



SUMMER 2020

Insight

the Bancroft's newsletter

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From the Chair of Governors

Professor Peter Kopelman

This has been a truly extraordinary year which none of us anticipated last September as the year began. I want to thank all Bancroftians and their parents for their incredible forbearance and commitment to the School throughout the year, and most particularly the last few weeks.

I wish also on behalf of the Governing Body to thank every member of the School's staff for the way that they stepped up to the mark, and well beyond, to maintain the teaching and learning support. With little warning, the School went from normal life into "lock down" and the staff have done a fantastic job in such challenging circumstances. The programme of on-line teaching and learning combined with sensitive and personal support for our pupils is impressive, and the School is grateful for the appreciative feedback it has received from pupils and parents.

“ Please stay well and stay safe



Moreover, in an extended period of considerable insecurity, the School has managed assuredly difficult economic challenges and maintained the buildings and estate. I particularly acknowledge the leadership of Simon Marshall and Joe Layburn, together with their senior leadership teams, and Lionel Green, the Bursar and his excellent team. I consider it timely to congratulate everyone on their "Bancroftian spirit" during this past term, a term that will undoubtedly be written into history of the School and the nation.

I look forward to the return of "new normal" school in September; in the meanwhile, I wish everyone a very good summer holiday with their families.

Planting and Litter Picking

Mrs Sarah Strong, Prep | Year Group Leader



It was great to see so many green fingered Bancroftians helping their local community at Pankhurst Green on Saturday 14 March. It was a planting and litter picking day to give something back to the Woodford Green Community. There were activities galore and refreshments for the busy workers. Now the area is cleaner and I cannot wait to see the spring buds in full bloom in the coming months

To thank the pupils for such great community spirit they were rewarded in assembly with badges, certificates and pencils. The project was promoted by Hannah Hole, who works for the Woodford Creative Hub. PVC Kate King from Woodford Police Station said, "We

were really surprised to find Bancroft's parents coming down, I think mostly junior school parents, but we had a real turn out from them and it was a lovely surprise!! I don't know how word got to them, we would like to extend our appreciation."



Visors for Frontline Workers

The shortage of Personal Protective Equipment for frontline NHS staff during the coronavirus emergency was well reported. Marc Rogers, Head of our Design and Technology Department (D&T) was following the story when he saw a tweet suggesting that anyone with manufacturing capability (3D printers, laser cutters) could help in the production of PPE for the NHS. Further messages suggested that it might be possible for D&T departments within schools to use machines, which were necessarily idle during school closures, to help. Marc decided to put his skill and that of David Fernandez (D&T Technician), together with Bancroft's equipment, to good use.

"I found prototypes of the various components on line and decided to build the Prusa MK 3 developed by the 3D printing company Prusa. To make best use of time we set the 3D printing in stacks of four overnight. The visors were then constructed the next morning." Once the frames were printed, the rest of the job was pretty swift: cutting the visor shield took seconds and assembling them a couple of minutes. It was necessary to wear masks and gloves to keep manufacturing as clean and germ-free as possible.



Following construction, the visors were placed in sealed bags for three days (to avoid any virus being passed on). The visors were picked up and delivered directly to local NHS points of need. The School received several requests directly from parents and Old Bancroftians working within the NHS for these PPE items.

Initially the Bancroft's operation was capable of producing 32 visors a day but a shift in production methods increased output. When Mr Rogers needed to return to his (remote) teaching, Mr Fernandez continued the work. By the end of the project they had produced some 1800 visors. Initial fears that sourcing the materials would become a problem were overcome by a fantastic response by Bancroft's parents to social media requests to provide them.

We were delighted to receive so many messages of thanks from the recipients of the visors together with photos of them being worn. Mr Rogers said that being able to produce them was "an honour."

OB Heads Up the Crisis Project

Old Bancroftian Soumya Krishna Kumar, who left Bancroft's last July, has launched a scheme to write thank you letters to NHS staff. Soumya, who has just completed her first year at Warwick University, took the general "Clap for Carers" one stage further by thanking individuals for their care and work.

Her simple but effective idea pairs volunteer letter writers with an NHS key worker who has been nominated by a friend, family member or even a grateful patient. The key worker will receive a personalised letter of thanks and appreciation for their work. Soumya, who is one of the organisers for the Redbridge Covid Mutual Aid group, says she is trying to reach as many NHS workers as possible. Over 700 people, aged six to 90, have joined in writing letters and the initiative is working with more than 20 NHS trusts. Soumya's initiative didn't go unnoticed.



She has featured in *Time Out* magazine, the local press, on BBC Radio London, the ITV London News and is one of the fifty people named in *The Independent's* "Happy List 2020 - Heroes in a Crisis" which celebrates "the people doing remarkable things in response to the pandemic." In June, Soumya announced a second project: letters to residents of care homes and retirement homes, reaching out to people who had been isolated from their friends and family.

If you would like to volunteer to write a letter or nominate an NHS staffer to say a well-deserved thank you, visit thecrisisproject.wixsite.com/lettersforthenhs

Bringing Mutual Aid for Mutual Benefit

Danya Lakshman, L6N

Since lockdown began, many passionate British citizens have been stepping up to do what they can to fight Covid-19 and support those on the front lines. Of course, it is undeniable that, due to our collective efforts, the ramifications of the virus have gradually been decreasing. What was nearly a daily death toll passing the thousand mark has become a figure just short of 200 (as at 31 May, the time of writing). Whilst lockdown restrictions are being eased, our efforts to take initiatives and support one another during this time of uncertainty must not ease alongside them.

Redbridge is a London borough in east London with a population density of over 4,945 per km². Researching into Ilford South really caught my eye. A shocking 46.9% of children in poverty places it in the top 25 constituencies in Britain with the highest recorded levels of child poverty. And with a severe global pandemic such as Covid-19 rising, we must continue to take initiatives to help those around us.

Redbridge Mutual Aid is a volunteer organisation which helps and provides basic needs to all vulnerable people in the Redbridge area. It offers: a 7 day a week phone hotline for any Redbridge resident; shopping help; prescription deliveries; phone buddying; food bank and hot meals

It needs your continued support. Although the organisation continues to run three food bank deliveries with 150 parcels per week, donations are still needed. Food poverty and child poverty are still such major issues in our borough. Donations only last two weeks. This is not a matter of stockpiling. Demand is simply so high, and they need more.

As an organisation starting from the drive of one person, Tanya Salinder, it has successfully integrated with different charities and organisations and built something wonderful.

