Poetry' unit this term, 8C wrote their own interpretations of 'Where I'm From' by George Ella Lyon. We then compiled these to create a collaborative poem written by the entire class which can be seen below.

I'm from cluttered streets and busy roads, humming of cars at night feels like home,

I'm from playing football in a Tesco carpark,

I'm from watching YouTube and Marvel movies,

I'm from luscious wheat and muddy grass, Cats up trees watching down below,

I'm from running up and down deserted streets and swinging from monkey bars,

I'm from discussing political ideals and ideologies with a friend over the phone,

I'm from cycling around the forest alone,

I'm from a roast dinner on a Sunday and back to school on the Monday,

I'm from climbing trees, feeling free,

I'm from walking down wet streets where leaves fall with frogs in sight,

I'm from being pushed off my bike by my sister,

I'm from watching Netflix,

I'm from feeding pizza to the birds and listening to Karen's shouting,

I'm from a happy family with a lovely tabby,

I'm from going down to the park and building forts from rubbish,

I'm from wild camping with my Dad eating self-cooked meals with a plastic spork,

I'm from jumping off the bridge into the river, shouts of enjoyment surrounding me,

I'm from kicking a ball around since I was two,

I'm from being born in East London, being a cockney with no London accent,

I'm from completing every LEGO game on the Xbox 360,

I'm from watching the Bee Movie and wondering if you like jazz,

I'm from homemade jam from homegrown fruit,

I'm from awful school dinners,

I'm from strict teachers and plastic classroom seats,

I'm from taking care of my exotic shorthairs,

I'm from laying in bed during lockdown watching anime,

I'm from a lovely house, all warm and cosy,

I'm from a mum, dad and little brother,

I'm from playing video games and English being my favourite subject,

I'm from pushing my cousin into a swimming pool before he knew how to swim,

I'm from walking through the woodlands to get to the local park,
That's where I'm from.

History Around me Photo Competition

This year we have all paid closer attention to our local area. Students in P7 were challenged to photograph local History around them – whether on their journeys to school or their weekend activities. Here are a selection of their photographs.

Did you know?

There has been a castle on the site of LEEDS CASTLE since 1119.

St Margaret's Church, Barming: The original church was built around 1120, no doubt on the orders of the powerful de Clare family who had been Lords of the Manor of East Barming since the Norman Conquest. There was no village then - just a scattering of maybe 30 peasant families - and the church would have been built next to the manor house.

Many of the local sites P7 chose to photograph in fact link to their studies this term on Norman England. Students were walking in the footsteps of medieval people who lived in Kent hundreds of years ago and experienced the Feudal system, revolt and religious change.



Leeds Castle: Matthew Sandman



Ben Dauncey Coldham Stones



Thomas Voutt, Holy Cross Church, Bearsted



St Margaret's Church, Barming: Leo Budgen

Students in Year 7 have been working very hard on their Power, Monarchy and Democracy theme this year.

Term 2 has focused on the ways the power of the monarch was challenged in Medieval times and as well as a detailed research homework on the Black Death, students have also explored key events including the Peasant's Revolt, Magna Carta in 1215, the development of parliament and the Wars of the Roses. For this activity, students were building on the prior knowledge of methods used by kings to keep control in their realms. The steps taken by Henry VII have been explained here with a high degree of accuracy and overall judgements successfully made. Year 7 students now have a secure understanding of key features of Medieval kingship, from the importance of marriage and tax to war and controlling their barons.



Lancaster Rose



York Rose



Tudor Rose

Impact of Plastic Pollution

by Jack Priestley

Coca-Cola, Pepsi and Nestle have been named the world's top plastic polluters for the third year in row. Up to 91% of all plastic waste ever generated has not been recycled and instead has been either incinerated, thrown in landfill or ended up in the natural environment.

Why have these massive corporations been allowed to abuse their power and pollute the environment to such extent? They have yet to denounce these practices and have made no promise to reduce their waste. What they have done however, is secure deals with the oil industry to increase the supply of plastics and pressure countries such as Kenya to lift restrictions on plastic use.

Why has no government stepped in to stop these companies? Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Nestle and Unilever were found to be responsible for half a million tonnes of plastic pollution in 6 developing countries by NGO Tearfund. This waste has an

untold impact on the environment and all life on Earth. Plastic has been found at the deepest levels of the oceans. Areas that humans haven't even reached yet aren't safe from our influence! Some sources claim that we only have 8 years before climate change becomes irreversible, so why is there minimal media coverage and no major action being taken? Time is running out to do something about it.



Harry Styles wearing a dress on the front cover of Vogue

by Beca Godsmark

Harry Styles, 26 year old singer – songwriter from the UK has been breaking the gender stereotypes from society for the past several years, with his latest breakthrough being on the front cover of Vogue wearing a gown. Styles is also the first ever solo male star to feature on the front cover. Harry is one of the most prominent celebrities who are breaking down the gender barriers in clothing and blurring the lines between gender categorized clothing. Styles does not believe that clothing should have a gender and that any person should be allowed to wear any item of clothing that makes them feel confident in themselves, whether that is a man in a dress or a woman in a suit. Why should we allow our gender to affect what we wear?

