



Withington
GIRLS' SCHOOL EST 1890

WHERE GIRLS SHINE

wgs.org

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HEADMISTRESS'S REPORT

A very warm welcome to all our Newsletter readers. We hope that you enjoy our annual record of life at Withington Girls' School at the end of 2020, an exceptional year for the School and for us all.



You join us at the end of a year none of us could have anticipated back at Founders' Day in October 2019. Our theme for that uplifting occasion when pupils, parents and staff past and present, alumnae and friends of the school came together in the splendour of The Bridgewater Hall was 'Sustaining People and Places'. Little did we know then just how apt that choice of theme would become. 2020 has been a year unlike anything any of us have experienced before but one in which our focus on what is always our key purpose – the pupils in our care – has enabled us to hold fast and weather the storm. The pandemic has challenged us all and will continue to do so for some time to come but at Withington we can take pride in how we as a whole school community have pulled together, sustained one another, met the many challenges presented, and ensured that our school and its people continue to thrive. I am immensely grateful to everyone who has helped to make this happen and been part of this inspiring story.



We know that those whole school occasions which bring us together have more than a touch of magic about them at Withington – Founders' Days, Open Days, Christmas concerts, House events, Sports Days, Drama Productions, School assemblies. But when we are faced with not being able to share these occasions in person, we realise more profoundly than ever just how strong the Withington ties, the Withington relationships and the sense of shared purpose are. As we compile this Newsletter in Autumn 2020, we look back with such great fondness and appreciation at the end of term traditions we enjoyed in December 2019, many of them in a full Arts Centre, we look forward with great anticipation to when we will all gather together in person once again, and in the meantime, take satisfaction from how we have created innovative, often virtual, alternatives which have reflected and sustained the Withington spirit and Withington community at its very best – purposeful, compassionate, creative, resourceful and determined.

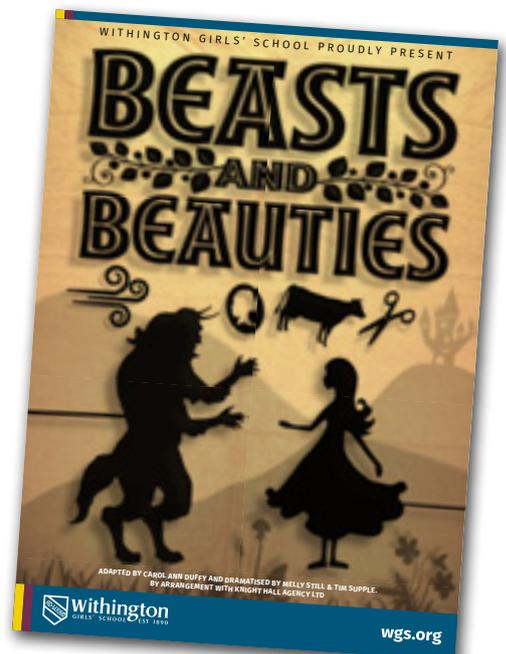


Autumn Term 2019 drew to a close with a series of outstanding achievements for the School. The Sunday Times named Withington the North West Independent Secondary School of the Year 2020 and our inaugural *Manchester Sings* project brought our pupils and primary school children from across Greater Manchester together to sing in the Cathedral – nearly 250 children and young people, led by our Director of Music, Mrs Gilly Sargent, created an utterly joy-filled occasion which more than lived up to the event's theme: 'Everyone has a voice, every voice a song'. Withington ranked very

highly in The Telegraph's survey of value for money in independent education; was re-awarded the Green Flag for the School's Eco work and enjoyed a series of fantastic high quality and often fun-filled events at the end of term, a fitting conclusion to a term in which, like all at Withington, pupils and staff worked with great dedication and much progress was made.



As the new decade began, 2020 marked the 130th anniversary of Withington's foundation in 1890 and, although January brought with it a vague and growing sense of unease, none of us imagined that it would not be possible to hold Founders' Day in October. As January became February and February became March however, special events such as the wonderfully creative Drama production of *Beasts and Beauties*,



featuring nearly seventy Withington pupils, our International Women's Day celebrations when twenty five speakers generously gave of their time to lead workshops for our pupils, and the Emily Simon Legacy Lunch in this the 100th anniversary of the death of WGS Founder, Emily Simon, who bequeathed the School its playing fields, all took on a growing significance as the prospect of what would come to be called 'lockdown' grew. At the Emily Simon Lunch on 11 March we were privileged to host four former Withington Headmistresses, including Miss Hulme whose tenure began in 1961. This moment felt like a gift and the sense of continuity, of strong foundations and Withington family would encourage us all during the months to come.



Our keynote speaker on International Women's Day in March, WGS alumna, Joëlle Warren, encouraged the girls and us all to 'Remember Your True North' and this theme inspired us all as we entered the previously inconceivable reality of school closures, remote learning and national lockdown. Our School's digital strategy which had involved a growth in digital working for all Senior School pupils and staff where it was beneficial to learning, meant that we were well placed for a switch to remote learning.



Nonetheless, those final days before the closure of schools at the end of Friday 20 March, were busy and intense as everyone pulled together to ensure that plans for teaching and learning remotely were in place, our Upper Fifth and Upper Sixth pupils had 'last days' to remember with fondness and our provision for Key Worker School was thoroughly risk assessed and staffed. This would be the first time since 1939 when the school community was evacuated to Staffordshire for a year that the school had had to leave the school site for any length of time. We left the building that day on Friday 20 March with some trepidation and no indication of when the whole community might return.



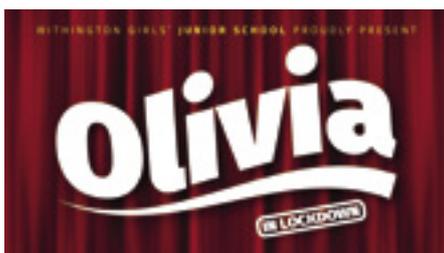
By 23 March 2020 our Virtual WGS was live, an online, virtual equivalent of our daily School which aimed to continue as many aspects of normal school life as possible. We were determined that our pupils' academic learning and progress should continue unhindered and also our pastoral care, guidance on health and wellbeing, extra-curricular activities as far as that could be achieved and, crucially, the integral sense of the Withington community and connectedness we all felt daily when we

were in school. Bridging courses for our Upper Fifth and Upper Sixth pupils whose public examinations were cancelled soon began to take shape, teachers and pupils embarked on the challenges of teaching and learning at home and a loyal band of colleagues travelled on eerily quiet roads to School each day to care for the children of Key Workers, a service we are proud to have continued throughout the Easter and May school holidays. Our teachers approached the process of Centre Assessed Grades, the alternative to public examinations devised by central government, with great care and integrity, just as they then coped stoically with the changes to how the GCSE and A Level grades would be determined during August. It was a source of sadness for us all that we could not share the usual 'last day' and very special Leavers' Dinner with the wonderful Class of 2020 and their parents to mark together all of their achievements and contributions, but we hope that the special films made went some way towards marking this rite of passage and we continue to look forward very much to the day we can hold an in person reunion for this very special Year group.





Whilst none of us would choose this way of working over the pleasures of day-to-day life in School, as in other times of adversity and challenge, much progress was made during an intense period. The Withington spirit and commitment to maintaining the best for our pupils and honouring our commitment to their parents and to the Withington ethos and values, meant that we were soon delivering assemblies, running our own WGS radio through Junior and Senior School podcasts, writing a WGS Journal to chronicle our experience of this exceptional time, and finding creative and alternative ways of sustaining Music and LAMDA lessons and House events. By the end of Summer Term, Sports Days, Citizenship Day, alumnae Careers events, our Art exhibition, Music Festival and the wonderfully uplifting Junior School production of *Olivia!* had all taken



place, the return of pupils to school in Years 6, 10 and 12 had been safely and successfully achieved with much delight all round after weeks of home learning, and provisional plans were in place for the much anticipated full return to School in September. Incredibly, WGS

pupils, staff and parents even managed to sustain fundraising during this time, raising over £31,000 for charity during 2019/20, many girls also maintaining their volunteering commitments.

Summer 2020 also saw Withington Girls' School reflect on how it should respond to the calls for renewed focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. Asked by some of our alumnae and current pupils to engage with these vital issues, Withington has committed to an embedded, strategic approach which will enable us to continue to reflect on the inclusive culture of our school to ensure that everyone can benefit from the strength and success that a positive, active approach to inclusion brings. This will be an ongoing focus in 2021.



So finally to Autumn Term 2020 and the end of this most unusual year. The return to School in September was unlike anything I or any of us in School have ever experienced. After extensive risk assessment and preparation during the summer holiday, we were ready for the start of term - wearing masks, observing hygiene protocols, social distancing and operating in Year group bubbles but crucially - we would be in School together again, reunited after six months of remote working. The excitement and delight were tangible - some nervousness of course and some adaptation required - but we could now get back to much of what we love about being in our School. Our Golden Rule of Respect for Self, Respect for Others and Personal Responsibility has never been more relevant and our school community has responded brilliantly to what is required.

How wonderful then that after almost a year of steadfast hard work, innovation and resolute commitment to the highest standards in all areas, to learn that The



Sunday Times had awarded Withington the prestigious accolade of North West Independent Secondary School of the Decade in its Parent Power Guide published in November. The award recognises the consistency of academic excellence at Withington, the supportive, caring environment, the myriad extra-curricular activities, the commitment to accessibility through the bursary programme, and celebrates the diversity of the school and the School's capacity to inspire its pupils. We are thrilled that the dedication, the care and the passion of all who make up our community, present and past, have been acknowledged by The Sunday Times in this way.



This year has brought immense challenge, sadness, suffering and hardship. It has also seen determination, creativity, flexibility, resourcefulness, teamwork, compassion. None of us will forget the year of 2020 but I hope that the Founders would be proud of how the School has risen to the challenge, supported by all in the Withington community - pupils, staff, parents, governors, trustees, alumnae and friends of the School. We hope for better times in 2021 but whatever it brings, I have no doubt that together we will be equal to it.





During my nine years at Withington, I have been fortunate enough to witness our school flourish. Through reaching milestones such as the 125th anniversary, Withington harbours a community of intellectual minds and continues to nurture the aspirations of young girls in Manchester. Throughout my time here, Withington has established new and exciting facilities for all the students, ranging from the new Sports Centre to the Junior School; I can proudly say that all of us have benefited and enjoyed the vast array of opportunities Withington has offered us.

Despite the pandemic of this year and the circumstances surrounding it, I really feel that WGS has retained its strength and provided strong motivation for the students. There are many restrictions in place at School to ensure safety of the staff and students. For example, every Year group is limited to their own bubble, and there is a limit to extra-curricular activities and mixing of Year groups.

However, WGS's resourcefulness has continued to amaze me especially in the past few months; whether it be the academic and pastoral support on Microsoft Teams, or provisions for online video learning during lockdown, our year continued to progress through the A Level course smoothly during these uncertain times. Even now, when girls need to self-isolate, the School has continued to provide exceptional provisions for all, even at home. I have found that the teachers are willing to adapt and provide us with lessons which are easy to cope with at home.

The advocacy for wellbeing at Withington has been sustained throughout lockdown too. At School, there is now a 'new normal' for students to adapt to. We have also experienced this within the Head Girl Team, via our adjustment to the new technologies necessary for us to carry out our jobs. In my opinion, this entire situation does have many positives that we can take forward. As students, it has provided us with a learning curve of independence academically at home. There have been so many chances to learn new skills, coming to grips with the ever-changing technology and using the lockdown period to understand ourselves much better. The Head Girl Team has reflected all of this in the Assembly last half term, discussing lessons learnt during lockdown; including the prioritisation of mental health.

Although this year is obviously an unprecedented one, the Withington community is still advancing, and I am extremely excited about the many upcoming events this year, such as Citizenship Day and other House events – even though they will be taking place in a slightly different format. As a school we have continued to support the local community through events such as the Senior Citizens' Christmas Concert and Christmas Jumper Day in aid of Save the Children. Inspired by Marcus Rashford's action of promoting the supply of school meals, the Sixth Form has made a commitment to our local foodbank where we drop off donations every Friday. My Form conveyed this in a message to the whole school via an online virtual Assembly.

What I really cherish about Withington is that it is still finding a way to thrive even during these unprecedented times. We may all be uncertain about the future, but there is a comfort in realising that everyone is going through the same thing and in true Withington spirit, we are all in this together!





PTA COMMITTEE

Chair: Dr Rashmi Dev-Jairath

Vice Chair: Mrs Sarah Haslam

Treasurer: Mrs Valerie Torevell

Secretary: Mrs Joanne Kinney

Staff: Ms Jen Baylis
Ms Bridget Howard
Dr Sue Madden
Mr Ian McKenna

Parents: Mrs Claire Claymore
Mrs Kinnari Mehta
Mrs Lisa Raja
Mrs Nicola Tatton

The last academic year has been quite different for all of us as we have had to adapt to new ways of working and learning. The PTA has also been required to make some changes, including the cancelling of social events, but we look forward to meeting in person again in the not too distant future. Our second-hand uniform service has continued successfully throughout the pandemic and we hope this has been of benefit to the girls and their parents.

In October 2019, we had our annual Junior Fun Night. The girls enjoyed entertainment by Louby Lou, alongside some wonderful food and refreshments provided by the new caterers, Holroyd Howe. This was very well received and not much was left over! Many new parents enjoyed the opportunity to meet their daughter's new friends and their families. Our thanks go to Claire Claymore and her team for their hard work and effort.

The PTA also hosted a successful dinner dance at the Midland Hotel in November 2019. This was a lovely evening and special thanks are to be given to Mrs Jo Kinney, Mrs Lisa Raja, Mrs Valerie Torevell and Mrs Kinnari Mehta for their invaluable input into this event.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we had to cancel the Spring Fair, Junior Fun Night and Dinner Dance for 2020. The Spring Fair was cancelled at quite

short notice and we had already received many generous donations of gift items from Withington families. Mrs Nicola Tatton suggested we donate some of these to the Wood Street Mission Christmas appeal and we are delighted to have been able to provide this support.

The 300 Club has continued to be promoted to encourage parents to join. Its membership is open to parents, relatives and friends of Withington School.

The second-hand uniform service continues to provide the PTA with an excellent source of fundraising. Special thanks to Mrs Lisa Raja who has managed this service for the past six years and to Mrs Nicola Tatton who has now taken over. Nicola has worked alone (due to COVID-19) through the summer holidays and Autumn Term to fulfil all uniform requests. All orders are placed via email and collections can be made from School Reception. Please remember to pass on any old school uniform as it will continue to support this excellent service.

Money raised by the PTA over the last year has allowed the PTA to fund a Stair Climber for the Fitness Suite and shelters for the new pitches.

The WGS PTA would not achieve what it does without the continued, voluntary efforts of committee members, staff and parents. Their support throughout the year is very much appreciated.

300 CLUB WINNERS

AUTUMN 2019

1st £150 Dr E Leon
2nd £100 H & P Rooney
3rd £50 Mr A Sibley
4th £50 Ling Lan

SPRING 2020

1st £150 Mr & Mrs D Phillips
2nd £100 S Papoutsopoulou
3rd £50 K Tunstall
4th £50 S Btsh

SUMMER 2020

1st £150 Mrs AV Heap
2nd £100 Mr & Mrs J Laidlar
3rd £50 Mr & Mrs N Jenkins
4th £50 K Holder



MANCHESTER SINGS - EVERYONE HAS A VOICE, EVERY VOICE A SONG

A new Withington tradition was born in December 2019 with the inaugural Manchester Sings event, initiated by Withington's Director of Music, Mrs Gillian Sargent. Inspirational, moving and just a spectacle to behold, nearly 250 children gave an unforgettable performance at Manchester Cathedral on 4th December. This is an exciting new schools' partnership bringing together pupils from primary schools across Greater Manchester and the WGS Senior 'pop up' choir to perform a programme of six emotive songs that, weaved in with a series of readings written by Withington pupils, told a human story of dreams, life's setbacks and, ultimately, hope. The event was in aid of the Booth Centre, a day centre for homeless people, while families supported by Wood Street Mission benefited from over 150 Christmas gift donations by the School community. In the lead-up to the event, Mrs Sargent visited the participating primary schools - Broadfield Primary (Oldham), New Islington Free School (Ancoats), St Kentigern's RC Primary (Fallowfield), St Luke's CofE Primary (Bury), Wilbraham Primary (Fallowfield) and Whitefield Community Primary - to teach and rehearse the songs. The first time they all sang together was at the event itself.

On the day, a sea of colourful t-shirts, lots of smiling faces and the heart-warming sound of a massed choir of young voices filled the Cathedral as pupils from the seven schools came together to perform the medley of songs, beginning with *Sing* by Gary Barlow and Andrew Lloyd Webber. The repertoire

was designed to tell a story of hope, with all songs selected specifically for the poignancy of their words. The concert was attended by the Lord Mayor of Manchester, the High Sheriff of Greater Manchester and was opened with a welcome from the Dean of Manchester.

Mrs Haslam paid tribute to all involved, saying:

"We were expecting it to be a special performance, but the children exceeded even those expectations - they had memorised the words to all the songs and performed from the heart with such commitment. It was exceptional."

Mrs Sargent said:

"Watching these children practising so hard, enjoying their music and growing in confidence has been incredibly inspiring. I was particularly touched to hear one boy say to me, 'I didn't even know I could sing!'. It was wonderful to see these young pupils performing as one with such passion and energy at this magnificent venue in the very heart of our great city."

Mrs Sargent continued:

"This was a wonderful opportunity for young people from very different backgrounds to come together, enjoy the power of music and perform in a fantastic and historical venue in the heart of Manchester. Spoilt for choice with which songs to sing, the songs I selected told a story - a story that is loosely based on the Christmas story BUT a story which is very much related to the social issues of today's society, a story which we witness every time we go into Manchester - the homeless."

"The songs chosen were *Sing* (a thousand voices - not quite but we did have 250 singing!); *A Million Dreams* (Everyone has their own hopes and dreams); *Hallelujah* (3rd verse - I tried my best, but it all went wrong); *You Will Be Found* (Have you ever felt forgotten and alone... Even when the dark comes crashing in, when you need a friend to carry, when you're broken on the ground, You Will Be Found); *True Colours* (You with the sad eyes, don't be discouraged... I see your true colours shining through); and *Stand In the Light* (and be seen as you are). Between the songs we listened to beautiful poems and stories written by Withington pupils which reflected the lyrics and the meaning of each song."

A total of £724.46 raised during a collection was donated to the Booth Centre. Our thanks go to all the schools who participated and to Beaverbrooks who sponsored the event.

Some observations from the children who took part:

"It was fun to sing with other people. It was amazing to hear our voices echo around the building."

"My favourite part was when we got to sing Stand in the Light. We wore yellow t-shirts and looked like part of a rainbow."

"I'll never forget it and would love to do it again!"

"I thought it was amazing to hear Withington Girls' Choir sing with us. They sang different parts to us, but together it sounded beautiful!"





PROJECTS & PARTNERSHIPS

PARTNERSHIPS

IN

NUMBERS

£31,173.37



AMOUNT RAISED ACROSS THE SCHOOL FOR CHARITY

OVER 700

@HomePal_

PEOPLE HELPED THROUGH PUPIL-LED HOMEPAL ONLINE LEARNING

3480



PUPIL HOURS SPENT ON LION KING PERFORMANCES

OVER 100



PEOPLE BENEFITED FROM THE LOCKDOWN MUSIC RECITAL

14865



MINUTES OF EXERCISE TO RAISE FUNDS FOR OUR WORK IN THE GAMBIA

200



FAMILIES HELPED THROUGH FOODBANK COLLECTIONS BY PUPILS

91

MAINTAINED SCHOOLS PUPILS ATTEND OUR SATURDAY MORNING SHINE SCHOOL

210

PRIMARY PUPILS TOOK PART IN

MANCHESTER

sings

Everyone has a voice, every voice a song.

OVER 4240



HOURS SPENT BY WGS PUPILS ON LINKS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

CHEMISTRY COMMUNICATORS

Chemistry Communicators is a national scheme supported by the Royal Society of Chemistry from which a Gold CREST award can be earned. The intention is to encourage Chemistry enthusiasts to develop their science communication skills by working in teams to present a Chemistry-based workshop or show to an audience of younger children.

The Lower Sixth of 2019-20 were the fourth group of WGS A Level students to participate in this programme. Twenty-five of our students took on the challenges of devising chemistry activities, including developing methods and risk assessments, and practising the safe and effective delivery of these demonstrations in the chemistry labs. The first part of the programme consisted of a training day, during which students took part in a variety of activities which were led by members of the Education Team from Techniquet Glyndwr, a science

discovery centre in Wrexham. With three shows booked for March, the girls worked enthusiastically, producing scripts and practising communicating the chemistry behind their activities in a fluent and accessible way. Unfortunately, the shows had to be cancelled, which prevented them from completing the activity and producing the report which would normally earn them a well-deserved Gold Crest Award from the British Science Association. Nevertheless, our girls gained extremely valuable skills and we could not have been more proud of all that they achieved and gained from this project.

However, the School was not deprived of flash bang Chemistry shows in the 2019-20 academic year as, on 16th March, the Upper Sixth of 2019-20 reprised some highlights of their shows from the previous year in a special Assembly to celebrate the receipt of their Gold Crest Awards. They also shared some of the

letters sent from children who had been in their audiences and enjoyed their Chemistry theatricals:

“You have inspired me to be a scientist because I have seen how it looks and it looks amazing”

“If I had the chance to come again, I would”

“I want to study Chemistry in high school, I thought you were Einstein in disguise”

At the end, the Gold Crest Award certificates they had earned were presented by Mrs Haslam and Dr Vilela. Well done to all of these young Chemistry enthusiasts who have transmitted their passion for learning to so many younger school pupils and for not only their entertaining ‘live’ presentation but also the very engaging and amusing film which ran on the big screen as everyone was taking their seats.



SHINE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

Withington Girls' School has organised and delivered a successful, community-focused series of Saturday School courses for the past 12 years. Taking place during the Autumn term, the WGS SHiNE educational programme is aimed at able students in Years 5 and 6 at maintained primary schools in and around south Manchester.

The programme provides, free of charge, specialist teaching in a range of courses to the students, including Science, Design & Food Technology, Classics, Spanish, Drama and Music. The aim is to increase pupils' love of learning, boost self-esteem in the classroom, and provide opportunities for academic growth and development. This year 91 children from 18 Manchester schools enjoyed attending SHiNE.

The programme was launched in 2007 with the help of funding from SHINE, a national organisation which funds projects to extend educational opportunities to children who would not ordinarily be able to access them, and the former Excellence in Cities programme. Withington has always hosted and run the programme, but from 2016, has also fully funded the WGS SHiNE programme.

The children work in small groups under the supervision of one or two teachers and two Upper Sixth students. This high adult to children ratio contributes to a very supportive and stimulating environment for the delivery of novel, practical sessions using our school's facilities. These activities provide the children with the opportunity to cover exciting aspects of subjects such as Science and DT outside the scope of the National Curriculum.

Withington Girls' School provides classroom facilities (including our purpose-built science laboratories, a design technology suite and food technology room), teaching materials and resources, teacher time and Sixth Form mentors. During the science course, the School funds an outing to the Manchester Museum. This year, the planning and delivery of the SHiNE courses involved approximately 377 staff hours and 175 student hours, with a benefit to 91 local children alongside our own staff and pupils. Over 591 local pupils, from 30 different schools, have benefited from the SHiNE programme in the 12 years it has run at Withington Girls' School.



CLASSICS PROGRAMME

Withington has worked with the University of Manchester and the Manchester Classical Association to establish a Classics programme in a local primary school.

Withington pupils and staff work together to devise the programme of study and provide all the teaching resources. Three Year 5 classes take part in an initial six-week programme, before pupils are given the option to continue on another six-week course.

Nine Sixth Form Classics students volunteered this year, and helped with planning the scheme of work. Studying Latin, one of the least common subjects to be taught in state schools, has a positive impact on pupils' understanding of English grammar. For example, the students at Mauldeth Road learnt how sentences are constructed in Latin, and thus improved their understanding of how sentences are formed in English. The Headteacher of Mauldeth Road reported that spelling and grammar in Key Stage 2 assessments notably improved after the Latin course.

This partnership benefited 43 children this year, and gave our Sixth Form students valuable tutoring and leadership skills.



PROJECTS & PARTNERSHIPS

SENIOR CITIZENS' CHRISTMAS CONCERT & TEA PARTY 2019

On 11th December, Withington opened its doors once again for the annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Concert. We had a record number of guests this year and they enjoyed Christmas classics by Senior musicians and choristers, a repeat of Mr Ian McKenna's winning Teachers Got Talent performance of Robbie Williams' *Angels*, and Golden Oldies led by the Staff Choir. Held in the Dining Room, a fantastic spread was laid on for our guests to enjoy, all prepared by WGS pupils and staff. Mrs Sargent paid tribute to the House Committees for organising the event and also a preceding House Competition festive 'Bake Off' earlier in the day, which, in turn, provided our visitors with spectacular seasonal bakes. Thanks to the generous donations of gifts we had received from Withington families, every guest was delighted to receive a gift. The event was a fabulous success and, as ever, enjoyed by all who were involved and attended. This same group of Senior Citizens also enjoyed a performance of *The Lion King* in July 2019, with 150 guests attending our matinee performance.



FARADAY CHALLENGE

On 6th November, Withington pupils were joined by teams from Trinity Church of England High School, Whalley Range High School, Sale Grammar School and Cheadle Hulme High School to take part in the IET's Faraday Challenge.

The teams must solve a real-life engineering project thinking about cost and design, then present their ideas to the judges. Competition was fierce throughout the day and the standard of work was high.

Very well done to the Withington team comprising Arabella Nawaz, Haidal MacDonald, Sama Beden, Satu Rajashanker, Uma Abbas and Esme Torevell who were overall winners.



SUSTAINING NHS CRITICAL CARE STAFF

During lockdown, Upper Sixth pupil Florence Bird very much enjoyed being part of a project collecting hot

dinners from Manchester restaurants and delivering them to hospitals (Wythenshawe and Stepping Hill) for the

NHS staff on HDU and ICU wards. She said that it was a real pleasure to witness the happy response of the recipients.

COMMUNITY SERVICE BY HEAD GIRL

Last year's Head Girl Kea Bell entered the annual Miss Manchester/Miss Cheshire competition and was been picked as a finalist for Miss Cheshire, which, Kea says, provided a great platform for getting involved in charity work. Separately, she was involved in providing friendship and support via an online friendship group in the Burnage area.

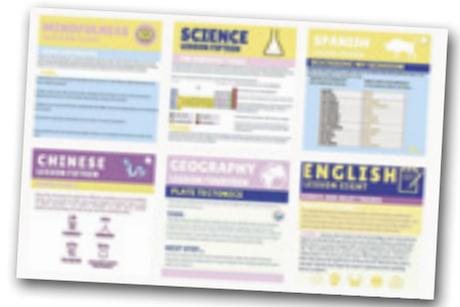
As a Miss Cheshire finalist, Kea fundraised for two charities, one based in the UK and the other in Kenya and India. For the first charity, Elle for Elle, which supports women and children suffering from domestic violence, she collected donations of unused toiletries and feminine products, particularly important for women confined to their homes. Kea also fundraised for One Woman at a Time, a charity which aims to empower women in India and Kenya.

In August, Kea's efforts were recognised with the award of the Young Person trophy at the Outstanding Social Behaviour Awards (OSBAs), which celebrates the positive impact people have made to the lives of others in Manchester.



HOMEPAL_ INSTAGRAM LEARNING PLATFORM

On the day the lockdown and cancellation of public exams was announced, some of last year's Upper Sixth pupils, together with friends from MHSG and MGS, considered how they might be able to work together during this time. Their first thought was to come up with a way of helping to continue the teaching and learning of KS3 pupils in the wider community, which led to the creation of a learning platform on Instagram. Working entirely on their own initiative, the group of students launched HomePal and delivered lessons in Maths, Science, Chinese, Spanish, English, Geography, German, History and even Mindfulness each and every week during the first lockdown. They developed quite a following and even marked and gave feedback and encouragement to their online pupils.



DofE VOLUNTEERING HOURS

The volunteering hours given to our local community by our DofE participants have been certificated by DofE North and add up to an amazing 2,509 hours in 2019-20. This equates to an impressive total of £10,914.15 in social impact value. Such commendable commitment by these girls to do good in the world!

DofE North said in their commendation:

"Firstly, we would like to thank you for your continued support for our Charity throughout these unprecedented times. In the midst of uncertainty, our DofE Leaders and Participants continue to set a precedent, a shining beacon for our communities to look to for inspiration.

We wanted to bring your attention to the fantastic work being carried out across the North of England Region. Across all levels of the Award a total of 661,349 hours has been spent volunteering which equates to a staggering total of £2,876,868 in social impact value.

We would like to take this opportunity to firstly congratulate you and your participants, whilst also thanking you for your continued hard work, motivation and dedication to our Charity's core values.

We hope that this provides inspiration for your next cohort of participants and look forward to working with you over the coming year."



UGANDA

During October 2019, nine Upper Sixth Formers, visited Uganda for ten days. Over the course of this annual trip, girls visit all the charities that Withington has supported, and visited, for the past seven years - particularly the Small Steps Foundation which runs Glory Be Nursery providing early years education for some of the poorest children in the local area. Our pupils delivered lessons and painted a mural at the nursery. Small Steps Foundation is a registered UK charity who support, educate and promote the inclusion of young children with learning disabilities in Uganda. Girls also raised money and collected items of clothing for a charity for street boys, called Jinja Connections which will use our donation to get their computers fixed. Our pupils always visit Wanyage Girls' School, a private girls' school, and took along stationery and sports equipment which was donated by the WGS community and their families. Money raised also went towards malaria medication for 300 babies who attend a children's hospital in Jinja called Whispers. Girls also paid a visit to Giasco, a home for boys that used to live on the street. This charity was founded by two ex-WGS girls. Our pupils were able to take clothes and shoe donations collected in School and the money donated this year was used to pay the salary for six months for a social worker to work with the boys. WGS girls and staff spend approximately 2140 hours on this project and estimate their work benefits 2178 people.



PROJECTS & PARTNERSHIPS

FALLOWFIELD & WITHINGTON FOODBANK

We are extremely proud of one of Upper Sixth pupils, Emma Wilson, who, during last year, orchestrated three collections for our local Fallowfield & Withington Foodbank. During October and December

2019 and February 2020, Emma collected over 800 food and toiletry items from donations from our School community. This translated into 860 meals for families. The Junior School also collected

food for the Fallowfield & Withington Foodbank for their Harvest Festival last Autumn and provided enough donations for 773 meals.

WITHGAMBIA INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The aim of Withington's involvement in The Gambia is to advance educational opportunities and, since 2007, the WithGambia project's main focus has been the Mama Tamba School in Illiassa. Withington pupils have raised at least £5,000 each year and enabled the establishment of the school, enhancing buildings and associated facilities year-on-year. Mama Tamba School began with just a few pupils and now has more than 200.

In recent years, the teams have fundraised to enable the construction of a borehole and a community hall in the village. Together, these have opened up many possibilities for local enterprise and training, benefiting the wider village community too. WithGambia also pays the salaries of the teachers at Mama Tamba, so that the children can attend the school free of charge.

Each year, the highlight is an annual trip for members of our Sixth Form to visit Mama Tamba to spend time with the children there and work on projects to improve and enhance the school's facilities. Our girls devote 2800 hours to this partnership and staff 800 hours.



FUTURE PROJECTS

FALLOWFIELD SCHOOLS AND ART PROJECT

We have recently applied for funding from the Department for Education for a new Partnership with local primary schools, St James' C of E Primary and Wilbraham Primary. Both St James' and Wilbraham are actively looking to develop their curriculums in foundation subjects, enabling pupils to improve skills and confidence in Art, History and Citizenship. Our Arts Award specialist will be working with link teachers to develop skills and expertise and to enable a cohort of children from each school

to achieve an Arts Award (Heritage) certificate, accredited by the Arts Council England. The Arts Award inspires all young people to grow their arts and leadership talents; it is creative, valuable and accessible.

Drawing on the Withington archives for inspiration, together with the archives and heritage of our partner schools, the project will allow pupils to develop practical artistic skills and talents, gain a deeper understanding of history,

citizenship and their local community, a strengthened link to the place they call home and a new understanding of the different communities that have lived here over time.

Sixth form volunteers will support the group art sessions and pupils from all schools will work together to produce a collaborative piece to be displayed in a community venue, stimulating their imagination and enriching the lived experience of being a pupil in Fallowfield.

Z ARTS PARTNERSHIP

We are in discussion with Z-arts, the child-focused arts and theatre venue in Hulme, to offer opportunities to Withington pupils, alongside pupils from a partner primary school, to engage with exciting and unique Shakespeare performances. As well as experiencing

an action-packed, immersive production, pupils will have the chance to talk to the cast and tread the boards in the production of their own Shakespeare scenes.

Connecting to the English and PSHE curriculum, this programme is relevant

and relatable to pupils' lives - enabling conversations around important issues affecting children and young people today - and will support the development of their creativity, resilience, emotional intelligence and autonomy.

CHARITY FUNDRAISING

Withington pupils and staff have worked tirelessly all year, raising funds for some very worthwhile causes. Just before the end of 2019 Autumn Term, we went to visit our 'Withington coin' at The Christie Hospital in Manchester. This was recognition from The Christie for our fundraising efforts throughout the previous academic year, which raised a sum of £12,694. It was a fantastic achievement. Recently The Christie Charity has been in contact to let us know we have achieved another coin on the wall as we have raised over £4000 over the past financial year.



The Uganda team hosted a Teacher's Got Talent contest and raised £1,364. This was a wonderful community event as the pupils got to see many of our teachers in a totally different way!

During the Autumn Term, Lower and Upper Fourth completed their Arts Award and the card, jewellery, bracelets and bags they created were sold to raise money for charity; this was an inspiring opportunity for the girls to be creative and they raised an impressive £543.