- It teamed up with the Singh Sabha London East Gurudwara – Sikh temple - in Seven Kings which

provided 500 to 600 meals a day to local hospitals with coronavirus patients

- It worked with St Mungo's Charity which housed homeless people in local hotels, providing them with daily hot meals
- It joined forces with the Frenford Youth Club to form a superhub for many services, including further food bank and hot meal parcel preparations.
- It has helped vulnerable individuals and families get back on their feet, whether that be through regular food parcels or alerting the local council of their housing needs.

These are just a few examples of how such a strong, interconnected network has been formed. It demonstrates that we as a community can show those in need that, even during uncertain and undetermined times, they could have a progressive outlook on what their life can be.

Helping out for such good causes not only benefits other people's lives, but it benefits yours too. Mandy Keigher, 54, a Foodbank volunteer said, "As a furloughed swim teacher I have been giving my time to helping people who through no fault of their own have found themselves in a position that they are struggling to pay for essential food and household goods. For my own mental health this project has allowed me to stay focused and know that the project is making a difference to people's lives. I am forever grateful to the happy helpers for this opportunity"

If we all continue to play our part, we can continue to build something so great. We can shed some light on a situation so grave and turn it into something so positive. We can bring mutual aid for mutual benefit. To get in touch with Redbridge Mutual Aid either phone: 02031373984 or email: redbridgecovid19mutualaid@gmail.com.



Sewing Scrub Bags

Mrs Gray (Bancroft's Cleaning Manager), Mrs Hague (Foundation & Development Office) and Mrs Dawkins (ex Biology Lab Technician) put their sewing skills to work to make scrub bags for keyworkers in the NHS. These bags enable workers to safely transport their scrubs home to wash them without fear of cross contamination. The bags can then be hot washed to blitz any traces of virus. A second project for the group was sewing face masks for use in Great Ormond Street Hospital.

They were aided by members of the Bancroft's community who provided them with the necessary materials. Once again we saw incredibly generosity: a great example of #BancroftsKindness in action. The bags look great: almost far too pretty for their intended use!



Hans Woyda Maths Competition

Martin Flaherty, Head of Mathematics

What is the exact value of $\sin 105^\circ$? In March, it was the ticket to the Hans Woyda Maths Competition Final, a prestigious 64 team knock-out tournament for most of the top ranking maths schools in Greater London and the Home Counties. Initially, teams play in groups of four local schools. Following this, the winning team progresses to the knock-out stages. The Bancroft's team had already done well to reach this stage, beating Forest, Chigwell and Ilford County High School to emerge as group champions and then winning knock-out matches versus St Paul's Girls and Haberdashers' Aske's Boys. They faced Queen Elizabeth Barnet at home to reach the final.

However, the semi-final did not start well with QE taking early control and establishing an 18-12 lead by the end of the Geometry Round 2. Bancroft's struck back in Mental Maths but the QE Year 13 captain, Cambridge bound naturally, delivered a sucker punch so that QE continued to lead by three points going into the Team Round and break. The Team Round was shared 5-5 with fully correct answers from both sides.

The next rounds saw QE resisting the onslaught from the plucky Bancroft's team but QE entered the final Race Round with their three point lead intact. Shivan then made a breakthrough, reducing arrears to a single point. The game

then swung to and fro, punch and counter punch traded but, as we entered the final two point question, captain versus captain, Bancroft's trailed by one point.

And so to the question. What is the exact value of $\sin 105^\circ$? Alex, Bancroft's captain and team veteran, scribbled furiously. His hand rose. His answer was correct. Bancroft's emerged into the full glare of Hans Woyda victory by 42 points to 41.

Congratulations must go to the team, Alex, Jathusan, Shivan and Akash for both their Herculean efforts and also for their hospitality and generosity of spirit to the opposing team. Handshakes all round and bring on the final. Although Bancroft's can be relied on to reach the upper rounds of the competition, and has done well in the Hans Woyda Plate Competition, we believe this is the first time we have reached the final of the main Hans Woyda Competition.

Unfortunately, Covid-19, school closures and lockdown mean that the final has yet to be played. We remain hopeful that with a relaxation of social distancing, it will take place in the autumn.

By the way the answer to Alex's winning question is $(\sqrt{6} + \sqrt{2})/4$!

Spanish Film Contest Win

On Monday 9 March, Mr Urreaga Gorostidi and Mr Hernandez took a group of 5th Form (Year 11) Spanish pupils to compete in the Spanish Short Film Contest held at North London Collegiate School.

There were several other schools competing: Dulwich College, Latymer Upper School and Haberdashers' Aske's, amongst others. Our pupils had been working very hard to create a short film on their given topic of "the environment". Their film, *Las Aventuras de Juanita*, concerned veteran documentarian Juanita who embarks on a worldwide journey to track down rare animals which seem to have disappeared. A world-famous explorer with thirty years' experience, she travels to a range of locations, from forests to the sea to the Arctic. She is shocked to realise the harsh reality of the status of the environment which looks bleaker than ever.

The Bancroft's team was awarded the prize for the best short film. Pupils were delighted to win a Spanish course in Salamanca. Maha Dannawi also won the prize for the female actor with the best spoken Spanish - a week long Spanish course in Málaga. The judges were very impressed by the short film and at the end they came to talk to the Bancroft's team and complimented them all on their Spanish, which they said clearly stood out. This is a fantastic and a rare achievement: well done to the pupils involved.



MFL Writing Competitions



Huge congratulations to Ananya (5Sa) who has been judged the winner of the Year 11 (5th Form) category for Spanish for the ISMLA (Independent Schools' Modern Languages Association) Original Writing Competition; she has received a £50 iTunes voucher as a prize.

This competition was open to all Year 11 pupils in independent schools all over the UK. Pupils were given a choice of three titles and Ananya chose to respond to a work,

The Flower Vendor, by prominent mid-twentieth century Mexican artist, Diego Rivera. The essay was entitled, "Diego Rivera expressed his personal views about social injustice through his art. Imagine you are the flower seller in the image. Tell us about yourself. Your essay should be set in the cultural context of this period."

Ananya's piece of writing entitled *Las Flores de la Esperanza (Flowers of Hope)* demonstrated excellent creativity and imagination, engagement with the Hispanic culture and linguistic ability. She says, "I have always enjoyed creative writing and Spanish which is why I entered the competition. I was inspired, firstly, by the sheer beauty of the Diego Rivera painting and, secondly, by the social criticism evident in the piece. I felt compelled to explore the injustice faced

by the poor in Mexico in the early 1940s through writing from the viewpoint of a flower seller. It did push me out of my comfort zone as I have never written a short story in Spanish before. Nevertheless, I enjoyed the process very much, especially learning about the rich history and art of Mexico. Thank you to the Spanish Department for teaching and supporting me over the years."