This front cover of Vogue that was issued for December 2020 has sparked a lot of controversy and angered some more right-wing people such as Candace Owens. Owens tweeted “There is no society that can survive without strong men.



The East knows this”, “Bring back manly men” to which Styles responded with an Instagram post of him in a pastel blue frilled suit eating a banana from a Variety magazine interview. He captioned it “Bring back manly men”. Styles has not publicly responded to her controversial tweets, but other celebrities have jumped in to defend him through tweeting themselves. Director of an upcoming film with Harry Styles as the lead, Olivia Wilde responded with “You’re Pathetic” and Lord of the Rings actor, Elijah Wood tweeted “think you’ve missed the definition of what a man is, masculinity alone does not make a man” Owens explains her tweets as discussing the ‘steady feminisation of men’. Styles believes in gender fluidity and a world without stereotypes creating barriers to people’s happiness. The freedom to wear whatever clothing item you want regardless of gender allows you to fully express yourself freely and as Harry styles says you feel like you’re wearing a “superhero outfit”. The singer gets a lot of inspiration from other stars breaking the gender stereotypes such as Elton John, Freddie Mercury, David Bowie, Prince and Elvis Presley. Do you think clothes should be gendered and closed to only that gender?

Debating Matters Great Britain India

Throughout November, three teams of year 12 students were put through their paces by the dmgbn Debating Matters tournament: a competition operating between a selection of British and Indian schools about a number of highly controversial social issues. Our three teams were assigned the challenges of presenting cases regarding two-child policy, populism, and compulsory vaccinations and its very fair to say all debates were fought valiantly despite the virtual venue.

Following weeks of preparation, working with their researchers, and holding mock debates to strengthen their premises as much as possible, teams were met by four key rounds, beginning with opening statements presenting their angle of argument. Next came 15 minutes of judges' questions from a panel of experts in the field of the given debate. Having given the pair of debaters from each school the chance to further

solidify their arguments against these challenges using previously gathered evidence, the debate moved onto a stage of team exchanges during which each pair worked to strengthen their own presentation whilst placing that of the oppositions under a spotlight of scrutiny. The debate itself was closed with a series of final statements from each teammate before the judges slipped into a Zoom 'breakout room' to deliberate towards a winning team.

Unfortunately, our teams ever so slightly missed out on entry to the next round of the tournament following three remarkable debates yet, the hard work and skill that went into each argument was undeniable. All participants should be extremely proud of their role in the event whilst treasuring the experience and advice received from experts throughout the process – you were all incredibly worthy opponents!



Meet the new House Prefects:

We are the Year 11 Prefects, and we are going to work with Year 7 and Year 8 throughout this year to help them get more involved in the school and make positive contributions to their respective houses. We will be holding competitions, launching projects, and supporting their learning; however, we have been given an extra challenge this year as this will have to be done virtually due to current restrictions.

We were extremely excited to launch our first homework support videos for Year 7 and 8 on the 3rd of December. These are currently in Maths and English and cover current topics they are studying. These videos have been sent to the students' email accounts. They can also access any of the videos by going onto Microsoft Stream and searching for the topic. We believe these videos will consolidate their knowledge, enrich their learning (with extension work discussed) and help them revise upcoming tests.

Some videos end with a challenge and we encourage all students to have a go and send their responses to: houseprefects@opgs.org. This email address is also open to any general queries about work (all subjects) or help with mental health from lower school students. We are happy to help Year 7s and 8s in any form and will respond ASAP.

Here is a quick survey that we encourage Year 7s and 8s to fill out. It will enable us to see which topics are more difficult so we can make our videos more relevant: <https://s.surveypal.com/FyQv3ISWr>

Keep your eyes open for any upcoming competitions and be sure to try and make the best contribution to your house! Good luck and the House Prefects are excited to let another year of house competition commence!



Meet the new House Prefects:

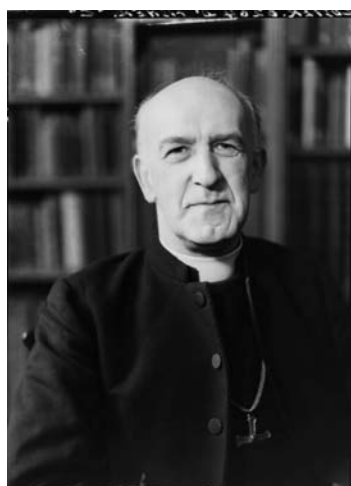
Sadler:

Hello, we are Ashwin Knight and Archie Gillies and are Sadler's house leaders. David Sadler was a former OPGS student who went on to play 272 games for Manchester United football and 4 games for England. Keeping in theme with our history, Sadler have a past of sporting successes as we have won the 'Sports Day Trophy' 5 out of the last 6 years and the overall 'Sporting Trophy' every year since 2014. Despite this, Sadler is not all about sports – we value being a key member of the team, taking part as much as possible and making the best contribution to the house that you can. You can do this in sporty, academic and creative competitions, so everyone will have their chance to shine in Sadler! Let's work hard this year and see if we can keep blue on the house trophy...