Mental health and wellbeing are important aspects of life at Withington

and the Sixth Form ran a 'Feel Fab Feb' week, in order to raise money for Young Minds, a mental health charity for young people. Activities ranged from a non-uniform day and various sessions concerning the important issue of digital wellbeing. The girls successfully raised £598.

In the Spring Term, girls and staff furiously knitted away creating an impressive 204 Easter rabbits and chicks. These creations were donated to Francis House Children's Hospice for their fundraising activities.

In the Spring Term the girls managed to raise money for several charitable causes such as WWF Australia and Birth Aid (supporting women in the developing world). They ran many varied charitable events, including cake sales and Zumba dance classes. There was also a joint venture with MGS, organised by Sixth Formers, called 'Funiversity Challenge'. This event raised money for Prevent Breast Cancer at the Manchester Royal Infirmary.

The Summer Term was certainly a unique experience for the staff and girls alike! During lockdown, the girls relished the opportunity to continue their commitment to their chosen charitable activities. In particular, The Gambia team raised £6,130 and the South Africa Sports Tour group £2,270, both completing ambitious exercise challenges to achieve these totals. We also conducted a charity concert featuring a multitude of girls from across the year groups. This was in order to raise money for Soundup Arts, which is a charity established to help people living with dementia. Overall, in the Summer

Term we raised a total of £10,783.47 despite the lockdown restrictions.

The new academic year has started very positively in our fundraising ventures. We have raised £646.78 for the Jeans for Genes day, supporting young people with rare genetic disorders. We recently collected food items at Harvest Festival and donated them to the Booth Centre who were delighted with all that they received to help support people without a home. Thanks go to our parents for responding so generously to this worthwhile cause. I would also like to thank parents and staff for their continued support of the Fallowfield and Withington Food Bank which we have supported throughout last year and are continuing to support on a weekly basis.

In October we added a new charity day to our calendar, Be Seen in Blue or Green, to raise money for Manchester Children's Hospital. We raised £207.40. We continued with our support of Mind – supporting children's mental health by wearing yellow and that raised £379.03.

Finally, I would like to recognise the many bake sales, jewellery sales, friendship bracelet stalls, and other creative ways of raising money for charity. We have donated to a wide number of charities including MacMillan Cancer Support, UK Youth Climate Coalition, National Deaf Children's Society, Francis House Children's Hospice, Children in Need and Ashoka Venezuela. This tremendous achievement is a tribute to the great efforts of the girls, staff and parents. Thank you for all your continued support in raising money and helping those in need.

MRS NADINE MORGAN
Charity Coordinator



COLOURS

I close my eyes, and I can see, the colours waiting up for me, some I call my own:

Red

I miss the colour of the flames, they represent anger, love, and a burning passion to survive.

Orange

I miss the colour of the sunrise, the thought that hope is still out there, but for me, in many ways it has faded.

Yellow

I wish that I was able to feel the colour still, yellow means happiness, happiness means compassion, compassion means love.

Green

Green was the colour of home, my safe and warm place. It was where life began, and then, where it ended.

Blue

I miss her the child. She always wore blue.

Indigo

The colours all swirl around my head, merging together, natural colours and manufactured ones becoming one. They no longer seem so different now and become darker turning to indigo, indigo.

Violet

I loved violet. It was always my favourite. The colour of peace, and beauty. The colour that made me different. The one that made me human. But that is all behind me.

I will live in all the colours



EMILY EDGE Third Form

DRAGONS

[I think of what the world can be
A vision of the one I see]
I remember you with a halo
With a smile that could defeat any monster,
And love a dead dragon back to life.
You were the hero of my fairytales,
Not the princess in the tower,
But the dragon holding siege.

[Cause every night I lie in bed, the brightest colours fill my head,
A million dreams are keeping me awake]

It was a year before it happened
That you gave me my own dragon.
A small wooden one, you carved it yourself

Rough with jagged edges
And a small squinty face.

I thought it was angry with me, at first,
But you said it would protect me from the monsters beneath my bed
When you couldn't.

I hugged you tight and said I wouldn't need it.
Why would I, when you could protect me instead?

So it was fierce and brave, and made me fierce and brave, too,
Until I realised that I would need the dragon after all. [Through the dark,
through the door
Through where no-one's been before]
I lost you, then,

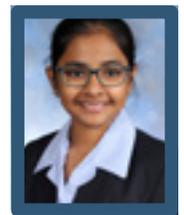
And it was more like a dream than anything.

I knew in the back of my mind you were gone,
But it just didn't seem real
That you weren't coming back.
It was like you were just not there.
Maybe you'd suddenly appear again
And we'd go off doing something somewhere
And I honestly wouldn't have been surprised,
Because it didn't feel like you'd gone.
So I was okay with it
Because I didn't really believe it.
And then I lost the dragon.

[A million dreams is all it's gonna take,
A million dreams for the world we're gonna make]

I thought, once the dragon was gone,
The other things could go too.
Maybe that would make it more real,
Make me believe you weren't coming back.

I had started to believe it after all.
I found a box,
Best to start small,
Even if I was just going to take a look.
I rummaged through,
And felt something sharp against my palm.
I hissed in pain, opened up my hand
And saw a small wooden dragon glaring back at me.



KIMI TOKALA Lower Fourth

COMPETITION WINNERS

WE ARE THE HOPE

So, we say we're Greater Manchester?

Greatest football, greatest music, greatest art

But you sit there, isolated, feeling alone.

Forgotten, ignored, invisible in a city of busy worker bees.

But you're not alone - reach out
I see you; I sense you

For you have a name, you were once a child, full of wonder, hope and expectations, which should never have been lost.

Now we are the children of Manchester

And we will not forget

We will not ignore

We hold out our hand, we make that promise to not walk by

For you are the people as we are the people.
The people who put the great into Manchester.

So, we will be a City United, an Oasis for all.

Seeking regeneration, not a lost generation

We hold out our hand

Remember my message - you will be found.



ALEENA CHAUDHRY Lower Fifth

ISLANDS

Joan was bored. She hated it when teachers read stories, voices droning on and on and on about the world wars or how the first computer was made. Greek myths sounded promising, but so had the space stories and the second world war stories.

"And Ariadne gave Theseus a ball of string to help him defeat the minotaur..."

And it was a Wednesday. Joan hated Wednesdays.

"Theseus defeated the minotaur with the help of Ariadne's help, and they escaped and sailed back home."

Joan had maths on Wednesdays, and maths made her head hurt.

"But halfway through, they stopped on an island. Theseus, tired of Ariadne, left her there, and they sailed back home."

Hold on.

Joan put her hand up. "But sir," she said, "Surely that's harsh? Ariadne helped Theseus escape, after all."

"Well," said her teacher, "Let me finish the story. Theseus forgot to change his sails, which as you should know if you had been listening, were going to be used to signal to his father that he was alive. So when his father saw the black sails were raised, devastated, he jumped into the sea below. So Ariadne was appeased."

"But was Ariadne rescued from the island?"

The teacher looked uncomfortable. "Well, no..." And then he proceeded to set everyone a homework on researching their next Greek myth.

Joan came home fuming. "Theseus and the Minotaur is the worst story in the world! It's really uninspiring!"

"Rewrite it." said her dad.

"I can't believe anyone would want to publish - What did you say?"

"Rewrite it." he said again, simply

"If you don't like it, change it. If you think it's not inspirational show a new version to the world."

"Ha." Joan said flatly. "Like anyone would publish it."

"Put it onto a blog, with lots of other stories. You could re-write them and change the world, inspiring people one story at a time."

Joan didn't like the idea of work, but she did like the story of changing the world. So that was what she did.

She re-wrote the story of Ariadne.

She re-wrote Cinderella, showing the step-sisters turned to cruelty by bad parenting.

She changed real stories too - like writing a world where Rosalind Franklin's work was recognised.

And then she got an email from a boy who was being bullied asking her to re-write his story.

She did, nervously. But the boy wrote back, saying how she had inspired him to stand up to the bullies, and now they just ignored him.

Even more people wrote to Joan, asking her to change their stories. Like the girl whose homework project idea got stolen by her best friend. And the boy who was too afraid to say anything when he knew the correct answer all along.

She wrote all their stories. And written on the first page of the blog, the first thing people would see when they checked it was:

To all those people left on islands,
You will be found.



PHOEBE HEATH Lower Fifth

HOME

I have four walls surrounding me,
A roof above my head,
A bedroom,
A bathroom,
But it is not a home.

I have a sofa and a kitchen,
A front door, a conservatory,
But still no home,
For a house is not a home and a home is not a house.

A home is where the warmth comes from more
than the heating,
Where support comes from more than the bricks.
A house is where you sleep,
But a home is where you rest.

A home is where peace exists within you,
Even if never around you.
For me, my home is across the Ocean,
It is in the arms of my mother,
And the voice of my father.

Home is in the ghosts of the loved ones I've lost,
In the laugh of my best friend
In the depths of the eyes of the one who holds my heart.
Home is in the meadow, by the huge slab of rock.

For you,
A home may be in a flower or a tree.
You may find your home in the sunset,
Amidst the warmth of the colours.
Or during the depths of night,
Staring into nothing but black.
You may find peace in the stars,
Love in the moon.
Or you may find nothing.

In a world ridden with war,
Peace seems a distant dream.
We can try and try, but
There is no guarantee.

But in times where Hope is low,
We gather to support one another
To form the home that we may be lacking.

**NADIA RAUF** Lower Sixth**RESPONSE TO 'A MILLION DREAMS'**

I closed my eyes and I
could see,
The world of my fantasies.
A place that I designed,
The world you created
for me.
And it only took,
a million dreams.

'We can live in a world
that we design',
A place we were willing
to lose our minds,
Even to be called crazy.
All for the place you
created for me,
And it only took,
a million dreams.

The brightest colours
filled my head,
Countless thoughts
left unsaid,
The place we made,
the place we dreamed,
Is where those thoughts
could be seen.
All in the world you
created for me,
And it only took,
a million dreams.

Special things that
make me smile,
The way you go that
extra mile
To see happiness on
my face,
In the place you created
for me.
And it only took,
a million dreams.

We ran away to the world
that we designed
Hope took over our bodies.
I didn't care if I seemed
crazy,
In the place you created
for me,
And it only took,
a million dreams.

Those dreams that kept
me awake,
The ones that were fulfilled,
the ones we made.
Were fulfilled by the place
you made, the place we
dreamed,
All in the world you
created for me,
And it only took,
a million dreams.

The world asks for a world
full of peace,
Filled with children's glee.
We had found that place,
It was the world you
created for me.
And it only took,
a million dreams.

Because every night
I lie in bed
All I dreamt were wishes
that you would come
and lay your head,
Next to mine,
one last time,
so, I could say thank you.
For the million dreams
we made.

**ANANYA KOTEYAR** Year 9

COMPETITION WINNERS

A MILLION DREAMS

As soon as I closed my eyes,
I felt myself tumbling through layers
of imagination
Vast oceans of creativity

I closed my eyes and saw a place
A place so faraway but so close at
the same time
A place in my dreams it felt so real

I saw a house
A house so different than what I
lived in today
A house that felt so real even though
it was in my head

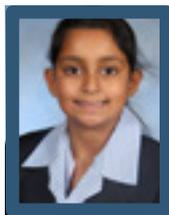
Its walls were made of knowledge
and creativity towering above all
The staircases were made of stone
encrusted with jewels from deep
under the earth
The bed was made of the softest silk
and the fluffiest feathers

In each room there are things from
far away
There are special things I compile
Each one there to make you smile

There are rooms which have been
unexplored
Like dense Amazonian jungles
Like deep, dark oceans

The gardens have plants
Plants from jungles, forests, oceans
Everywhere breathing with life

But I know this won't be here
when I wake up
So I'm going to dream
a million dreams
until this becomes real



ESHAA RAO Year 7

I'M NOT CRAZY

They can say I've lost my mind
But inside I know I'm sane
Just because I'm different from
everyone else
Why do I get the blame?

I can't be anyone else
Just accept me for being me
Just because I'm different to
everyone else
Why can't anyone let me be?

Everyone discards my dreams
as impossible
Only I know that I can do it
One day I will surprise them all
One day I'll do my bit

Every night I dream my dream
The same one every night
Of me stood on a great big stage
Doing what I think is right

I know that it is going to be hard
And no one is going to be friendly
But if I achieve my dream one day
Then maybe they'll see
me differently

For now I just want to tell my story
Everyone else is allowed to sing
They dismissed me without a
second thought
Now I want to show them what I
can bring

So let me perform for you all
Let me show you what I can do
Because they can say that I'm crazy
But inside I'm not crazy at all



LORNA ABBOTT Year 9

THESE ARE THE THINGS I WANT YOU TO SEE

Look outside the window.
What do you see?
A dull grey sky,
No clouds, no birds.

But I have dreams for you and I.
I want you to go outside
and smell the clean and fresh air,
Not the fumes of petrol and gas.

I want you to go to the beach
and see thousands of tiny shells
and pebbles,
Not bottle caps and fragments
of glass.

I want you to walk home
And see the lush green leaves
on trees,
Not the bare branches that cling on
to plastic bags.

These are the things I want you
to see.
These are the dreams I have for you
and I.

If you can make a difference,
If you can make a change,
Then my hopes and dreams will
come true.

In a few years' time,
You will look outside the window
What will you see?
An azure blue sky
Filled with white fluffy clouds.

But wait,
There is one last thing I want you
to see,
And it's how great the world can
really be.



SATVIKA RAJASHANKER Year 8

WELLBEING INITIATIVES

FEEL FAB FEB

Opportunities for wellbeing and personal development are, of course, woven into the fabric of life at Withington and these themes were brought into the spotlight as one of the strands of our Feel Fab Feb fortnight focusing on mental health and digital wellbeing.

The Sixth Form was very much the driving force for this campaign, raising money for Young Minds, a mental health charity for young people. Activities ranged from presentations in assemblies, including the Lower Sixth's Dance Competition preview; a non-uniform 'wear yellow' day and various sessions concerning the important issue of digital wellbeing. The girls successfully raised £598.

The aim was to enable everyone in our community to 'feel fab' not just in February, but all the year round.



ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

Anti-Bullying Week is a nationwide campaign run each November by the Anti-Bullying Alliance. Withington's programme for Anti-Bullying Week activities was launched in Assembly by Lower and Upper Fourth pupils. Through roleplay, they enacted scenarios around different kinds of bullying, themed on the concept that 'Change Starts with Us'. The actors wore odd socks to celebrate individuality and to promote 'Odd Socks Day' for the whole school a few days hence. They explained the idea that every individual is unique - something which is to be celebrated - and yet we are also all humans. Similarly, the socks look different - but they are all socks.

The assembly also explored techniques to avoid conflict and confrontation as well as strategies to change behaviours to improve relationships and promote wellbeing in our school and wider communities. For the remainder of the term, girls in the Third Form to Upper Fifth considered issues such as prejudice, racism and age discrimination in their PSHCE lessons. Pupils in the Third Form and Lower Fourth undertook an Anti-Bullying 'escape room' task, solving six anti-bullying puzzles requiring them to develop their understanding of verbal, physical, mental, social and cyber-bullying.

In the Junior School, Odd Socks and Children in Need fundraising were combined. The girls held a bake sale and made Pudsey headbands for Children in Need, but also wore odd socks to fundraise for the Anti-Bullying Alliance.



DIGITAL WELLBEING

One of the strands of the Feel Fab Feb fortnight was the important issue of digital wellbeing.

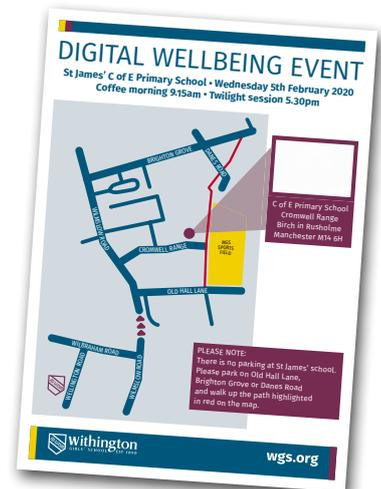
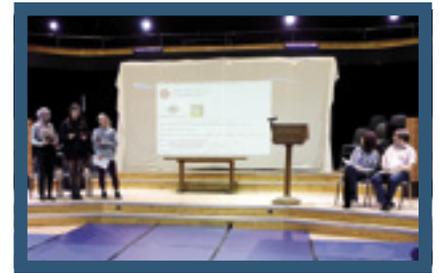
To launch Feel Fab Feb, Sixth Form e-peer supporters gave a special assembly, kicking off a series of digital support and information talks from visiting practitioners, including Digital Awareness UK and distinguished expert Mr Dick Moore.

The visiting speakers delivered information sessions for parents and for pupils from Upper II to Upper Sixth on mental health, wellbeing and digital discernment.

Mr Moore, who is a regular visitor to schools and universities across the UK to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues and has delivered talks for Radio 4 'FourThought' and TEDx, delivered talks separately to pupils and parents. His parents' presentation evening about how to support a child's mental health and wellbeing was very well received and Withington's own PSHCE staff were also on hand for conversations and questions. He offered insights into some of the knottier problems of parenting – when to talk, when to listen and how to help children develop emotional resilience and perspective. His message about putting wellbeing, relationships and working together first were certainly very much in tune with Withington's ethos and philosophy.

Digital Awareness UK have an excellent reputation for their work on internet safety and digital trends and their talks for parents were held at St James' C of E Primary School, one of our partner schools. The digital world changes rapidly and it can be hard to find the time to engage with what our children are doing online. Digital Awareness UK staff talked to parents about the rapidly evolving world of online apps and explored the steps that can be taken to look after our young people's mental health and safety online.

The assembly given by the Sixth Form e-peer supporters, supported by Ms Baylis and Mr Lockett, included lively and clear explanations about how to avoid falling prey to online scams such as phishing, virtual VPNs and adhering to the School's Acceptable Use Policy designed to keep everyone safe online. There were also some very useful tips about avoiding online distractions while using the internet to do schoolwork!



RETURN TO SCHOOL, JUNE 2020

After switching to remote learning in March, wellbeing was not overlooked - we believe the Joe Wicks daily PE lesson proved a hit but so did Mrs Birch's yoga classes for younger children; there were art and craft activities; Heads of Year provided advice and suggestions and, on the last day of term, after engaging in the scheduled Pupil Review, Senior pupils played along with their families and used virtual collaboration with other pupils to tackle the traditional House Quiz.

Soon after lockdown the School was very pleased to be able to welcome back Ms Bernie O'Neal, who had retired in July 2019 as Head of Psychology. She returned to WGS to take up a new role as a School Counsellor working alongside Miss Sarah Horsfall on a part time basis to offer support to our girls through counselling to ensure that the emotional, physical and psychological wellbeing of every pupil at Withington could be nurtured. In tandem with the Department's individual counselling work and in recognition of the impact friendships, happiness and self-esteem have on pupils, Ms O'Neal has been holding sessions to help younger girls in their friendship groups and aims to build on this in the future.



FORGING AND RENEWING FRIENDSHIPS

Within two weeks of the start of the new academic year in September 2020, all Senior and Sixth Form pupils enjoyed events and activities especially designed to enable them to establish or re-establish friendships after, for most of them, five and a half months away from School. These took the form of activities days involving a lot of fun and teamwork or, for the some of the older girls, special mentoring to help them approach the next important stages of their studies.

The new Third Form spent their first day getting to know each other and their form tutors and finding out about daily routines at WGS. Their second day took the form of a Let's Make Music Day creating a platform for pupils to get to know others across the Year group through a variety of different musical activities. Pupils had a great day of fun through music, including a carousel of ukulele band, garage band, orchestra, percussion and keyboards culminating in an end-of-day performance and review of the day with the whole Year group together in the Arts Centre. There was also a very noisy but friendly house quiz at lunch time.

In the second week, all Third Formers had another day off timetable for an activities day devised to enable new

friendships to be forged and for all girls to develop confidence and trust amongst their peers. It was a delight to see everyone tackling the challenges with an open mind, an adventurous spirit, and a great sense of fun. Activities, which included herding 'sheep' into a pen, deactivating an 'unstable bomb' and 'escaping crocodiles' on stepping-stones, spurred pupils to think creatively, develop leadership skills and work together as a team.

It was been wonderful to see the new Third Form getting to know each other and their teachers and involving themselves in a wide range of exciting activities. They made an excellent start to their first Senior School year!

Lower and Upper Fourth each had a day off timetable where they took part in team building activities and, for the Upper Fourth, an introduction to some of the skills they would need to stay nourished, warm and dry on forthcoming DoFE expeditions.

Lower Fifth attended a study skills workshop, delivered by study skills specialists Positively MAD, in which they explored a range of study techniques to enable them to make confident progress on their GCSE courses and take control of their own learning. Later on,

in the evening, there was live streaming presentation from Positively MAD for parents on how to encourage and support smart study at home. Head of Year, Mrs Parker, spoke about pastoral arrangements in this new phase of the girls' studies and Director of Studies, Mr McKenna, spoke about the current GCSE landscape.

Upper Fifth and their parents took part in an online Introduction to Withington Sixth Form event and Upper Sixth enjoyed a day-long series of workshops into university entrance interviews.

Lower Sixth began the new academic year bonding with one another and their Form Tutors over a day of activities themed around the TV show *The Crystal Maze*. Those who had just joined Withington from other schools and those who had progressed from WGS Upper Fifth worked together in their new Form groups to solve a variety of physical and mental challenges.

All-in-all each special day was most successful not only in forging old and new friendships but also imparted some extremely relevant life lessons to set each age group firmly on a path to a happy and productive year of learning, friendship and fun.

"I learnt to never stop trying, because you don't know what will happen!"
RACHEAL 7Y

"I got to know other people in my class, not just people from the same junior school as me, but people from different schools"
ERIN 7Y

"I learnt the importance of working in a group and listening to others"
EILIDH 7X

"I didn't expect that some people in my group would be really good at planning and leading during the activities"
HARMONY 7W





HUNTER



WILLIAMS





CAPTAIN: NOOR KABBANI
VICE-CAPTAIN: SAVANNAH ARORA



CAPTAIN: CODY TAYLOR
VICE-CAPTAIN: LUISA EDWARDS



SCOTT LEJEUNE



SIMON HERFORD



CAPTAIN: BRONTË HORSFIELD
VICE-CAPTAIN: FIONA TOWNSLEY



CAPTAIN: ERIN HOWELLS
VICE-CAPTAIN: KOSHIKI CHAUHAN

This has very much been a school year of two halves, but nevertheless there has been an immense amount happening in the Art Department.

Our annual Lower Fifth Art trip in October saw us travelling to the Whitworth Art Gallery. Not only were the girls spoilt for choice in the gallery's Art Garden, with a beautiful array of autumnal plants and flowers interspersed with contrasting sculptures, but there was also varied and inspirational artwork on display inside. From the inspirational tapestries, to Cezanne and the 'Unreformed' wallpapers, all exhibitions were powerful and thought-provoking, providing a great deal of food for thought for our young artists.

In the first half of the year there was a hive of activity at lunchtimes in the Art Studios. Girls from the Third Form to the Upper Fourth took part in a fantastic array of creative and artistic activities in their extra-curricular clubs including collage, drawing, painting, jewellery making, ceramics and seasonal decorations. These clubs have been supported by our wonderful Sixth Form Art Ambassadors.

All our Sixth Form Art students took part in life drawing classes, modelled by our wonderful model, Jan, who has been with us now for ten years.

Three of our Art Ambassadors delivered a topical masterclass on the day that the results of the General Election were announced. They inspired other girls to think 'outside the box' for their entries for this year's Ruth Bayley Illustration Competition, in creating a unique artefact to demonstrate activism! The puppets of Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn were extremely creative in their use of materials and very strong in their message. Well done to all involved, but

particularly Olivia McGrath, Anouska Brooks and Raaida Hossain who planned and delivered the wonderful masterclass.

At the end of the Autumn Term, our ten keen and talented Lower Sixth artists embarked upon an intense full-day practical workshop with practising artist Ian Murphy. The girls were hugely inspired by the vast array of work that Ian brought into school, ranging from small-scale and intricate sketchbook work, gathered on his world travels, to enormous mixed-media paintings. He shared with the girls his passion for recording directly from the world around him, in combination with his passion for the use of textural materials. The girls produced a great array of confident and rewarding experiments over the day, work which will greatly enrich their Art portfolios.

In the Spring Term, the Lower Fourth artists thoroughly enjoyed a textile workshop led by Sally Craig, a weaving specialist and art tutor. After looking at examples of weaving made by contemporary weavers, the girls watched demonstrations on different weaving techniques. The girls then got to work on creating their own, working hard and mastering some difficult weaving techniques as well as having lots of fun in the process.

Some of our girls from a variety of year groups were very lucky to work alongside Eleanor Mulhearn, a senior lecturer of Illustration and Animation at Manchester School of Art. The inspiring task was to create a protest poster. Eleanor said:

"It was lovely to work with your students on Friday. They engaged with themes of responsibility, communicating well and thoughtfully, migration and racism and looking to the past to move forwards."

In February our Upper Fifth and Upper Sixth Exam artists ventured to London to gather invaluable first-hand research for their examination projects. At the National Portrait Gallery they viewed the 'Everyday Icons' exhibition which included portraits of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, and a superbly jewelled sculptural portrait of Dame Zandra Rhodes. We also visited Tate Britain where we were delighted by the work of the greats such as Turner's masterful landscape drawings and paintings, and Henry Moore's tactile and powerful oversized figurative sculptures.

Our last trip of the academic year was on 24th February to Manchester Art Gallery with our Lower Fifth artists and our last physical exhibition of work was for The Living Edge School's Art competition at the Lowry Art Gallery on 7th March, where Rachel Horton won the 14 and Under category for her exquisite still-life painting.

We moved our annual Art Exhibition online in June in the form of a stunning digital show of work by our GCSE and A Level students. This was not something which we would ordinarily choose to do as you cannot match the experience of viewing artwork first-hand, but the digital presentation of work looked simply stunning and was testament to the extremely high quality of the art created by our students. Many thanks to Elliott Peterken for creating this lasting tribute to these girls.

Last, but certainly by no means least, I would like to warmly congratulate our GCSE and A Level artists who worked tremendously hard throughout their two-year courses and achieved outstanding grades in the summer. We are very proud of all of them and wish them the very best for the next stages of their education.



This year is the first in many years where there have been no changes to staff within the Biology Department. Dr Madden continues to teach within the Sixth Form, whilst also acting as the UCAS referee for the many students who apply to courses in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science. That means that the first half term is always a busy one for her as she writes more than 30 UCAS references! Mr Boyle is teaching all Senior key stages within the school and joins Miss Thorpe in teaching our Upper II girls Science this year. He also continues to provide additional support for those girls in the Sixth Form who will be sitting admissions tests as part of the university application process. Although the pandemic has meant that Pets Club is unable to run at present, Miss Thorpe continues in her role in coordinating the club and looks forward to being able to welcome our remaining hamster, Popcorn, back to school as soon as possible. Dr Kenny continues to teach across all senior key stages, to coordinate the Eco Society and is also providing additional support to some of our Sixth Form students. I also continue to teach across all Senior key stages this year as well as leading the Department through the challenges of remote learning and the return to school.

Despite the unusual circumstances this year, we were thrilled with our examination results at both A Level and GCSE and congratulate all our students. Their results are a testament to the hard work of both students and staff throughout the A Level and GCSE courses. This year saw more than 20 students taking up places at university to study Medicine or Dentistry. We also have a number of students who are going on to study courses such as Natural Science, Biomedical Science and Biology. We are always pleased to see so many students pursuing their study of the biological sciences.

As usual, we entered our students into the annual competitions run by the Royal Society of Biology: the Biology Olympiad (Upper Sixth) and the Intermediate Biology Olympiad (Lower Sixth). This year, as in previous years, we have a significant number of students who were awarded medals in these competitions. In the Upper Sixth there were seven students who opted to take part, and we were delighted that all girls achieved either a certificate or a medal (three Gold, one Silver, two Bronzes and a Highly Commended). Our Lower Sixth students faced the challenge of competing in the Intermediate Olympiad from home during

lockdown and 20 students, over 50% of the cohort, opted to take part. The girls again performed exceptionally well, with one Gold, four Silver, six Bronze and six Highly Commended or Commended certificates. Congratulations to all those who took part in these competitions. Unfortunately, our Lower Fifth students were unable to compete in the Biology Challenge this year as the competition was scheduled just at the start of the nationwide lockdown.

Due to local and national restrictions a number of our usual activities were also curtailed. These included the Edge Hill Olympiad and the A Level field trip. We have been able to rearrange the field trip and are hopeful that it will be able to go ahead in March, so that our current Upper Sixth students can put into practice the field work and ecology techniques they have been learning about.

Many of the girls continue to take full advantage of the range of extension opportunities and competitions on offer in school such as lectures through the PhilSoc group and the science extension sessions. We very much look forward to another exciting year with a new set of challenges, competitions, external speakers, trips and extension activities.

Pets Club lockdown photo & caption competition - Winner Gauravi Amandakone, 8Y



Due to the pandemic, this has been an unusual and challenging year for the Chemistry Department and our students. Despite all the difficulties, we were able to conduct live lessons during the lockdown period and we were delighted to continue teaching our pupils during this unprecedented period. The girls ought to be congratulated for their positive and mature attitude: it was a pleasure to see their commitment and willingness to engage with the learning process and to take advantage of the opportunities made available to them. A special mention should go to Upper Sixth and Upper Fifth students, who engaged in the remote lessons, completed extension activities suggested to them and shared their experiences so positively with others in the group.

We were equally delighted with our students' A Level and GCSE exam results. We congratulate all the girls on their efforts and wish them every success in their futures.

During the year, many of the Sixth Form girls have attended lectures, workshops and competitions. One example was the Spectroscopy in a Suitcase workshops organised by the RSC. This scheme gives the Lower and Upper Sixth chemists the opportunity to produce an organic compound, for example paracetamol, and analyse this and other compounds using various spectroscopy techniques. The workshops focus on challenging aspects of the Chemistry A Level specification and provide an excellent opportunity to extend and consolidate our pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Many of the regular activities run by the Department were cancelled due to the pandemic. These included the Young Analyst Competition, aimed at our Lower Sixth chemists, and the ChemQuiz, for students in Lower Fourth, Upper Fourth and Lower Fifth. Both events are team competitions where students

are provided with some tasks that are relatively familiar to them and others that are likely to be unfamiliar. The aim is for them to apply their skills to complete a range of tasks. Another cancelled event was the Salters' Festival of Chemistry, a day of interesting challenges aimed at our younger Lower Fourth pupils. All of these activities allow our students to demonstrate and expand on their existing chemistry knowledge, skills and aptitude for science and we look forward to these very worthwhile activities taking place again during the academic year 2020-2021.

Our Sixth Form candidates continue to be extremely successful in the Chemistry Olympiad and we were delighted with the increasing number of participants in this renowned competition. Over 9000 students from across the country participated and the Withington Upper Sixth cohort performed, once again, extremely well achieving 31 certificates including five golds, awarded to 8% of national candidates, 15 silver, given to 24% of national candidates and four bronzes, awarded to 30% of national candidates. A special mention to Diya Salahudin who gained the top mark in school! For the third year running seven Lower Sixth students sat the examination gaining five silver and two bronze medals.

We were equally delighted with the number of girls participating in the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge alongside more than 6000 national candidates; like the Chemistry Olympiad, this is a written exam set by university chemists in which students are expected to apply knowledge and think creatively. The competition was held online in June and the Withington Lower Sixth girls did extremely well gaining in total 30 awards: four golds, awarded to 8% of national candidates, ten silvers, awarded to 18% of all entries, and 15 coppers, awarded to 36% of national candidates. We would like to congratulate all who took part with a special mention to Zainab Shah who

won the prestigious Roentgenium award, given to the top 40 of this competition, an outstanding achievement!

The Chemistry Department has undergone some changes this academic year. In January 2020 we have said goodbye to Mrs Sharp, who left Withington to take on a new job in the pharmaceutical industry, where she will be able to use her many skills and exceptional technical ability in the field of microbiology. Dr Maisey has retired from teaching after 24 years of loyal service at Withington, not only in Chemistry but also in a number of other roles during her time working in the school, including as Coordinator of Gifted and Talented and of Trips. I would like to thank both Dr Maisey and Mrs Sharp for their invaluable contributions to life at Withington and wish them all the best for the future.

The Chemistry Department continues to count on the expertise of Mr Eckersall and Dr Smiles, and we have been very fortunate to welcome Dr Pitts, a highly experienced chemistry teacher, and Miss Lea, herself an undergraduate chemistry student, to our Chemistry team in January of 2020. Dr Pitts comes from Stockport Grammar School and Miss Lea has started her first job as a chemistry technician. Both Dr Pitts and Miss Lea have settled into life at Withington seamlessly and I have no doubt that they will help the Department continue to go from strength to strength.

I feel extremely grateful for the dedication and contributions of Mr Eckersall, Dr Pitts, Dr Smiles and Miss Lea. It would be impossible to offer such a varied and successful range of experiences to our students without the efforts of all Chemistry staff and it is a pleasure to work in such a supportive, professional and positive environment. We look forward to continuing this highly encouraging and close-working relationship with our girls over the coming year.



Obviously, this year has been a very unusual one but it is good to reflect on what we have achieved. We were lucky enough to fit in a trip to Oxford one Saturday in November with our GCSE and A Level students to visit the *Last Supper in Pompeii* exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum. This contained various artefacts from Pompeii, including the resin cast of a girl and various pots and beautiful mosaics which helped to build a picture of daily life and meals. The group also enjoyed wandering around the cast gallery of the museum and listening to story time! As well as walking down to Christchurch College and looking around the town, we were treated to a guided tour of Brasenose College by former pupil, Elin Donnelly. We were so lucky that she took the time to show us round and describe the life of a typical student in college.