Mr Urreaga Gorostidi, Head of Spanish, said, "I would like to thank Ananya for engaging with such enthusiasm with this competition and producing this impressive short story. This is a fantastic achievement: ¡enhorabuena, Ananya!"

In April, Bismi Rahman (L6E) submitted a 500-word essay written in German on the topic of 'Learn Languages to Build Bridges' and was commended by a panel of academic staff from the Department of Languages and Cultures at Lancaster University. Bismi said of her essay, "In a world where borders and maps separate us, language is what reunites us. Language is the tool which connects different groups of people."

Ben Bagley (L6W) was awarded Highly Commended in the White Rose Project Writing Competition 2020 in association with the Oxford German Network. The White Rose was a student led resistance movement against the Nazis. The competition asked entrants in years 12 and 13 to write an essay in German "Was können wir heute noch von der Weißen Rose lernen?" ("What can we learn from the White Rose today?") Very well done to Ben.

Primary Science Fair

We held our annual Primary Science Fair on Monday 9 March at the start of British Science Week. This year eighteen teams of L6 scientists put together their stalls on the theme of "Our Diverse Planet" in the Great Hall. Two hundred excited Year 6 visitors from a range of local primary and prep schools enjoyed visiting the stalls, listening to the L6 explain some quite complicated ideas and, of course, taking part in the various hands-on opportunities available. The Sixth Formers hadn't shied away from tackling advanced ideas such as electromagnetism, the complexity of language and the evolution of Earth's atmosphere and life forms.

Our guest judge was, again, Dr Elizabeth Swinbank, Honorary Fellow in Science Education, University of York. She described the job of picking a winner as "a challenge" and was most complimentary about the various stalls in her report. She had a series of judging criteria on which to base her final decisions. These were: complexity; clarity of explanation; poster; table displays and demonstrations; relevance to the theme and engagement. She noted that "every display drew a crowd and each did well according to at least some of the judging criteria."

The shortlisted teams were as follows.

- Fishalicious: for clear relevance to the theme, simple but effective demonstration and an eye-catching poster (and headgear).
- Tsunami Defence: for well-designed and memorable demonstrations using a tank that they made themselves and effective engagement with the audience.
- Bouba/kiki: for a novel choice of topic that related strongly to the theme, and effective interaction with the visitors using both visual aids and recordings.
- Flame Tests and Change of State also did well, drawing good numbers with attractive posters and activities.

Dr Swinbank named Tsunami Defence as the overall winner. She praised them for clear explanation of some key ideas which were conveyed with enthusiasm through well thought out demonstrations. She also commended them on the design and making of the tank which "was outstandingly good". Very well done to James, Ben, Henri and Lewis. The visiting pupils' votes indicated that this was also the most popular this year with Change in State (Leya, Vidya, Emilia and Oluwadamilola) being the runners up. It has never happened before that the most popular exhibit was also the one chosen by the judge!



In addition, visitors got the chance to have their passports stamped at the three science zones: chemistry, physics and biology.

Dr Swinbank was lavish in her praise, "Many congratulations to all the teams and organisers of the science fair. A huge amount of work had clearly been done both beforehand and on the day. This work paid off with a highly successful event which I'm sure will have a positive impact both on the young visitors and on the Sixth Formers themselves." It is always gratifying to receive thanks from the participating schools after this event such as the email from Ms Jordan of Handsworth Primary School who wrote, "Thank you so much for your invaluable contribution towards our very successful Electrifying Science Week at Handsworth Primary School. The children and staff had an amazing time!"



Successes in English Competitions

We have recently seen several notable achievements in English based competitions. Very well done to Danielle, Sarah and Anika.

Firstly, congratulations to Danielle in L4E who was named as the winner of the age 13-17 age group in the nationwide "Nature on your Doorstep" competition. During lockdown, children and teenagers aged 4-17 were invited to write about the wildlife outside their windows in a search to find the UK's most talented young nature writers. The competition had three categories 4-6, 7-12 and age category 13-17.

Judged by a diverse team of wildlife writers, champions and publishers, the competition saw entries from all over the UK. The winners in the three categories each received a pair of Savanna binoculars from Opticron, as well as benefiting from a plethora of prizes for themselves and their classmates. Prizes including several 'money-can't-buy' experiences, such as spending a day at the RSPB headquarters in Sandy. Most impressively, the winners will get to see their stories in print, published in a future edition of *BBC Wildlife* magazine.

Nature author and wildlife storyteller Lucy McRobert from Leicestershire organised the competition. She said: "I, and all the judges, have been so moved by the stories we have received. We have laughed and cried and mourned and smiled and learned a lot, too. It was a hard competition to judge, but the diversity of stories made for a magical experience. They connected with nature using all their senses and emotions. It's magical."

Danielle's story follows a nightingale as she flies across Europe on her migration north to return to Essex, wondering what has scared all the humans into their nests. Whilst humans hide from an unseen virus the birdsong can be heard more clearly and nature thrives. Danielle said: "When I saw the competition, I wondered what nature I had on my doorstep. I decided to investigate the birds in my flowering pear tree. I stumbled upon a track of different birdsongs on YouTube and realised I had heard similar sounds before in my garden. I used the nightingale as my inspiration. He became my main character and I began to think what it must be like for him and other birds coming back on their migration to a completely changed world under lockdown. Nature is a huge inspiration for me, and I love to explore."

Well done to Sarah Sayid (U4N) who has been named as one of this year's winners in the annual Young Reporter competition organised by newspaper publishing group Newsquest Media Group. The competition involves the budding journalists sourcing, researching, and then writing



eight articles across an eight month period about local events and events pertaining to their neighbourhood. Sarah has yet to be told which one of her eight articles secured the prize for her.

The competition, which has been running annually for 12 years, is open to pupils in year 10 through to year 13. All their articles are published on Newsquest's online local newspapers, so giving the "reporters" the opportunity to build up a portfolio of their work to use with their CVs and UCAS applications. Mr Young, who co-ordinates the scheme at Bancroft's said: "The Young Reporters Scheme is a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to get some experience at writing, but also crucially forces them to organise their own work and deadlines. It is no mean feat to complete the year-long programme, and to win something at the end of it is a lovely bonus!"

Finally, in this trio of young writers, congratulations go to, Anika Vijay who has had a poem "Wilted" published in Trinity College, Cambridge's collection for young writers, *The Litmus*.