Broughton:

Ben Madden is the Broughton house prefect for this year. Andrew Broughton was the Clerk at the High Court of Justice in the time of James I's reign. He lived throughout the 17th century, and lived in Maidstone during his main days as high clerk in the 1640s. During the First English Civil War, he was elected the High Clerk, and his most significant act was to sentence King Charles I himself to death in 1649 after his defeat by Oliver Cromwell and his New Model Army. Unlike some of the other houses, we are not renowned for our sporting achievements but there have been significant improvements in our results, and in the end our high effort is what is most important. Whether through academic, sporting, musical or another way of achievement, this is celebrated in our house, so work hard and put in every effort every day.



Hazlitt:

Hello, we are Oli, Bradley and Luc, prefects for Hazlitt at Oakwood Park. Our house was named after William Hazlitt, who was born in Maidstone and went on to be one of the most talented writers and philosophers in all of England. In Oakwood, we tribute our green house to William Hazlitt to represent our strive in what we can offer to the world's achievements. Whether that may be your strengths in sport, writing, art, skills or progressive ideas, the house of Hazlitt is a place to start with what YOU want to achieve. Whoever you want to be, let's work hard together to put green on that house trophy once again.

Fisher:

Owen Jenner has taken the position of house leader for Fisher this year. Fisher house has one of the richest histories of the foundation of the school, with Archbishop Fisher leading the Dedication Service at the official opening of the school. We are highly successful in all aspects of school life whether you are creative, sporty or academic, you all play a key role in the development and future success of the house! Everyone in Fisher works for one another in this friendly but also competitive environment, as we continue to work back towards the top spot for the purple tie. Watch out Sadler!

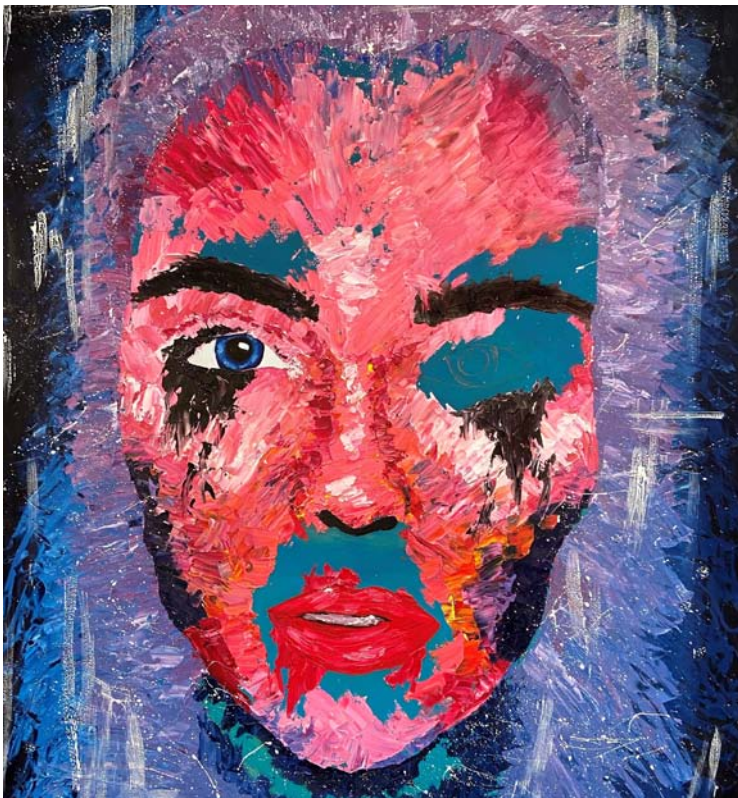
Wilberforce:

Year 11 students Scott Bain and Jack Sands have taken on the role of Wilberforce House Leaders to help make your involvement at OPGS more enjoyable. Our house is named after the famous William Wilberforce and represented by the yellow tie. We may not be well known for our sporting success in prior years, but our house is all about getting involved, working as a team, and making a positive contribution. You will have plenty of opportunities to do this at a variety of events and competitions, including sporting, creative and academic ones.

John Downton Award

The Art Department have entered 4 students work into the John Downton Award.

The students are Joseph Clinton, Alannah Manning, Alexa Botha, and Adam Williamson. The John Downton Award for Young Artists is an annual exhibition which encourages and celebrates the creativity of Kent's young artists. The exhibition commemorates the life and work of John Downton, the celebrated Kent artist, poet and philosopher. It is open to students aged 11 to 18 from schools and colleges across Kent, the standard is extremely high and to be shortlisted for this award is a great achievement. The Art department is very proud of the achievements of not only these students but all the Art GCSE and A level students.



Charity Food Collection: Maidstone Day Centre

Homeless Care has been working in Maidstone for over 30 years, to support homeless and vulnerable people.

Over the years their focus remains on helping people going through a difficult time in their lives and they do so through several projects. Homeless Care is a registered charity and their main activity is running a comprehensive service for homeless men and women at Maidstone Day Centre in Knight rider Street. Food for Thought, is now going into its 16th year and in 2020, more than ever, is in demand by homeless people who would otherwise go hungry.