We also started to reinstate our local Scrabble competitions with GCSE pupils, fitting in a visit to Manchester Grammar School in December and Manchester High

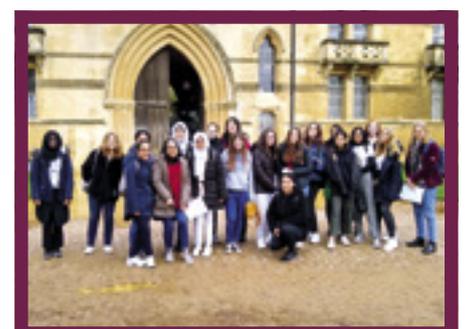
School for Girls in January. These are wonderful opportunities for the girls to take part in a stimulating and fun activity with like-minded students from other schools. Unfortunately, the Classical Association Reading Competition and lectures at the University did not take place this year.

We continued with our visits to Mauldeth Road Primary School, introducing their Year 5 pupils to Latin in a fun lunchtime session, this year with a group of eight Sixth Form students, who had previously studied Latin to GCSE. As ever, it was encouraging to see the enthusiasm of the primary school pupils and how our students grew in confidence presenting their lesson to the whole class. Unfortunately, we were not able to run the Roman Games afternoon in June this year and have not been able to return this October, but our link with the school will continue when possible.

The Summer Term was obviously very difficult for everyone and I would like

to thank my two colleagues for coping wonderfully well with the demands of online teaching. It was truly a team effort and they did their utmost to ensure our pupils received a consistent education, pushing the boundaries of their own knowledge and experience. Luckily, we had already been using the online textbooks and OneNote so we were able to expand our use of this, rather than start afresh. Sadly, Mrs Easby left us at the end of the Summer Term but we were pleased to welcome Mr Banks, a versatile linguist, to the Department, who had already taught on a temporary basis at school in the German Department.

We were pleased to be able to introduce Classical Civilisation as an A Level subject this September. Although the class is very small, we hope that this subject may attract girls who are enthused by their studies of the Roman world but may have struggled with the language work. We wait to see how things progress.



There has been a range of different activities taking place in Design Technology this year and a great deal of change and adaptation too. From seeing the amazing work of our first cohort of GCSE students to new projects, there has been plenty of opportunity for pupils and staff to share their passion and drive for designing and making.

Our GCSE students each undertook a substantial design challenge and worked on developing ideas and models for their prototypes, recording their progress electronically. From sustainable crafting kits to educational books to VIP festival souvenir packages, each one of our talented group went on a very individual journey of design discovery. Sadly, their goals were cut short by the pandemic and they were not able to enjoy all their hard work coming together as a collective. Unable to share their work with friends and family was disappointing but a display in the school Reception was an opportunity for the school community to see how ingenious and creative they had been and to see how successful they had been in achieving their well-earned results.

During the Autumn Term, the Lower Fifth had the chance to visit Siemens Engineering in Manchester. They threw themselves into each activity on offer, making the most of the hands-on practical tasks they were given to try. It was interesting after the visit to hear

that they had their eyes opened to vital and important engineering careers on offer to them right here on their doorstep. I am sure one or two will be pursuing these interests into their Sixth Form studies and onto university.

New projects were introduced into Key Stage 3, with the Third Form thoroughly enjoying the designing and making of a range of paper, card and plastic products. They quickly got to grips with the idea of developing their designs into a range of stickers and notebooks that were suitable to be sold in any high street stationers. The Lower Fourth experimented with using a range of plastics and creating everyday useful 'tech' holders, such as mobile phone stands and ear-bud holders. Their ideas for styling and personalising this project were amazing and they really did put their own spin on all their work. The Upper Fourth had the chance to design and make electronic mini light boxes that used a combination of materials and processes. They were able to use existing skills, improving and adapting these to stretch their technical knowledge and practical experience to make successful prototypes that were fit for purpose and fulfilled their own design briefs.

During remote lessons all our DT pupils were able to continue to enjoy their designing and learning through mini activities. It was very heartening at the end of term to hear from several

students who told us that they had greatly enjoyed their DT lessons online. Having the opportunity to be creative, whether it was using technology or using paper and pen, gave them an outlet to communicate ideas that were not confined by being in lockdown and isolated from working collaboratively. We were so grateful that the essence of community and group work that DT provides translated through any barriers that a global pandemic threw at our pupils!

At the end of the Summer Term Mrs Zoe Goldman, a longstanding member of the DT team, left Withington to pursue new creative challenges and goals. We also said a sad farewell and bon voyage to Ms Ilona Kiss, both DT teacher and technician, who has emigrated with her family to Melbourne, Australia. We shall greatly miss them both and the fantastic contributions they made not only to the DT Department, but also to the school community and school activities. I know both will stay in touch and will keep up their love of designing and making and share these with us from wherever they are in the world!

Overall it has been a very busy Design Technology year, with so much activity, new ideas and productivity in all areas of pupil work and we have so many more ideas we still want to pursue!



It is a delight to be able to share with you some of the many highlights of our year in the Drama Department. We were delighted with the GCSE and A Level results achieved by our Drama students this Summer. Whilst the process for awarding grades was different this year due to the pandemic, the results reflect the dedication, commitment and passion for learning demonstrated by all our students.

The real highlight of our year was our school production of *Beasts and Beauties* by Carol Ann Duffy. Thankfully, the production took place in February 2020, only a month before the School went into lockdown. We are very relieved that after all the months of preparation and rehearsals, that the event took place ahead of the lockdown, enabling us to showcase the real talent of Withington girls.

In addition to the whole school production, the Drama Department has also shared many exceptional performances in the studio and Arts Centre this year. Studio performances, including the GCSE and A Level devised performances, showcased the exceptional writing, devising and performance skills of our students. Many students from the across the school community came to watch the lunchtime showcases following the extremely successful examination performance evenings,

which were well attended by parents, family, students, and staff.

Live theatre trips continued to be an important feature during 2019-20 and these are reported in the Drama section of this Newsletter.

There were several changes within the Drama Department last year. I continue to lead the Drama Department as Head of Drama and Mrs Corner continues to work as a part time Drama teacher. Mrs Corner and I now deliver all Drama lessons to Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 pupils. 2019 leaver Ella Rosenblatt joined us from September 2019 until March 2020 as Assistant Performing Arts Technician. Ella distinguished herself as an organised, efficient and motivated member of the Department and was a great technician assistant and show promoter. Elliott Peterken continues to offer his outstanding skills in set design and marketing for all our projects, no matter how small and we are extremely grateful for his expertise.

The Drama Department continues to thrive with excellent support offered by Mr Joe Walsh, our Performing Arts Technician. Mr Walsh continues to deliver the ever-popular Tech Club and Garage Band. He is a valuable member of the Department who supports and mentors the GCSE and A Level students exceptionally well, whilst offering his knowledge and expertise in sound and

lighting design to all students during allocated lessons. He is a dedicated member of the Drama Department whose skills were utilised further during lockdown when many projects required filming, editing and processing. Mr Walsh hosted and produced the Senior School version of Radio WGS, a weekly podcast which was launched two weeks after the School went into lockdown to offer an engaging, light-hearted and entertaining way to keep pupils in touch with School life.

LAMDA Speech and Drama lessons continue to remain extremely popular with our students, who are taught by our skilled and dedicated LAMDA team. Ms Fiona Paul, Ms Kelly Hotten, Ms Naomi Radcliffe and Ms Susan Guest deliver high quality, engaging lessons to our girls, and continued to teach remotely during lockdown, ensuring that the girls were able to develop their confidence, vocal and physical expression even whilst at home.

Our extra-curricular programme continues to grow, allowing students and staff to explore their own interests beyond the criteria and time limitations of curriculum drama. It helps bring girls of different ages together and projects are shared with parents and friends. We are very excited about the projects planned for 2020-2021 and very much hope you enjoy reading about our projects this year.



This year once again saw large numbers of girls opt for Economics when choosing their courses at A Level. This is a reflection of the continued popularity of the subject and its relevance to our everyday lives. It is going to be an interesting year full of significant events that will have a huge impact on our economy, making it a very exciting year to be involved with the subject. The girls who started the course this year will be studying the subject through some of the biggest changes in our economy for generations: we are indeed living in interesting times.

The A Level results were once again excellent with many girls choosing to study Economics or a related degree at university. During the year, the Department's extra-curricular offers have given students wider experiences that will develop their skills and offer great

background to university applications. The school team once again performed very well at the Chartered Accountants (ICAEW) business skills event and gained a lot from the experience: we are still awaiting the final results as the competition was delayed but the entries look very competitive so far. Many of our students entered the Royal Education Society essay competition and the John Locke Institute essay competition producing some incredibly well thought through and interesting essays.

A team of Lower Sixth students competed in the Institute for Economic Affairs Budget Competition and, in a very competitive process, made it through to the national finals and were eventually placed as runners up. There was also success in the Economic Horizon competition run in conjunction with the Bank of England where again some of our

Lower Sixth students made it through to the national finals. To add to this another group of Lower Sixth students also made it through to the national rounds of the Institute for Fiscal Studies Student Investor Challenge and had the opportunity to pit themselves against the best in the country at time where the stock market was incredibly volatile. Students were also accepted onto various work experience and internship placements at such places as The Institute for Economic Affairs, Morgan Stanley and HSBC.

We are looking forward to another exciting year in the Department and wish all of our Economics alumnae great success at universities this year on courses that range from PPE, Politics & International Relations, Geography and Psychology to Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry.



It has been another busy and successful year for the English Department, despite the fact that lessons were taught remotely from March and this led to the inevitable curtailment of some of our usual activities. We have embraced new technological challenges and opportunities with enthusiasm and have extended our repertoire of teaching methods as a result of the constraints imposed by the pandemic.

Girls in the Upper Fifth and Upper Sixth achieved excellent results at GCSE and A Level and several Sixth Form students have taken up places at university to study English or English-related courses. We wish them all well.

In September 2019 we welcomed Mrs Dalton-West back from her sabbatical. Her return, however, was short-lived as she left us in July 2020 to take up a teaching position at The Latymer School in London: we wish her well in her relocation. Miss Choudhury joined us in September 2020 and has already established herself as a valuable member of the Department; even though her introduction to the School has been under exceptional circumstances she has adapted quickly to remote and blended learning.

Planned theatre trips were unable to happen this year because of the lockdown but we have managed to fit in a number of activities, some of which happened remotely. In November we welcomed the popular author Frances Hardinge into school: Key Stage 3 pupils were entranced by her wildly imaginative tales and intrigued by the processes involved in producing them. It really was an insightful glimpse into the world and the mind of a writer and some girls were inspired to create their own creative writing as a result of the visit.

Our two debating clubs – Junior Debating, led by Mrs Stockton and Senior Debating, led by Miss Furlong – attracted ever-increasing numbers of pupils; topics for discussion were wide and varied and the girls involved impressed at every level with their sophisticated and well-supported arguments and confident delivery.

The Sixth Form Book Club, run jointly with Manchester Grammar School and Manchester High School for Girls, ran until lockdown and several of our pupils chaired sessions and led interesting discussions. We hope the Book Club will restart as soon as restrictions are lifted.

Early in the Autumn Term several of our pupils entered the English Heritage Poetry Competition: *Untold Stories* which aimed to showcase people and stories often omitted from the history books. The results are yet to be announced but we hope you enjoy reading some of the entries in the Creative Writing section of this Newsletter.

Scrawl, the student magazine, has continued this year under the leadership of Heather Goodwin, Cat Alvaro and Ifra Ahmed. We have been delighted to welcome many more Third and Fourth Form girls into the *Scrawl* writing community – what a pool of writing talent we have!

Once again, I would like to thank all the members of the English Department: Mrs Bowie, Miss Choudhury, Mrs Edge, Miss Furlong and Mrs Stockton for their dedication and unstinting hard work which continues to make English an enjoyable and challenging subject for all our pupils.



In spite of the drastic shift to teaching and learning that we all had to make in March, due to the pandemic, there is still much to report from the Food and Nutrition Department. Firstly, the examination results were once again excellent. It is a genuine pleasure to teach such enthusiastic, creative, and conscientious students.

I am very proud to be leading the Food and Nutrition Department and we welcome Mrs Kerry Levene, who has joined our team, offering her talents one day a week, as a Food and Nutrition Technician. Mrs Levene is an inspiring and highly creative teacher of Design Technology and she joined Withington in September. Mrs Da Silva continues her invaluable role as a Food and Nutrition Technician, and I am delighted to report that she is now teaching some senior school pupils. Mrs Da Silva collaborates with the Eco Society as well as helping Mrs Howling with the Junior Outdoor Club.

We are all keen advocates of recycling, promoting energy conservation and sustainability, and encouraging pupils to use seasonal foods and where possible, to buy locally produced ingredients.

The revised Key Stage 3 lessons have been well received and they are supporting our pupils who choose to study GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition. The educational emphasis remains, to prioritise the learning opportunities for students to improve their practical skills and to embed food nutrition knowledge to support their health and wellbeing. With the continued uncertainty that we face, due to the pandemic, the significance of managing one's health and wellbeing has never been more relevant. Food and Nutrition offers so many benefits and rewards. An opportunity to engage in a cooking or baking session helps to distract the mind and offers a form of escapism and relaxation hopefully rewarded with something delicious to share with others

During the remote teaching and learning that took place during the Summer Term we were delighted to invite our Lower Fifth Food students into school for some intense practical skills sessions. The girls had a full day of practical work, practising and perfecting important food preparation skills that are examined in the Upper Fifth. The girls were enthusiastic and worked diligently throughout the day. When the time arrived to leave school, they declared they were exhausted but proud of their achievements.

The Department continues to participate in numerous outreach initiatives; SHiNE, NWGT, and Taster Days. Due to the pandemic we were unable to offer summer school sessions, but we are participating in a live, virtual cooking lesson for NWGT pupils.

I would like to thank Mrs Da Silva for the unfailing support she gives to me and for her enthusiasm, commitment and invaluable contributions to the continuing success and popularity of the subject.



The previous year will certainly be an unforgettable one for reasons we could never have predicted at the start of the academic year. In the Autumn we launched the annual Lower and Upper Fourth trip to Paris and Poitiers and had reserved tickets for Parc Astérix, the Château de Blois, the Puy du Fou and Futuroscope. We showed clips of the venues to our classes and we were all looking forward to discovering the delights of the new shows and attractions. However, lockdown restrictions meant that sadly the trip had to be postponed. The staff language courses which had been planned to Santander and Lucca as part of our project also had to be postponed, but we are delighted to announce that we have been allowed another year in which to complete the initiative and we are intending to continue to work on improving our language skills in the meantime.

When the announcement came that schools were to close at the end of March, we quickly seized the opportunity to set up notebooks for all our classes on OneNote and ensure we knew how to contact our pupils via Microsoft Teams. We had planned to start using OneNote with a number of our classes during this academic year, but immediately realised what an asset it would be to enable us to share material with our students. I would like to thank my colleagues:

Ms Catherine Ositelu, Mrs Anne Humblet and Ms Angela Siddons for their willingness to put in the extra time at such short notice to ensure we could use the technology both efficiently and effectively. The Department embraced the changes and did all they could to make the transfer as swift and successful as possible to guarantee continuity for the girls. Communication and support were key and we met regularly as a department on Teams to share ideas and experiences and to celebrate the successful delivery of lessons in such challenging times. My colleagues were keen that the girls should continue to benefit from a range of materials as they would have done in the classroom and they worked out how to embed audio in PowerPoints and how to share audio files and clips such as songs on YouTube. I am so grateful to them for their dedication and hard work, creating materials and coming up with such innovative ideas to keep the girls motivated and learning. We enjoyed singing *Léon le Caméléon* with Third Form and reading *La Rébellion des Crayons* to improve their knowledge of colours. The Lower Fourth had learned about cafés in France so they were given instructions on how to make and decorate a crêpe en français and were encouraged to share pictures of their finished creations. Food was also on the menu for the Upper Fourth who watched Mr Bean's antics at the restaurant and had to create the dialogue as well as finding out how

to make a fondue. The girls also created powerful and moving poems recording their experiences of Le confinement – lockdown - using their knowledge of the past tense. The course finished as usual with the compelling and intriguing film *A la folie, pas du tout* and girls were asked to use their knowledge of the future tense to predict what would happen. The Lower Fifth worked with interest on the GCSE material, but we made sure there was time to listen to Francis Cabrel's song *Octobre* to practise the future tense as well as watch *Peppa Cochon Faire des Crêpes*. The Lower Sixth were keen not to fall behind and worked with both interest and dedication. We must make a special mention of our Upper Fifth and Sixth classes, whose final term was unlike anything they or we could have imagined. We thank them for their good grace and willingness to continue with lessons. We enjoyed the bridging courses with the girls carrying on to A Level and could not wait for the opportunity to teach them in person. We wish our talented Upper Sixth every success in their future studies and thank them in particular for their enthusiasm and good humour throughout the course. Although we had envisaged a very different final few weeks for their studies, we were soon all enjoying having the opportunity to watch and discuss two films: *Le Jeu* and *Mauvaises Herbes*, as well as discovering their favourite French places and reasons why they had chosen to study French.



This has certainly been an unprecedented year for the Geography Department, but I am delighted to report that the A Level and GCSE results were excellent. Very pleasingly a high percentage of the Upper Sixth girls have now gone on to study Geography at university which reflects their enjoyment of the subject.

It is fair to say that the overriding consequence of this pandemic on the Geography teaching programme has been the need to cancel or postpone the large number of external activities that had been planned for the various Year groups.

The Geography Department has always carried out a large number of fieldwork days during the course of a year with each Year group having the opportunity to investigate 'real' Geography whilst developing their knowledge and experience of a range of fieldwork

techniques. However, unfortunately the Upper Fifth girls have missed out on their two days of Physical and Human Geography fieldwork and the proposed residential trip to Yorkshire in October for the Lower Sixth girls was also not able to go ahead. We are, however, really hoping that this will be able to take place later in the academic year.

Local fieldwork has continued to take place, however, with strict adherence to the necessary COVID-19 health and safety regulations. The Third Form have investigated the area around school, whilst the Upper Sixth girls spent a morning in the Northern Quarter which is their 'Near Place' A Level case study.

July 2020 should have been our biennial trip to Iceland with five days of action-packed activities planned. It was extremely disappointing for the girls involved when the trip had to be cancelled but we will certainly return to

this spectacular landscape once we are permitted to do so.

This year has also been characterised by the major increase in the use of technology as the Geography Department adapted to the need for remote and now blended learning. It has certainly meant that learning has been able to progress almost uninterrupted and Zoom calls have been invaluable for enabling talks and lectures to still go ahead. For example, the Geographical Association are running a series of online lectures to enhance A Level learning. Girls have either been able to attend the lectures 'live' or at a later date, and this flexibility has been invaluable in these uncertain times. With topics such as 'Trading with the dragon: China in Africa' and 'Impacts of climate change on infectious diseases', these lectures are excellent for extending A Level knowledge and understanding.



Whilst, for us all, this has been an extraordinary year for all the wrong reasons, German at least has continued to enjoy a state of rude health at Withington Girls' School.

We have welcomed two wonderful new classes to the language in the Third Form, who are already impressing us with their enthusiastic engagement with even the trickiest aspects of German pronunciation. Significantly, for the first time ever, we have 'gone paperless' from beginners through to Sixth Form, with every class doing all their classwork, home learning and tests within the safe and organised environs of OneNote. Whilst us oldies might well mourn the passing of the exercise book, the move to the virtual realm certainly has its upside: never again will a photocopied handout go adrift in a schoolbag, and any pets with an appetite for chewing homework will find it significantly harder to swallow from here on in!

From this September, I have joined Frau Siddons in spreading the love for German to the pupils of Lower Fourth, whose numeracy in the target language is already second to none, as they have grappled ably with German numbers and sums this autumn term.

It is all change in Upper Fourth, with the introduction of a new electronic coursebook *Zoom 2*. This dynamic and colourful resource, which leads on seamlessly from the Year 8 book, features German language audio and video clips, and an additional suite of interactive activities and worksheets available online to every pupil.

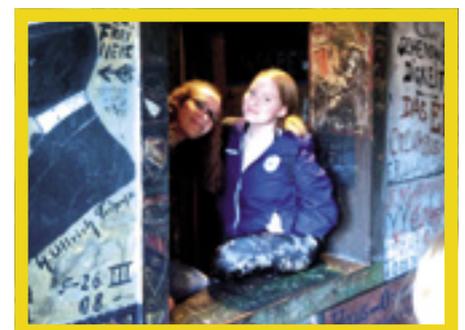
It is encouraging to note that the pandemic has not dampened pupils' enthusiasm for our twin German clubs; Upper Fourth have continued to enjoy German Culture Club with me, tackling German language adverts, chart hits and TV shows in this term alone, whilst Upper

Fifth have benefited from the listening ear and helpful input of Frau Siddons at the weekly German Conversation Club.

At GCSE, the fact that the external examinations in German were cancelled should in no way diminish the great achievement of Upper Fifth of 2019-20, whose efforts throughout the course were recognised, and we have been delighted to welcome five of those students onto the A Level course in Lower Sixth.

It is certainly sad that, because of the global pandemic, all school trips abroad have been put on hold for the foreseeable future. We remain hopeful that our mooted interdepartmental excursion to Berlin with History will happen at some point before too long, and we are lucky to have very happy memories of our latest excursion to Heidelberg in October 2019 with Upper Fifth still fresh in our minds. You can read about that elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Alles Gute für das kommende Jahr!



This year has been an extremely challenging one for all of us, but there have been many positive moments and much that we feel proud of within the History Department. Enthusiasm for History remains high amongst all Year groups and the uptake of the subject at both GCSE and A Level is strong. Despite the unsettling circumstances facing our examination groups in the 2020 season, we were extremely proud of the grades our students received; they were all extremely well deserved and reflected months of hard work. Katie Bhanja has taken up her place at Edinburgh to read History whilst Taniya Mahmood secured her place to read History at Manchester. Congratulations also go to Ella Myers, who has taken up her place to read History at Oxford after a gap year. We were also delighted with the very high grades earned by our GCSE students.

Although it feels like a lifetime ago, the last academic year started with some genuine highlights for the History Department, including the regional heat of the Historical Association's Great Debate, which we hosted here at Withington. This year's question asked, 'Should we judge historical figures by the morals of today?' and we were delighted that Deia Penn in the Upper Sixth was awarded the runner-up position. November 2019 saw us welcoming Dr

Anindita Ghosh into school to deliver a lecture entitled The Long Road to Indian Freedom. Dr Ghosh is Professor of Modern Indian History at the University of Manchester and she gave a fascinating and informative talk which explored the role of nationalism, economics, Gandhi and the Second World War in explaining the 1947 Indian Independence Act.

When School closed in March, we unfortunately had to postpone a number of events including the *Histories of the Unexpected* roadshow and a collaboration with the Religious Studies Department involving the *We Were There Too* project. We look forward to rescheduling these events in the future and we continue to embrace the plethora of virtual opportunities to explore history which have appeared in recent months. We were delighted with the enthusiasm shown by our students for the Schools History Project lockdown essay writing competition. Students were asked, 'If 1066 is said to be the most important date in English history, what is the equivalent in another country?' and we had a superb response from all Year groups. After a careful selection process, the essays from Eilis Mathur in the Upper Fifth and Heather Goodwin in the Upper Sixth were chosen to represent Withington in the national competition.

Both staff and students were quick to adapt to the new way of working during remote History lessons and classes continued to progress well through their courses. Our Sixth Form historians contributed to History Podcasts for both Senior and Junior students and this built on the excellent impression they had made in March when they led an assembly on the vibrant history of Manchester as part of the Junior School's History Week. The History and Politics Society has continued to flourish as HAPSOC this year, and we look forward to a schedule of virtual sessions in the months ahead.

It remains a huge privilege to lead the History Department. This year has reminded us of the significance of history to the world today and of how, in the words of Mark Twain, "history doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes". Whether we are looking at pandemics, parliamentary sovereignty or the Black Lives Matter movement, there has perhaps never been a more important time to educate young people about History and to equip them with the skills to question and contextualise the events they are witnessing. I would like to thank Mrs Parker and Mrs Kimpton-Smith for their continued contributions and commitment to the life of the Department.



Three years ago, the School launched its BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) scheme where every girl in the Senior School brings their own mobile device to school. During lockdown we learnt how essential these would become in allowing girls to continue their learning remotely. This too has been extended to include the Juniors from September 2020.



This was the third year of Cyber Discovery, HM Government's Cyber Schools Programme - its goal is to ensure that many more people enter the cyber security profession in the coming years.

A number of girls from the Upper Fourth to the Upper Sixth took up the challenge which was split into four stages. At each stage girls were asked to complete a set of fun, interactive challenges to find a secret code; each task represented realistic scenarios and threats faced by actual practitioners in the field of cyber security.



National Cyber Security Centre

A team of Lower Fourth girls (Haleema Ashraf, Sama Beden, Siena Chae, Olivia Harou and Kimi Tokala) entered this year's CyberFirst Girls Competition – a cyber security competition run by the National Cyber Security Centre (part of GCHQ). The competition encourages more girls into the exciting world of problem solving, creativity, team working and applying knowledge to real world situations, in the context of Cyber Security.

Over 3,000 teams took part from all corners of the UK and the team was placed in the top 10 within the northwest in the online round and qualified for one of 10 regional finals.

The girls completed ever increasingly complex tasks at the regional final held in Manchester. Many congratulations go to the WGS team.



UK Bebras
Computational
Thinking
Challenge



The TCS
Oxford Computing Challenge

All our Upper Fourth girls took part in this year's UK BEBRAS Computational Thinking Challenge. Girls were asked to solve a number of online puzzles based on problems that Computer Scientists often meet. Nationally, over 130,000 pupils entered at intermediate level and we were incredibly pleased to find out that over 25 of our Upper Fourth girls were placed in the top 10% nationally, all of whom were invited to compete in the TCS Oxford Computing Challenge. Special congratulations to Aysha Malik who was best in School.



The Perse Coding
Team Challenge

This year several teams entered into the Perse Coding Challenge. Teams of Upper Fourth, Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth girls worked together to code solutions to a number of problems. Congratulations go to Grace Adebawale, Ayokunmi Alade, Daisy Button, Pakinam El Seehy, Sonali Koku Hannadige, Grace Lu and Dina Taher who qualified for the second round which took place during lockdown. Our second year of entry saw us move up the national rankings into the top 25!



The Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award, known as iDEA is an international programme that helps develop digital, enterprise and employability skills. To achieve the Bronze Award, girls need to have a minimum of 250 points and these points must be made up of at least 50 from each core category (Citizen, Worker, Maker, Entrepreneur). With courses ranging from five to 20 points this amounts to over five hours of work. To achieve the Silver Award, girls need to have completed all courses in at least four categories (Citizen, Worker, Maker, Entrepreneur, Gamer). Senior girls were encouraged to complete their Bronze Award by the end of the Upper Fourth.

Girls proved that they were up to the challenge and a growing number have already completed their Silver Award.

This year saw the introduction of new initiatives to encourage girls to embrace and extend their coding skills.



CoderDojo

At the Junior Code Club, girls enjoyed a programme of activities which utilised their coding skills to make their own games, animations, and websites using coding languages such as Scratch. It proved such a popular addition to the extra-curricular programme that we had to alternate the groups of girls attending!

The Senior Coder Dojo branched out into the world of physical computing with a range of activities built around the micro:bit and Raspberry Pi. Girls particularly enjoyed building and programming their remote-controlled vehicles.



For a little light relief during lockdown a group of girls helped us build our very own virtual school within Minetest (a Minecraft clone).

The ICT and Computer Science Department at Withington continued to make excellent progress over the year and we were very pleased with both the GCSE and A Level Computer Science results. Computer Science continues to grow with 13 girls starting GCSE in September 2020.



The use of mobile technology and social networking sites remains incredibly popular amongst the girls and we encourage parents to keep abreast of emerging technologies and their daughters' online activities. Further information and advice can be found on the Digital Awareness UK, ChildNet and ThinkYouKnow websites.

As always, thanks go to the ICT technical team who work tirelessly to keep the computer network running smoothly.

The academic year of 2019-20 was dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. After the March 2020 lockdown, Withington embarked on remote learning with all year groups. Over the last four years the Mathematics Department has fully embraced the School's digital initiative and use of OneNote, so we were well placed to make the transition to teaching pupils at home. The Mathematics teachers worked collaboratively to produce videos to support pupils at home, whilst meeting girls live via Microsoft Teams to iron out any issues. Upper Fifth pupils, having finished their GCSE course, studied enrichment topics on proof and advanced algebraic skills, whilst the Upper Sixth were given the option to study Decision Maths and Advanced Statistics, the latter taking examples from the pandemic to demonstrate the concept of statistical significance. Although this was a very challenging time, I am very proud of how quickly we adapted to this new way of working and how fortunate the pupils were to be able to continue with their studies.

On a very wet day in December, Mr Parry and I accompanied 12 girls from the Upper Fifth to the GCSE Maths in Action day at Salford University. The aim of the day was to inspire pupils to look at the ways in which Mathematics is used in everyday life. James Grime, one of the leading bloggers in Mathematics, discussed how encryption is used to keep traffic on the internet secure and how extra digits are included to scan for

errors. Matthew Scroggs, from Cambridge University, did an amazing talk on how 2D computer screens are used to play computer games like Pacman and Asteroids, and in particular how players reappear when they exit and re-enter the screen from different sides to produce cylindrical and donut shaped three dimensional motions. The day ended with a very insightful talk by scientific broadcaster Emily Grossman, who looked at how everyday headlines can result in the misinterpretation of statistical data.

Under the guidance of Mrs Statter, 2019-20 saw significant success for our Senior and Junior UKMT Challenge Teams. In December, our Senior team of Lucy Mehandjieva, Amy Ponter, Jessica James and Imogen Breeze came second in the North-West regional finals and were invited to take part in the National Finals in London in February. The team worked hard ahead of the day producing a poster on Structure and Symmetry in Chemistry, and although they were unplaced on the day, they thoroughly enjoyed the competition at the Royal Horticultural Halls in Westminster. In early March, our Junior Team of Zunaira Shah, Sonali Koku Hannadige, Uma Abbas and Anika Ramesh, followed in the footsteps of the Seniors by winning their North-West regional final. The National Final was due to take place in London in June but was unfortunately cancelled due to the pandemic.

Girls from all years continued to take part in the UKMT individual challenges. We started in October with the

Mathematical Olympiad for Girls (MOG); seven girls took part in this extremely challenging 2½ hour paper with Imogen Breeze achieving a Distinction. MOG was closely followed by the Senior Challenge for pupils in the Sixth Form, who achieved five Gold, three Silver and 13 Bronze Awards. Congratulations to Imogen Breeze, Jessica James and Diya Salahudin who subsequently achieved merits on the second round Senior Kangaroo paper. In February, all members of the Fifth Form sat the UKMT Intermediate Challenge; overall, they achieved eight Golds, 35 Silver and 34 Bronze Awards. Special congratulations go to Ayokunmi Alade and Grace Lu, who achieved best in Upper and Lower Fifth respectively, and to Sonali Koku Hannadige, from the Upper Fourth, who sat the paper a year young, and achieved a Gold Award. During the June lockdown, the Junior Challenge moved online, with all pupils in the Third Form and Lower Fourth taking part. Overall, they achieved 12 Gold, 38 Silver and 52 Bronze Awards. There was, unfortunately, no second-round competition - but well done to Bella Mulcock and Uma Abbas who achieved the highest scores in the Third and Lower Fourth Forms respectively.

There is no doubt that 2019-20 has been a challenging year, I would like to thank the department of Mrs Fletcher, Ms Kusznir, Mr Parry, Mrs Collard, Mrs Kochhar, Mrs Statter and Dr Terrill for their dedication and hard work, which has enabled the pupils to maintain progress throughout the pandemic.



2019-2020 was another busy and successful year for Music despite being a year with a difference! The Musical year began as normal with preparations for Founders' Day at The Bridgewater Hall. Pupils, family and friends enjoyed the musical performances from the Senior Percussion Ensemble, Harp Ensemble and Stage Band. The Senior Choir gave a poignant performance of *Fields of Gold* and were then joined by the Third Form to sing a beautiful performance of *Hallelujah*.

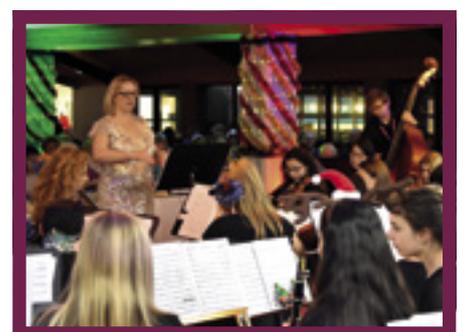
As we entered the new academic year, GCSE and A Level Music students set to work on their compositions immediately upon their return to school in September with their compositions performed and recorded live by visiting instrumental staff in March, the week before lockdown. This was a week to remember and was certainly 'all hands to the deck' to complete all recordings!

Despite the unusual situation, both GCSE and A Level students enjoyed much success in their Summer 2020 results, and Head Girl Kea Bell secured her place to study Film Music at Leeds College of Music and Katie Mei secured her place to study Medicine at Queen Mary University of London.

Let's Make Music Day has now become an established tradition as part of the Induction Programme during the summer term for the new Third Form intake. Despite the restrictions, the Music Department were determined that the Third Form girls would still be able to enjoy a day of Music in September and *Let's Make Music Day* took place with the new intake enjoying numerous workshops which included Body Percussion, Garage Band, Instrumental Ensemble and Ukuleles. The day ended with a fantastic performance of *The Blue Danube* performed by the Third Form Ensemble and a whole Year group performance of the *Twelve Bar Blues*.

Outside the classroom a varied programme of musical ensembles continued to be well attended, producing a consistently high standard of concerts throughout the year; St Ann's Carol Service, Senior Christmas Concert, Senior Citizens' Christmas Tea Party and Recital Evenings (organised by instrumental staff) showcasing individual performances and of course various ensembles and bands.