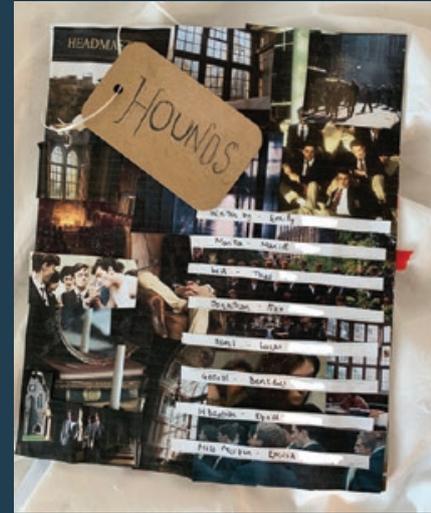
National Theatre's New Views

Five L6th pupils and one from the 5th Form have now sent off their fully finished plays to the National Theatre New Views competition. Last year, Emilia Hitching's play *For Charlie* made it to the shortlist and it was performed in a rehearsed reading at the Clore Studio at the National.

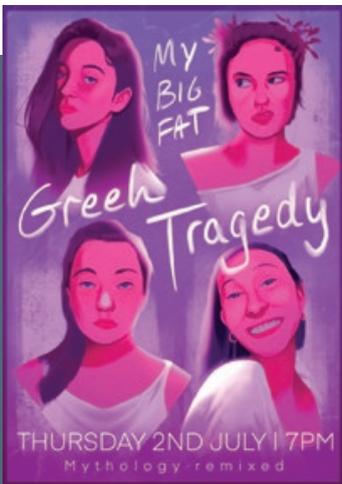
Ms Middleton, Director of Drama said of the entries, "I'm incredibly proud of all the students who submitted plays this year. They worked incredibly hard in difficult circumstances, and have produced brilliant plays which cover a wide range of issues including racism, nepotism, cultural differences and the complexities of life as a teenager.

Some have moved me, others have made me laugh, and some have made me question the way I understand the world. We await the results in May with excitement, but no matter whether any of them make it to the longlist, all students have created pieces of work they can and should be proud of.

Emily Christaki's play *The Hounds* was given a rehearsed reading via Zoom on Wednesday 1 July. It was a fantastically powerful play, highlighting the dangers of power and wealth and dealing with difficult themes of racism and misogyny. Thanks to Theo, Marisol, Emily, Ben, Lucas, Alex and Kyrill for taking part and well done to Emily on her writing debut.



My Big Fat Greek Tragedy



The Drama Department produced a first for Bancroft's – a juke box musical. *My Big Fat Greek Tragedy* was devised and performed by Emilia, Emily, Martha and Marisol and brought together songs from artists as diverse as Ariana Grande and Ella Fitzgerald.

Described as *Hercules* meets *Six*, the musical shows what happens when the Greek goddess Persephone, Titan Themis and monster Medusa attempt to convince Hera, the goddess of women and queen of the Olympian gods, that her brothers' days of reckless abandon should be consigned to ancient history. The girls are to be congratulated on a very witty (and pertinent) concept which both acknowledged and made use of the limitations of communicating via Zoom calls and Teams meetings. Even immortals, it would seem, are confounded by technology.

Middle School Play *Don't Feed the Animals*

Ms Gillian Entwistle, Drama Teacher

The Middle School Play *Don't Feed the Animals* had been cast and rehearsals started before school closed. We were determined to make sure "the show went on" and arranged rehearsals via Teams for the cast from L4 and U4. This culminated in a rehearsed reading via Zoom, along with some improvised costumes and props.

It went really well. We successfully used the function where cast members switched on their cameras and microphones when "on stage". We used some items of costume and some simple props as well as changing the backgrounds occasionally. We had a clip of one character falling off his skateboard and a film of all the cast performing circus acts such as juggling, diabolos, a card trick, skate boarding, cartwheels, trampolining. We finished with a credit roll of cast pictures. Josh James made the film for us and provided the sound on the night. Miss Middleton ordered lots of bits of costume. We all had a lot of fun and there has certainly never been a production of Jemma Kennedy's *Don't Feed the Animals* like this one!

Blue Stockings – Senior Play 2020

Good drama should touch on universal themes and this year's Senior Play, Jessica Swale's *Blue Stockings*, certainly did that. *Blue Stockings* has the question of equality and education at its heart, and it was apt that it followed so closely on from the events of International Women's Week.

Set in Cambridge 1896, *Blue Stockings* follows the careers of four female students at Girton College. They cannot be described as undergraduates as, although permitted to study the same courses at the university as the men, they are denied the opportunity to graduate alongside their male counterparts.

From the opening words of psychiatrist Dr Maudsley (Dan Harvey), the prevailing attitudes towards women and education are made clear: Higher education of women is seen as "detrimental to their physiology, to the family and to the future of our society." His views are countered by pioneering principle of Girton Mrs Welsh (Abby McKinlay) who walks a tightrope between being campaigning (spearheading the fight for graduation) but not political (rejecting the growing women's suffrage movement).



If the subject might sound a little dry, the production certainly wasn't. The cast found much humour, notably from Vicki Morgan-Couch as globetrotting, bohemian Carolyn, Ben Hughes as tongue tied, social incompetent Edwards and Nicole Simpson as the ever present chaperone Miss Bott, owner of a fine collection of withering glances..

The confident directorial hand of Ms Middleton was clear: Her decision to add songs, and even dance, was inspired. Mr Young's lyrics to Gilbert and Sullivan's music were fitting and no one winced at a Victorian young man pairing Queen Victoria with Greta Thunberg in his "little list." The Three Ladies (Josie Grimsell, Martha Grimsell and Gauri Godbole) displayed beautiful *a cappella* harmonies throughout and Siobhan Downey, as pianist and Musical Director, is to be admired.

Numerous short scenes in a variety of locations led to a vast number of set changes but Mr Arron Whitbread's sliding and revolving panels were a neat solution. Choreographing the cast to perform these changes must have been a nightmare.

Blue Stockings was another triumph for Bancroft's drama. Entertaining and educating, amusing and shocking, it was an all-round success.



This was an assured production with strong performances all round. Central are four very different young women. Emily Christaki (Tess, torn between love and knowledge), Emilia Hitching (the committed Celia), Marisol Rojas (a beautiful display of stillness as Maeve, which contrasted to her breakdown at the end of the first Act) and Vicki Morgan-Couch (wordly and flamboyant Carolyn) are to be congratulated for their rounded and nuanced performances. Set against them are the male undergraduates: again a very diverse set of characters. Alex O'Brien showed a great display of sneering misogyny as Lloyd; Kyril Borzenko's Ralph was ultimately as much of a victim of society's, or at least his father's, expectations as the women. Theo Life gave a very sympathetic portrayal of Will caught between his desire to "belong" and his feelings for Tess. They were supported admirably by Ben Hughes (Edwards) and Lucas Celentano (Holmes). Lucy Joyce and Harry Lorrell (Miss Blake and Mr Banks) showed how it was not just the young whose ideals were challenged.