One of the highlights of the school's Christmas charity fundraisers has been taking part in the annual 'You Can Help' Christmas Appeal set up by the Homeless Care Charity in conjunction with the Kent Messenger. Last year, thanks to the support of parents, students and staff we donated over 1,500 items to the charity. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions a physical collection of tins, toiletries and other essential items will not be possible this year. We do, however, want to support the charity in its Christmas Appeal by asking each OPGS family and members of staff, if financially possible, to make a donation of one pound, or as much as you can give, to support this local charity. With over 1,000 students at OPGS a one pound donation from each family would raise enough money for the charity to support families at risk from food poverty, not only over the Christmas period but beyond.

Every day they provide hot showers, clean clothes and home cooked meals for the men and women who come to them for help. As well as using the food in the Day Centre kitchens, they deliver to school breakfast clubs, children's organisations and those for elderly people who are faced with the dilemma

of paying the bills or buying food. As a result of COVID-19 and its devastating impact, the Trussell Trust reported a massive 81% increase in demand for emergency food parcels from foodbanks in its network during the last two weeks of March 2020 compared to the same period in 2019 – including a 122% rise in parcels given to children. In light of all these changes, Homeless Care (which usually focuses on offering a comprehensive service to homeless) shifted its operations to concentrate more on distributing food to those at greatest risk of food poverty.

If you are able to make a donation please visit:
https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/donation-web/charity?charityId=1011232&utm_source=extbtn&utm_campaign=donatebtn

If you could please put OPGS in the 'Leave a Message' box that will allow us to let you know how much the school has raised in donations in the new year.

Thank you on behalf of the charity for your support.



Missing Mini Sagas

Students in Year 9 took part in a national creative writing competition.

Students had to write a mini saga in a maximum of 100 words on the theme of 'missing': 6 students managed to get their work published in an anthology of these thrilling short stories by young writers in a book entitled SOS Missing: Mini Sagas specifically to encourage 11-18 year olds to shock the audience with a climatic creative piece.



Virtual Art Club

This term has seen the launch of our Virtual Art Club, allowing year 7 to 9 to extend their skills outside of the classroom, producing some fantastic work and seeing some creative artwork being produced, including some interesting entries for our Halloween competition.

1st place = Zachary Cockrill
2nd place = Hudson Draper
3rd place = Henry Stockham

To find out more or to sign up please email Mr Edwards at Aedwards@opgs.org and we look forward to seeing you all.

Rashford Raises a Row over Free School Meals

Over Lockdown, footballer Marcus Rashford raised the point as to which people come underneath the free school meals category as during his childhood he had trouble with food as his mother did not have a high enough income to facilitate Marcus and his brothers hunger needs.

So This is something Marcus feels strongly about due to his childhood and with the global pandemic this is heightened due to people having to be at home on a regular basis. So Marcus Rashford took it upon himself to raise the point and get the UK government to change its decision about their free school meals policy. In order to help provide food for people eligible for free school meals across the UK to underprivileged children during the summer school holidays. This is good since children could have potentially started missing out on important

meals in the day and not being able to eat when they are hungry, which could have caused a mass hunger problem across the UK.

People may also perceive this differently with people all around the UK. Some people might say that the government should not be worrying about those sorts of thing since money can be spent on different things which are a bigger problem than free school meals. They may also think that free school meals should not apply during holidays as during normal school holidays they can usually deal with it. Since it is a global pandemic, I personally think that it gives a lot of stress to people that are unable to work, either due to the job they do or due to a type of illness they have that causes them to not be able to work and therefore not be able to provide to their children.

Year 7 and 8

VIRTUAL ART CLUB

Tuesday's 3:30-4:30

Sign up

AEwards@opgs.org

Your Railway Needs You

Back in 1929 when Oakwood Park was called the Maidstone Technical School and based where the Maidstone Museum now is, there was a club/society formed; now known as the Maidstone Model Engineering Society (MMES).

They used to hold their meetings at the Maidstone Technical School and students used to test their engines on the track in Mote Park. The Society stopped using the workshops at Maidstone Technical School in 1950 when the permanent track (that we now know and love) was built in 1950. If there are any train buffs out there, Hornby's Rocket was tested on the Mote Park track.

You may see us on a Sunday during the summer or on Boxing Day giving rides to the public for 30p (or just donations on Boxing Day) in Mote Park.

Unfortunately, since March up until now there has been a lot of vandalism at the clubhouse for the Engineering society. This vandalism has now got to the point where there is a hole in the clubhouse roof and water is now leaking into the trip board and keeps tripping out our electrics and could potentially cause



a fire

We have been given £3000 by the government in a grant which can help us fix the roof of our beloved clubhouse (it really does help our volunteers in the colder months). However, it is going to cost £10k to fix in total. We are putting £2000 in ourselves but still need to raise £5000. As we are only 30p, per person, per ride, we are an appealing attraction within Mote Park, however, this also means that we do not have much savings to help us with this repair. This is where we are hoping you might be able to help, we have starting a GoFundMe page (<https://gf.me/u/zbmkt>).