The Music Department has over the years developed strong links with the local community and it was a pleasure to welcome local elderly people to our annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Tea Party. Organised by the Houses this was a truly wonderful evening. The Sixth Form House Captains, Vice Captains, Prefects and Committee were superb in organising transport, presents and food for our guests. As ever, this evening was Withington at its best – a full team effort taking a huge pleasure in serving others.



The Department started the year on a high, full of hope and anticipation for the coming season in all our major sports, after being placed in the top 100 independent schools for sport nationally in the School Sports Magazine. This was awarded based on the previous season's successes in national competitions and is the first time that the school has featured in this publication. The 2019-20 season continued to build on that success with our netball teams progressing with ease, for the most part, through to regional and national semi-finals and finals. Senior school hockey is showing much improvement again with good cup runs, and lacrosse continues to go from strength to strength, with the highest position to date in the Nationals.

In order to provide more opportunities for girls to represent school at sport, this year we entered netball B teams into the Manchester Schools' League. Our girls certainly rose to the challenge of competing at this level, with the U12s winning the league and U13 and U14 teams finishing as runners up. Our commitment to and achievement in sporting events in the Manchester area earned us a School Games recognition award.

The wide variety of extra-curricular activities continued to be on offer, with badminton, football, fitness and Zumba being accessible for all Year groups. Our badminton squad once again were champions in the Manchester Schools' tournament and went one step further this year in the National

Schools Competition, by reaching the National Finals. Sadly, they were unable to compete at this level due to the lockdown.

Unfortunately for many of our sporting stars, COVID-19 proved to be too strong an opponent, resulting in the cancellation of many competition semi-finals and finals which meant a very disappointing end to the 2019-20 season.

The start of this season has also proved frustrating with a gradual return to extra-curricular sport both in and out of school, but without the opportunity to compete against other schools yet. The girls are still training hard and showing commitment and resilience so that when we are once again able to restart our fixtures they will be in peak form.



The Physics Department has had a busy and exciting 2019-20. Congratulations to all our pupils on their superb examination results: we are delighted that two of our seven A level students went on to study Physics at university.

The year has certainly been one like never before, with many of our usual events put on hold. In the Autumn Term a group of pupils did manage to visit AESG for an inspirational lecture from astronaut Helen Sharman and I would like to thank Mr Mitha and Mr Forrest for organising the trip. Pupils from the Third Form and Lower Fifth also enjoyed an optional trip to MOSI to visit the Sun Exhibition as well as take part in

workshops on materials and sounds. We also managed to host the Faraday Challenge Competition where we were joined by four local state schools. The CERN trip planned for March 2020 was cancelled at the last minute, but I would like to recognise the work that Mrs Lee put in to organise this trip. Despite the recent events we successfully managed to run the CREST Award Projects for the Third Form during lockdown and we had a team of seven Lower Fourth pupils who had great success in the Great Exhibition at Home competition.

Throughout lockdown, we continued to support the girls academically and I was delighted that in June we managed to

have a day of practical activities with our Lower Sixth physicists and a lesson with the Lower Fifth. Mr Mitha, our technician, continues to help and support the Department and I would like to thank him in particular for being so willing to support these days in School. On return to School, Mr Forrest's 3D Modelling Club proves to be as popular as ever and I would like to thank him for this along with supporting the Lego League team, who have begun work on this year's project 'Replay'.

Thank you to all the Physics Department for their tremendous hard work and dedication over this unusual year.



Last year we concluded that we were living in 'unprecedented times' and how true that is. This Newsletter is being written in the context of the current global pandemic, which has brought a whole new range of unprecedented events in both politics nationally and in how we operate in school.

Some parts of the system continued with a degree of normality as again Withington has continued with many students studying Politics at universities including Leeds, Bristol, Edinburgh, Birmingham and London. We offer our warmest congratulations to these students and wish them every success; they will be enthusiastic and engaged students at their chosen place of study. We are now in the process of students applying for and receiving offers for courses and several have chosen to study Politics in a range of interesting combinations including Politics and International Relations, Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE) and Human, Social and Political Science (HSPS). Although the grades were awarded in unprecedented circumstances the students should be rightly proud of them as they reflected their hard work and determination.

The Department would like to welcome Mrs Kimpton-Smith who has joined the team. She is teaching both Lower Sixth classes and has brought a great deal of

enthusiasm and insightful teaching to the Department. Politics has proved to be a popular subject with very healthy numbers again in the Lower Sixth, with two groups. Before lockdown, students from the Politics Department were also responsible for helping to run a lively and well attended HAPSOC on Tuesdays.

The current Upper Sixth should be credited for the excellent way in which they engaged with their learning during lockdown. They are now clearly enjoying the relevance of their current political studies, looking at the presidency of Trump and the 2020 election. We have currently been studying the American Constitution and the checks and balances it establishes, both in theory and in practice. We are also looking at the two main parties in America and how internally united or divided they are as well as exploring the differences between the parties. How typical a Republican is Trump? What is the future for the Democrats? The School has a very well-informed set of students who will be able to explain the reasons for, and consequences of, the outcome of the election alongside the impact of coronavirus and recent racial unrest on the result. The continued debates over current issues illustrate the contemporary and vital nature of this subject.

This Year group were also lucky enough to be invited for a visit and tour of Number 10 Downing Street during the election. Alumna, Anisha Patel, was working in the Cabinet Office and was able to grant us access to the seat of power. We recreated our own cabinet meeting in the Cabinet Room and saw large parts of the building. This was an exciting and illuminating tour and we were delighted that we were able to take this opportunity.

Lower Sixth students have enjoyed studying the topics of democracy and elections, which are extremely relevant to current events in politics although everything is being viewed through the prism of the pandemic. The Lower Sixth have recently completed their studies of whether we live in a democracy or not and the new types of electoral systems we have around the UK. The Lower Sixth can now tackle 'Is there a democratic deficit in the UK?' and can explain why we have different parties such as the SNP in power in different places and how minority governments can occur. We have also explored the impact of referenda and have studied the effect of the recent Scottish Independence referendum as well as the significance of BREXIT.

This year has, therefore, been extremely interesting and exciting for students of Politics. The term 'unprecedented' can only be applied once more and it appears that 2021 promises a similar unpredictable set of events.



After 17 years running a marvellous Psychology Department Ms O'Neal retired, big boots to fill but I was delighted to be given the opportunity and return to my hometown from an all-girls school in London.

It has been a year like no other and I was blown away by the girls' commitment and work ethic during the lockdown; this saw the Upper Sixth rewarded with grades they thoroughly deserved. Six of the girls secured places at university to study Psychology, where I am in no doubt their passion for Psychology will continue to grow and flourish. I am so proud of them all: they endured so much, but their positivity and resilience were inspiring. I wish them all the best in their bright futures.

The Lower Sixth also had a very successful year with all 17 students deciding to pursue the full A Level. Seven students are now applying for undergraduate study of Psychology.

We implemented online and interactive textbooks enabling greater flexibility in both home and school learning and these have been positively received by the girls.

The Lower Sixth also established 'Psych Society' where they organised and led lunchtime sessions on psychology-related areas of interest. Many girls continued to take advantage of the range of extra-curricular activities on offer, including extension sessions and the after-school research methods club. Students also took the opportunity to enter numerous essay competitions including The John Locke Institute Essay Competition which produced some very interesting and well written responses to 'According to evolutionary psychology, we are evolved to believe what is useful, whether or not what is useful is always also what is true. How can we resist the tendency to believe what is evolutionarily adaptive at the expense of

truth? And would it increase or diminish human flourishing to do so?'

Something good to come out of lockdown was our online Psychology Book Club; we had weekly discussions on the psychology featured in chosen fiction, from Graeme Simison's *The Rosie Project* to Pat Barker's *The Silence of the Girls*. This was a great way for students to switch off and relax during lockdown and then engage in a social and light-hearted discussion with their peers.

It has been a privilege to lead the Psychology Department, albeit in unprecedented circumstances; the girls have been remarkable throughout. It feels the study of Psychology is more important than ever: with the rollout of vaccines, the pandemic may have an end in sight but the psychological implications will be long term and we will need more people than ever to have an awareness of psychology and mental health.



We were delighted last year to have Miss Donohue join the Religious Studies Department. We would like to thank her for her contributions last year and we will miss her this year.

In a very different year for our Religious Studies GCSE students, we would like to say well done to our students who have been excellent and hard-working for the last two years. It is such a shame that they were not able to complete the examinations, but they have been fairly rewarded for their hard work of two years with their superb results. In addition, we had a student who completed the Cambridge Pre-U in Philosophy and Theology. Once again, we are confident that had she been able to sit the examination, she would have done herself proud. The result awarded was well-deserved and we would like to wish our student all the best in her university career; it has been a pleasure to teach her.

We once again held a Memorial Assembly for Holocaust Memorial Day. The theme of this year's Holocaust Memorial Day was *Stand Together*, and this allowed us to reflect on how we can take the lessons learned from the tragic events of the Holocaust to stand with those in our own communities who are discriminated against. Students from the Lower Fifth and Upper Sixth spoke about their studies in Religion and Philosophy

lessons about the Holocaust and their own experience on a Jewish Society trip to Auschwitz, respectively. As ever we felt truly privileged to hear from Holocaust survivors last year. In January, we welcomed Ruth and Werner Lachs back to the school for the second year.

This year the heads and committees of the four religious groups (Christian, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim) have come together to give a fantastic first Interfaith Assembly on hope and a sense of community, and how their religious leaders and communities have reacted to the pandemic. In addition to this, they have been delivering remote assemblies throughout the school, to maintain our sense of interfaith community.

Although the Autumn Term has just begun, we have already had great success with our partnership with the Booth Centre, with another successful collection for the Harvest appeal. It is heart-warming to see that even in these difficult times we are faced with globally, we are still pulling together as a community to support those who are vulnerable. Charlotte Vale, who works at the Centre, prepared a remote assembly that was given to the whole school about the work of the Centre and expressed how grateful they were to receive our donations.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN

Head: Asha Joseph
Deputy: Ellen Brabban-Brown

HINDU

Head: Saakshi Kapoor
Deputy: Keeya Modi
Committee: Shivani Puri & Tanvi Shah

JEWISH

Joint Heads: Talia Bernstein & Ruby Kwartz

MUSLIM

Head: Farah Akbar
Deputies: Anam Saleem & Iman Sultan



This year started with our ninth Spanish Exchange trip to Barcelona with La Vall School, which was a most enjoyable experience for 13 Upper Fifth and Lower Sixth pupils.

In an attempt to continue our journey towards increasing the use of technology in the teaching of languages, all Year groups have now moved to online textbooks and we have discovered that even our very enthusiastic Third Form pupils are very well versed in the use of tablets and can teach us a thing or two.

Early in the year, our Department's use of OneNote and other facilities was quite elementary and it took the lockdown in March for us to embrace the inevitable. All classes were given a OneNote book which held copies of their lessons and worksheets and pupils could complete their work that teachers could easily mark, both in their home environments.

Whilst the migration to full technology was swifter than anyone would have chosen, it was such a pleasure to see how prepared and willing our pupils were to embrace it all and how delighted they were to attend our remote lessons during the last weeks of school.

The Upper Fifth and Upper Sixth were offered bridging courses remotely to introduce them to their next phase of learning. We covered interesting cultural material such as Frida Kahlo and ancient South American civilizations such as Incas, Mayas and Aztecs with the Upper Fifth. With the Upper Sixth we explored a play, *Historia de una Escalera* and a film, *Ocho Apellidos Vascos* where they got a flavour of social Spain between 1919 and 1949 and had a look at regional identity.

We were delighted overall with the Spanish A Level results where over 90% of our cohort was able to get into their firm choice at university selecting a great variety of careers such as Medicine

(5), Computer Science (1), Spanish (1), Politics and International Relations (1), Languages and Politics (1), Film Music (1), Geography (1), Psychology (1) and Business Management with Communications (1). It is a delight to see that Spanish in many cases is seen as a strong enabler to careers other than languages.

We were also very pleased indeed with the Spanish GCSE results and my congratulations go to them all! Ten of these students have decided to proceed with Spanish for A Level and it is a delight to welcome them in our Sixth Form.

I would like to finish by thanking the members of the Department: Miss Alicia Noya, Mrs Anne Humblet and Mrs Julie Wagstaffe who, through their incredible commitment, wonderful caring nature, positive approach and great sense of humour, have made this last year a great success!



As for so many others, 2020 has been an extraordinary year in the Careers Department. Whilst it has not been without challenges, there have been some exciting developments since Founders' Day 2019; moving so much of our provision online has allowed us to develop and deliver careers sessions in totally new ways, connecting with alumnae all around the globe. We started this cycle with our usual focus on supporting our Upper Fourth and Upper Fifth students in choosing their GCSE and A Level subjects respectively. It is always a joy and a privilege to speak with the students 1:1 in this way and provide an objective 'sounding board' for them as they work out the path they hope to follow in the future.

We are fortunate to have a huge bank of online resources to help our girls make these choices, something we are looking to improve and increase yet further in the coming twelve months – so, watch this space!

Our annual mock interviews for Upper Sixth applicants to medicine, dentistry and veterinary science courses also took place in November, as always wonderfully supported by our team of parents, alumnae and associate volunteers who

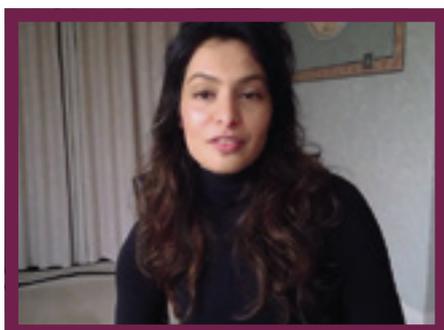
freely give their time every year to offer expert advice to our students. We are grateful to them for their continuing support of this annual event, which really does allow our students to perform to their true potential during the real university application interviews.

This was followed in March by our International Women's Day event, reported in greater detail elsewhere in this Newsletter. It was a truly wonderful day with 25 speakers – members of our alumnae and parent community and local business representatives – volunteering their time to deliver a series of empowering equality-themed talks to our Lower Sixth cohort, with former pupil Joëlle Warren, MBE and Vice-Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, presenting an insightful keynote speech. In a series of interactive small-group sessions held to mark the occasion, the many achievements of women across the globe were recognised – but in keeping with this year's IWD key message that 'an equal world is an enabled world', our Lower Sixth girls were also able to take away valuable lessons designed to equip them for their future lives and careers.

Working closely with the Development Team during the lockdown period, we

were delighted to inaugurate our RISE Live online careers talks. Five WGS alumnae delivered truly inspiring talks about their careers, how their degree choices set them up for their future pathways, and more. We would like to record our huge thanks to Lizzy Burden (Class of 2012) Economics Reporter at the Telegraph; Natalie Bodek (Class of 2002) Acting Deputy Director (Elections Division) at the Cabinet Office; Inga Deakin (Class of 2001) Entrepreneur in Residence at Duke University, NC, USA; Michelle Goulty (Class of 2005) Head of Foundation Partnerships at City Football Group; and Sabina Puri (Class of 2005) Vice President at Blackstone New York, USA for participating in these talks, and their honesty and humour in delivering such wonderful insights. Our RISE Live online talks continue, and we are always keen to hear from any WGS associates who may be interested in delivering this type of session - planning is also well and truly afoot for our first ever online Careers Convention in January.

2020 has truly been a year like no other; our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has been involved with our events, be it in person or online, and for the continued support of so many. 2021 promises to be another exciting year!



The girls are making the most of the Silent Study room; use is now established and is extremely popular, as they now have a bespoke area for personal study in a room that is conducive to learning. Feedback has shown that girls from both the Sixth Form and the Fifth Form are impressed with this new facility.

Early November saw a group of Lower Fourth girls compete in the Kids Lit Quiz at Pendle Vale College in Nelson. This was the North West heat and the winners of this would head to London for the National Final. Our girls competed admirably and just missed out on winning the North West heat. However, they did come away with many spot prizes for winning individual rounds which had various themed questions. The girls showed amazing knowledge of children's literature and represented the school at the highest level on the night. Unfortunately, this was to be the last Kids Lit Quiz due to lack of funding. Our pupils will miss this opportunity, but hopefully other competitions will arise in the future.

The annual Books vs Movies reading theme continued in the Autumn Term. Girls were encouraged to select a book which has been made into a movie, and then give a short review on whether they preferred the book or the movie. Girls were asked to compare how the book imagery measured up to the screenplay imagery and vice versa. Did they feel that

the movie lost any of the structure from the book? Perhaps, because it was too complicated to adapt to the big screen, or the characters were too complicated to portray as the author intended.

In the lead up to the Christmas holiday, the girls had fun – with the support of the Student Library Assistants – making Christmas baubles from recycled books. This activity was extremely popular with the girls, especially the younger students.

After the Christmas break, in a bid to encourage the reading of different genres and styles, the ever-popular 'Blind Date With a Book' returned in February. All the books available – both fiction and non-fiction - were new to the Library and had only been published in the last eighteen months. Girls chose a book which had been wrapped in brown paper from their age appropriate box. The girls were asked to write a short review about their 'Blind Date'. This is always a popular event for all Year groups.

During the week of World Book Day, Upper Fourths were given personal crosswords for which they could only find the answers from the Carnegie collection of books. On completion of the crossword, following the instructions given, they would be able to create a catchy slogan connected with reading for fun.

When School went into lockdown in March the Library became the base for Senior pupils attending the Keyworker

School. These pupils followed their timetable in the same online lessons delivered to their peers at home. However, to allow the pupils some variation in their unusual school day, several activities took place during these months, including Library Battleships and Orienteering – which involved the students finding several facts about English, Geography, History and Sport. Also, during this time, the Third Form pupils made several recycle bins out of used plastic water bottles. They were extremely proud of their achievement.

Unfortunately, due to lockdown, the annual 'Read Your Way Around the World' challenge could not take place this year. Hopefully, we will be able to resume this activity this academic year, as it is popular with pupils.

Finally, the Library has continued to provide an academic service to the School, seeking to source syllabus-specific materials such as textbooks, supplementary reading material for varied interests, and research tools both in print and digital format. New Third Form pupils have attended a comprehensive induction course to introduce them to the Library and all Year groups have had lessons on using the Library for research purposes.

I would like to thank our Student Library Assistants and all the girls who have contributed to the life of the Library throughout the year.

DONATIONS

Vicky Brickhill:

Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States: from WH Taft to GW Bush

Andrew Snowden:

The GCHQ Puzzle Book II, Visual Basic: Learning to Program in

Maisie King:

How to Pass Exams, The Wibbly Wobbly Jelly Belly Flop, A Murder Most Unladylike Mystery: Jolly Foul Play, The Ultimate UCAT Collection: Guide, Mock Papers & Solutions

Michelle Steer:

How the Parliament Works

Jude Wallis:

Comparative Government and Politics; 9th ed, The Globalization of World Politics, European Union Politics; 4th ed, Partnership: The Lakeside Classics

Denis Whelan:

The Outsiders, Journey's End, Peveril Castle

Girls at Withington receive support and information about different careers and the university application process. This support is provided by the Careers Department, individual subject departments and the Sixth Form team. In addition, given the unique nature of the application process for Cambridge and Oxford universities, Oxbridge-specific support is offered to candidates applying to these two institutions. This support is open to all girls in the Sixth Form, irrespective of their university choices, as the skills developed during the two-year programme are highly beneficial and strengthen the girls' applications at other high-ranking institutions.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the regular activities organised to support these universities' applications had to be held online. These included the regular buddy meeting, where girls are given the opportunity to meet former Withington pupils currently studying at Oxford and Cambridge. The conversations and discussions that took place at this meeting could be continued via email and the Facebook forum organised by the School's Development Office.

Another event held remotely this year was the student and parent information evening. This event, which is normally led by an admissions tutor or school liaison officer from either Cambridge or Oxford, was led by the universities using Zoom. During this session, our pupils learned about the application process and were offered guidance on personal statements and interview preparation.

Preparation for admission tests is a major part of the support process offered at Withington, and the girls could attend a critical thinking workshop, which lays the foundation for successful completion of several admission tests, for example the TSA and the BMAT. Given the large number of girls who take these two tests, the school also offered a remote TSA/ BMAT preparation day, which was followed by mock TSA and BMAT examinations. This allows the girls to find out how they perform in the critical thinking and problem-solving components of the test as well as in the essay section of the respective papers. Support for other tests is offered by individual departments.

Our girls have continued attending subject-specific sessions, led by individual departments, either online during

the lockdown months, or in person. In addition to the extension sessions offered, many Withington pupils attended talks organised by several departments and the various societies led by the girls. These provide wonderful opportunities for our girls to expand their subject knowledge in areas outside the scope of the A Level specifications and give them opportunities to formulate ideas and arguments in an encouraging and stimulating environment. The variety of guest speakers invited to the talks and the myriad of talks available online has meant that our Upper and Lower Sixth girls have been able to choose from an interesting range of topics; from climate change, issues across the Science subjects including talks on medical research, and also in the field of History, Geography and Politics, to name a few.

In recent years, Withington girls have celebrated successes in national essay competitions and our girls continue to regularly submit entries to different competitions, many of which are organised by the University of Cambridge. These competitions provide opportunities for students to carry out research outside the scope of their specialism, which in turn allows them to develop their interests further and to become experts in their subject area. Fourteen students have spent time researching and writing essays across several disciplines including English, History, Science and Engineering, Architecture, Modern and Medieval Languages and Humanities.

We also encourage pupils to set up their own blogs and to present their essays or any other research they have carried out independently to their peers and to subject specialists in School. These provide the girls with further opportunities to articulate their own thoughts and arguments.

To give girls in Lower Sixth a flavour of the life at Oxford and Cambridge, we organise a trip to one or the other of the universities each year. For the second year running, this trip was organised by WGS with the support of our alumnae at the University of Cambridge. During a long and exciting day, our pupils visited several colleges and learned about the admission process from admission tutors and school liaison officers in various subject areas. In addition, the group also met with a number of Withington alumnae studying

a variety of courses and had the chance to chat with them about their personal experiences.

The final aspect of the support offered at Withington is interview preparation; the girls attended our very own interview workshop led by a former pupil and Oxford student. In addition, the girls undergo subject mock interviews with alumnae studying their prospective courses at the two universities and also academics from different universities, teachers from neighbouring schools and professionals from different areas (often former pupils and current parents) who willingly give their time and expertise to provide the girls with yet another opportunity to express their ideas within the context of their subjects.

This year, six pupils have started their university studies at Oxford and Cambridge studying a range of subjects from Experimental Psychology, History, Physics, Medicine and Natural Sciences. We are delighted to see the girls' passion for their subjects, willingness to engage with ideas and genuine curiosity about the world reflected in these subject choices.

We look forward to another year of encouraging and fostering a culture of learning and independence of thought in all girls in the Sixth Form and to continue to support the girls in all their career choices.



Our archive is filled with resources that inform us about the lives of our school community during challenging times in modern history. We are privileged and thankful that our archive exists and that these treasures have been set aside and saved for us to learn from today. It therefore made perfect sense to us, that in our own challenging times, we should record and document the thoughts and ideas of our current school community. We are delighted to be collating a range of poetry, paintings, drawings, diary entries and photographic pieces produced by pupils and staff, into one special book titled Journal 2020. This will be printed and sent out to all who contributed and digital copies will be available to everyone upon request. We will store this book within our archive

so that future generations can build up an image of the difficulties we have faced together, and maybe even a few moments of joy too!

Before lockdown, each class from the Junior School made the annual trip to the Founders' Room as part of their interesting History week. The girls learnt about different aspects of School life through the decades and looked at sources of information including real photographs, trophies, items of school uniform from different eras, old newsletters and manuscripts. We spent some time looking at all the images on the main wall, thinking about our Founders and our previous Headmistresses. We look forward to inviting the girls back into the Founders'

Room for another fascinating visit next year.

Prior to school closures this year, we were working towards another digitisation project with the aim of commissioning a professional heritage scanning company to digitise our original admissions register. This is a particularly precious, handwritten hardback book that documents every pupil who entered our school from the very start of Withington. We are also hoping to digitise the main body of school and class photographs from the very early days of school, including our oldest photograph from 1894. We are now resuming this project and hope to protect these wonderful resources for future generations to benefit from.

PSHCE

MRS JULIA JOHNSTON

The Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) Department had another exciting year. The subject continues to inform and discuss the knowledge, skills, and attributes pupils need to keep themselves healthy and safe and to prepare them for life, work and citizenship in modern Britain. Pupils are informed and inspired by our own staff and visiting speakers who all assist in covering the vast array of subject matter the PSHCE curriculum covers in three distinct areas – Health & Well-being, Relationships and Living in the Wider World.

We were delighted at the end of January to be joined by Mr Dick Moore, a highly regarded Mental Health speaker who, since November 2012, has been visiting schools, universities and organisations internationally to help raise awareness of mental health issues. It is believed that 10% of young people are suffering from a diagnosable mental health disorder today and Mr Moore believes that much more could, and should, be done to reduce this. He provided age-appropriate, helpful information, guidance and reassurance to pupils from Upper II to Upper Sixth and delivered a parents' information evening so that they too could find out more about adolescent mental health.

Like Mr Moore, our other guest speakers come to us with a wealth of knowledge to enhance our programme of study

by sharing their expertise with pupils of all Years. We were delighted to have returning practitioners and speakers, such as Jacki Wild, who talked to Lower Fifth pupils about gambling; Mrs Harris, who raised awareness of drug-use; and Brook Advisory Service who each year impart information relating to relationships and sexuality. We also had new speakers joining the programme, such as Dr Anna Carter and colleagues from Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust who delivered CPR sessions to Third Form pupils, and Chris Haddon who delivered mindfulness sessions to Key Stage Three pupils. Our School Nurse, Sister Jo Lees, and our School Counsellor, Miss Sarah Horsfall, continue to enhance the PSHCE curriculum by delivering wellbeing, mindfulness and relaxation sessions.

The Anti-Bullying Week theme was 'Change starts with us'. We focused our attention on ways in which we can build better relationships with others, and raised awareness of verbal, physical or virtual bullying. We explored two types of change: emotional internal change (changes we ourselves can make for our emotional wellbeing – for example changing how we tackle certain situations, reflecting on our own personal feelings) and external change (how we can act to change our wider environment – having an impact

on our community, or even our planet). An Assembly was greatly enhanced by Lower and Upper Fourth Form pupils who acted out some useful strategies for positive communication, and pupils in the Upper Fourth Form and Lower Fifth Form produced some wonderful and thought-provoking campaigns for change, generating wonderful ideas, such as a buddy bench for the Junior School and a campaign for local libraries to stay open later into the evening to help isolated individuals come together.

Citizenship Day is always the highlight of the PSHCE calendar, and whilst we were not physically in school to celebrate this event, a virtual assembly illustrated how pupils and staff undertook an unprecedented act of citizenship by staying at home to protect their families and the NHS amid the threat of coronavirus. As well as this, Citizenship Day enabled us to celebrate the many unnoticed acts of kindness by Withington pupils and staff, such as helping elderly neighbours, sewing masks, baking cakes for NHS workers, cooking meals for neighbours and food projects, making bunting to celebrate VE Day, sewing scrub bags for doctors and nurses, and of course lots more. The Citizenship Day Assembly demonstrated beautifully how the pupils and staff of Withington always go the extra mile in numerous ways to help others.

JUNIOR SCHOOL



'What have you done today to make you feel proud?'

This always reminds me of the year Manchester hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2002 when, as one of the volunteers, I heard Heather Small rehearsing the song, *Proud*, for performance at the closing ceremony; such a powerful voice and such an important question to ponder.

This has become the title of our achievement board in the Junior School. It is a way of recognising the wonderful things that our pupils do and highlighting them to the other girls.

Our pupils make us proud on a daily basis. It might be a small but important act of kindness or something more unusual, and the events documented here are just some of those occasions when they have excelled.

2020 has been a rather strange year to say the least and pre-lockdown seems a distant memory now! However, it is important that we do look back and remember some of the lovely events that occurred at that time.

One such event was the visit to School of alumna, Marjorie Rigby, just prior to her 100th birthday celebrations in December. Much to her surprise, records from the archives were found including some of her school reports! Our Junior girls were invited along to sing Happy Birthday and were pleased to be allowed to share her birthday cake! They were delightful in the attention they gave Marjorie and the genuine interest they showed as she regaled them with tales from her childhood and school days at Withington.

December saw the country facing a General Election and this gave us the perfect opportunity to investigate the processes of democracy and the way such events are run. The Junior School held their own 'mock election'. Our parties were Tomorrow, Progress, Transform and Vision. The girls prepared their manifestos and shared them with the whole of the Junior School. The Junior Hall was set up as a polling station and each class came to cast their votes. The Vision Party won by a small majority!



My first Christmas at Withington was very special. I have been amazed at the standard of the school productions here at Withington. Written by Miss Rachel Smith in the Music Department, the Junior School boarded the *Withy Express* last Christmas. Great singing, acting and the execution of the well-choreographed dance routines along with dazzling special effects made this a great show on which to end the Autumn Term and start the Christmas festivities.



A love of music is fostered throughout the years here and I had my first experience of the annual *Let's Make Music* day. It was a lively and noisy afternoon but the pure enjoyment and inclusivity of this event was wonderful to witness. The musical recital evening which preceded this, another first for me of course, was another terrific event. The girls displayed wonderful talent and poise as they played instruments or sang to the audience in the Arts Centre.



I was so glad to be able to witness the Gym and Dance Display too. This must be one of the most eagerly anticipated events on the school calendar and there would have been great disappointment if this had fallen during the lockdown period I am sure. Again, it was an event which encourages participation by all, whatever their level of skill.

Last Autumn our Junior School was selected to form part of the judging panel for The Royal Society's Young People's Book Prize. This annual event aims to inspire young people to read about science and promotes the writing of excellent, accessible books for under-14s. Representatives from each year group formed part of a committee. Meeting with Miss Gorman each week, the girls read and critiqued each book in turn. Out of the six books being judged, our girls' favourite was *100 Things to Know About Numbers, Computers & Coding* by Alice James, Eddie Reynolds, Minna Lacey, Rose Hall and Alex Frith. Nationally, the winning book was *Planetarium* by Raman Prinja.

At the start of the Spring Term we introduced a new house points scheme. This encourages the girls to focus on being responsible, respectful, resourceful and resilient. Coloured discs representing each value are given out as staff spot girls demonstrating these behaviours and the houses work as a team to gain an end of term treat!



It was during the Spring Term that we entered a very different time for the country which inevitably impacted significantly on school life.



With the closure of schools in March, the partial return of pupils in June followed by the full reopening this September, 2020 has tested both pupils and staff more than any other year. I feel extremely proud of all that girls and staff have achieved, both in School and whilst learning and working from home.

Thankfully, Withington girls will always embrace a challenge and this year has certainly provided challenges in abundance!



New to Withington, the use of technology to enhance the girls' learning was an aspect that I was looking forward to developing but I had not quite imagined how quickly my hand would be forced! The remote learning process evolved rapidly from packs of work to the use of Teams and embracing all that entails. Now, in our new academic year, all Junior girls have their own devices and have demonstrated that they are able



to switch between learning at school to learning from home, seamlessly. This has been a fantastic achievement for us all!

Fast-paced lessons and rigorous content means that whether the girls are in class or at home, they need to be, and are, constantly stimulated and challenged. One of my highlights of the remote learning period was *Challenge Week*. Masterminded by Mrs Williams and Mrs Stallard, a wide range of challenge activities in Art, Science, History, Geography and ICT were set. These really got the girls thinking with their final challenge being how to present their week's work. One of the most popular tasks was finding a way to propel a soft toy along a zipwire – some most impressive engineering was on show with this challenge!

North West Gifted and Talented sessions took place on Zoom and were keenly attended by girls across the year groups.



Lockdown meant that we all had to think creatively about how we could ensure that the girls still learned at a high standard and that, wherever possible, the additional activities that enrich their learning normally were still maintained wherever possible. The STEM ambassador programme was one of these. Lower II and Upper II enjoyed fascinating presentations from Helen Taylor about her work studying bacteria and Maria Eftimova, a civil engineer, who spoke about the processes involved in the design of buildings and other large structures. The girls thoroughly enjoyed the sessions, demonstrated by the wonderful questions to which they sought answers.

Our annual Sports Day was replaced by a two-week programme of activities. Miss Mottershead used the opportunity to encourage the Junior girls to come together as a community and enjoy some friendly competition between the Houses. She devised a number

of challenges from which they could choose a maximum of three to join in with. House points were awarded for participation as well as achievement and we thoroughly enjoyed seeing videos of many of the girls in action. It was great fun!



The traditional *Strawberry Serenade* at the end of the summer was not to be, but the musicians in school were not going to let a pandemic defeat them. Most girls in Upper II had returned to School at the beginning of June and the planned performance of *Olivia!* still went ahead and a recording was made available for all to enjoy. Indeed, one of my favourite memories of this last academic year was seeing the girls bounce into school, dressed in the costumes appropriate for that day of filming; one day they arrived looking like poor orphans, on another they were dressed in their 'glad rags' for a scene from the opera. Upper II enjoyed their own private screening of the final production munching popcorn as they sat in their bubbles, spaced out in the Junior Hall. The 'icing on the cake' was being able to take home a selection of strawberry-based edibles produced by our wonderful catering team, to enjoy at home whilst they watched the production again with their families!



Being thrown into lockdown was the catalyst for other new initiatives too. Miss Ellen Sides started the Junior Podcast. Consisting of Actions for Happiness, readings of stories, a Mastermind quiz section and musical recitals, the girls embraced their chance to have their time on air. Whilst apart, it was lovely for both staff and girls to be able to hear familiar voices reading out their stories or playing their instruments, some even turned quiz master and set some demanding questions for their friends!