Music in “Lockdown”

The Music Department was one of the early Covid casualties as their showcase Drapers’ Hall concert in March had to be cancelled. The past term, however, has continued to be busy.

We have enjoyed regular concerts: a soloists’ concert featuring some of our top musicians; a junior soloists’ concert and an end of year concert which featured performances from some of our visiting music staff as well as members of staff who have recently taken up instruments as part of a staff “Grade-one-athon.” This involved staff being coached by pupil musicians with the aim to get them to at least Grade One standard. This end of year concert also featured ensemble items from Bancroft’s Musicians and the Bancroft’s Singers as well as a farewell from The Common Denominators, a staff band whose performances at school fundraisers and Sixth Form Open Mic Nights has proved popular over the past couple of years.



Twenty of our musicians joined together as a virtual orchestra for the *Pirates of the Caribbean* project. Mr Kelsell said, “I am grateful for all pupils who submitted a video. I recorded a guide track with a click for them to play in their headphones whilst they recorded their own video on their instruments. I then collated and edited all these

together in Final Cut Pro, it took ages! I had some pointers from Florian Cooper (Director of Music at Brentwood).” The response from the pupils has been positive, Shreya Valera said, “It turned out really well. So great of you to put it together!”

You can watch it on:

<https://youtu.be/OhDPOn9YhZc>



Members of the Bancroft’s Singers have worked hard to produce a version of *You’ll Never Walk Alone* from the musical *Carousel* (and also ‘adopted’ by Liverpool fans). For those who are unfamiliar with the song, the lyrics are poignant, reflective and, perfect for the situation in which we find ourselves as a community.

Huge thanks to all members of the Singers who took the time to record their parts and a special thank you to Mr Kelsall who spent hours editing. Please do take a listen and we hope you enjoy!

<https://youtu.be/nNchdhCRm6g>

UCL Performance of *Frogs*

Jemima Henderson and Tanya Liu, L6E

Back in February, Sixth Form Classics students, accompanied by Mrs. Baker and Ms. Stewart, attended a performance of Aristophanes’ *Frogs* at UCL University College London (UCL).

The play tells the story of Dionysus travelling down into the Underworld with his comical slave, Xanthias in the hopes of reviving a dead playwright to reignite the golden days of Athenian tragedies. Whilst remaining true to the original text, the University adapted the play to suit a modern audience, featuring contemporary ideas such as current political and social affairs. Another modification made was to the setting of the play which took a minimalistic approach compared to the traditional view of the Underworld. One character who was particularly different from the conventional portrayal was Euripides, another successful playwright, who was played by a woman – which would not have been allowed in ancient Greece. An essential part of Greek theatre was the role of the chorus who act as a moral guide



for the main characters and the audience of the play and, in this interpretation, the chorus remained on stage for most of the performance and were vital for understanding certain moments of dialogue, particularly for those not studying the play. Overall, the performance encapsulated the essence of the original text whilst also engaging a modern audience’s interest in the traditional Greek comedy with themes from present-day society.

Enrichment Days

As term came to an end, we held several “off timetable days” for our Junior year groups. Such enrichment days saw pupils working both alone and collaboratively in groups on a variety of themes and projects.

We had originally planned to celebrate Earth Day in April, but, unfortunately this became a casualty of lockdown and school closure. Instead, Mr Foley and Mrs Vetta arranged an alternative Earth Day in June. This kicked off with an early morning yoga session run by Mr Ceeraz, after which the pupils were encouraged to get outside to woods, fields or even their gardens to enjoy nature but also to pick up litter. We were impressed, but also saddened, at the amount of litter they found in such a short time. Mrs Fryer-Green told of her newly discovered love of gardening and instructed everyone on how to plant the sunflower seeds they had been sent. We discovered that Bancroft’s pupils and parents already enjoy a cornucopia of home grown produce from their gardens and allotments. Mr Foley channelled his inner Blue Peter presenter and showed everyone how to make reusable beeswax food wraps: an eco-friendly alternative to cling film. He may have even said, “Here’s one I made earlier.” OB and current student at Exeter University, Anissa Patel gave an interesting presentation on the environmental impacts (both good and bad) of Covid-19.

Earth day was followed by Creative Day which brought together the Art, Music, Drama and DT Departments to challenge pupils to produce creative responses to lockdown. Ms Burnside kicked things off with an exploration of creativity which is linked so closely to our Bancroft’s value of Curiosity. Each of the four



departments presented a variety of suggested activities and the Thirds and Removes could then choose which activity they would like to work on for the rest of the morning. In groups, they worked together and after lunch everyone came back together to present the products of their joint creativity. We were very impressed by the ingenuity and the standard of work which was produced in such a short time.

In a typical year, the Thirds all enjoy a history trip during the last week of term. Recently their destination has been the fascinating Dover Castle. In this very atypical year they enjoyed a virtual History Day in which, instead of visiting a castle, they let their imaginations run riot in designing and building their own castles. In a relatively short period of time we saw a fantastic array of castles, being built from a variety of materials: including edible materials and even one from empty stationary boxes by one of the keyworker children who completed the project in school.

Sixth Form Law Day

Manav Arora, L6S

On 6 March, thirty students including myself had the opportunity to attend a Law Day. We were given an insight into the study of law at higher education and the practice of law in courts.

We started the day off with an unconventional, yet imaginative task at Queen Mary’s University which required us to express certain images through freeze frames or animated scenes, this allowed us to work on the skill of inference and its application in the legal world. We were also given an informative lecture on international law, which included the example of the developing genocidal nature of Myanmar’s government, which many of us found eye-opening and allowed us to widen our understanding of an area of law that is usually not discussed. My personal highlight of the day was our mock trials in Mayor’s Court where I was able to play the role of one of the advocates and others played the; judge, jury and defendants. This experience allowed us to gain a first-hand understanding of the inner-workings of the judicial system. I would like to thank the OBs, teachers and lecturers who made the day possible and I hope to attend similar events in the future.”



Silver Medals for U18s in National Hockey Finals

Many congratulations to our U18 hockey team who secured silver medals in the Investec U18 T4 Girls Schools Championship Finals on Tuesday 3 March.