Without our much-loved clubhouse (which provides amenities to our volunteers) we might not be able to give rides for the 2021 season and going forward. Please, if you can give anything, even 50p, it will help us immensely.

Falklands Row

By Jamie Mullins

Whilst in the grip of a global pandemic, tensions are beginning to resurface between Argentina and Great Britain over the Falkland Islands in an eerily similar fashion to that of 1982.

Both times the Argentine government has used the islands as a distraction to the economic downturn of the country and rising nationalism within it. Even after the 2013 referendum that saw all but 3 of the 1571 voters (which was a 92% turnout) vote to remain under the rule of Great Britain the president is still pushing for the islands.

At the beginning of this year the HMS Forth arrived at the Falklands as its new patrol boat to counter piracy and to protect the island's fishing waters. This sparked controversy as it breaches the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, of which 24 South American and African countries are

a part and of which the UK is not a signatory, however they follow the treaty as part of the UN. Later in November Argentina as part of the 18th Meeting of State Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention objected to the necessary and helpful mine clearance effort undertaken by the UK as it breaches UN Resolution 3149 that calls on both sides to abstain from any unilateral actions in disputed territories.

So far it seems that Argentine President, Alberto Fernandez, has wisely been taking a peaceful approach, over a very long period of time, to the claims on the islands after the embarrassing Argentinian defeat in 1982. However this doesn't mean that the situation cannot escalate towards more aggressive methods of diplomacy especially since Russia is supporting Argentina's claims and has recently demanded we return them to Argentina.



OPGS Remembrance Ceremony 2020

On Wednesday 11th November, the students at OPGS gathered together virtually as a school community to commemorate the annual Remembrance Ceremony on the anniversary of Armistice Day.

On this day, there are usually ceremonies at war memorials, cenotaphs and churches throughout the country, as well as abroad. The Royal Family and top politicians gather at The Cenotaph in Whitehall, London, for a memorial service. The anniversary is used to remember all the people who have died in wars - not just World War One. This includes World War Two, the Falklands War, the Gulf War, and conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, due to our second national lockdown, remembrance services across the country were not able to be observed in the usual way. Having said that, we harnessed the power of technology to do so in a way that also respected social distancing guidelines on site. The Sixth Form students moved to the hall to watch the ceremony on the screens there, whilst others watched and listened respectfully in silence in their classrooms. All students and staff were asked to stand for the ceremony.

The Act of Remembrance consisted of a The Exhortation as recited by our Head Boy Maximus Leighton:

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

Then, The Last Post was sounded. This was respectfully followed by an observation of two minutes silence. The first two-minute silence in Britain was held on 11 November 1919, when King George V asked the public to observe a silence at 11am. This was one year after the end of World War One. He made the request so "the thoughts of everyone may be concentrated on reverent remembrance of the glorious dead".

The Reveille was sounded, again to signal the end of our time of quiet reflection and thankfulness

to those that lost their lives. Finally, The Kohima Epitaph was recited by Head Girl, Kajal Knight:

When you go home, tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow, we gave our today.

As a school community, we feel rather strongly it remains important for the students to be a part of the remembrance ceremony and show their respect for the fallen, despite the circumstances of COVID-rules, we managed to do so as a whole school successfully this year as well.



Sixth Form Spanish Stream

La Casa de Bernarda Alba

On Wednesday 9th December Year 12 and Year 13 Spanish students had the opportunity to watch the play that they study in the A Level Spanish curriculum, *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* by Federico Garcia Lorca, virtually, being streamed live in London from the Cervantes Theatre Company.

After the performance there was a live question and answer session with the director of this play Jorge de Juan in Spain.

The benefits of watching the live performance were that it was enjoyable, the acting was very good and it gave us a much better understanding of the play compared to simply reading the text. I strongly feel every actor fulfilled their roles and in turn, produced a brilliant piece of theatre, thoroughly enjoyable to watch. I would highly recommend any Spanish A Level student studying *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* to watch this play as well as reading it. I can speak for many in saying

how well performed and coordinated the play was and, in the end, it made me replay it in my head, having favourite characters and scenes. Watching this has invested me into this play, each scene will give you a different emotion, which you could use in writing about it, making the analysis much easier.

After watching, I strongly feel like I know the entire play inside and out, the motives for each character's actions, what they're like, how they look and how they think. It was a treat and a blessing to watch. I am personally very grateful as I believe this was extremely useful as a tool to help deepen the knowledge and understanding of the play. It is a huge bonus as now I feel I have broadened my understanding of this cleverly written play and am much more confident to write an essay about it. Being less afraid to get an essay question about this play in the mocks or even the real exam!



During the nation-wide lockdown there was not a single person in the country that was left without suffering from some form of consequence.

Whether that be losing vital doctors' appointments for a life-threatening illness or small businesses being forced to close leading to a catastrophic loss in profits. Amongst all of the unpredictability and fear everyone has been left at a disadvantage. Yet, there were already some who were at this disadvantage and have felt the effects of these lockdowns more than others.