Despite our best efforts, not all activities could be replicated during this tricky year. Although we did our best to ensure a significant ending to their Upper II year, the girls inevitably had a very different end to their time in the Junior School. One much anticipated event for them following on from the Entrance Exam is their involvement in Junior Enterprise project. Whilst they still had the experience of building their teams and deciding on their products to make, unfortunately the culmination of their efforts, the Trade Fair, was unable to take place. This year's theme was sustainability and the girls embraced this fully, producing an impressive array of bath bombs, face masks and lip balms, to name but a few.



Another firm favourite for all the girls is the annual residential trip. Upper II were lucky enough to enjoy their trip to Winmarleigh in February and despite the

cold and wet, threw themselves wholeheartedly into every activity on offer! Transition also managed to just squeeze in their trip to Robinwood, for some of them their first experience of staying away from home. They too embraced the opportunities to try activities out of their comfort zone and to see the benefits of supporting each other and working well as a team. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, all other residential trips had to be cancelled until further notice.



Whilst most girls were at home learning remotely, daughters of key workers were able to attend our Key Worker School. They were joined by their peers remotely for lessons but also enjoyed an array of art and sporting activities in school.



Thinking of others has continued to be an important part of Junior School life. Throughout lockdown we remembered those who served their country during the Second World War and joined in the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of VE Day and, along with the rest of the nation, we delighted in the efforts of Captain Tom with many girls taking the time to make and send cards to him on his 100th birthday.

We were all delighted when we were given the go-ahead by the government to allow our pupils, starting with Upper II, to return to school. Realising the importance of all girls being able to spend some time back in school and amongst their friends and teachers, we ensured that each year group was able

to spend two separate periods in school before the school closed for the summer holiday.



This September, we welcomed all the girls back into school for full time education. There have been significant changes to the way in which day-to-day life has to be organised, but the girls have adapted to these swiftly. There is a new look to parts of the Junior School too. The Junior reception area now houses our library and is a cosy area in which the girls can access all the new books available, along with old favourites. Another new addition is our beautiful tropical fish tank. A stunning array of fish provide fascination and a lively talking point for the girls and are a calming addition to this part of school.



Classrooms, too, have a bright new look with the addition of coloured wall panels.



As I write we are entering another period of lockdown but we shall continue to not let this dampen our spirits in the Junior School! Our pupils will continue to thrive on school life and make us all proud.

JUNIOR SPORT

The Juniors enjoyed a superb winter season excelling especially in netball and lacrosse and making great progress in all other sports including football where they played competitively for the first time in the AJIS Tournament. Despite not being in their usual winning ways – like all their other sporting participation – they really enjoyed the experience!

HOCKEY

This year saw the third phase in our efforts to provide access to more hockey to the Junior girls. Following the introduction of Quicksticks for beginners and Saturday morning coaching sessions in hockey for those who had gained some experience, it was now the time to play more fixtures. As well as midweek fixtures against local schools, the girls also had the opportunity to play on Saturday mornings. There were at least ten fixtures for each of the Lower II and Upper II teams; results were mixed with Upper II facing some very tough opposition. Lower II fared better with a number of convincing wins, most notably a 5-0 win over The Queen's School Chester. The strength and depth of junior hockey continues to increase with some very talented girls, many of whom are already playing club hockey. The future looks good.

LACROSSE

In the Juniors, the benefits of introducing lacrosse into the Form I curriculum last year began to be seen, with Lower II and Upper II showing real enthusiasm for the sport.

Both A and B teams were entered into the three tournaments hosted by Timperley Lacrosse Club, in one instance finishing in third place. At the Manchester Pop Lacrosse Tournament the combined Upper II and Lower II team - the only all girl team in the competition - was crowned champions, qualifying them for the much tougher Greater Manchester Finals where, after some impressive teamwork and determination, they finished a commendable fourth out of 14 teams. This qualified them for the National Finals in Sheffield but unfortunately the pandemic put an early end to the pop lacrosse season.

Almost 30 girls regularly attended lunchtime pop lacrosse practices and Upper II enjoyed progressing to full contact field lacrosse in lessons. Both Lower II and Upper II have some very talented and committed players attending practices and we remain optimistic that the teams can enjoy some competitive tournaments in 2021.

NETBALL

I think it is fair to say that Withington's Junior School netball has come on in leaps and bounds over the past season. With increasing numbers of girls every year committing to training sessions and honing their skills, it has been brilliant to watch the players improve in not just their physical strength and skills, but also their mental and technical play.

Our ethos at Junior netball is to provide our young talented netballers with a good foundation to develop their netball but over and above this, we aim to provide a platform for WGS girls to have fun. Very often they are doing both and they ended the season with a very impressive record across the age groups with 41 wins and 440 goals in 48 matches.

In the new academic year, the pandemic has brought many challenges, but it has been lovely to see the girls adapt to new rules, regulations and to continue to play the sport they love whilst staying safe.

MRS LIZ O'NEAL Head of PE



MRS STEPHANIE ROBERTS Head of Lacrosse



MRS JAYNE LANE Netball Coach



KEY WORKING ALUMNAE PORTRAIT PROJECT

“We are humans. We need connection with other people. Art acts as an anchor to our humanity”

MARION LYNCH

former deputy director at NHS England

Inspired by the highly successful and wonderfully inspirational national project, ‘Portraits for NHS Heroes’, which was initiated by the brilliant artist, Tom Croft, we also wanted to give back to our very special key working Alumnae, all of whom we know have been working tirelessly and without question for all of us, during this time of unprecedented international crisis.

Working closely with the Development Team, we decided to follow in Tom’s footsteps and offer a free portrait to our keyworker alumnae to say thank you and to express the depth of our gratitude and our heartfelt thanks for all that they have done and are continuing to do for us during the pandemic.

Some of our hugely talented GCSE and A Level artists, and all of our Art teachers, rose to the challenge and created a series of 19 stunning portraits for all alumnae who put themselves forward. The portraits were created in all manner of mediums from oil paint to watercolours,

graphical illustrations to textiles. They looked fantastic in a professional exhibition in the school’s Hub area.

We very much hope that all the people represented in the artworks enjoy their portraits as much as we have all thoroughly enjoyed creating them, with love and with care. We hope they will look on them fondly and with pride, now and in years to come, as they capture such a monumental point in all our lives. As Tom Croft said himself, ‘As a physical record of our existence, a portrait is likely to last far longer than we will and hopefully get passed down through generations.’



RACHEL STONE
(Class of 1998)
GP Principal, GP Trainer
By **MRS J JOHNSTON** Teacher of Art



SONAM AOJULA
(Class of 2010)
Trainee GP,
A&E Doctor during pandemic
By **ALEX SYKES**



ANGELA MACFOY
(Class of 2003)
GP
By **OLIVIA McGRATH**



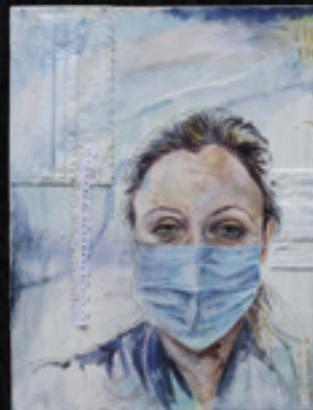
CHLOE PRAGER
(Class of 2011)
Clinical Pharmacist
By **MARIAM HUSSAIN**



ANA CLAYTON-SMITH
(Class of 2012)
Acute Medicine & Intensive Care
ZOË CLAYTON-SMITH
(Class of 2007)
Specialist Registrar in Radiology
By **RAAIDA HOSSAIN**



AMY HAWKES
(Class of 2007)
First Secretary, Justice & Home
Affairs, British High Commission,
India
By **ELEANOR CARTER**



ELLIE JESKY
(Class of 2000)
Consultant Paediatric
Haematologist
By **MRS Z TAYLOR** Teacher of Art



NUTAN PATEL
(Class of 2004)
GP, Stockport
and her father **DR S PATEL**
By **MRS R FILDES** Head of Art



DOMINIQUE FINNEGAN-PARSONS
(Class of 2005)
GP & Occupational Health Physician
By **SOPHIA BALLIN**



ALIAH MIAN
(Class of 2017)
4th Year Medical Student and her father **DR S MIAN**
By **MRS R FILDES** Head of Art



SOPHIE CHESHIRE
(Class of 2009)
Radiology Doctor
By **REANNA MEADOWS**



CHARLOTTE DEANS
(Class of 2007)
Detective, Metropolitan Police
By **MOLLY DOW**



CHERIE DEANS
(Class of 2007)
Doctor
By **EMMA SHEAN**



AARTHI RAVISHANKAR
(Class of 2009)
Doctor, Children's A&E and GP
By **HANNAH JENKINS**



NADIA AWAN
(Class of 2003)
Consultant Doctor
By **MIA ALEXANDER**



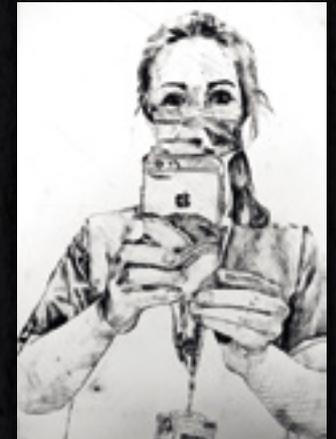
RAKHEE NAYAR
(Class of 1998)
Consultant Plastic Surgeon
By **AASIYA KARA**



ELLENA COTTON
(Class of 2013)
Junior Doctor
By **MRS R FILDES** Head of Art



CHARLOTTE STRZELECKI
(Class of 2003)
Anaesthetics and Intensive Care
Medicine Speciality Registrar
By **ANOUSKA BROOKS**



JOCelyn HUGHES
(Class of 1991)
Specialty Doctor in Neonatal
Intensive Care
By **MRS R FILDES** Head of Art

RUTH BAYLEY COMPETITION

MRS RUTH FILDES Head of Art

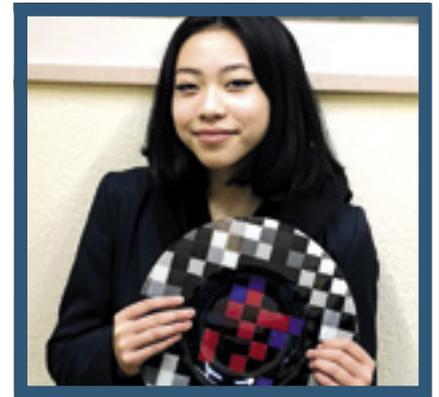
We were extremely lucky this year to welcome artist, curator and television presenter Diana Ali into school to launch and to judge our Ruth Bayley Illustration Competition. Diana is a highly successful curator of visual art and a practising artist herself. Additionally, she is a lecturer, workshop leader, professional practice consultant and external art moderator.

Taking inspiration from the centenary of the Peterloo Massacre and the story of suffragette and activist Mary Fildes, the brief this year was to create a flag or similar artefact which could be used to demonstrate, or to help to articulate activism. We wanted to see powerful, creative and personal work with a clear visual message.

The response was outstanding in terms of the number of entries and the quality and breadth of the artworks. Diana was blown away by the ideas and passions in evidence. In a lockdown video recording she announced the results and said of the judging and work, 'That was hard! The work was really amazing, and it is so reassuring that young people care about our world.'

I would like to say thank you and well done to all girls who entered work. Congratulations to those who were category winners and highly commended. The overall winner was Safiya Fazuan in the Lower Fifth. Huge congratulations to her. Diana said of her work, 'Wow, it's so current. Most of us follow social media and it is one of the biggest ways to get a message across but some people in particular abuse it. Well done for getting this noticed! You have been bold, honest, and taken action on what we should not ignore in politics. I love the reality and the simplicity of the design - well done.'

Sincere thanks to the executors of Ms Bayley's estate for their ongoing support of the Ruth Bayley Illustration Competition.



AN UNEXPECTED CAREER

MRS KAREN DRURY Development Officer

“You have the ability to walk out of here and change the world in so many different ways, but always remember that the privilege that we have is about giving people who don't have a voice the opportunity to express what they have to say and to be heard, in order to create a better world for everyone.”

These were the inspiring words of alumna Olivia Darby (Class of 2002) when she visited to speak in Assembly at the beginning of the year. Olivia is one of the founders of the WONDER Foundation, a woman-led charity dedicated to empowering women and girls through quality education and access to good work.

She described her career as 'unexpected' and the fact that having to change her A Level options because they didn't fit the timetable, had inadvertently set her on the path to where she is now. She also had some wise words for students about not having to do everything perfectly and that working with others whose strengths complement each other helps us to achieve more than we can by ourselves.



MEETING AN ASTRONAUT

OLIVIA HAROU LIVY

In early November, a small group of dedicated Withington girls were invited to see the first-ever female astronaut speak at Alderley Edge School for Girls. The lecture was inspiring and the pictures that space pioneer Helen Sharman used to illustrate her career and journey to space were incredible.

Helen explained about life in space and what she did around the space station, as well as detailing the kinds of space-related jobs that young women can work towards if they continue to aim high and reach for the stars. Overall, it was an amazing experience that all of us enjoyed and a great chance to see a woman blazing a trail for a more equal space programme.



ARKWRIGHT SCHOLARSHIPS

Prestigious Arkwright Scholarships awarded to two Withington pupils

Upper Sixth Formers, Amy Ponter and Alex Sykes, were among only 415 talented students nationwide to be awarded an Arkwright Scholarship in the 2019-20 academic year.

Over the years, numerous Withington pupils have achieved this scholarship, but this is the first time two pupils have become Arkwright Scholars in the same year. The award has afforded them financial and mentoring support since the start of Lower Sixth. The successful applicants, who all undertook a rigorous, year-long application process, have received £600 to assist with the purchase of engineering materials and books and, in addition, the School was awarded £400 per student to enrich STEM curricular and extra-curricular resources. They have had, and will in the future have, access to many opportunities for expert mentorship and chances to attend conferences and presentations allowing them to experience the real world of engineering.

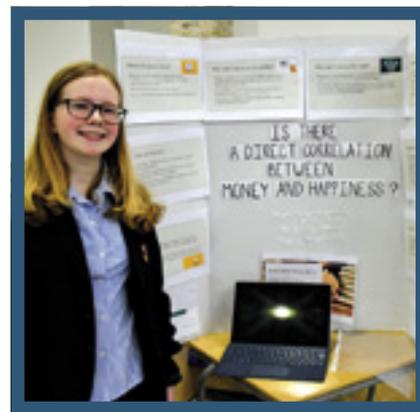
The Arkwright Engineering Scholarship is a programme from national STEM education charity, the Smallpeice Trust in association with the Institute of Engineering and Technology.



EPQ & HPQ PRESENTATION EVENING

DR JO SMILES EPQ Coordinator

Following the success of last year's event, the presentation component of the HPQ and EPQ took the form of an academic-style conference to which parents and future candidates were invited. Topics ranged through medical, political, environmental and technological issues and were presented via a display stand or a talk to an audience in the Arts Centre. During enrichment time, some students in Lower Fifth complete their HPQ (Higher Project Qualification) and in Lower Sixth, the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification). The HPQ is equivalent to a GCSE and the EPQ to half an A Level and, at A*, is worth 28 UCAS points. Both are research-based qualifications on a topic of the pupil's choice and most of the work is autonomous, though each student has an allocated supervisor who offers support with the completion of the project. It was a great opportunity for parents to see their daughters' work at first hand and for current Upper Fourth and Upper Fifth pupils to get an insight into this extremely valuable opportunity that will become an option for them in the next academic year.



GCSE SCIENCE LIVE

MR KIRK ECKERSALL Teacher of Chemistry

In January 2020, the Lower Fifth travelled by coach to the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester for the GCSE Science Live Conference. The pupils listened to a series of lectures from leading well-known scientists: Professor Jim Al-Khalili inspired the audience with his lecture on wormholes and the spaghetti effect; Professor Alice Roberts gave a fascinating presentation on the evolution of dogs; Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock held the audience captivated with her presentation about why she is so inspired to study the moon. Our pupils were particularly entertained by her teaching aid toy which she calls Moonie. Mark Miodownik, Professor of Materials and Society at UCL, gave a particularly fascinating presentation on the environmental impact of polymers and questioned just how environmentally friendly biodegradable polymers actually are. The day was fast-moving, fascinating, and thought provoking: an enjoyable time was had by everyone.



PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS **JESSICA JAMES, TARA KINNEY & VENOS KEETHER** Upper Sixth

In June, three Lower Sixth girls enjoyed an overnight stay at the University of Cambridge whilst attending the Murray Edwards College Pathways to Success conference. The annual conference aims to encourage young women to succeed academically and in their chosen

career, by way of a series of lectures on the nature of success, subject-specific academic sessions, and an interview workshop. We also had a Q&A session with the students and a tour of the college, which houses one of the world's largest collections of women's

art, as well as an evening meal and time to explore the college ourselves. The conference was a valuable insight into the varied paths taken by Murray Edwards alumnae, as well as a snapshot of what studying at Cambridge would be like, and was thoroughly enjoyable.

WITHINGTON WINS THE CORE VALUES TROPHY FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR.

On 5th December, a team of nine girls from Lower and Upper Fifth went to Daresbury Laboratory and participated in the annual FIRST Lego League Competition. We competed in three categories: Core Values, Robot Wars and our presentation. Robot Wars included us having to code a small robot, which we had designed and constructed ourselves, to go over different obstacles in a certain time limit. Whilst preparing our own code, we helped a small primary school who were new to the competition and were struggling to complete the coding section.

For the Core Values section, we were told that we had to build a bridge using no supplies other than ourselves. After a little confusion we pulled through using resilience and managed to build a bridge. Finally, we gave our presentation which had to tackle an issue impacting cities in a scientific way. We decided to go with the issue of food waste and how this was relevant to our school. At the end of the day we were pleased to hear that we had been awarded the Core Values Cup, which is given for the best teamwork and communication.

Congratulations to the Withington team:

Rebekah Babar, Mariam Hussain, Grace Lu, Ayrach Majid, Raabiya Mirali, Dina Taher, Freya Demby, Sophie Jayson & Victoria Wang.



CYBERFIRST GIRLS' COMPETITION

Huge congratulations to our team of five Lower Fourth codebreakers whose Cryptography, Cyber Security, Logic, Coding and Networking skills got them through to the regional semi-final of the CyberFirst Girls' Competition 2020 run by the National Cyber Security Centre, a part of GCHQ. The team, named White Feathers, had progressed to the semi-final through online rounds held in School, taking the group on to a secret location in Manchester city centre where they competed in real time with 9 other schools.

This year, over 2900 teams from all corners of the UK took part and the aim of the competition was to unearth talent and spark interest in cyber security among girls who, currently, are underrepresented in this vital area of our country's security.

Head of ICT and Computer Science, Mr Andrew Snowden, said:

"Congratulations to this year's team on reaching the semi-finals. This is only the third year we have taken part and last year our team got all the way to the final, so we are building a very good record in this competition, which reflects our girls' abilities at the highest level for their age."

Team members: **Haleema Ashraf, Sama Beden, Siena Chae, Olivia Harou & Kimi Tokala**



AN INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE

Alumna Iram Kiani (Class of 1997) was kind enough to return to Withington in February to speak to the Politics Society and give them an insight into standing for Altrincham & Sale West in the December 2019 General Election. Sixth Form student Heather Goodwin from the Politics Society writes:

'On 4th February, the Politics Society welcomed Iram Kiani into school to speak to a range of students, including A Level Politics students, about her experience standing as an independent candidate in the 2019 general election. She delivered a fascinating and inspiring talk on her journey as a candidate, documenting her successes and difficulties. Her experience standing against candidates with a party supporting them made her realise how much preparation goes into election campaigning, from distributing leaflets and talking to constituents, to participating in debates with other candidates. Her dedication and perseverance were evident. She spoke about her decision to stand as an independent candidate stemming from her belief in voting for policies you truly believe in. All who attended enjoyed hearing about Imran's experiences, with many informed questions asked afterwards.'



After weeks of hard work and many hours spent poring over the complex cases of *Crown v Bonaparte* and *Crown v Jetti*, Withington's Lower Sixth Mock Trial team had the chance to showcase their skills of advocacy at Manchester Crown Court on 30th November 2019. The cases this year comprised an alleged jealous attack at a re-enactment of the Battle of Waterloo, and a cat-burglary by a student dressed as Macavity the Cat! Taking on the roles of barristers, witnesses, clerk, usher, jurors and court reporters, the girls competed against 11 other local schools in some hard-fought legal battles. Even though they were faced with some strong opposition, their hard work paid off, winning two out of the three cases on the day.

The barristers, Tanya Aggarwal, Imaan Saeed, Safa Saeed and Lamisah Aamir, gave impressive performances throughout, and managed to remain calm and articulate during the cross-examination of extremely unhelpful opposition witnesses. In true Withington style, the competition was a team effort and the girls playing the roles of witnesses were superb: Ruby Kwartz, Heidi Lynn, Brontë Horsfield and Priya Jari all gave very convincing portrayals of their characters, and made life very hard for the opposition!

A special mention must also go to Heather Goodwin, Olivia McGrath and Ella Clare for their excellent report which crowned them winners of the Court Reporter element of the competition. The judges were very impressed with their ability to summarise large amounts of information in the hour they were given into such an interesting and factually accurate legal report.

Overall, it was a wonderful team effort, and every single team member played an important part both in preparation and on the day itself. They made it an absolute pleasure for Mrs Bowie, Mrs Air and me to work with them. I would like to thank Joshua Bowker and Verity Quaite from 18 St John Street Chambers for supporting the girls throughout the preparation and for giving us an insight into what life is really like for a criminal barrister. To quote Verity after the competition: 'The girls gave truly exceptional performances ... and I have no doubt that they will be very successful in whatever they choose to do, and certainly at the Bar.'

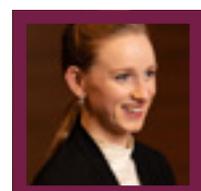


SPOTCAST ON

Just after school was closed in the Spring, the Development team launched Spotcast On. In this monthly podcast we talk to an alumna about their life and career, finding out more about the paths they have chosen; the highs and lows, how Withington has influenced them as they have moved forward, and what they have learned along the way. We hope that this will inspire both our alumnae and current Withington pupils as they prepare to take their next steps.

Our first interviewee was Denise Parnell (Class of 1979), who talked about her career as a professional tennis player, her move into coaching and then becoming Assistant Referee at the Wimbledon Championships. We followed this with conductor Tori Longdon (Class of 2009) in conversation with Withington's Director of Music, Mrs Sargent, discussing her love of singing, being a judge on Gareth Malone's *The Choir* and her latest venture, setting up the online Stay at Home Choir during lockdown.

Next up were Lizzy Burden (Class of 2009), Economics reporter for *The Telegraph*, interviewed by Year 13 pupil, Shamae Griffin, followed by film producer Catherine Slater (Class of 2007), whose short film *Wale*, was nominated for a BAFTA last year, in discussion with Deputy Head and alumna, Ms Baylis. In December Assistant Head, Dr Madden, spoke with Elissa Thursfield (Class of 2005) about her leadership roles as Head of Employment Law in a Welsh law firm and as first female helm of RNLI Abersoch's lifeboat.



Click here or scan
to listen to our
Spotcast On series



ONLINE CAREERS SESSIONS

MRS KAREN DRURY Development Officer

We have a wonderful tradition of being able to call on the experiences of our alumnae to support students to consider the many and varied career opportunities available to them. With the arrival of COVID-19 and the changes it brought, we needed to find new ways to do this.

In the Summer Term, during lockdown, Head of Careers Mrs Nicki Cottam worked closely with the Alumnae/Development team to devise a programme of live, online careers sessions with the opportunity for students to take part in a Q&A. These were based around the premise that, having completed a degree, there were many different career journeys possible. Back at school in Autumn 2020, there have been further online sessions concentrated on developing skills such as how to network and play to one's strengths.

These sessions have been excellent for allowing us to invite alumnae to take part who would not, under normal circumstances, be able to visit Withington in person. It also meant that we could extend the invitation to attend the sessions to our most recent alumnae, those still at university or just graduated, who we thought would also find the information beneficial, especially during this time.

We are extremely grateful to the following alumnae who have supported the programme:

LIZZY BURDEN (Class of 2009)
Humanities Degrees:
From History to the
Economics of Coronavirus
Economics Reporter, *The Telegraph*

NATALIE BODEK (Class of 2002)
Language Degrees:
To Finance, Electoral Reform and Beyond
Acting Deputy Director, Elections
Division at the Cabinet Office

INGA DEAKIN (Class of 2001)
Science Outside the Lab
Entrepreneur in Residence/Mentor
in Residence at Due University,
North Carolina, USA

MICHELLE GOULTY (Class of 2005)
Language Degrees:
Sport to the Charitable Sector
Head of Foundation Partnerships
at City Football Group

SABINA PURI (Class of 2005)
Science Degrees and Beyond:
Natural Science to Investment
Vice President, Blackstone, New York

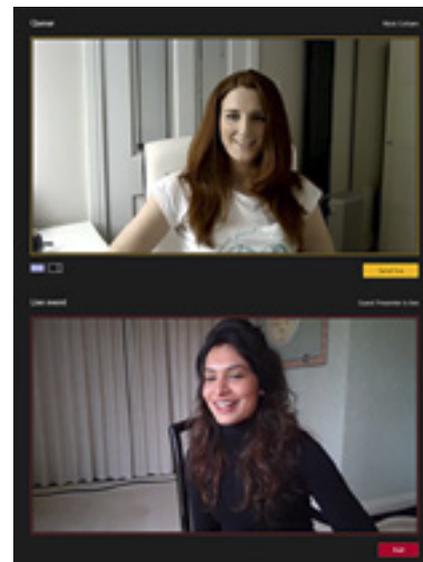
HELEN MOUNTNEY (Class of 1980)
Making the Most of Networking
Formerly Managing Partner, Kurt Salmon
UK, part of Accenture Strategy

DIANA BREEZE (Class of 1985)
Identifying Your Strengths
Group HR Director, Bunzl PLC

Mrs Cottam, Head of Careers, said:

“It’s been a real pleasure to host these inspirational women. It demonstrates that following your genuine academic interests, and allowing them to inform your career decisions, ultimately leads to jobs that provide huge fulfilment, challenge, enjoyment and excitement. Our alumnae spoke about how to make the most of opportunities and your network, how change and challenge should be welcomed rather than feared, how sometimes the most surprising directions can be the most rewarding, and how it is ultimately your attitude and skills, and not the name of your degree or university, that sets you up for a worthwhile and satisfying working life.”

We’re delighted that this online format has allowed our wider network of alumnae to connect with current pupils and newest alumnae.



LIT & PHIL SOCIETY

It was a proud occasion for Withington when the Manchester Lit & Phil, the first and oldest literary and philosophical society in Britain, ran its first ever online event in the Spring featuring a conversation between a former and then current pupil of WGS.

The live session entitled, 'There are no adults: My journey to realising that no-one has a plan!', was aimed at encouraging young people to consider a career in STEM. Kirstie Whitaker (Class of 2001), who inspired Withington students as our Founders' Day speaker in 2018, shared insights into her career journey with then Upper Sixth pupil, Tea Milanović.

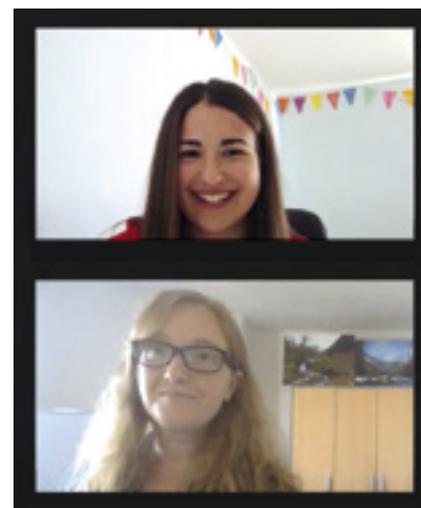
Kirstie, a neuroscientist, is currently the Programme Lead for Tools, Practices and Systems at the world-renowned Alan Turing Institute. Her work covers a broad range of interests and methods, but the driving principle is to improve the lives of people with mental health disorders.

During the course of the interview, she revealed to Tea that dance and choreography had also been a passion during her school years and she had considered the option of becoming a professional choreographer before opting to pursue a science degree. Kirstie also stressed that her arts background had helped her to develop skills she had not realised she would need as a scientist; the ability to write well and to present well. Creativity, she said, was a key part of being a scientist.

Kirstie pointed out that, whilst it can appear that careers have been strategically planned, it is often about seizing the opportunities that come along. She advised, "Follow your joy because every pathway is going to give you pain but know that there can be a joyful day along this journey."

Tea, having been awarded A Levels in Maths, Further Maths, Chemistry and Biology, is now studying Chemistry at Imperial College London. As well as being awarded an Arkwright Engineering Scholarship, Tea was also accepted into McKinsey's Leadership Academy 2020.

Mrs Haslam said, "We were delighted to be asked to take part in this event. We are extremely proud of Kirstie's achievements and continue to follow her career with interest. At Withington we are passionate about encouraging all our students to be the very best that they can be in their chosen fields, regardless of gender or background. Tea was an excellent choice to interview Kirstie. She is already taking steps to build her future career in the arena of science, and this was a most interesting and enlightening discussion."



[Click here or scan](#)
[listen to the interview](#)
[via the Manchester](#)
[Lit & Phil website](#)



SPECTROSCOPY IN A SUITCASE

In February, WGS Lower Sixth chemists attended a workshop entitled Spectroscopy in a Suitcase, run by the Royal Society of Chemistry. The morning involved first learning about the history and structure of paracetamol, and then using some new equipment and techniques to make some ourselves. We then used various techniques to analyse the purity of our sample, such as infrared spectroscopy and thin layer chromatography.

We really enjoyed seeing the specification brought to life, by learning about the real life applications of some of the analytical techniques we cover as part of the A Level, through some hands-on experience that we would not otherwise have been able to do in school. We also found it very interesting to find out more about the potential careers that are linked to studying Chemistry by talking to the students from the University of Manchester who helped us with the practical work.

ZAINAB SHAH Lower Sixth



A team of seven Upper Fourth pupils won a prize for their entry to The Great Exhibition at Home competition. They achieved fourth place in the competition run by 'Big Ideas', a London-based organisation whose mission is to support projects to bring countries and communities together.

In the spirit of Prince Albert's original Great Exhibition, which showcased the most exciting Victorian technology and inventions from 1851, students across the country took part in engineering challenges and created their own Great Exhibitions whilst at home during the Summer Term lockdown. Participants were asked to create a two-minute video presenting their Great Exhibition at Home, which tackled the question: 'How can engineering help protect the planet?'

The girls involved, Aarya Kumar, Nishi Panwar, Adhya Gupta, Dalola Kajopaye, Kimi Tokala, Erin Samaranayaka and Mimi Gu, won a 30-minute digital meeting with one of Big Ideas' inspiring engineers and an individual prize voucher. They had an online meeting with Milly Hennayake, a civil engineer who is passionate about using her skills to keep communities safe. Milly grew up living in Sri Lanka and the UK before going on to study Civil Engineering at the University of Cambridge. She is now a civil engineer in the water engineering team at Arup.

Mrs Bradshaw and Dr Pitts said:

"This is a fantastic achievement and this team, who worked together from each of their individual homes, should be very proud."



POLITICS BLOG SUCCESS

Congratulations to Upper Sixth student Emma Wilson who has been awarded the runner-up accolade in the Political Studies Association's 2020 Student Blog Competition, which is run in partnership with the *Financial Times* and UK Parliament. Emma was one of 20 students nationally to make the shortlist and heard the news of her success this September.

Emma writes of her experience of political blog writing:

In May, I entered the Political Studies Association 'Student Blog Competition' in partnership with the *Financial Times* and UK Parliament. The task was to answer the question 'Does the public expect too much of UK politicians' in a political blog-style format.

As a prospective law student, I had considered the intrusion of law into the private sphere before and it was interesting to look at it politically. I was also keen to look at the different, or added, expectations placed on female politicians.

In July, I found out I had been shortlisted in the top 20 nationwide and that an awards ceremony was scheduled in the Houses of Parliament for September. Unfortunately, the ceremony could not take place due to restrictions on gatherings, but a virtual event included talks from the competition judges David Blunkett, Robert Halfon MP, and the *Financial Times* political editor George Parker.

Finally, the results came in and, along with one other, I was chosen as a runner-up. The question was a very interesting one to answer and it was really exciting to listen to and be recognised by such prominent political figures.



Click here or scan
to read Emma's
blog on our website



Click here or scan
for more information
about the competition



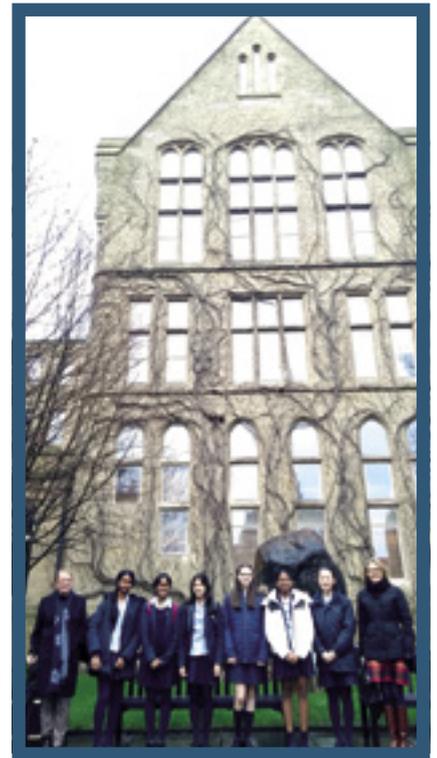
For the past five years, Withington has been involved in Go4Set, which is a ten-week challenge in which we compete with other schools from the North West. It is aimed at 12-14-year olds who have an interest in the STEAM careers (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics). Teams get to choose from a variety of projects, all of which are current and environmentally based.