They travelled to Reading Hockey Club as both the Essex and East Regional Champions, to face the champions and runners up from the other four English regions: North, Midlands, West and South. Initially, they had four pool games of 12 minutes each way with a 3 minute half time. A pattern emerged in their first three games against Maynard School, Hymers College and King Edward's, Lichfield which all saw Bancroft's with 2-0 wins. Bancroft's scorers were England U16 player Grace O'Malley Kumar and Eleanor Channer.



At this point Bancroft's led their pool with a total of 9 points, but they knew they could not afford complacency. In their last pool match they faced St Mary's Ascot, the South champions. Bancroft's were in the position of having already played three games, with relatively short breaks. St Mary's had only played two and had had an hour to recover from their previous fixture. It was clear from the offset that St Mary's were the fresher team; the Bancroft's girls were visibly tired. A first half goal from St Mary's was answered almost immediately with an equaliser from Grace O'Malley Kumar. In the second half, however, St Mary's managed two more goals giving Bancroft's their first defeat of the day.

Having played all their games, the girls knew that they were in a good position to reach the final but technically other teams could have at least equalised. It was a relief when the England Hockey website showed Bancroft's as finalists. Then the long wait began. The final was not due to take place until 5.50pm, giving time to refuel, regroup, relax a little and even grab a quick power nap.

In the final, the girls faced Wells Cathedral School, the West champions, who had won all their pool matches without conceding a single goal and having scored 12. This wasn't going to be an easy match for Bancroft's and, as expected, it proved

a hard fought final. The Bancroft's girls kept up the pressure throughout and were tenacious, particularly in defence. At half time, honours were equal and remained so until almost the close of play when, with two minutes left on the clock, the Wells Cathedral forwards broke through to hit the net. Time was against Bancroft's and they finished in silver medal position.



Naturally, the girls were disappointed but they should be proud of all they have achieved this year: it was a great performance, displaying a strong sense of team spirit throughout. This is a relatively young team: four of the players are in the Fifth Form and so there is a strong nucleus on which to build for next year. It was a proud day for the U18s' Manager, Mrs Jo Fryer-Green, "The team were outstanding on the day, I cannot fault their effort or attitude. It was a very special moment that I was proud to be part of. The bar has been set for next year and already I'm thinking how we can best prepare ourselves for more success."

Head Simon Marshall said the team, "put in a superb performance throughout; they played with wonderful team spirit. I think it is also important to recognise the hard work and dedication they have shown to reach this tournament as well as the commitment and belief of their coaches, Mr Webster and Mrs Fryer-Green, and the support from Mr Eghoyan." A final thanks goes to the parents who have supported the girls, not just on Tuesday but throughout the season.





2.6 Challenge

Sunday 26 April should have been the date for the Virgin London Marathon 2020, an important day for both sportspeople and the charities which the event supports. COVID-19 forced a reschedule of the event, but the organisers of the Virgin London Marathon encouraged us to support the charities which will be missing vital support by joining in the 2.6 Challenge.

The challenge was to undertake any activity you like, but involving the digits two and six, eg cycling 26 miles or doing 26 press ups. Many Bancroftians of all ages - Prep, Senior and staff - took part in the challenge. Several of them raised money for ELHAP (Every Life Has A Purpose) a local Adventure Playground for disabled children and one of the local charities which Bancroft's supports. There were some great and unusual efforts on show: Harry's (L4E) 2.6k ride on a penny farthing bike; Mr Pollard's 26 mile paraglider flight, Aram Eghoyan lifting 260kg x 26. Eliza (L4W) deserves a special mention for her full marathon on the cross trainer which raised over £1000 for local hospice, St Clare's.



Tennis

Miss Amanda Wainwright, Head of Tennis

With lack of Wimbledon this year, I set various challenges to test the tennis skills of Bancroftians. The Grand Slam Skills Challenge went very well and Fionn Duffy (U4) was the first pupil to achieve all four with complete activity logs and videos of his silky skills. Since then a complete set of Video Grand Slams has been produced by: Krishan Parmar, Maanvii Arya, Charlie Day, Simran Chadda, Bradley Varaden, Kimaya Seewal, Olivia Gauvin, Sarah-Jane Western, Danielle Amouzou-Akue and Anavi Shah. The Golden Slam has also been captured on video by the following superstars who now have a grand total of 40 skills under their tennis belts: Krishan Arya (3E), Johnny Visan-Gherghe (3N), Alex Hancock (RE), Charlie Day (U4E).

The "Tennis Star" of the first half term was undoubtedly Danielle in L4E. Not formerly a tennis player, Danielle's commitment and positivity have overwhelmed me and she has worked so hard to secure the four Grand Slam titles. Quite a few parents joined in too, either behind the camera on video duty, or as a fellow challenger;

best performances belong to Mr Western, Sarah-Jane's father; and Mr Wood, father of Amelia and Harriet.

To keep pupils and parents engaged with some seasonal sporting activity I launched the "Tennis Trickster Award": a set of 13 tricks ranging from "tricky" to "devilishly difficult". Anyone who demonstrated mastery of all 13 won a tennis themed prize. Krishan and Maanvii Arya became the first to master the Trickster Challenge! These are some of the most difficult tricks I could invent but Krishan and Maanvii focused on them for over two weeks to emerge triumphant. They are well and truly at the top of the tennis tree!

The "Recreate a Wimbledon Moment" competition was won by Miles Watson for his uncanny likeness to Boris Becker: Miles recreated Becker's 1985 record breaking Wimbledon win by serving an un-returnable serve and duly celebrating as only Boris could!"

Stay Safe Sports Day

Sports Day is one of the highlights of the summer term, if not the whole of the sporting year. Clearly it would not be possible to hold Sports Day with School closed. Or would it? The Sports Department got to work and devised a Sports Day in which everyone could be involved, albeit safely socially distanced in their own little bubble. An afternoon of challenges away from screens was welcomed and, of course there was still the incentive of winning valuable house points.

Pupils were asked to choose at least one activity/challenge from a list of ten, take a photo and send this to their house captains to gain house points. The activities were such that sporting prowess was not always of prime importance, so making this a truly inclusive event. The house sports captains did a fantastic job rallying the teams and collating results. Judged by the number of entries the Stay Safe Sports Day was real success.



Mrs Fryer Green said, "I was totally overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and participation for our Stay Safe Sports Day. There were over 600 entries from staff, pupils and their families. Images of family cycle rides, races, headstands were among the most popular but this was coupled with images of iconic sporting moments being recreated in people's back gardens. The resounding winners were East House beating their closest opponent School by over 300 points. Well done and a huge thank you to all those who took part."