All over the country men, women and children suffer from mental health issues with one in six people

reporting a common mental health problem every week in England. Lockdown left many of these people in an even worse position mentally than before which is an issue that has mostly evaded mainstream media for no good reason. As a whole, 69% of adults reported feeling somewhat or very worried about the effect Covid-19 is having on their life. A shocking statistic that has been widely ignored with very little support being put in place for more than two thirds of the countrys adults.

There has been a clear and definitive study conducted by The Health Foundation that found a correlation between the lockdown restrictions and levels of anxiety and depression. It was reported that levels of these mental health illnesses dropped

in early June, the same time at which lockdown restrictions began to ease. However, despite this drop, the numbers remained highest among young people. There is a large amount of evidence that has shown that lockdown has had a negative effect on mental health issues for those with existing problems as well as those who have been forced into having to deal with this new and foreboding challenge. A challenge this day, we have failed to beat.



World Health Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Eastern Mediterranean

Coping with stress during the COVID-19 outbreak

- It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis. Talking to people you trust can help. Contact your friends and family.
- If you must stay at home, maintain a healthy lifestyle - including proper diet, sleep, exercise and social contacts with loved ones at home and by email and phone with other family and friends.
- Don't use smoking, alcohol or other drugs to deal with your emotions. If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor. Have a plan, where to go to and how to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.
- Get the facts. Gather information that will help you accurately determine your risk so that you can take reasonable precautions. Find a credible source you can trust such as WHO website or, a local or state public health agency.
- Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage that you perceive as upsetting.
- Draw on skills you have used in the past that have helped you to manage previous life's adversities and use those skills to help you manage your emotions during the challenging time of this outbreak.

Sustainability

The Green Club, set up by Mrs Alltimes last year, consisted of several students, as well as a few members of staff, who are passionate about making an impact with locally sustainable projects, national environmental issues and wild life conservation.

Receiving the Department of Education Sustainability Award for 2020, has encouraged students and staff to think about creative ways to still make an impact and so Mrs Alltimes has set up a virtual Sustainability club for KS3 students so students and staff can get involved in practical ideas, projects and missions in and outside of school. We hope to continue our plans from last year to convert the quad area into a wild life space, encouraging birds, insects and bees even with the restrictions due to Covid-19. We have a new section on the OPGS website with the latest news, advice and aims we have as a school to make our students and surroundings more sustainable. We have also been busy sowing more wild flower seeds, adding wildflower plus plants and adding a cobnut tree in an area of the school site.



Congratulations to Oakwood Park Grammar School on winning the Department for Education Sustainability Award 2020!



Education Estates® Digital Awards 2020
Celebrating Excellence & Achievement in Education

WINNER!



Oakwood Park Grammar School
Department for Education Sustainability Awards



SUSTAINABILITY VIRTUAL TEAMS GROUP

Are you interested in climate change, sustainability, nature & wildlife projects, reducing plastic and other green topics? If so, join our virtual Teams group and see how you can get involved!



The group will be run completely virtually, using Teams to communicate, discuss ideas and release information on how you can practically get involved in projects, competitions, quizzes and more. There will be an update every Tuesday after school at 4pm but you can view Teams at any time and get involved as much or as little as you like.

Year 8 Poems to Protect Sustainability

Following on from Black History Month in October, in English this term, Year 8 students have been studying poems from around the world, as a celebration of other cultures and traditions.

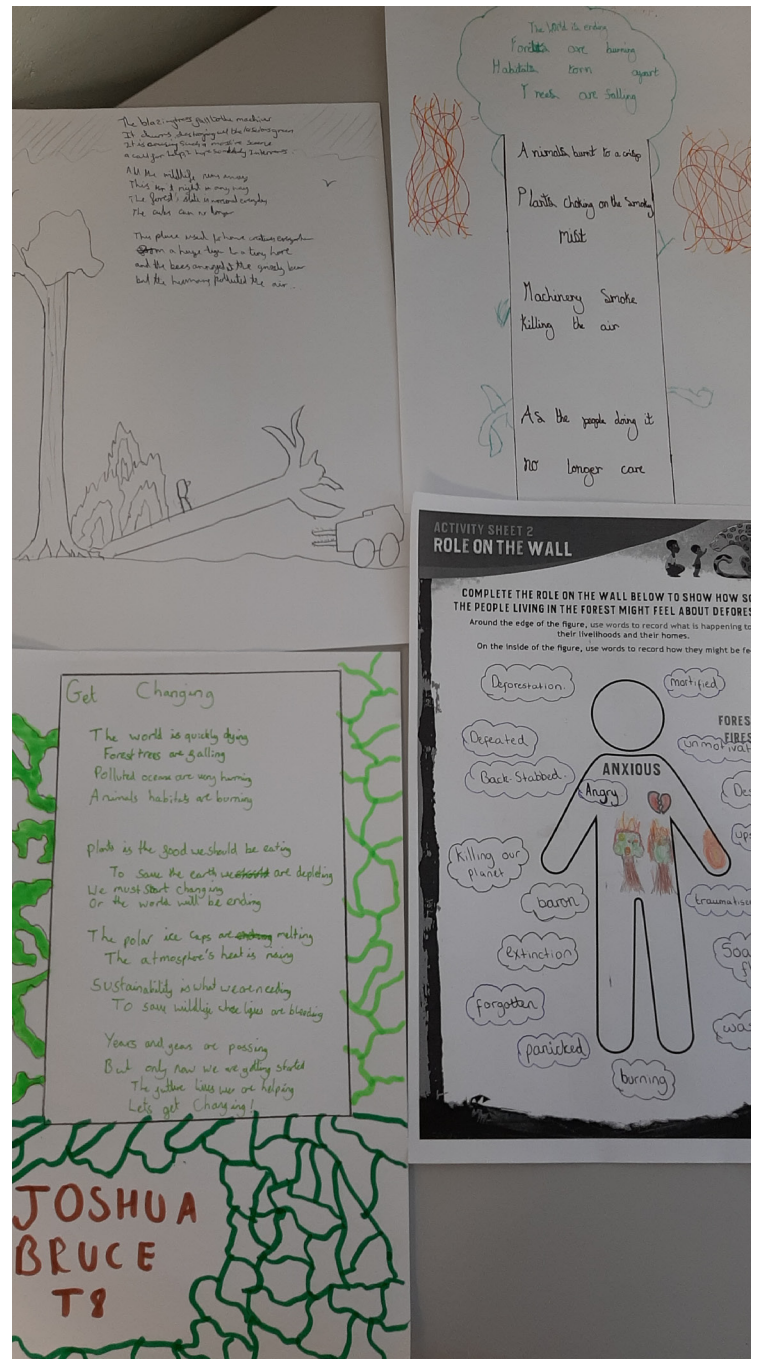
Some of these poems include 'Island Man' by Grace Nichols, 'Search for my Tongue' by Sujata Bhatt and 'Half-Caste' by John Agard. In addition to this, students are invited to analyse and write their own poetry in the linked Literacy Lessons they have once a fortnight. Students were introduced to song lyrics, such as Alicia Keys 'New York' and asked to analyse the imagery of the "concrete jungle" she describes.