The 2019-20 team were: Anushka Acharya, Erin Samaranayaka, Janani Velayutham, Mimi Gu, Sonali Koku Hannadige and Zoe Salmon.

We were invited to a launch at the University of Manchester to choose a project and take part in several activities. These involved a presentation introducing Go4Set and the STEAM careers, a quiz designed to help select team member roles, meeting our industry mentor, Ms Chapman, and a tour of parts of the University. The project that we chose was 'A piece of technology that can help in everyday life'. We chose this because we were all interested in technology and being able to produce something practical.

Over the next two weeks we continued to brainstorm and evolve ideas into a final design, which was a bin designed to sort refuse. This was our final idea because we thought it was very important as we are becoming increasingly concerned about the high level of refuse that enters our environment and the detrimental effect it has on the planet. Following this, we conducted a survey to establish how useful this technology would be and how much people already recycle. The survey indicated that people found it most difficult to recycle plastic, so in response to this we refined our idea so it became a scanner that could differentiate between recyclable and non-recyclable plastic. We also spoke to our IT teacher to talk about the hardware and software elements of our idea. He advised us to purchase a scanner which would be programmable using Python.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we were not able to complete the Go4Set challenge; we were, however, able to describe our invention in a document that we sent to Go4Set. For this we received the Challenger Level Industrial Cadets Award. Overall, Go4Set was a really positive experience and it has greatly improved many of our skills from IT to communication and creativity.



MAYOR'S YOUTH PANEL

Head Girl for 2019-20, Kea Bell, was appointed as a member of the Greater Manchester Youth Combined Authority (GMYCA) - a panel of young people representing the ten boroughs and various communities of Greater Manchester who advise GMCA Mayor, Andy Burnham, on key issues and concerns of young people, and offer solutions to those concerns. Kea joined in January 2020 and has attended all meetings since. It was the idea of Mr Burnham to set up this panel and he said at the first meeting that he has come to value the opinions of his young advisors and encourages them to 'be critical and to hold us accountable to ensure the young voices of Greater Manchester are heard.'

Last year, the Youth Combined Authority was actively involved in the concept and eventual implementation of the Greater Manchester 16-18 bus pass. This year, Kea has been involved in developing a new apprenticeship and careers app to open up paths to employment and training for Greater Manchester's school leavers and the consideration of ideas for connecting different generations in common cause. Kea says that there is a very strong sense within the panel that their ideas and advice will be listened to and will influence the policies and activities of the Office of the Mayor. She said: "It has really sparked my interest in politics and it's exciting to know that it can make a real difference to people's lives."



In 2019-20, 22 Lower Sixth girls participated in the Young Enterprise programme and were divided into two companies: Lovender Botanics and YouPhoria. Both companies achieved fantastic results selling products that conveyed meaningful and ethical principles to customers. Each team member was allocated a role, from HR director to Managing Director and Operations Director to Sales Manager.

Lovender Botanics sold eco-friendly lavender-scented products that emphasised the importance of good mental wellbeing. Our aim was to reconnect people to nature through our lavender products, which included bath bombs, lip balms, soap and candles. To reduce our impact on the environment we used recyclable packaging such as cardboard and wax paper. We also used plant wax candles, instead of paraffin wax, and our lip balms were made with beeswax, supporting bee farming.

YouPhoria's aim was to tackle social stigmas. As a company, we thought it was important to relate the product to something that we as individuals have encountered before. This led us to the creation of our first box 'YOUTOPIA' which was centred around breaking the negative stereotype surrounding menstruation. We researched this and found that movements such as #MeToo and #Endperiodpoverty speak out about this topic. Each box contained a variety of luxury items to help women alleviate menstruation symptoms - artisan herbal teas, hair scrunchies that we sewed ourselves using old clothing, a hot chocolate stick and a mug hand-designed by our Marketing Director. We also created a 20-page booklet entitled the Little Book of Big Positivity which aimed to lighten up the reader's day with feel-good advice, recipes, quotations and, most importantly, a large segment about our mission to end the stigma surrounding periods.

Our second box challenged another prominent societal stigma and raised awareness for the struggles of the LGBTQ+ community, and as a result we widened our target audience. Our aim was to try and promote the fact that people should be able to show their support for the campaign without being fearful about what others may think about them. The 'YOU MATTER' box contained a personalised positivity mug hand, artisan tea, an organic handmade candle which we produced ourselves by melting and moulding

sustainable eco-soy wax, and a luxury bar of chocolate.

Both teams succeeded greatly. At the Trafford Centre Trade Fair, YouPhoria won Best Customer Service and Lovender Botanics won Best Trading Stand. We spent a lot of time and effort preparing for the trade fair, and we used the selling and negotiating skills previously developed at Stockport Makers Market where we had many sales and compliments about the unique products and social aims of our businesses.

YouPhoria reached the North West Regional Finals and finished runners-up. Due to the pandemic, the final competition was carried out online, so the team had to record their presentation at very short notice. The team coped very well by cooperating and supporting one another, despite the deadline being slightly stressful!

Through Instagram, Lovender Botanics were approached by AAB Collection, a London-based fashion company, who wanted to sell their products as complementary items on their website. This showed the professional nature of our company and boosted our team morale as we knew other businesses were interested in our products.

As a result of this programme, we believe that all participants developed their skills of organisation, time-management, communication and confidence. The most valuable thing we all learnt was the importance of team working and motivation which will prove useful in future life. There were moments where members were in low spirits and it was nice to see members encouraging each other along the way. In conclusion, we all thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from taking part in the Young Enterprise programme and it was a shame that the pandemic prevented us from selling for even longer.

Both companies would like to thank Amber Whittaker and John Kinney, our business advisers, for giving us immense support and guidance that have helped us to achieve so much, even under these unprecedented circumstances. We would also like to thank Madame Ositelu, our Centre Lead, for running this programme and we are grateful for the invaluable experience we have gained.

We are very grateful for the support of Mr Joel Rosenblatt, who kindly sponsored the 2019-20 Young Enterprise teams.

YOUPHORIA



Lizzy Abel, Farah Akbar, Natasha Arora, Eleanor Carter, Aanya Khandelwal, Shuhan Li, Imaan Luqman, Amber Naeem, Shivani Puri, Emma Shean & Kalia Yiasoumi



LOVENDER BOTANICS



Catalina Alvaro, Ella Chauhan, Luisa Edwards, Raaida Hossain, Opeyemi Lamina, Jessica Lo, Nadia Rauf, Anam Saleem, Olivia Stack, Iman Sultan & Maisie Tunstall

Withington celebrated International Women's Day 2020 with a series of inspirational and thought-provoking workshops organised jointly by the Development team and Head of Careers, Mrs Nicki Cottam, encapsulating the 2020 IWD theme, #EachforEqual or an equal world is an enabled world.

Members of our alumnae, parent community and local business representatives volunteered their time to deliver a series of empowering equality-themed talks to WGS's Lower Sixth, including guidance on working in male-dominated sectors; how to get the best out of teams as a female leader; strategies for closing the gender pay gap and winning promotions and how to balance work, life and family time effectively.

In her keynote talk Class of 1980 alumna Joëlle Warren, Executive Chair and founding partner of Warren Partners Executive Search, spoke of Collective Individualism and called on the students to help to influence change. She pointed out that there are currently more men in CEO roles in the FTSE 100 with the names Steven or David, than there are women in the top posts; just five female leaders who, on average, earn 32% less than their male counterparts. And sharing anecdotes of her own personal experiences, she advised 'don't hold self-limiting beliefs; don't fear failure and don't lose sight of personal beliefs and values'. 'Go for it, don't be afraid,' she urged the girls.

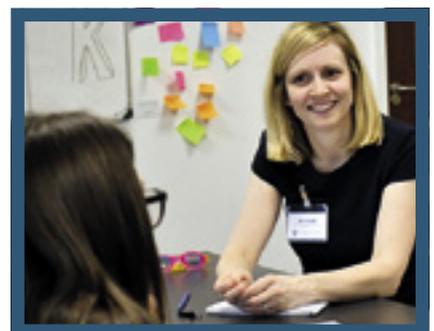
Thank you to all those who helped to make the event such a success. As Mrs Cottam pointed out, the contributors were fantastic champions of the International Women's Day message 'to challenge stereotypes, fight bias, broaden perceptions, improve situations and celebrate women's achievements.'

"I think it is important that we celebrate IWD at Withington because we come from a school where female role models are of great significance. It is positive that we have knowledge of what will happen when we go on into the outside world and how to create an environment that is as supportive as it is here in school."

Fiona, Lower Sixth

"I have learnt some important life skills. Often women are criticised for trying to be assertive, as they are mistaken for being bossy. After listening to these amazing women, I now have confidence in the knowledge that it won't reflect badly on me to follow my own path, because all people should be equal."

Nadia, Lower Sixth



DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

BRONZE AWARD

It was very unfortunate that due to the lockdown, the 2019-2020 Bronze Award cohort were unable to complete their full Bronze Awards because they could not take part in the expeditions. However, DofE 'with a difference' allowed the girls who had completed their physical, volunteering and skills sections to achieve a Bronze Certificate of Achievement. A large proportion of these girls then decided to rise to the challenge and enrolled onto the Silver Award in September this year.

We were delighted that this September most of the 2020-21 Upper Fourth girls enrolled onto the Bronze Award. During the year group teambuilding day at the start of term, the girls had an opportunity to participate in many different activities supervised by DofE instructors, for example, making a cup of hot chocolate using a Trangia and putting up a tent.

On Saturday 10th October, the girls travelled to Whaley Bridge for the training walk. The aim of the walk was to practise navigation skills using compasses and maps. Each group, supervised by an instructor, walked a different route towards Lyme Park and then back down to Whaley Bridge. The groups showed great resilience and determination in the face of torrential rain at the start of the walk. Fortunately, the weather improved later in the day and the groups successfully completed their practice walk, gaining invaluable skills in preparation for the qualifying expedition in February next year.

We are very grateful to Mr Tim Deighton and his team of mountain leaders for organising a very successful training day and training walk and to Dr Madden and the very many other WGS staff who helped with organising these activities.

Meanwhile, the girls will start to work on completing their volunteering, physical and skills sections for the Bronze Award and uploading assessor's reports onto eDofE so that their hard work and commitment can be recognised.

MS ALEX KUSZNIR DofE Bronze Coordinator



SILVER AWARD

Unable to complete the planned summer term expeditions due to the pandemic, we were delighted that DofE launched 'DofE with a difference', enabling COVID-safe DofE activities in July. For Upper Fifth girls, this involved using individual tents, social distancing, hand sanitiser and independent travel to the Practice Expedition.

Thanks to the continued support of our DofE assessors, we were able to complete a Silver training day at Whaley Bridge followed by a two-day expedition hiking from Dunham Massey to School via the Trans Pennine Trail and then back to Dunham Massey via the Bridgewater Canal the following day. The routes were more complex than anticipated and did test the navigational skills of the teams. We camped in the school grounds and made use of the indoor facilities during an evening of route planning for the Qualifier Expedition, first aid, efficient bag packing and diets.

Having been back at school for only one day in September, the 18 girls now in the Lower Sixth, we able to complete their postponed Silver Qualifying Expedition. The girls were in high spirits as they made their way up to Gisburn, to meet up with the DofE team. From there, the groups all successfully made it to Whitehough Outdoor Centre which was to be our base for the next three days.

Although the wind was bitterly cold, the rain showers were infrequent and, overall, the weather was kind to the groups. On day two, each group had a very long walk starting with a climb to the top of Pendle Hill and down again, then a long hike anticlockwise around the hill and back to the centre. On day three, the groups all trekked across to the Ribble Way and down to Clitheroe where they were collected by their parents. Throughout the three-day expedition the girls remained cheerful, positive and showed excellent team spirit. It was a pleasure to accompany them.

As always, I am grateful to Tim Deighton and his team of mountain leaders and to Ms Kusznir who accompanied us.

DR SUE MADDEN Assistant Head



GOLD AWARD

We were delighted that a record number of girls in the Lower Sixth signed up to take part in the well-respected Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Gold level at the start of the 2019-20 cycle. These 34 girls represent 41% of the Lower Sixth cohort which is outstanding.

The Gold Award requires participants to commit to a 12-month period of weekly volunteering plus two other weekly activities for 12 months and six months respectively. One of these must show the progression and development of a new skill and the other a commitment to a physical activity. In addition, students must organise and attend a five-day, four-night residential course of their own choosing. It is no wonder that the Gold Award is so well respected in the wider world as it represents a significant commitment of time and effort on the part of the young people involved. This is, of course, all balanced against the academic courses followed by girls in Lower and Upper Sixth and their other wide and varied extra-curricular commitments.

It was a real pleasure to accompany the Lower Sixth cohort on their Practice Expedition at the start of the October half term holiday to the Yorkshire Dales. After an early departure from School, the girls set off on their hikes from Ingleton and over the challenging Ingleborough Peak, then down into Horton in Ribblesdale for their first camp of the trip. The following day they walked across to Malham Tarn and down into Arncliffe for the second night camp. Up until this point, the weather had been cold but dry, however, the rain did start up overnight with the result that some teams found that they had not set their tents up correctly. All in good spirits for the final day, the weather started off dry again as the groups walked over the fell into Kettlewell and then down the valley to their final checkpoint at Grassington. It was unfortunate that for the final three hours or so, the weather changed, and the teams walked in torrential rain.

It is to their credit that the teams all pulled together; resilience and enthusiasm were maintained, and all groups successfully completed their practice expedition. Camp sites were basic with minimal home comforts, but the girls set up their tents and enjoyed cooking and eating their hot meals every night.

Unfortunately, due to the lockdown, we were unable to complete the planned Qualifier Expedition in April 2020 to the Lake District; this was postponed until August, at the end of the summer holiday. Taking advantage of the DofE 'Expedition with a Difference', 24 of the girls camped in individual tents and stayed at the same camp site in Borrowdale for the full expedition. Girls travelled independently to the start and at

the end of the expedition and we supplied vast quantities of hand sanitiser, hand wash and wipes and girls wore face masks when discussing routes with the DofE staff. Those girls who chose not to take part in this expedition have been able to achieve a DofE Gold Certificate of Achievement for the completion of the volunteering, skill and physical sections.

Storm Francis was an additional and unwelcome presence when the girls walked in persistent rain from the drop-off point at Threlkeld on day one to the campsite at Borrowdale, arriving late in the day, and then having to erect tents and cook a hot evening meal in difficult conditions. The girls awoke to a fabulous second day, clear skies and hot sunshine. From camp, they walked over the fells, via the Honister Pass and into Buttermere, witnessing the Lake District at its very best. Unfortunately, the rain on the third day was again torrential and a shorter walk was planned and successfully executed by each team. There was an added incentive of a hot drink rustled up for each team member by Tim Deighton and Mr Parry in their 'pop up café' at Watendlath before the return leg back to camp. The final day was a little overcast but dry, and everyone had packed up camp and set off on the final leg of the expedition before 9am. Walking back to Keswick with magnificent views over the lake, all teams safely arrived at the final collection point, tired but delighted to have successfully completed this challenging expedition.

As always, I would like to thank the DofE assessors Tim Deighton and Alyn Griffiths and their staff for all their support and encouragement to enable the girls to complete this expedition. The girls remained positive and cheerful throughout, despite the conditions and Mr Parry and I very much enjoyed sharing this experience with them. Finally, many thanks to Mr Parry for giving up part of his October Half Term break and the final part of his summer holiday to accompany this expedition and for driving the minibus.

COLLECTION OF GOLD CERTIFICATES

Five former WGS girls were awarded their Gold Award certificates at St James's Palace in London, before the start of the lockdown. Miranda Bate, Katie Roberts, Namitha Aravind, Ella Myers and Isobel Muotune received their certificates from HRH The Earl of Wessex and spent some time chatting with him about their exploits and the challenges of the expeditions.

The award ceremonies due to take place in March and in May 2020 have all been postponed until 2021.

DR SUE MADDEN Assistant Head



VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

EMMA WILSON Lower Sixth

On 7th February, I visited Cambridge University with a large group of Lower Sixth girls. The trip gave us all an opportunity to see the beautiful university and city and hear about what it's truly like to be a student there. The first place we visited was Fitzwilliam College where we attended a talk about the admissions process. The talk was informative and helpful whilst also reminding us of how prestigious and selective the university is, making me both excited and nervous for my future ahead.

Some student volunteers then led us around the college on a tour during which we had the opportunity to ask about life at Cambridge. After lunch, we reunited with some old Withy girls who were now studying at Cambridge, one of whom showed us around her college - Murray Edwards. As a law hopeful, I was then able to meet another ex-Withington pupil who studies law at Cambridge and look around a more central college, asking her questions about the law course in particular. It was invaluable to hear her experiences specific to law at Cambridge and hear her talking about the wonderful times she has whilst also making us aware of the realities of the challenging academic environment.

We finished the day by exploring Cambridge town itself before heading home. It was a very successful day and meeting up with the ex-Withington pupils allowed us to see the university from a much more personal perspective.



MOSI TRIP

Twenty-five girls from the Third Form and Lower Fourth spent a science-packed day at the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester. In our first workshop we enjoyed looking at materials under a microscope and then designing a space suit for use on the International Space Station. There were many creative ideas using graphene and other materials.

In our second workshop, we composed a piece of music and we then used the Rubens' Tube to see how the frequency, amplitude and wavelength of our music changed the flame patterns. We enjoyed seeing the effects that we had created.

We had a quick trip around the Sun exhibition and learnt about solar storms, how we harness power from the Sun and the impact of the Sun on our health. A quick trip to the shop rounded off the day.

MRS LISA BRADSHAW Head of Science



SKI TRIP TO ITALY

Forty-five pupils from Lower Fourth upwards enjoyed Half Term week in Claviere, Italy. It was fortuitous that Withington's Half Term was in the early part of February and that the area was not one of those considered high risk at the outset of the coronavirus outbreak; thankfully, everyone remained healthy upon return to the UK.

Girls on the trip had a wide range of skiing abilities, and everyone soon got to grips with working at their own level. The beginners grasped the basics and progressed to the mountain on the first day, eventually mastering the red slopes by the end of the week. There were numerous amusing moments and some very graceful falls, along with some which were less so! Other girls were taught at lower intermediate, higher intermediate and experienced levels.

By the end of the week, everyone was taking on much more challenging runs, skiing with greater confidence and enjoying pushing themselves to their limits! Much fun was had on the evening activities too with one of the highlights being night-time sledging!

MRS NATASHA TOUBANKS Trip Leader



In December 2019, 14 Lower Sixth Formers visited The Gambia, the 15th such Withington visit to the village of Illiassa and to other parts of The Gambia. The trip was led by Miss Kaeren Browning, accompanied by Miss Bruce and Mrs Toubanks.

The focus of this visit was the completion of the multi-purpose hall project, adding toilet and washing facilities. We also added a separate building for staff quarters, including bathroom facilities. As well as being a great facility for the Nursery School, the hall, which is a year old now, is regularly used by Tamba Jammeh, the Headmaster of Mama Tamba, to conduct agricultural training sessions with local community farmers. There is an emphasis on a youth empowerment programme focusing on the production of aloe vera, moringa and honey from which they are taught to manufacture products of soap, body cream and honey thus providing them with a secure income. This year, for the first time, we were able to use the hall as a dormitory for overnight accommodation in the village, making travel logistics much easier and putting us right on the spot to get going with our activities of painting an environmentally themed mural on the outside of the hall and teaching and playing games with the nursery children and other young people in the community.

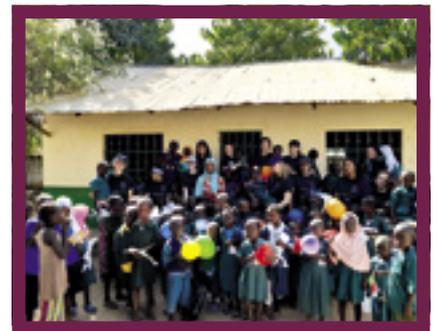
We also built a 'bantaba' (a Gambian bantaba is a traditional meeting place with open sides and a roof), between the hall and staff quarters providing an outside shaded space. We had a celebratory meal here in honour of the new hall and facilities. After the meal, many people gave speeches expressing what a difference the now 15-year friendship and association with Withington had made to this small community in The Gambia. It was incredible to hear the effect on the community of the work and fundraising of the various Withington groups over the years.

We travelled further east to Baboon Island, a registered national park 270 km from the coast which is run by wardens and protected from development. This unique conservation project began in 1979, and today is home to over 100 chimpanzees. We stayed at a lodge here and, on a boat trip, our guide showed us the chimpanzee colony which was amazing – they were very noisy! We were thrilled to see a hippo with her calf.

We also visited the ancient Wassu Stone Circles, which are located in the Central River Region and are believed to be burial mounds of kings and chiefs in ancient times. The circles have been dated to between 750-1000 AD and, because of this, local legend has it that there is a curse on anyone who disturbs those laid to rest there.

We really enjoyed our 2019 Gambia tour and, as always, our girls were fantastic company and a credit to themselves and to the School.

Lakshmi and Eleanor reflected on the whole experience and wrote: 'Overall, our trip was an eye-opening experience that left us in awe of the hard work and dedication evident in the numerous projects run by Tamba, Smiler and Lamin. The Gambian culture is vastly different from English culture; there is a much greater focus on family and community, allowing us to feel like this was our second home. Most Gambian households live with their extended families in a compound, creating a lively atmosphere all the time and this helps to strengthen family bonds and enables a stable environment for children to develop and grow. Being able to support Mama Tamba Nursery was so rewarding and the memories we made with the children there will last a lifetime. Seeing where the fundraising of 15 years of Gambia teams from WGS has gone is incredible – the community are so grateful for the support they have received.'



Imagine time passing agonisingly slowly: you find yourself in solitary confinement in a fusty cell with bars on the windows; your only entertainment is the colourful graffiti and wall-scrrawl left behind by previous inmates, and a writing desk and pen and paper are your only solace. Fortunately, this is a description of Heidelberg's historical student prison, and not of the language school where eleven Withington Germanists from the Upper Fifth spent three hours every morning brushing up on their GCSE German grammar and conversation.

The visit to the student prison (populated in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by local undergraduates, guilty of such misdemeanours as stealing pigs and rowdy partying) was just one of many highlights of our five-day half-term visit to the picturesque southern-German university town. We also found ample time to explore the Altstadt (Old Town), where we got to practise our German in its numerous charming shops and cafés. We marvelled at unusual and beautiful stained-glass windows portraying scientific discoveries in the Evangelische Kirche, and some of the braver members of the party sampled the local delicacy of lentil broth, dumplings and sausage in a restaurant named after Franciscan monks.

Our own accommodation was significantly more comfortable than the aforementioned student prison, but just as unique: the Jugendherberge (youth hostel) which was our temporary home was situated right on the edge of Heidelberg Zoo, and some of us could hear lions roaring during the night.

Heidelberg proved to be the perfect place to experience the season: in the golden afternoon light of our 'four castles' boat cruise down the river Neckar, with its picture-postcard villages and heavily wooded banks, we were treated to a breathtakingly varied tapestry of trees in their autumn leaves which would rival any firework display for its awe-inspiring flashes of colour.

Two singers filming a Christmas video helped to put the 'fun' into 'funicular railway' when they serenaded us with Wham! in a German accent as we took the sloping train up what looked like an impossibly steep gradient to the top of the hill overlooking the city, where we also had the opportunity to explore the impressive castle with its unique Pharmacy Museum.

Heidelberg left us charmed and intrigued and I am sure that the students would join me in expressing many thanks to Frau Siddons, who masterminded our visit and put the itinerary together.



GEOGRAPHY FIELDTRIP

MRS SUSAN HAMILTON Head of Geography

Just before October Half Term, Lower Sixth geographers travelled to Cranedale, East Yorkshire to carry out three days of physical and human geography fieldwork.

After leaving school early on the Friday morning, we travelled in very wet conditions up to Mappleton where we began our investigation of coastal management along the Holderness coastline. Two other locations were looked at, Hornsea and Skipsea, and cost-benefit analysis at each location helped the girls to analyse and appreciate the rapid rate of coastal erosion along this section of the UK coastline. Issues hitherto only read about in textbooks were being analysed in real life.

Saturday saw a drier day, and in fact the sun shone for us as we visited the erosion features at Selwicks Bay, north of the chalk headland at Flamborough Head. The extensive wave-cut platform, wave-cut notches, caves and stacks were all observed, and provided the girls with real-life examples of coastal erosional features. The processes that create these features were also analysed, helping the girls to understand more fully this section of the A Level specification. The afternoon was spent at South Sands, Bridlington, where the process of sand dune succession was investigated involving the collection of primary data using a variety of quantitative techniques.

Sunday was a day for human geography fieldwork, which was carried out in Scarborough. The girls were introduced to more qualitative techniques as the town was explored for its sense of place and its history, which the group discovered through local artwork. Gathering the data in Scarborough was a challenge as it literally did not stop raining all day. However, the girls were an absolute delight, rising to the challenge of the dreadful weather conditions by showing initiative and gathering the information on their mobile phones using the recording mode and photographs rather than attempting to write on sheets which quickly turned into papier-mâché! Despite the weather conditions the fieldtrip was a success, greatly enhancing the girls' understanding of coastal geography (and clouds and rain!).



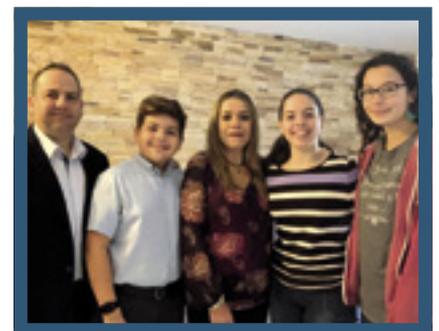
SPANISH EXCHANGE 2019

ASHA JOSEPH Upper Sixth

My time in Spain was more helpful and enjoyable than I could have anticipated. My Spanish family were lovely. Not only did they not tire of my relentless questions, but they told me that they really enjoyed answering them. They made me feel at home and welcomed me into their family. I got to meet Valeria's (my Spanish Exchange partner) grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins - so I truly feel like part of the family now!

Another amazing thing about the Exchange was the difference it made to my confidence and Spanish speaking abilities. The fact my Spanish 'parents' spoke little to no English meant that I was forced to speak Spanish the whole time and stopped me from being lazy and reverting to English. I have noticed a change in my accent and the Exchange has definitely helped me to be less afraid of making mistakes - because I made plenty!

I also got to see different places in Barcelona, from a bird's eye view of the city, to the beach at night, to the Picasso Museum, it is truly a beautiful city. I was fed very well and was able to sample traditional Catalan and Venezuelan food - which was all delicious. I am still in contact with my exchange partner, Valeria, and we are making plans to see each other soon when we are all able to travel again. We were also blessed with sunshine for the trip, making it that much more enjoyable. I am very grateful to the teachers who organised the trip and accompanied us, the Withington girls who came and were all so friendly, the girls from the Spanish school who helped me and spoke Spanish with me but most of all my Spanish family, who now truly feel like an extension of my own family.



UGANDA TRIP 2019

During October Half Term, nine Upper Sixth Formers and three members of staff visited Uganda for ten days. Over the course of the trip, they visited all the charities that Withington has supported, and visited annually, for the past six years. The girls take up the story...

Diya: Once we had committed to the trip, our priority was to fundraise and collect donations for all our partner organisations in Uganda. Overall, we raised over £7,000 and collected various donations of clothes, shoes and other essential items. Our main fundraiser was a 6000-mile combined triathlon with each team member running, cycling and swimming 500 miles each. Further on, we also organised cake sales, an Easter egg hunt and, in conjunction with The Gambia team, a Promises Auction. As we visited each one, we were able to give the many useful items that had been donated, and use funds raised to enable various life-enriching initiatives.



Imaan: Whispers Children's Hospital in Jinja carries out various medical procedures at affordable prices, including blood transfusions for children debilitated from malaria or malnutrition and maternity services to name just two examples of the amazing work that the hospital does. We were all happy to be told how the hospital and its staff wish to "combine good, healthy services with laughter, love and happiness", and this was extremely evident in the compassion we saw shown to the patients. Some of the money we raised for this cause is being used to fund sufficient malaria medication to treat up to 300 babies.

Tala: Glory Be Nursery was established by the Small Steps Foundation to provide early years education for over 200 of the poorest and most vulnerable children in the local area, some of whom are orphans. We spent time painting a mural along the wall of baby class, depicting a sunset with animals wandering in fields, and painted the dark walls of the teacher's office a bright mix of colours too.



Diya: We gave various craft lessons, including making maracas out of rice, plastic eggs and spoons. The children loved it and we sang various nursery rhymes as they shook their shakers to the beat. We taught the older children about the importance of trees and planted fruit trees within the nursery grounds, which hopefully will provide shade, shelter and sustenance for many years to come.

Maya: GIASCO is a home for boys, aged 16-18, who had been taken in from the street and two of its founders are Withington alumnae. The boys are also provided with schooling, including learning English. We played volleyball and football with them and listened to music - to our surprise they knew many of the same songs we knew, especially Beyoncé! It was really nice to be able to connect with them and even though our lives have obviously been very different it was great to know that actually we have a lot in common.



Katie: Home of Hope is a facility that houses and cares for children with disabilities. This was one of the most emotionally challenging parts of the trip. Initially, many of us found it very difficult and upsetting, but this changed when we got underway with the activities we'd planned. Bubbles and balloons immediately lit up the children's faces and most popular was the shaving foam we brought along. The children were entranced by the texture of it and by the end of our time there, we and the children were completely covered in it. Seeing all the children smiling made us realise that this truly was a place of hope.

Risha: Jinja Connections is a charity for street boys, and we met them at a basketball court, one of the many venues from which the charity operates. The boys who are helped are aged from as young as three up to the age of 18. We enjoyed a basketball game of boys v girls which ended honours even. Later in the week, we visited another Centre which provided schooling and lunches for the boys. As an activity to share, we brought baseball caps for the boys to personalise and take away with them.

Sanji: Wanyange Girls' School (the Ugandan WGS!) is a private girls' school which, while having similarities to Withington in the sense of the girls' strong work ethic and their aspirations and ambitions, was also worlds apart, not least that school runs from 5am until 10pm! While there, we made dreamcatchers, an activity that gave us a great opportunity to really get to know the girls and find out about their daily lives. It was, overall, an eye-opening and humbling experience and gave us a greater appreciation of the simple things we take for granted.

Tara: Our trip didn't consist of just charity work and we had time for a bit of rest and relaxation too. We took a sunset cruise across Lake Victoria with spectacular sightings of birds and monkeys, but the highlight was seeing the actual source of the River Nile. Our final two days were spent at the Uganda Wildlife Conservation Centre in Entebbe. We stayed in 'bandas', which are small huts, inside the wildlife centre with giraffes and ostriches living just next door. We were able to go behind the scenes and feed and interact with rhino, elephants, giraffes, monkeys and chimps and well as getting a closer look at some of the birds and big cats. There was a beach on the lake nearby and we spent a few hours on the last day sunbathing and having ice cream to make us feel like we had also had a holiday.





ENGINEERING CLUB

AMY PONTER Upper Sixth

Engineering Club is a new club this year and welcomes all Upper Fourth girls with an interest in the practical application of science.

The group's first project has been to build a powered glider using one of the Smallpeice 'Think Kits'. Girls have been given the opportunity to think about the mathematics behind the balance and ratios of the glider and apply these ideas in its construction. Using balsa saws and craft knives, the girls have cut out the pieces of the glider and have begun putting them together to form the wing. Despite the break from school, they are making excellent progress and we hope to be able to test fly our glider on the field in the new year.



ARTS AWARD

MISS HANNAH BROWN Arts Award Advisor & Junior Teacher of Art

Following the wide participation in Arts Award last year, even more enthusiastic artists have taken part in different levels of Arts Award during lunchtime and after-school clubs.

ARTS AWARD JOURNEY

Our creative Junior girls began their Arts Award Journey in the Autumn Term and they successfully completed their Discover Award. The topic was 'Funky Food' and we had fun making 3D ice-creams out of screwed up newsprint, modrock and card coffee cups. With a lick of paint and the addition of some glitter on the top, the ice-cream sundaes looked good enough to eat! The girls also produced some beautiful drawings, collages and monoprints using carbon paper before sharing their work with each other. In the new year, many of the same Junior pupils moved on to the second level of Arts Award titled 'Explore'. The theme for this project was 'Recycled Art' and we began by making stylish pin badges using scrap paper, inspired by the cut-outs of Henri Matisse. The girls collected cellophane and sweetie wrappers to use in a stained-glass style artwork and they also engaged in work by artists invested in the environment and the natural world. Following the postponement of part of the course, the girls are now excited to plan and design a mandala decoration using old CDs and scraps of vinyl sticker material.

ARTS AWARD BRONZE

Our cohort of Arts Award Bronze students from the Third Form worked hard to compose colourful and highly individual portfolios demonstrating their interests and creative ideas. They began by designing and making lovely silk paintings stretched over embroidery hoops; they then recorded their experiences of different arts events and produced a short review in their books, as well as exploring the work of tapestry artist Marta Rogoyska, whose weaving hangs in the main stairwell at School. The final unit that the girls participated in was a firm favourite and is called the 'Skills Share'. Our pupils thought through and planned a short creative activity and then taught a peer, before reflecting on their own personal efforts and feedback.

ARTS AWARD SILVER

Our pupils from the Lower and Upper Fourth enrolled on the two-year Arts Award Silver course worked in teams to plan, organise and deliver a fantastic seasonal craft market in the Autumn Term. They each took responsibility for a different element of the project, developed their leaderships skills and took part in talks from professionals working in merchandising, marketing and advertising. They also showcased their innovation during the production phase of the project. The Christmas market event saw a range of homemade craft products for sale such as festive cards, bookmarks, decorations, printed bags and pencil cases, painted canvases and jewellery. A great deal of money was raised for different charities and the girls absolutely loved this part of their Arts Award course. Many of the same students are now working through their own personal Arts Challenge and those who have completed the course are eagerly awaiting the results from the external moderation. Once the portfolios have passed the Arts Award assessments, every pupil will receive an Arts Council England acknowledged certificate.