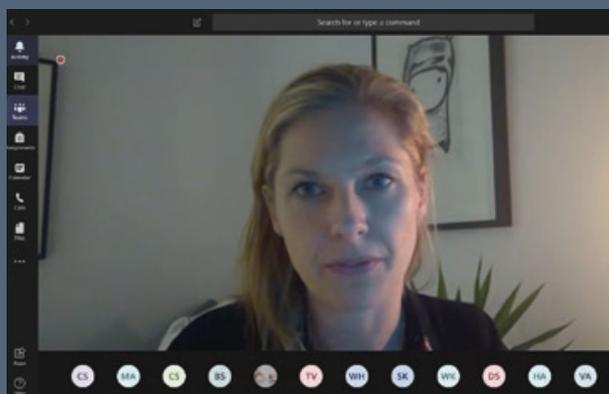


I was totally overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and participation for our Stay Safe Sports Day.



MRS FRYER-GREEN

Geography Society



Geography Society is one of Bancroft's societies which has continued to keep busy since remote learning started. Vishaali Ganesh shares what has been going on, "We have been doing our best to keep people entertained whilst also introducing geographical concepts and ideas. Christopher Weber and I have been running Geog Soc since October and recently, we have incorporated fun quizzes, prizes, debates, interactive activities and presentations into our weekly sessions.

With the help of Miss Burridge, we were extremely lucky to have Sophie Hutchinson deliver a talk to us on the concept of sustainability all the way from Australia. Sophie is the Director of Sustainability at a leading engineering consultancy in Australia. A Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD), and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) professional with over 10 years of experience Sophie is a recognised leader within the sustainability community."

International Women's Week

Once again Bancroft's marked International Women's Day (March 8) with a week of activities. One of the highlights of the week was a talk by OB, Journalist and Broadcaster Anita Anand about her book *Sophia: Princess, Suffragette, Revolutionary*. Hannah Zia (L6W), Chair of EqualiTEA Society, (L6W) writes about the talk:



"At a few minutes past 6 on Thursday 5 March, parents, teachers, members of the general public and pupils gathered in the Great Hall to listen to the highly anticipated talk given by celebrated broadcaster, author and, not to mention, OB Anita Anand. Her talk was on the subject of her book, the research for which took Anita five years.

In a brilliantly engaging and witty hour, Anita captured the vivacity and drive of one Indian princess, Queen Victoria's goddaughter. She was born into aristocratic roots and subsequently 'fell from grace', as it was perceived by many, into becoming a fully-fledged member of the suffragette movement. Anita invited us all to consider the implications of a piece of history that is not only far more recent than we think but also exceptionally relevant to all of us, as members of British society. Somehow, through a little humour, Anita managed to lighten a story rooted in, firstly, colonialism and, secondly, the void of women's rights ultimately delivering a timely message that was fascinating, enlightening and powerful."

The week also saw a mixed football match, a performance of a short suffragette drama from 1912 *Miss Appleyard's Awakening*; a thought provoking assembly by members of the EqualiTEA Society, a lunchtime careers fair and a return visit by OB Rioghnach Sachs, who spoke to members of the Classics Society about Sappho and her poetry.

EqualiTEA

EqualiTEA Society continued to meet regularly, albeit remotely, throughout the summer term. Their first discussion concerned ethnicity and Covid-19 deaths. A disproportionate number of people from the BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) community are dying from the virus; and they discussed why this might be.

Another topic discussed was "What makes something cultural appropriation?" Where do we draw the line between appreciating someone's culture and appropriating it? In our modern society, it is increasingly significant to understand what cultural appropriation is, how to avoid it and how celebrity 'role models' are influencing us. They even considered things close to home, such as "is everyone wearing Bindis for Taal cultural appropriation?"

Black Lives Matter was also the subject for discussion and EqualiTEA Society finalised plans for Black History Month. Hannah Zia Chair of EqualiTEA Society said plans include, "speakers, competitions and all manner of ways to encourage and instil messages and crucially educate about the ongoing vice of institutionalised racism in the US and at home. Staff and



pupils have offered their hand at getting involved through their respective strengths and subjects. This year's Black History Month is vital, not least because of the current protests against police brutality in America, but because it seems we still haven't got it right. This being said, this month will be that of both remembrance and celebration. It is easy to focus on the disheartening and on injustice but we hope, through our events, to not lose sight of the power of conscious and universal understanding and togetherness. We want this Black History Month to appeal to all and so have tailored specific events for the Prep School and beyond. We hope that all will take this opportunity as a timely reminder of what is being and can be achieved with firstly, a recognition of human decency and rights and secondly, positive and focused action."

Duke of Edinburgh Award News

We have recently been presented with a certificate of social value for 2019-20 which details the total hours DofE participants at Bancroft's donated to our local community. In the year this totalled 3,822 hours of voluntary service. The social value of these hours in a staggering £16,626! Across London, DofE participants contributed an incredible 356,616 hours volunteering to help others, which equates to a social value of over £1.5 million.

The weekend of the 7 and 8 March saw 108 members of the U4 head out into the wilds of Epping Forest for their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award training weekend. It was possibly the muddiest conditions that we had ever seen for this weekend.

Some paths were almost impassable and pupils frequently found themselves at least ankle deep in the mud. Boots and feet parted company on several occasions. Camping conditions were interesting, to say the least. Thankfully, further rain held off until early afternoon on Sunday. Maybe not the best introduction to DofE expeditions but well done to all those who made it through the weekend and remained smiling.



This training weekend was the last DofE expedition before lockdown, all others for the year have been cancelled. Fortunately the participants' experiences were enough to enable staff to sign off the expedition section of the Bronze Award. We are hoping that "normal service" will be resumed in October half term with a mega-Gold expedition to Snowdonia which will combine the training expedition with qualifying one.



Sea Scouts Winter Camp

Matthew Balchin, Scout Section Leader

It was a chilly and somewhat damp Friday evening at the end of February as the 4th EFS (Bancroft's) Sea Scouts arrived for Winter Camp and what was to be one of our last face to face meetings for a while.

Forty two Scouts and older Cubs settled themselves into their dormitories and got wrapped up for the first activity of the weekend. This involved a small assault course in the dark involving a crawl through the mud under scramble nets coupled with a mental challenge that required each team to collaborate from both sides of the nets. Hot chocolate and an early night made sure they were all ready for the fun the following morning. With bleary eyes and plenty of tea we got Saturday underway with a decent breakfast to prepare for a long day ahead.