Most recently, students have been able to tackle issues of sustainability and the pressing concern of the climate crisis through their poetry. You may remember last year, Greenpeace launched a campaign with the sing song poem entitled 'There's an Orangutan in my Bedroom' read by Emma Thompson. The destruction of the natural habitats of the orangutan population was given more publicity when Attenborough showed the destruction of monoculture farming to produce palm oil in his documentary 'A Life on Our Planet' in which an orangutan is left homeless after they suffer from the effects of mass deforestation in Borneo. This year, continuing on from this drive to raise awareness of the destructiveness of industrialised meat production, they produced a poem 'There's a Monster in my Kitchen'. Inevitably, the binary opposite of the wild invading the home of the child is turned on its head with the volta of the poem which sees a jaguar explain the destruction of their species and ecosystems as a result of intensive farming practices to sustain the human population.

In response to the Greenpeace campaign, students were invited to complete the 'Role on the Wall' activity sheet where they could try to empathise with people who have been adversely affected by such practices, putting their feelings inside the silhouette and the effects of mass meat production on the outside to the local area. Secondly, students were asked to write their own emotive poem in response to the issue of the climate crisis with some students choosing interesting perspectives of an animal, bird or

plant that is affected. Some alternative ideas included from the perspective of jaguars, toucans, monkeys, palm oil trees, orangutans. Others still dealt with the issues surrounding the climate crisis in general such as forest fires, flooding, ice caps melting, plastic pollution, mass extinction of species.

Therefore, we were able to celebrate their work, by putting some on display, in our Sustainability board by the Headmaster's office near the Tower Block stairs. Well done to all those students who took part and who had a heartfelt response to the issue of climate crisis by lending their own interesting perspectives and empathy skills.



Football Fans Are Back In Stadiums

By Oscar Mulligan

After many months since the coronavirus outbreak hit the UK, football fans are finally allowed back in stadiums – if they are in areas which are tiers 1 or 2.

Since the suspension of many football leagues across the world which occurred at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic in March, the British Government are slowly permitting fans back into grounds. After each area in England was assigned a tier to go into on December 2nd, football fans can now watch their favourite teams play live. However, areas in tier 3 such as Manchester, Leicester and Newcastle, cannot yet see live football in the grounds. Premier League teams in tier 1 are allowed a maximum of 4,000 fans, whereas tier 2 teams can only accept 2,000 fans through their doors.

But shouldn't fans have been allowed in earlier?