During last academic year, MUN at Withington was as exciting and fulfilling as ever. The newly elected committee of twelve Lower Sixth pupils were divided into two smaller teams; one responsible for organising weekly MUN sessions at Withington and our participation in external conferences, and the other organising the WiMUN XII Conference, scheduled to happen in June 2020.

Girls in the first team were diligent and enthusiastic as they organised weekly sessions on various MUN topics from 'The issue of young girls' access to education' to 'The rights of refugees'. These sessions gave everybody a chance to speak and an opportunity to represent their country and put forward its perspective. As always, the team promoted MUN to younger pupils in the Upper Fourth to give them a flavour of a new extra-curricular activity that they may not have tried before. The team created a comfortable and encouraging environment, giving new MUNers the confidence to debate and ask questions, as well as teaching them how MUN works, in preparation for external conferences. Withington were lucky to attend two large conferences in the year: MUNCH 2019 and MUNHIGH 2020. Withington girls debated stimulating and complex issues, like the economic crisis in Venezuela and the threat of terrorism in the modern world, with eloquence and sensitivity. We were delighted to receive an abundance of accolades at both conferences: a testament to the hard work put in by Withington girls, as well as the committee.

The second team started preparations in September for the highly anticipated WiMUN XII conference to be hosted by Withington in June 2020. The team's ambition and dedication meant they extended the conference as a two-day event, the first in Withington's history with its theme 'Creating Change, Taking Action', a perfect embodiment of what MUN is about. With an exhaustive list of things to plan, the team's hard work and many hours dedicated was astounding. The financing and costs for the conference were carefully planned, including a self-sufficient 'MUN fund' that would provide financial support to help pay for the cost of external conferences for Withington girls in the future. In addition to this, eleven committees were decided, including a World Health Organisation and Committee on Latin America, each to debate three relevant issues. The team invited 25 schools across England with 300 delegates set to attend. Furthermore, they organised logistics for the whole weekend, menus with catering, the MUN website and a keynote speaker to attend the opening ceremony. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the conference had to be cancelled, however the team found it an insightful experience and much of their planning will be used for a conference in the future.

Despite the cancellation of the annual conference, the committee, with the support of the Development Team, were able to arrange for the guest speaker who had been set to attend the conference, Ms Pallavi Sekhri, to deliver her speech via Teams for all Senior School pupils to watch live. As an alumna, Ms Sekhri delivered a thought-provoking speech about her career as a Legal Officer in the UN and life since leaving school. Her work as Counsel for the Secretary-General particularly fascinated MUNers as it brought the MUN experience to life. The vast range of careers and projects on which Ms Sekhri has worked made her talk incredibly inspirational and her resilient attitude resonated with many pupils. We were delighted that the virtual event was so successful and are grateful to Ms Sekhri for her time and expertise. Despite these uncertain times, MUN still very much thrives at Withington with virtual lunchtime sessions and we wish the new Lower Sixth committee the best of luck in continuing the special legacy of MUN at Withington.



3D MODELLING

MR CHRIS FORREST 3D Modelling Club Coordinator

This year in 3D Modelling Club, the next generation of modellers tackled the challenges of a brand-new version of our modelling software. Many weeks, and an army of digital stick figures later, they began the process of modelling and

sculpting their own creature creations. Whilst the truncation of the year in school paused those efforts, I am sure that they will apply their skills to their next modelling challenges. Looking ahead, we are investigating the options

for expanding the use of the sculpting workflow to increase accessibility for pupils and assessing the potential benefits of upgrades to the 3D printing equipment.

ECO SOCIETY

A great year for Eco Society has culminated with the renewal of the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award! Withington has now been recognised continuously as a Green Flag School since 2010 and the Award recognises the efforts of the School's 'Eco' groups in creating and communicating a school 'eco-code' in which all pupils and staff cooperate and undertake to play their part. The assessor said in her letter confirming the Award:

"I would like to congratulate you for all the time and effort that has been invested in environmental education at your school. Your award is well deserved and reflects the hard work you have put into the programme so far."

EcoSoc for the Seniors and Outdoor Club for the Juniors continue to grow, both in numbers of pupils involved and in the determination to promote the environmental cause. Environmental issues are gaining an ever-higher profile as we better understand how our choices can affect the planet, and our students are passionate about making changes for the better. Sixth Form Environmental Officers have worked tirelessly to ensure that Withington continues to work to become as sustainable as possible as an organisation. Last year, they impressed Mayor Andy Burnham with their commitment and ideas. His visit was followed by a highly successful Eco Week: a whole week of fundraising and activities designed to inspire everyone to be more environmentally conscious.

After the success of last year's reusable water bottle campaign, students were determined to reduce plastic use and waste even further. This year has seen the end of plastic cups in the student dining room and water fountains, and the introduction of a milk pergal in the staffroom.

As the effects of climate change become more apparent worldwide, it is now crucial that we change our habits to curb emissions of greenhouse gases. The monthly Eco Tip in the weekly email for parents and pupils has been encouraging us to reduce our carbon footprint by turning off engines outside school and switching from Google to Ecosia. In Eco Week, all students logged their sustainable journeys as they competed for the new (and very beautiful) Eco House Trophy, won this year by Scott. A particularly dedicated group of Withington staff has even started a cycling group for zero-emissions commutes. Cutting down on eating meat is also an effective way of reducing emissions, and meat-free Monday remains a feature of our school menus.

Eco Society members are also passionate about increasing biodiversity and have raised over £515 for Rewilding Britain and the Withington Hedgehog Care Trust. Looking even closer to home, work continues to make our school grounds a haven for wildlife.

The fruit trees planted during Eco Week 2018 are flourishing and members of Outdoor Club have created new bug hotels and composting areas to provide habitats for invertebrates. We have also received a Tree Pack from the Woodland Trust via their Trees for Schools initiative and 30 baby trees have been planted by pupils in our wildlife area at the back of school.

Last year's Withington Onwards magazine was an 'Eco Edition' celebrating the efforts of Withington alumnae in various occupations and campaigns related to caring for our environment. The magazine was printed on Carbon Balanced Paper and every effort was made to reduce its carbon footprint.

Eco Society is a fully inclusive group, comprising girls from the Third Form to Upper Sixth, who meet regularly and organise events under the encouraging guidance of Mrs Cotton and Dr Kenny. Junior Outdoor Club is overseen by Mrs Howling.



Eco-Schools



JUNIOR SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

MRS LISA BRADSHAW Head of Science

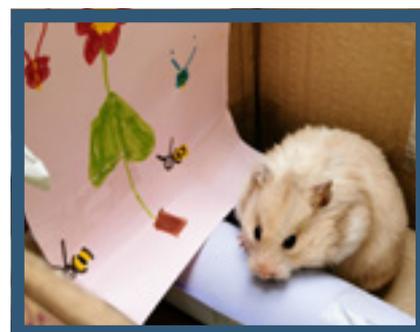
Junior Scientific Society continues to attract an enthusiastic group of Third Form scientists. Popular experiments have been chromatography butterflies, the Alka-Seltzer lava lamp, volcanoes and alien blood. As well as having a fun filled half hour experimenting, the girls have also been learning about scientific principles and concepts. This year with the unusual circumstances we do not have our usual team of Lower Sixth helpers but I want to thank Miss Kerry Lea, our Chemistry technician, for all her help in organising the equipment and sourcing unusual requests such as googly eyes. Dr Maisey has run Junior Scientific Society for many years and with her retirement I would like to pass on my thanks for all the hard work and support she gave the Lower Sixth and Third Form pupils who attended the club.



PETS CLUB

MISS REBECCA THORPE Teacher of Biology

Pets Club has continued to be extremely popular with girls in the Juniors, Third Form and Lower Fourth preceding school closure. We had many regulars who visited weekly to check in on our three lovely hamsters - Coco, Popcorn, and Truffle - and we even had a volunteer, Anya in the Lower Fifth, who helped with the running of Pets Club for her Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Pets Club has given many girls an opportunity to develop their understanding of how to take care of animals and they have been excellent in ensuring all the animals have fresh food, water and clean bedding. They have also been great at cleaning cages, and several of the Lower Fourth students enjoyed taking the animals home for school holidays.



Unfortunately, Coco and Truffle died during lockdown. Many of the girls have been very sad to hear this news. Popcorn, however, is alive and well... and still chewing through anything he can get his teeth on! There was great excitement in the Junior Keyworker School when Popcorn came for a visit during lockdown. As Pets Club is currently closed, Popcorn was temporarily fostered by Miss Smith (until he ate her dress) and since then he has been re-fostered by Ms Baylis and her daughter who have been taking great care of him since. Popcorn is very happy there, but we look forward to his return and cannot wait to have him back! We hope that he will enjoy making new furry friends as we plan to buy some new animals when Pets Club returns.

YOGA CLUB

MRS SANDRA BIRCH Yoga Instructor

Yoga Club takes place in the beautiful Dance Studio that is fully equipped with a lovely wooden floor, mats, blocks and belts. Occasionally it happens in the Gym and during warmer weather we hold some sessions outdoors, which is a whole lot of fun.

Yoga is a skill for life and many of our girls begin their Yoga journey as young as seven, whilst they are in Transition. Junior Yoga is quite different to adult yoga but essentially the postures are the same, they simply have different names or are accompanied by fun songs, rhymes and stories and include more partner and group work.

Twice a week I have offered Yoga sessions to the whole school. During lockdown I submitted some videos suitable for all ages so that everyone could keep up with their regular Yoga practice.

Yoga is beneficial for all, especially during these unprecedented times, and the positive mental and physical health benefits are widely recognised. Everyone is welcome.



CHESS CLUB

MRS VANI KOCHHAR Chess Club Coordinator

Chess Club continues to attract students of all abilities who want to play chess in a friendly atmosphere. The students' abilities range from beginners to more advanced players.

Last year, we had the additional experience of Mr Mike Swift who is a skilled chess player. He provided further support and taught some chess tactics to help improve game strategies.

Since September of this year, Chess Club is currently only being offered to Third Form in order to comply with a COVID-safe environment. The Third Form students have enjoyed learning and playing the game, learnt some tactics including the 'Scholar's Mate', and learnt to play competitively with a chess clock.

Chess Club allows students to enjoy playing this fun and educational game, as well as allowing them to improve their performance. Everyone in Third Form is always welcome.



SENIOR DEBATING

MS ANDREA FURLONG Debating Club Coordinator

Withington girls performed exceptionally well in the Manchester and East Cheshire Heat One English Speaking Union - Churchill Public Speaking Competition. Upper Fifth students Amelia Kloss, Maryam Mahmood and Éilis Mathur came runners-up with Éilis presenting her speech entitled 'HIV and Aids are serious topics that have drifted from the headlines'. Amelia was presented with an award for best questioner and Maryam received an award for best chairperson.

Oluwamayomikun Adetujoye, Salmah Elwerfalli and Anya Patoff won the event with Salmah arguing the topic 'We should stop saying 'everyone needs body positivity''. This team went through to the North West Regional Final held at The Grange School. Here Salmah spoke on the topic 'The longer I live, the more uninformed I feel. Only the young have an explanation for everything'. Oluwamayomikun acted as questioner and Anya chairperson for Altrincham Grammar School for Boys on the topic 'Capitalism is the best economic system'. It was a tough competition which saw the team achieve third place.

The competition was equally tough for our girls in the Sixth Form who competed in the English Speaking Union MACE Debating Competition. Withington proudly hosted the event, and our team of Tanya Aggarwal, Emma Wilson and Deià Penn won the first heat arguing for the proposition 'This house would limit each person to one return flight per year'. Our chairpersons for the evening, Imaan and Safa Saeed, were praised by teachers from the attending schools for their level of professionalism. Competing in Heat Two at Urmston Grammar School our team of Safa Saeed, Imaan Saeed and Deià Penn just missed out on a place in the final, arguing for the proposition 'This house regrets the commercialisation of Pride'.

Many congratulations and thanks to all our debaters who competed, supported and volunteered to help at the events.



TRAMPOLINING

MRS SANDRA BIRCH Trampoline Instructor

Last academic year trampolining took place once a week in the Sports Hall. Anyone is welcome to attend although this club is always a firm favourite with Juniors and the younger girls in the Senior School.

As there are always large numbers of girls attending trampolining, the club tends to be recreational and fun-based rather than skills-based. However, over the year girls who attend regularly really do dramatically improve their performance on the trampoline. After a while, the majority are able to perform seat drops, front drops, back drops, basic sequences and of course the ever-popular swivel hips!

It is traditional at Withington for everyone to have as many bounces as we can fit into the after-school time slot, then finish with some fun games.





ART EXHIBITION 2020

APART OF ART APART

Withington LOCKDOWN ART EXHIBITION 2020

While the stunning annual display of GCSE and A Level art in the Hub is a highlight of every summer term, this year provided a different yet no less impressive way in which to enjoy the fruits of the work which, in the words of Head of Art, Mrs Fildes, "has been so thoughtfully, delicately and brilliantly created" by our Art students over the past two years.

The artwork was displayed in a digital exhibition that was shared with the School community via Virtual WGS and the school website. Mrs Fildes wrote:

"It is, of course, such a shame that we have been unable to celebrate the girls' outstanding achievements in the usual way in School, but I am sure you will agree that their artwork looks tremendous in this spectacular, special and unique digital exhibition.

This is, of course, just a small snapshot of the wonderfully imaginative, thorough, personal, rich and diverse portfolios of artwork that our exceptional artists have produced during the last two years of their courses of study.

We always have a unique title for the annual Art Exhibition, and this year is no exception. This year we are hoping that the girls still very much feel 'A Part of Art' even though we were 'Apart' for

a number of months. The girls and their art will forever be in our hearts and we hope that their artwork will remain as special to them, as it is to us, and be a lasting legacy of what we, the staff, in the Department feel has been such a memorable and wonderful time together in the Art studios. Huge congratulations go out to each and every one of the girls; their absolute commitment, their thought-provoking ideas and their breath-taking technical prowess have been second to none. The standard of work is beyond their years and we have been blown away by the maturity of all aspects of their submissions. The breadth and depth of themes that the girls have tackled continues to amaze us, from environmental issues such as ocean pollution and the effects of global warming on the seasons, through to cultural heritage and religion, and of course personal identity and experience."



Mrs Johnston wanted to particularly mention the Personal studies of the Upper Sixth artists:

“Presenting artwork inspired by contemporary and historical artists, the Upper Sixth students have generated exciting bodies of work in a variety of media. Exploring genres such as fashion and textiles, installation, computer-generated design and architecture, their work reflects their independence of mind and differing interests.

This diversity has encouraged the group to show great interest in each other’s work and made for sophisticated, well-developed written analysis in their Related Studies. These documents reflect how the art world refers to all aspects of life – political messages; pollution and the environment; portrayal of the female form; techniques and inspirations; mental illness; death; experiences of war – an array of subject

matter chosen by our artists that will no doubt inspire Withington’s future A Level students for years to come.”

Mrs Taylor added her congratulations to her Upper Fifth class:

“It has been a pleasure to teach such a talented and dedicated group of artists over the last two years. The work in the exhibition looks fantastic and the girls should feel extremely proud.”

Mrs Fildes concluded:

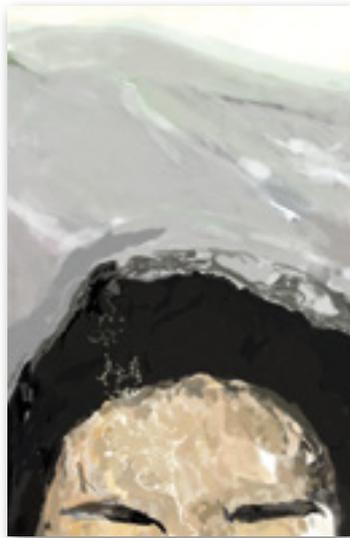
“We all hope that all of the girls continue to be inspired to respond and react to the world around them by using their creative talents to positively voice their experiences, thoughts and ideas. At unprecedented times like this, artwork can be a fantastic tool for relaxation and reward, and artwork created at this time will be a lasting and immediate illustration of this unusual life we are all leading.

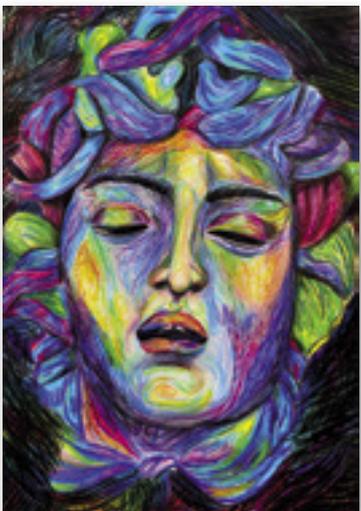
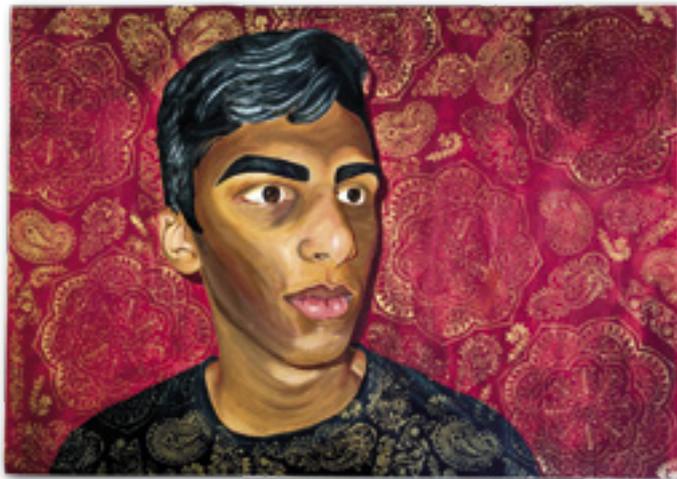
When back in school, we will be able to view the GCSE and A Level artwork in all its glory in the corridors and display spaces around school and this will certainly be something to look forward to in the new academic year. We would like to wish our unforgettable Upper Sixth Artists all the very best indeed for the next exciting chapter in their lives. We know they will be hugely successful and will find ways to be creative in all of their chosen degree courses. We very much look forward to seeing the Upper Fifth back in school as Sixth Formers and hope that you enjoy seeing your work beautifully adorning and enhancing the walls in school for all students, staff and visitors.

Many congratulations again. We are so proud of you.”



ART EXHIBITION 2020





A GIRL'S HEAD

There are a million things in a girl's head,
A million hidden thoughts.

There's an image of the outfit she's wearing the next day,
There's also the thought of dreaded homework.

The notion of winning 'best tennis player',
And meeting your idols.

The secret desire for crisps and fast food, mmmmm
And an unlimited amount chocolate cake,
With a design like no other.

There is a tunnel that leads to the centre of the earth,
And an infinite staircase to outer space.

There is a no-gravity zone where everything is confusing,
The power to fly like a bird in the sky,
And the horrifying curse of loneliness.

There are the wonders of 'whodunit',
from the thrilling new novel she's reading.

There is a cure for all diseases,
And a world where wars are not permitted.

There are many things in a girl's head,
From the most ordinary things,
To the deepest of thoughts.

But don't think for even a second,
That there isn't room for more!

SOPHIA DUMITRU Third Form



MEGAN POGSON Upper Sixth

THE GHOST WRITER

Every day, at precisely twelve noon, there he is. On the park bench - a half eaten sandwich in one hand, pen poised to write in the other. And there she is too, always with him.

Leaning over, she whispers a melody of exquisite words into his ear, and just as her voice travels through air, beautiful sentences of all colours cascade onto the empty pages of his open notepad.

And, a mere hour later when he rises from the bench and begins the walk back to his monotonous office job, she follows him. And yet, something is different about her.

It's almost as if she is fading into black and white, or as if she's been crushed beneath the palm of some kind of overarching power beyond human comprehension. Either way, she stands now not as a person but more of an empty vessel or semi-transparent spectre with pallid skin and an impassive expression. The sparks that danced in her eyes have burned out - for good, it seems.

By the time he begins his commute home, she is nothing but an idea, a distant memory of something he used to have long ago but seems to have misplaced.

That is, until, after he's gone to sleep, the very same notepad lying open on his bedside table. While colour drains from the evening sky in favour of total darkness, it pours into her, bringing life once more to her ghostly features like a colour by numbers.

And so, she resumes telling her story of triumph and of defeat, of expression and of oppression. Peculiar figures drift in and out of his dreams, his mind's eye a kaleidoscope.

And when he wakes, though dreary eyed, he fills the book with floods of words which sprawl across the pages with purpose, each clause more eloquent than the last. She stands at his side, more vivid, more real than ever before. This is because though he is the author, she is, in effect, his ghost writer.

But the truth is that she is dying, and in a way, so is he.

There were twenty in his squadron, and on the first day they huddled together in the helicopter shoulder to shoulder.

United in identical jackets of deep green, pristine and freshly pressed with a British flag on the breast pocket.

Faces pale but set with determination and pride to be part of something more, something bigger than themselves.

The helicopter blades slowed and they skimmed the ground, the brotherhood encouraging each other with reassuring nods.

Grasping their rifles with clammy yet unshaking hands, their feet made contact with the cracked dirt.

Unintelligible words shouted in exhilaration drowned in the din as they entered the war zone.

Flying with purpose, masses of bullets and shrapnel thickened the air, a deadly flurry.

And became embedded in their targets, chewing through iron, calcium, iron and dirt.

It knocked the air out of their lungs, a stolen last breath.

He remembered the way that empty smiles flickered across their faces.

And how those same faces became unrecognisable, caked in mud

When their comrades dragged them back to the barracks.

Embracing them while blood pooled at their feet.

Laying them down, whispering they're okay and

How their families will know they

Fought bravely to the end.

There they lay together

Shoulder to shoulder.

Leaving him

Alone.

ONE BY ONE

UNTOLD STORIES:

A BORING VILLAGE

I was taught that nothing happened in Lymm,
It was just a boring place full of fields and cows,
Full of old buildings and crumbling walls.
I think they forgot to mention how the first major
Change to the American pay policy happened on a bowling
green here.

I was taught Lymm was boring,
Full of tractors and farms,
A few boats floating on the canal.
Nothing interesting to see.
They never told me that Henry Ford
Built the high school here as a house for Belgian
Refugees of war.

They told me Lymm had nothing special,
We did the same thing as everyone else,
Nothing that could possibly make us stand out,
They never realised there was more than just the May Queen.
Soul-caking, Morris dancing and rush-bearing lying ever
forgotten.

I thought Lymm was a peaceful place,
Full of the simpler things in life,
Ever blind to the turmoils of the outside world.
Forgetting the radicals protests of 1817,
And the calls for military intervention in our
Small, quiet village.

And those same radicals and farmers,
Who left Lymm the following week
For protest in Manchester
Fighting for their rights.
Were slaughtered in the Peterloo Massacre.

And yet, in this colourful village,
With such a vibrant history,
Has been reduced to
A dull, quiet village, full of nothing.
A village that once meant everything.
And to some, it still does.



First prize: 13-16 category: **NATASHA BUTTERFIELD**

TWO BROTHERS

As an anxious sigh escapes a brother's throat,
The other hangs an arm around his shoulders.
They sit in silence at the edge of the pier,
Looking out onto the restless lake.

Losing hope is never an option
For those who migrate
Halfway across the world in order to
Make a better life.

The reality dripped in portions,
And without really knowing when
The imbalance would fade,
Two brothers walked in a hailstorm.

Every day, pausing before
Even buying chocolate,
Because the preservation of money
Was their priority.

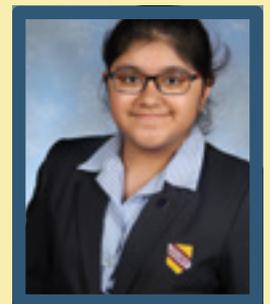
Losing hope is never an option
For those who migrate
Halfway across the world in order to
Define their visions of joy.

Their determination to find a job and a home,
Set them apart,
Rewarded them with the sweet taste
Of everything they worked so hard for.
After rivers of racism the
Time came to build a reputation,
One which would make a dent
In the history of medicine.

Losing hope is never an option
For those who migrate
Halfway across the world in order to
See success in their offspring.

As a relieved sigh escapes a brother's throat,
The other hangs an arm around his shoulders.
They stand in silence at the edge of the driveway,
Of a glamorous home in Manchester.

A home, after years of aching,
Finally occupied with the sound of
Laughing children and happiness
And the scars of spirit.

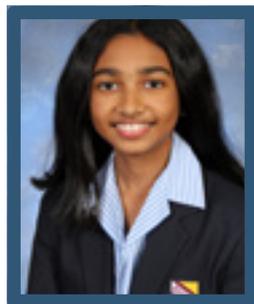


SAMEEHA ATIF

THE FOLLOWING VERSES WERE WRITTEN AS ENTRIES FOR THE ENGLISH HERITAGE 'UNTOLD STORIES' COMPETITION BY UPPER FOURTH PUPILS

TO LIVE ON BOTH SIDES

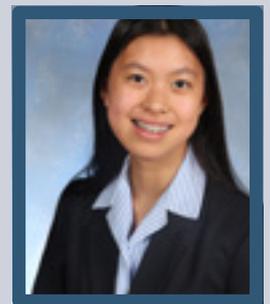
Some said I'm from here
And some thought I'm from there
It didn't really bother me
I didn't really care
But as I got older
I often started to wonder
Where I was from
And where I belonged
My passport said I'm British,
But this wasn't the finish.
My blood said I'm Indian though
Was this all there's to know?
I liked the glittery bangles,
The elephant statue on the mantle
The elegant sarees and costumes,
And the vibrantly coloured rooms
But I grew up speaking English,
Fish and chips being my favourite dish,
Having a British education ,
And being a part of the nation.
I learned to live on both sides,
To live life without a guide,
And to be who I want,
And write in my own font.
It didn't make a difference,
Where I lived and where I was from,
As long as it's true
That my culture lives on.



SATVIKA RAJASHANKER

FOREIGN

We've all heard about the "heroes",
entertainers, geniuses and the talented,
Local to far fetched.
From Winston Churchill to Charles Darwin,
From Elizabeth I to John Lennon.
And although they are by no means of less importance,
What about the others?
Nikola Tesla, who's he?
Sergey Brin, Alfred Wolmark, and the likes.
And let us not forget about the regular people too.
The hundreds of thousands, millions of brave
and nervous people
Hoping to make their fortune in a new and uncertain world.
And upon taking their bets, arriving, being met with the social
and financial difficulty of what is society.
Then after that, the long months and years of back-breaking
toil to work their way up,
Show casing their intelligence and many talents.
And whether they were successful, or struggled till the end,
Always, always the nagging whisper of 'foreign' following
them everywhere.
Following, always following, like a buzzing fly above the head,
Following right down into the next generation of children.



KIRA LIMBERT

UNTOLD STORIES:

IMMORALITY

This poem is about my mother's story dealing with the JVP, a political party, and the conflict between them and Sri Lanka's government. Between the 30,000 and 100,000 people were killed or disappeared.

She walks to school every morning,
Takes out her books and pens
Blocks out the battle outside to
Focus on the battle within.
She sees the messages
graffitied on walls
The threats cannot be erased
The derelict buildings, the stricken
families who
Have lost their children to this.
"70 MPs dead", she hears, knowing
The government is crippling, weak
But she knows all she can do is
study in order
To one day be of aid.
Her classmate, burned to death
For supporting the 'wrong' side.
School children tortured and murdered
Whilst the rest of the world
stares wide-eyed.
She wonders how many
deaths it will take to
Reveal to their leaders the truth:
That immoral actions cannot save a place

Already too far gone.
Her father, shot in the stomach,
She stifles back tears to pray for him.
Unsure whether that day
would come when
She would see him well
and cheerful again.
The family finally leaves their hometown,
To venture to safer lands.
Where the killings are not as
overwhelming,
Yet chances of death still not slim.
She continues to keep on studying,
Knowing education will one day
save her country.
She still hopes for the
assassinations to halt,
But her faith is starting to dwindle thin.
She walks to school every morning,
Takes out her books and pens
Looks around her diminishing
classroom to see
Another child missing or dead.

And now she stands on
a cold winter's day,
hiding her secret behind her smile.
Telling the memories to STOP.
She holds her stripy staff of safety.
The Countess and her sceptre.
The sweet memories of yesterday,
ever present,
in the lollipop that protects the adults,
that belong to tomorrow.



ERIN SAMARANAYAKA

THE OTHER SIDE

I observe the stray mongrels wandering
the bustling streets,
As I once did all those years ago.
Tuning in to the cacophony
of screaming infants, weeping mothers
and pleading men.
I peered down at my dark knuckles which
were gradually changing to a dove-white,
Clutching my brown leather bag and
praying for the noise to stop.
Please stop.
My mother grasped my arm and implored
me, voice shaking,
"Just stay next to me and we'll find your
father on the other side."
The other side? I thought.
The other side? Is that the place the men
in uniform were talking about?
The place where all the bad people were?
I felt my heart pulse in my ears as my
mother grabbed my wrist
And dragged me onto a big blue train.
I took a final look around my home,

Cherishing the memories that I had here
with my family.
When we were all together
And no one had even come up with the
concept of a partition.
Sighing, I swept my grubby stuffed toy off
the floor and wished that this would stop.
Please stop.
My father squeezed my hand and spoke
to me soothingly,
We'll find her, and we will all be together
again, on the other side.
The other side? I felt my stomach
plummet.
The other side? Is that the place the men
in suits were talking about?
The place where the criminals were?
I felt my eyes burn as my father took me
by the arm
And dragged me onto a big blue train.
The train was overflowing with bodies
both living and dead,
The putrid aroma of the two was

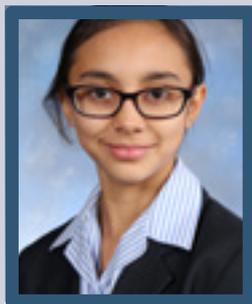
overwhelming.
Two boys clambered to a wrought,
iron door
One with their father and the other
with their mother.
They were embarking on their
passage to the other side.
Both exchanged brief glances
And a swift smile.
Both were on their own
passage to freedom.
On their way to newfound "paradise".



MEIRA NARAYAN

SOMETIMES I LIKE TO LOOK...

Out through the window
To far green fields
Of sweet, sticky sugarcane
The blue sky
Cloudless.
Dark skin, tender brown eyes
A vacant gaze...
He stands over me,
"Wanna show you something."
Holding hands,
He takes me through the fields
Of sweet, sticky sugarcane
Shows me how to look for wild orchids
Toiling workers thrashing
At the sheaves of cane.
Our secret den
Buried under a mountain of hay.
Where we collect things:
Old treasures -
Dead watch that had lost its merry tick,
Empty sardine tins from when we picnicked,
A faded photograph.
I heave a shaky sigh.
We would mount our bikes
The wind whipping through our hair.
Flicking through an album
Of a childhood memory reel
The wheels revolving round -
A never ending circle of time.
I wonder if I'll ever see him again.
He came and went
Like a rainbow through the mist.
Every colour,
A quality
I cherish.
I still look out,
To far green fields
Of sweet, sticky sugarcane
Wondering if he still remembers me.
I'll wait, regardless.
I've waited for ever.



H Aidal Macdonald

COUNTESS LOLLIPOP

She stands on a cold winter's day,
with the warmest of smiles.
The lollipop lady in her neon reflective jacket,
reflecting on a life that might have been.
Her untold story accompanying her
on her journey to guide children to safety.
She once stood on a cold winter's day;
Countess Luxury and Countess of tiaras.
But the lollipop lady has lost count of the years spent
without her husband the Count
and her creature comforts.
Killed in an accident along with her children,
a terrible tragedy,
a life that once was,
and now a new country and a new beginning.
Countess Lollipop uses her past to shape the present.



Arabella Nawaz

DRAMA NEWS & EVENTS

Despite only being in the School building for two terms, the Drama Department once again showcased many exceptional performances in the Studio and Arts Centre this year. Studio performances included the GCSE and A Level devised and scripted performances and LAMDA showcases. During lockdown, the Department was involved in various audio and video productions such as VE Day Anniversary celebrations, weekly podcasts and filming and producing a COVID-safe House Play Competition.

Whole school Drama production of *Beasts and Beauties*

In October 2019, Mrs Berry and Mrs Corner auditioned over 90 keen and enthusiastic students wishing to be part of the whole school production *Beasts and Beauties* adapted by Carol Ann Duffy and dramatised by Melly Still & Tim Supple. Once cast, the rehearsals could begin, and following weekly lunch and evening rehearsals and two weekend rehearsals, the show was ready.

The play is a retelling of some of Europe's best-known and well-loved tales, each with surprises, action, humour - or all three - thrown in. Produced and directed by the WGS Drama Department and supported by the Music Department, 67 Senior and Sixth Form pupils performed the series of short plays: *Beauty and the Beast*, *Blue Beard*, *The Husband who was to Mind the House*, *The Emperor's New Clothes* and *The Girl and the North Wind*. In addition, two Lower Sixth pupils made their directorial debuts, with Ruby Kwartz directing the thriller, *Blue Beard*, and Fiona Townsley taking on the magical tale of *The Girl and the North Wind*.

The series of vignettes was performed over two nights on the 25th and 26th February and then again during the day for the whole of the WGS Junior School. The show also involved some amazing shadow puppetry performed by pupils and staff backstage. They created a constantly moving and dynamic backdrop to the set as well as advancing the storytelling with animations which added, right on cue, to the humour or drama onstage. An original musical score was played live by Director of Music Mrs Sargent and her dedicated band of nine musicians, synching seamlessly with the storylines to create atmosphere and substance to the drama being enacted. The music took elements from the original compositions of last year's GCSE Music pupils and was added to and scored by Mrs Sargent. Ranging from romance and satire to farce, drama and thriller, our young actors from the Third

Form through to the Upper Sixth put in some stellar performances and truly shone.