This year the Scouts and Cubs took part in rifle shooting; a challenging assault course; zip wires and the rather intimidating leap of faith, which involves climbing to the top of a 7m high pole, balancing at the top and then leaping off, reaching out for the adjacent trapeze. Some of those on their first camp learned a variety of ways to light a fire using such objects as: wire wool; a battery; cough mixture; water sterilizing tablet; firesticks and, of course, a match. Happily, all survived the various challenges and the intermittent rain, although washing machines back at home would have needed some overtime afterwards. Saturday night saw the Scouts prepping and cooking their own before heading out into the dark to find various leaders, camouflaged and hidden in the forest, and collecting the various clues.

A quick change and the evening activities kicked off. We couldn't reach the camp fire pit this year for fear of sinking into the surrounding bog so, sadly, camp fire wasn't possible. This year, therefore, we turned the lodge hall into a Las Vegas games room, complete with Vegas style lighting, music, air hockey, dominoes, board games, word games, chill out areas and two card tables where a number of scouts learned the true meaning of 'poker face'. To recreate the atmosphere, the leaders all dressed up either as croupiers or in black tie. After another early start on Sunday, everyone completed their final activity in the much-improved and quite pleasant weather before packing their kit, clearing their rooms and heading home for lunch and a long sleep.

Virtual Scouting

The summer term for the Sea Scouts would normally be spent on the water, this year the scouts still faced a full and challenging programme on dry land. The Sea Scout leaders seem to be particularly unfazed by the need to adapt to virtual Thursday night meetings. The imagination and innovation shown by the leaders is a fantastic example of what can be done under lockdown. Each week they set the Scouts a series of different challenges and tasks: re-enact a scene from a favourite film; draw a seagull using a pen between your toes; create a 3D model of one of the scout leaders; turn your bathroom into a venue for a night or day out; recreate a famous painting.

The Hogwarts Escape Room challenge proved a great activity and it was certainly the most stressful behind the scenes with ten adult leaders managing 61 children. The Scouts were joined by the Cubs— their first online scouting session. A few parents joined in too. This proved a truly collaborative activity. All of the 10 teams 'escaped' and completed the set of riddles and puzzles in just over an hour.



The Scouts also had a virtual camp at the end of half term starting just before 7 on Friday night and closing at 8 the following morning. About 50 Cubs and Scouts attended, covering six different year groups from the Prep and Senior Schools. Up until midnight they organised a number of different collaborative challenges every hour: making pizzas from scratch - dough, toppings, baking; two online quizzes; preparing deserts;

a scavenger hunt. Tradition wasn't lost as there were campfire jokes, stories and the Scouts and Cubs sang camp fire songs together with everyone on audio and video (they won't win any acoustic awards but it was great to see the cubs and scouts dancing away in their own dens). There were two online games rooms and various breakout rooms for the Cubs and Scouts to hang out together. Everyone, including the leaders, built dens in bedrooms, living rooms and gardens.

At 7am on Saturday John Hasslegren, now 82 an OB and ex-Bancroft's scout, woke everyone with the traditional bugle call for 'all hands'. Mathew Balchin Scout Section Leader said, "We had a number of parents and some younger brothers and sisters online together and in some houses we had both a Cub and a Scout join together or on their own devices. Apparently they want to do it all again."



Sports Day at the Prep

Ms Hayley Pegg, Acting Head of Girls' Games

We had a change to our annual event this year, with the introduction of a Virtual Sports Day 2020. Team PE wanted all pupils to be able to

enjoy this annual event either at school or at home, so we asked pupils to try to complete as many of the activities as they could and earn points towards the total for their House.

The pupils, whether at home or back in school, responded well to the new style events. Dhiya from Manor said, "Although it was different, I still enjoyed it and found it fun!" Those at home particularly appreciated the chance to feel part of the Prep Community and not miss out. Well done to Manor who won Bancroft's Sports Day 2020 overall!

Alphas Back in School

Mrs Laura Dalton, Alpha Year Group Leader

The children will tell you that we usually sing a song at the start of a new year, or term, that begins, 'Back in school again, meeting all our friends, here with all of our teachers...' It would have been the perfect song to sing on Monday 22 June when we welcomed back the majority of our Alpha children. Despite the fact that we weren't able to sing it together did not detract from our excitement at seeing them all again.

It has been so wonderful to have them back for the last two weeks of term and they have loved it too. When we asked them what had been the best thing about returning to school, their response was unanimous: it was seeing their friends and teachers in real life. Some pupils were sadly not able to return; they were in the capable hands of Mrs Kanolik who continued to provide remote learning,

but we really missed them - and her! Our Alphas' first year at Bancroft's has certainly been one that they will not forget, but they have coped brilliantly, maintaining their enthusiasm throughout the long period of home learning, and we could not be prouder of them.



Primary Maths Challenge

Mrs Sue Jones, Maths Co-ordinator

The Primary Mathematics Challenge (PMC) is a fun and exciting mathematical challenge aimed at pupils in Years 5 and 6. It encourages enthusiasm, boosts confidence in mathematics and shows the different way questions can be asked. Problem Solving is a means of helping pupils develop their reasoning skills and the PMC is designed to make pupils think outside the box.

We had great success at Bancroft's Prep again this year with seven pupils being awarded bronze certificates, nine silver and particularly well done to Julia Boots and Luca Ventura who gained golds. Congratulations to all who took part!

Charity Day

Mr David Archer, Head of Boys' Games

This half term we held our first 'Virtual Charity Awareness Day' where the children were set a variety of activities including researching some charities; devising a 'Virtual Charity Stall' to raise money; helping out around the house and completing a workout.

To replicate the charity stalls we normally have, the pupils used their imaginations to create fantasy stalls and some of the ideas were out of this world, literally! They included swimming around the world with a whale, time travel and feeding sharks! There was some great feedback from the pupils, some even managing to raise money, which they have subsequently passed on to their chosen charities. Well done to Tom Knight who raised £100 for the Dogs' Trust.

Prep 2 Return!

Alex Adams, Prep 2 Year Group Leader



It has been wonderful to return to school and spend the last five weeks with so many of our Prep 2s. After a long lockdown - a difficult time for many of us - both the children and staff have really enjoyed being back together, having lots of fun, whilst teaching and learning face to face.

We started with 38 children on June 1 and finished on Friday 3 July with 60 back in school. Having the separate bubbles was a bit strange to begin with, but like most things, we have become used to the new ways of school life and these have enabled us to get to know different teachers and children. We will all remember what has been a truly extraordinary year but I hope, like me, the children will remember their last few weeks of their final year at the Prep as a time full of smiles, summer sunshine and special memories.



Bancroft's

Independent Co-educational Day School 7-18

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