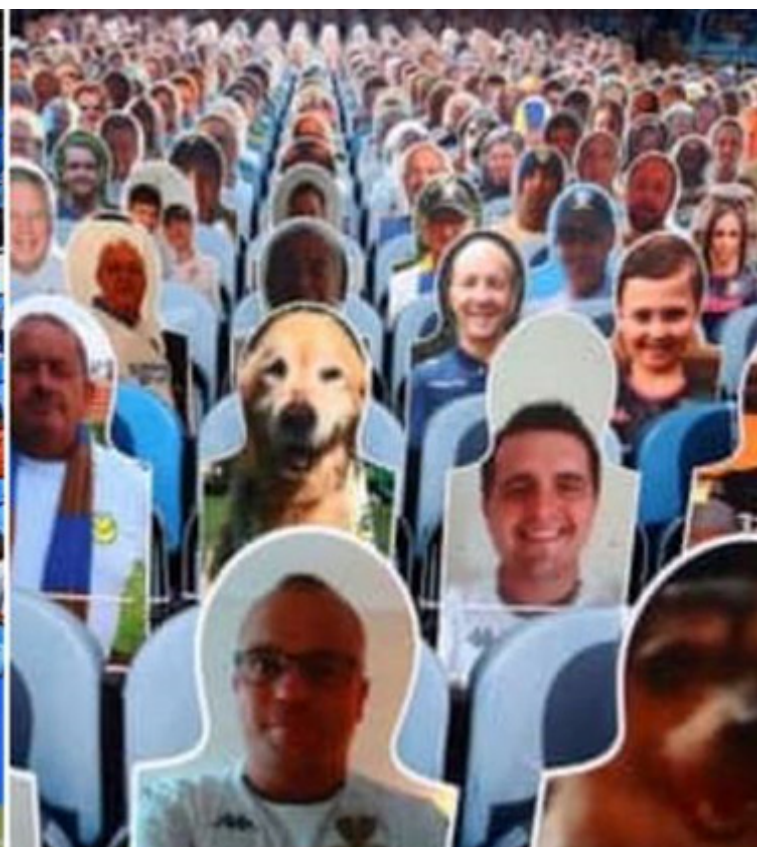
Although live indoor music had been given the green light since August to have audiences, Premier League clubs are still not allowed to even fill half of their stadium. When you compare the

venues of a close confined space where social distancing is difficult and an outdoor area where separation from one another is easy, it doesn't add up.

In addition, it's not just the 'rich' Premier League clubs that are struggling, lower league teams have lost tonnes of money too. Having fans in the ground generates large sums of money for clubs, especially the ones outside of the top leagues, all the way down to grassroots. Thankfully, the Premier League and the EFL have come to an agreement where funding lower league clubs with around £250m in total, is possible – the British Government had no involvement.

While many look at the big clubs and their great income, people forget about the smaller teams who don't produce as much money and they need to be respected a lot more – in this case by the British Government, who showed they didn't care by not even investing a penny.

Football is the biggest entertainment business in the world, and it is only getting bigger – the Government will slowly realise.



Year 7 KCC Road Safety Show

Produced by Hudson Draper-Jameson, Peter Adegoke and Elijah Anijeke 7C

Hello everyone, today we are going to be talking about road safety to you all. Year 7 have all watched a very interesting play on road safety live via Teams and the story of Dadio and Mario This story/play has taught us important tips for road safety and being safe in general out- side of home.

All about the story of Dadio and Mario:

In this play it is about a story of a young teen and his dad. Dad is a very protective parent and wants the best for his son (Mario) by trying to keep him safe but Mario becomes ignorant by wanting to be independent and not being "a baby anymore". The first day of the play Mario wakes up and is about to leave for school but Dad insists that he should be taken by car so he won't be late for school Mario doesn't want to go by car but he has to. Mario and Dad are then on their way to school and lots of people are swerving in and out of lanes as there is construction work around them. Dad and Mario finally make it to school but because of the hustle and bustle of the early school drop off Dad becomes reckless as Mario is speaking to him and nearly hits a student whilst telling Mario about road safety. Quite ironic.

Key Questions:

- Q.1 Mario is 13 should he be allowed to walk to school by himself?
- Q.2 Do you think dad is right about not letting Mario to go to school?
- Q.3 Do you think it is safe to swerve in and out of lanes?
- Q.4 Who's fault was it that Dad nearly crashed Dad or Mario?
- Q.5 Why do you think that Dad nearly hit the student?

Tips on Road safety that we learnt from watching the play:

- Stop. Look. Listen.
- Use pedestrian crossings
- DO NOT play on your phone when walking to school
- Be aware
- Always wear a helmet when cycling or using your scooter
- At night wear bright clothes
- Be responsible
- Wait for the green man
- Do not distract the driver

The message in today's Road Safety show was

very important, Dadio learnt to trust Mario and let him walk to school on his own but he had earned that trust by showing his dad how responsible he could be and by following the Road Safety advice. We also learnt about some serious accidents that had happened in Kent as a result of students walking out between buses, not using the pedestrian crossing or playing on their phone whilst crossing the road. This has made us all think very carefully about our actions and how serious road safety is.



More than 38,000 cyclists and motorcyclists are killed or injured on British roads every year.

▶ **Leave 150**
Leave at least 150cm between your vehicle and a bike when overtaking

150 cm

Be **bike SMART** Road Safety Week Coordinated by Brake Devitt Ford
www.roadsafetyweek.org.uk #BikeSmart

45% of all cyclist deaths occur at or near junctions

▶ **Turn your head**
Take time to look properly for bikes before you pull out at junctions

Be **bike SMART** Road Safety Week Coordinated by Brake Devitt Ford
www.roadsafetyweek.org.uk #BikeSmart

Every 20 minutes, someone is killed or seriously injured on a British road and each of these tragedies is preventable. Everyone has the right to safe and healthy journeys.

**STEP UP
FOR SAFE
STREETS**