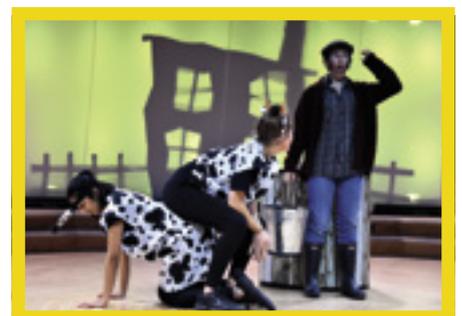
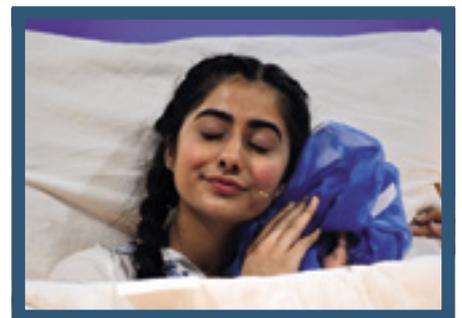
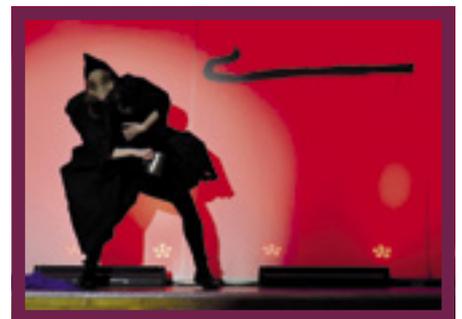
The production began with the Brothers Grimm tale of *Blue Beard*, who hides some dark secrets in his closet. In the farce, *The Husband who was to Mind the House*, audiences were told of a wife and husband who swap roles with disastrous consequences. Romance followed with the well-loved French folktale of *Beauty and the Beast*. This play had two casts made up entirely of Third Form pupils who performed alternately at the two evening performances, in Senior School Assembly and to the Junior School. The poignancy of the story shone through but there were plenty of laughs too, provided by Belle's extremely nasty and vain sisters. Vanity was also the theme of the comedy satire, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, which showcased some superb character acting. The evening ended with the whimsical and magical tale of *The Girl and the North Wind*, also with wonderful portrayals of the courageous and the contemptible.

Supporting the show was a fantastic team of technically talented pupils who assisted Performing Arts Technician Mr Joe Walsh with brilliant lighting and most impressive special effects and technical wizardry. Head of Drama, Mrs Lucy Berry said:

"We have been so fortunate to work with such talented and creative students and are truly grateful for the support and ingenuity of the production team. We hope that all those involved have learnt key life skills throughout the process - perseverance, dedication, commitment, confidence and creativity - whilst making memories that will be treasured."

Headmistress Mrs Haslam said:

"It was a delight to see the result of so many months of great teamwork, imagination, ingenuity and commitment. We are very proud indeed of what our pupils and staff have created and achieved together. Congratulations to them all!"



Tech Club



Tech Club led by Performing Arts Technician Mr Joe Walsh runs on a weekly basis and the students are offered the fantastic opportunity to develop and hone their skills in all areas of the technical side of theatre. The girls who attend Tech Club are heavily involved in supporting all extra-curricular events within the school and in the wider community. Many of our tech students worked as backstage and tech crew for the many Christmas events and the Drama production of *Beasts and Beauties*.

Stage One Drama Club



Stage One Drama Club, led by Head of Drama Mrs Lucy Berry, ran every Friday lunchtime for students in Third Form, Lower and Upper Fourth. There were regularly over 40 pupils attending this 'drop in' club. Sixth Form students Fiona Townsley, Ruby Kwartz, Tanvi Shah and Noor Kabbani regularly assisted in the running of the Club. They dedicated their time, enthusiasm and expertise, offering support and guidance. Activities included exploring approaches to scripts, improvisation tasks and devising original theatre and pupils got involved with real energy and enthusiasm. Mrs Berry said 'It is a truly wonderful sight to see so many girls of different ages working, performing, and encouraging each other in a creative, safe environment. Stage One is a place where students come to laugh, play, learn and entertain each other!'

Gym and Tonic, Sale Waterside

On 3rd October, Lower and Upper Sixth Drama and Theatre A Level students met at the Waterside Theatre in Sale to see *Gym and Tonic* by John Godber OBE. Set in a health spa, the play follows Don and Shirley who arrive hoping to fix their failing marriage but find that even the coolest therapists start to lose their cool. *Gym and Tonic* is described as a 'laugh out loud comedy about trying to find a moment of calm in these challenging times'. The Upper Sixth greatly benefited from seeing this production as they had selected John Godber as their practitioner for their A Level devised piece, so to see a production written and directed by him was invaluable.

Victoria & Albert Museum, London



On 26th November 2019, Lower and Upper Sixth A Level Drama visited London's Victoria and Albert Museum to watch a special private screening of the Duke of York's Theatre production of the selected A Level Drama and Theatre set text, *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. Seeing the production screened in a private special cinema room was fantastic! The screening offered the students a great insight into how to approach the text in performance. Whilst at the V&A, staff and students explored the many galleries and exhibitions including the *Theatre & Performance* collections which documented current practice and the history of all areas of performing arts in the UK, including drama, dance, opera, circus, puppetry, comedy, musical theatre, costume, set design, pantomime, popular music and much more. A highlight for Mrs Berry was seeing the *War Horse* puppet and the many costumes from *The Lion King*.

Malory Towers, Home Manchester

In the Autumn Term 2019, GCSE and A Level Drama students went to see *Malory Towers* by Wise Children at Home, Manchester. Adapted and directed by Emma Rice, the production was a real coming of age tale, as the girls in the story work out their collective moral code. The piece was typical of Rice's style and incorporated live music, animation, and dance to engage and delight the audience.

Upper Sixth Drama and Theatre A Level Devising Theatre Examination and Performance



For their Component Two examination, our Upper Sixth Drama and A Level students were required to devise an original piece of theatre in the style of a practitioner from a prescribed list in the specification. Our Upper Sixth students Milly Allweis, Grace Whitehead and Katie Lennox selected John Godber as their chosen practitioner, as they appreciated his comedic style, use of multi-roling, and heightened characterisations. The students wrote *Old Times*, a play which followed the three main protagonists meeting together for the first time in 15 years at their school reunion. The actors multi-rolled all the characters using outstanding physical and vocal skills. During the play we met all sorts of satirical characters representing the likes of Weightwatchers, Tinder and even a PTA. The performance was written, directed and performed by the students and demonstrated their ability to combine exaggerated comedy, stylised movement sequences and naturalistic acting to capture some poignant, sensitive and moving character portrayals. The performance was shared with a supportive audience of family, friends, students and staff in the main Drama studio on Tuesday 12th November 2019. It was such a great success that a second performance was arranged for a lunchtime, so that the school community could see the piece a second time.

DRAMA NEWS & EVENTS

GCSE Devised Examination and Showcase



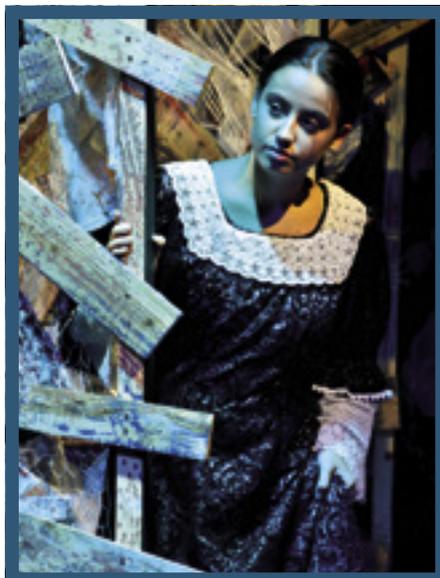
On 12th November, our GCSE Drama students performed their original devised performances for their Component 2-Devising Theatre Unit in the Drama Studio in front of a very supportive (and full) audience of family, friends, staff and students. Both Upper Fifth groups used social media as a stimulus. The first piece was entitled *Antisocial Media*, written and performed by Alice Poole, Raya Dasgupta and Jodie Davidson and the second piece of the evening was entitled *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and was written and performed by Erin Aziz, Amelia Thompson and Olivia Corbett. Both pieces challenged the audience's views about the role of social media in society and highlighted the pros and cons of using social media through a range of well executed scenes in a variety of styles.

Parade by Jason Robert Brown at Manchester Grammar School



In October 2019, four of our talented Lower Fourth students, Flossie Bird, Priya Jari, Fiona Townsley and Scarlett Williams performed in the wonderful MGS production of *Parade*. The play tells the story of Leo Frank, a Brooklyn-raised Jew living in Georgia in 1913 who is put on trial for the murder of 13-year-old Mary Phagan, a factory worker under his employ. Already guilty in the eyes of everyone around him, a sensationalist publisher and a janitor's false testimony seal Leo's fate. His only defenders are a governor with a conscience and, eventually, his Southern wife who finds the strength and love to become his greatest champion.

The production was daring, innovative and bold, and the heart-wrenching story, offered a moral lesson about the dangers of prejudice and ignorance that should not be forgotten. To prepare for the show, the students attended a week of rehearsals in June 2019 at MGS and continued to rehearse throughout the first half term at MGS. They were absolutely mesmerising, and the show was a truly impressive one! Well done to all the girls involved.



LAMDA Examination and Showcases



On 19th February, over 30 students from Upper Fifth and Lower Sixth took their Grade 6-8 LAMDA examinations in front of our visiting LAMDA examiners. The girls had been preparing for this examination since September, with hours of rehearsal and countless lines learnt. Following the examinations, our girls were joined by a supportive audience of family and friends in the Drama Studio to perform a selection of the examination pieces. The evening was a great success, and the result was a credit to both the teaching staff and the students with an eclectic mix of pieces ranging from some of the great classics to extremely edgy and contemporary pieces. This occasion is always particularly poignant to our Lower Sixth students who finish their Grade 8 examination, marking the end of their LAMDA journey. We are extremely proud of all the girls and wish them great success for their upcoming results. Mrs Lucy Berry, Head of Drama said:

"I would like to thank our exceptional and dedicated team of LAMDA teachers, Ms Paul, Ms Radcliffe and Ms Hotten for the ongoing support and outstanding tuition that they offer to our students here at Withington."

Our June showcase was filmed remotely proving that our girls could overcome the significant challenges of lockdown during a pandemic, and the showcase film was shared with all LAMDA students so that their families and friends could enjoy the film which celebrated the students' work and showcased their talent.

Senior LAMDA Results for the February Senior Examinations



The results for the LAMDA Speech and Drama exams which were taken in February were exceptional. Thirty-five pupils from Upper Fifth and Lower Sixth took their Grade 7 and 8 examinations and overall, 31 students passed with distinction and four with merit. This is an outstanding 89% at Distinction. The results really are a fantastic testament to the hard work and commitment from our students and the expertise, dedication and guidance offered by our exceptional LAMDA teachers. Ms Paul, Ms Hotten and Ms Radcliffe prepared the girls for this examination so thoroughly and with such passion. It is the end of the LAMDA journey for the Sixth Form girls, who have been working through the grades since the Third Form. Asked about their experiences with LAMDA lessons and performances the girls all mentioned how much they had enjoyed and appreciated the chance to explore their creativity and imagination, have fun and develop confidence at the same time.

Radio WGS



One of the innovations that came out of suddenly becoming a remote school was the introduction of twice-weekly podcasts for both the Junior and Senior Schools. The Senior version was hosted by Performing Arts Technician, Mr Joe Walsh and from the outset, pupils were encouraged to contribute their own content, such as musical performances, stories and book and film reviews. This was enthusiastically taken up and audiences were treated to some wonderful performances and creative and quirky contributions from pupils and staff. The podcast included regular features which included Head of Drama, Mrs Lucy Berry's 'Wonder Quiz', a mini general knowledge quiz. Students were invited to send their answers in to receive House points. Mr Walsh dedicated real commitment and time to the project, ensuring that the podcast was a great success.

Virtual VE Day Celebrations

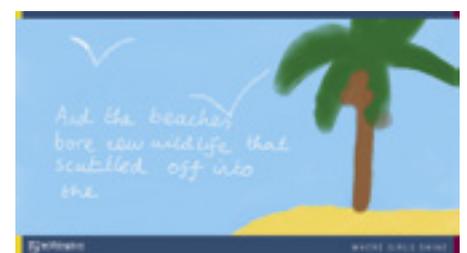


Mrs Berry and Upper Fifth Drama students, Raya Dasgupta, Alice Poole and Jodie Davidson all contributed to the School's virtual Assembly devised by the Development Department, which marked the 75th anniversary of VE Day on Friday 8th May. The film looked at how life and learning were affected for our school community during World War II. The students involved contributed by recording voiceovers at home which were edited into the film. Mrs Berry, Mrs Edge, Mrs Bowie, and Mrs Dalton-West also recorded voiceovers to bring the staff of the past to life. Mrs Berry said:

"It was a real privilege to be part of this significant and poignant anniversary, particularly at a time when we are all working so hard to overcome the barriers brought by lockdown, and to continue providing girls with an outstanding education in a remote way."

House Play Competition

The House Play Competition is a long-standing Withington Summer Term tradition, and due to lockdown, Head of Drama, Mrs Lucy Berry had to find a new approach this year. Usually plays written by the House prefects would be performed by all the Third Form girls from the same House. So, this year, it became the House Play Film Competition. Each House was given a different poem chosen from some that had become popular on social media during lockdown. The poignant four poems had captured people's imaginations as they chimed with the sentiments and significance of lockdown. The prefects directed the Third Form to record their lines from home or in the Key Worker School, and once the footage was submitted, the prefects then edited the footage to create a truly touching set of films that captured the poems in a creative and dramatic way. The films were judged by Mrs Cottam, Dr Kenny and Mrs Corner who considered the creative adaptation of the poem, the quality of filming and editing, the execution of ideas and the inclusion of students. Every film was excellent on all those criteria, but with 'outstanding storytelling, beautiful editing, a huge variety of visuals, strong acting' and making the judges 'feel truly moved and experiencing a variety of emotions', Simon's entry was judged the winner. Herford's poem was *And the People Stayed Home* By Kitty O'Mera, Le Jeune's poem was *Lockdown* by Brother Richard, Scott's Poem was *The Rainbow Children* by Gemma Peacock, and finally the winning house Simon presented *The Great Realisation* by Tom Roberts.



MUSIC NEWS & EVENTS

Outside the classroom a varied programme of musical ensembles continued to be well attended, producing a consistently high standard of concerts throughout the year. Key events this year included St Ann's Carol Service, Senior Christmas Concert, Senior Citizens' Christmas Tea Party and Recital Evenings, before our Spring / Summer Music showcases such as the Leavers' Concert, Spring Music Showcase and the Juniors' Strawberry Serenade had to be reimagined because of lockdown.

The Withy Express



The Junior Christmas show was everything a Junior show should be – bright, happy, glitzy and full of Christmas wonder. The show was produced by Mrs Beckie Lowe and Miss Rachel Hylton-Smith, who also wrote the opening song and script.

We were treated to a fantastic display of song and dance with music and lyrics that have become so familiar to us taken from many popular films of the festive season.

Festival of Lessons and Carols at St Ann's Church



A highlight of Withington's Christmas calendar for over 60 years and from which, as always, the collection was made towards the work of Wood Street Mission and St Ann's Church. The sound of heavenly voices filled the church as pupils and staff choristers performed songs including *Mirabilé Dictu* from Manchester Carols and *When A Child is Born*. It was a wonderful traditional carol service, made even more enjoyable by the amazing acoustics of St Ann's Church.

Wood Street Mission 150th Anniversary Event

The WGS 26-strong pop-up choir performed *May the Lord Bless You* and *For the Beauty of the Earth* in Manchester Cathedral on 18th November at a service to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Wood Street Mission.

Senior Citizens' Christmas Concert and Tea Party



Withington opened its doors once again for the annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Concert. We had a record number of guests this year and they enjoyed Christmas classics by senior musicians and choristers, a repeat of Mr Ian McKenna's winning 'Teachers Got Talent' performance of Robbie Williams' *Angels*, and Golden Oldies led by the Staff Choir. A fantastic spread was laid on for our guests to enjoy, all prepared by WGS pupils and staff. A House competition festive 'Bake Off' held earlier in the day provided our visitors with spectacular seasonal bakes. Thanks to the generous donations we received from Withington families, every guest received a gift. The event was a fabulous success and, as ever, enjoyed by all who were involved and attended.

Senior School Christmas Concert

The audience at the sold-out Senior Christmas Concert enjoyed the Christmas music performed by various ensembles and the massed choir of Lower Fourth accompanied by the Staff Choir. From Stage Band to Flute, Brass and Harp Ensembles, to all the Orchestras and Choirs, an astonishing array of talent was laid on for the audience, showcasing the real breadth and depth of Withington's Music Department. The concert closed as always with the entire auditorium singing *Merry Christmas Everyone*.



House Carols

A much-loved event of the Christmas season, the House Carol Competition is always saved until the last day of term. All Lower and Upper Fourth girls, led by a team of diligent Sixth Form house prefects, battled it out to see who would be crowned House Carol Champions. But, most importantly, it was an uplifting and joyous event that sent everyone away for the Christmas holidays with much festive spirit!

Podcast (Senior and Junior School)

The moment lockdown was declared, plans were underway to set up a WGS podcast which would be 'aired' on a Wednesday and Friday. A 15-minute programme with the latest House News, performances from Music and Drama, Comedy from Head of Upper Fifth Dr Smiles, a story written by Head of English, Ms Davies, a Weekly quiz from Head of Drama, Mrs Berry, items from the History Society, Film and Book reviews by Georgia Campbell, Nanaki Singh and Em Bate plus 'Thought for the Day' from Ms Robinson and Miss Bruce. Compered by Performing Arts Technician, Joe Walsh (Senior School) and Music Administrator, Ellen Sides (Junior School) the Podcasts provided a wonderful opportunity for all at WGS to connect, send in and share items of interest and enjoy some light entertainment.



Music Goes Virtual

A Virtual Performance Assembly included musical performances from girls who kindly recorded themselves at home and then sent in their performances to be played in this musical Assembly. Performances included; Hana Kurdo (Upper Fifth) *Valse Lente*; Cara Mooney (Third Form) *Telemann's Gigue à l'Angloise* and the final performance by Katie Mei (Upper Sixth) *Allegro Assai*. The Assembly ended with a thought for the day:

"Music is the great uniter. An incredible force. Something that people who differ on everything and anything else can have in common." – Sarah Dessen

There were two Virtual Upper Fifth Composition Assemblies in one week. As part of the Music GCSE, girls are required to compose two compositions – one from a given brief, set by AQA and a second, the pupil's own choice, hence a wide range of music is explored and composed.

So much time and effort went into creating these compositions throughout Upper Fifth – many moments of wonderful creativity and of course, on occasion, frustration! But the end results were truly fantastic, and we were able to record the girls' compositions performed live by our instrumental staff, visiting musicians and on occasions, the girls themselves. These recordings were then presented in a virtual Assembly to everyone at home during lockdown.

Thought for The Day:

"Live your truth. Express your love. Share your enthusiasm. Take action towards your dreams. Walk your talk. Dance and sing to your music. Embrace your blessings. Make today worth remembering." – Steve Maraboli

Virtual Music Festival

The Withington Music Festival takes place every other year and, despite the limitations of lockdown, Withington's Music Festival 2020 still took place!

Entry was open to all pupils from Third Form to Upper Sixth and the classes divided into piano, vocal, strings, woodwind, brass and percussion. Girls were asked to submit recordings of their performances which were then adjudicated by our Instrumental Staff, Miss Sides and Miss Hylton-Smith. This truly was a wonderful celebration of the musical talent at Withington! Results were as follows: 1st Place Lejeune; 2nd Place Herford; 3rd Place Scott and 4th Place Simon

Return to School

September saw a return to school and, with it, rehearsals in year group bubbles and preparations for Christmas.

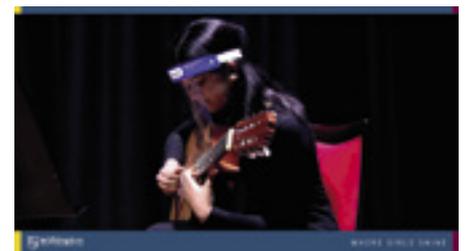
Much planning had taken place during the summer holidays, in preparation for Withington musicians to return to the 'new normal' – perspex screens, visors and much use of antibacterial wipes and hand sanitiser.

Instrumental Lessons began again and a new extra-curricular timetable was set up so that each Year Group 'bubble' could rehearse within a Voice Ensemble and/or Instrumental Ensemble.

With Founders' Day being postponed, preparation began for Christmas! Christmas always begins early in any Music Department, but this was yet to be another first of 2020 – rehearsing Christmas Music in September ready to be filmed just before half-term! (See Newsletter 2021!)

Virtual Recital Evening Exam Classes

Wednesday 13th October



Still unable to perform 'live' concerts, the Exam Class Recital Evening was a 'Virtual Concert'. Filmed and recorded by Joe Walsh, Elliott Peterken, Cat Meaden and Julia Munro, the girls were able to showcase their hard work and success to family and friends. The programme included solos and ensembles from our current Upper Fifth and Upper Sixth pupils as they prepare for their performance module.

Thank you and well done to all involved!

MUSIC NEWS & EVENTS

Juniors

Music in the Junior School continues to thrive and 2019-2020 provided many performance opportunities for the budding musicians, many of whom had the opportunity to perform as soloists at the Instrumental Showcase.

Strawberry Serenade Goes Virtual



There's No Business, Like Show Business AND the show will go on...

Just when Upper II thought that they would not be able to enjoy their final 'swansong', much plotting and planning was taking place so that the show could go on as we entered the uncharted waters of recording and performing with the girls in School and with those who were still at home.

Thrilled with the thought of being able to produce a show, Upper II girls mastered the songs, the dancing and IT skills so as to produce a 'Virtual' performance of *Olivia!*. Directed by Mrs Sargent and Miss Hylton-Smith, Upper II girls in school rehearsed in their bubbles, joined via Teams by those at home. The entire score of *Olivia* was covered, dances learned, filmed and then edited and mixed, plus cameo performances by Junior Staff!

A special thanks must go to Elliott Peterken and Joe Walsh for their IT wizardry enabling the show to go on and be presented to family and friends as a recording.

Well done to all who took part, both in front and behind the cameras. Enthusiasm, determination and creative thinking certainly helped us take on the challenges of Withington's first Virtual Show!

Junior Ensembles

Despite the new restrictions, Junior Ensembles continue to be well attended as an Instrumental Ensemble and Voice Ensemble has been formed for the Year Group Bubbles.

MUSIC CUPS 2019

THE CHRIS HOLMES CUP

for Musical Performance was awarded to **Shamae Griffin** for her rendition of Harp Cadenza - *Waltz of the Flowers* from *The Nutcracker*; Tchaikovsky

THE PICKERING CUP

for Outstanding Contribution to Music was awarded to **Kea Bell** and **Katie Mei**

OCSMAS 2020

The following girls have been involved in Music throughout their time at Withington. Not only have they become accomplished musicians, they have truly gone above and beyond and have been superb ambassadors for the Music Department. They have been committed, enthusiastic and above all, reliable:

Kea Bell, Abby Brown, Imogen Breeze, Shamae Griffin, Marialena Iacovides, Bonnie Li, Charlotte Marsh, Katie Mei & Sophie Reuben

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

DIPLOMA

Georgia Campbell (Lower Fifth)
Flute with Distinction

YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to **Anna Grayson** on reaching the second round of the *BBC Young Musician of the Year* competition

HALLÉ YOUTH CHOIRS

Withington musicians also continued to enjoy the wonderful opportunities with the Hallé Choirs. Places were awarded to **Siena Chae, Emily Edge, Anushka Krishnan, Meira Narayan, Anika Ramesh**, (Hallé Children's Choir); **Victoria Wang** (Hallé Youth Training Choir) and **Tuhina Rao** (Hallé Youth Choir).

HALLÉ YOUTH ORCHESTRA

A very 'well done' to **Anna Grayson** (Oboe) and **Georgia Campbell** (Flute) who have both been awarded a place in the Hallé Youth Orchestra - September 2020. With so few places available in the Woodwind section this really is a significant achievement!

ABRSM EXAMS

An impressive number of girls were entered for the ABRSM examination results and again achieved much success, many being awarded Distinctions. A particular 'well done' to **Emma Wilson** who achieved her Grade 8 Flute and the following girls who all achieved Distinctions:

Olive Harou	Piano	Grade 1
Arabella Nawaz	Harp	Grade 1
Ciara Halpenny	Clarinet	Grade 1
Nishi Panwar	Guitar	Grade 4
Hannah Cope	Clarinet	Grade 5
Kate Ponter	Saxophone	Grade 6

Congratulations also go to:

Rayanna Ahmed	Harp	Grade 1
Alexa Dhawahir-Scala	Flute	Grade 1
Samyu Ganesh	Singing	Grade 1
Harmony Coleman	Piano	Grade 2
Safa Jamil	Flute	Grade 2
Adhyavi Gupta	Violin	Grade 3
Anya Gupta	Guitar	Grade 3
Bridget Heath	Violin	Grade 3
Isabelle Burns	Singing	Grade 4
Penny Hirst	Piano	Grade 4
Mimi Gu	Violin	Grade 5
Sonali Koku Hannadige	Oboe	Grade 5
Florence Hannaby-Cummins	Singing	Grade 6
Maria Khan	Piano	Prep test.

REMOTE LEARNING AWARDS

As Instrumental lessons went online, the girls and Instrumental staff rose to the challenge and many girls excelled in their instrumental playing during lockdown. To recognise this

commitment and determination to succeed despite the challenges a new Music Award was created! Well done to:

YEAR 7

Aaloka Ariyawansa	Singing & Violin
Sienna Basso	Harp
Poppy Button	Singing and Harp
Jessica Chen	Harp and Piano
Camille Corbett	Clarinet
Rebecca Coughlan	Singing
Faye Davies	Violin
Sofia Dhawahir-Scala	Cello
Emily Edge	Singing
Maisa Farrukh	Singing
Alice Fines	Clarinet
Orli Garnett	Flute
Ciara Halpenny	Clarinet
Macey Haworth	Singing
Charlotte Hunt	Piano
Naomi Ingersoll	Cello
Holly Jackson	Singing
Ziva Jacobson	Singing and Guitar
Layla Karski	Singing
Maria Khan	Piano
Sasha Leach	Flute
Clara Luke	Piano
Grace Marando	Violin
Hattie McDermott	Violin
Jasmine Meftah	Piano and Violin
Cara Mooney	Singing and Piano
Bella Mulcock	Violin
Sophia Nelstrop	Harp
Maisie Nolan	Violin
Laura Parsons	Flute
Henny Peach	Saxophone
Zara Smith	Singing and Violin
Paavana Sugumar	Singing
Tenesha Swarbrick	Saxophone
Kit Towers	Harp
Vivian Tran	Cello
Diya Upadhyay	Percussion
Isabel Zhao	Cello

YEAR 8

Lorna Abbott	Violin
Krishna Bhagdev	Saxophone
Natasha Butterfield	Piano
Siena Chae	Singing and Cello
Nikita Chakraborty	Piano
Brianna Cui	Violin
Mimi Gu	Piano and Violin
Adhyavi Gupta	Piano and Violin
Bridget Heath	Violin
Lucy James	Bassoon
Ayla Kabbani	Piano
Ruby King	Flute
Aarya Kumar	Flute
Calista Lam	Singing
Oonagh Mathur	Bassoon
Daisy Myers	Singing
Arabella Nawaz	Harp
Anika Ramesh	Percussion
Erin Samaranayaka	Trumpet & Harp
Zoe Tower	Flute
Jessica-Dior Williams	Violin
Poppy Winnard	Trombone

YEAR 9

Karen Ayodele	Piano
Sama Beden	Guitar
Maryam Bhatti	Piano
Isabella Chen	Piano and Violin
Pako El Seehy	Piano
Zainab Gasimmalla	Saxophone
Anya Gupta	Guitar
Safa Jamil	Flute
Esther Kelly	Clarinet
Sonali Koku Hannadige	Oboe
Rosa Littlewood	Trumpet
Kaiya Matharu	Flute
Shenara McGuire	Singing and Violin
Sophie Porter	Singing
Mia Shah	Trombone
Ariba Tasnim	Guitar
Haleemah Umar	Percussion
Janani Velayutham	Clarinet

YEAR 10

Eve Beckford	Piano
Georgia Campbell	Saxophone
Hannah Cope	Clarinet
Penny Hirst	Saxophone
Emily Liu	Saxophone
Tammi Schweiger	Singing
Swetha Selvarajan	Singing
Ria Sijuwade	Trombone
Aisha Slater	Trumpet

YEAR 11

Sarah Chan	Percussion
Eleanor Fernie	Piano and Percussion
Easha Kapur	Singing
Asha Kochhar	Singing

YEAR 12

Ruby Kwartz	Percussion
Priya Jari	Singing
Shuhan Li	Harp
Olivia McGrath	Cello
Amy Myers	Singing
Amy Ponter	Flute
Ishika Ruia	Harp
Emma Wilson	Flute
Alex Sykes	Percussion

YEAR 13

Kea Bell	Percussion
Imogen Breeze	Flute
Charlotte Marsh	Singing

SENIOR SPORT

BADMINTON

Over the last two years a small squad of talented badminton players have competed in the Manchester Schools' Competition at Key Stage 3 level. They once again continued to dominate in this competition, taking on schools from all over the Manchester area, and finishing as Champions. In the National Schools' Competition, the team were looking to build on last year's success, where they came third in the regional finals, narrowly missing out on a national finals place. After a tough group stage, against Altrincham Grammar School for Girls and St Peter's Wigan, the girls finished as runners up in their group but sailed through their quarter and semi-final matches. They then faced a rematch with a very strong St Peter's side to whom they had narrowly lost in the group matches. It was a nail-biting match from start to finish with us narrowly in the lead after the pairs matches. A win in the final match saw the girls earn their place in the National Finals, which would have been held in April, but sadly were cancelled due to lockdown. Well done to Anushka Acharya, Kaiya Matharu, Erin Samaranayaka and Kimi Tokala for their continued commitment to badminton.



MRS LIZ O'NEAL Head of PE

SENIOR HOCKEY

The ever increasing demands of Sixth Form life make it harder and harder for girls to commit fully to hockey, but Captain Charlie Westbrook and Vice Captain Maya Fullwood did a sterling job leading the team from the front this year, setting the standard by attending all practices. The Senior Squad was a force to be reckoned with when all players were available and fully fit, with the team having their best successes in the National Schools' Cup, beating Abbotsholme and only losing on penalties to Giggleswick School.

The U14s also fared well in the national competition, progressing through the county round and North West Finals to reach the North Regional Finals which gave them a roadtrip to Leeds. Here they faced some of the toughest competition in the north of England and, whilst they did not make the semi-finals, gave a very good account of themselves, showing development and maturity in their game play.

The U13 squad had a mixed season of results but again, a very successful run in the ISHC Plate Competition. After beating Rossall and Ratcliffe College they made it through to the quarter finals. Here they faced a well-drilled Sedbergh team and despite taking an early lead, were unfortunately knocked out at this stage, losing 4-1.

The U12s have shown lots of potential with some very skilful players and a growing number of girls attending clubs out of school, which has made team selections increasingly complex to ensure everyone had a fair chance to represent school. It is good to be able to enter the national competitions as it gives girls the opportunity to face opposition teams from different parts of the country. The following girls were selected for county hockey squads: Lorna Abbott, Chloe Lowndes, Amelia Poole, Eliza Towers, Kit Towers, Jess Williams and Matilda Wright. Eliza and Amelia were also selected for England Hockey Performance Centres.



MRS LIZ O'NEAL Head of PE

LACROSSE

MRS STEPHANIE ROBERTS Teacher of PE

The 2019-20 season once again proved very successful for Withington Lacrosse with much to celebrate in all age groups. The Senior Team had a fantastic season under the captaincy of England Under 23 star Miranda Bate, finishing as runners-up at the North Schools Tournament and winning numerous friendly, yet competitive games during the season. It was a relief that the much-anticipated National Schools Tournament was able to be played before lockdown commenced; however the weather was against us and the tournament was reduced to one day and only three group matches. A convincing win against Caterham School and good results in the other matches saw Withington placed 14th overall – our best-ever result. A number of Sixth Form girls continue to play at club level with Charlie Bell of the Lower Sixth continuing to shine in the England National Academy.

The Under 14s had a brilliant year, losing only one of their friendly matches. The second half of the season saw training sessions intensify as preparations began for the Under 14 National Schools Tournament as this was the first time that Withington has entered at this age level. Showcasing the best players from Third Form to Upper Fourth, the team showed grit, determination and outstanding teamwork to achieve a top 16 finish. The Under 14s finished their season a week later, as runners-up at the North Schools Tournament, losing only to a very strong Moreton Hall side. This age group saw a great many players remain committed to lacrosse at both club and county level, with five girls continuing to perform well at the England Regional Academy.

The younger years continued to enjoy their lacrosse with the Under 13s finishing in third place at the North Schools Tournament and a number of girls succeeding at county level. The Under 12s were certainly the most enthusiastic and committed Year group, with over 25 girls regularly attending extra-curricular practices. With so many club players and a very talented Year group, team selection proved increasingly complex and hopefully in the future, we will also be able to run a B team for this age group. Highlights of the season included remaining undefeated in all friendly matches and finishing as runners-up at the North Schools Tournament. With an increase in competitive matches and more exposure to playing under pressure, this talented squad will be a force to be reckoned with as they move up the school. Congratulations must go to the twelve Third Form and Lower Fourth girls who were successful at county level for 2019-20.

This year, lunchtime and after-school practices have been incredibly well attended and girls in all age groups are showing a real commitment to the sport. Former pupil, Miranda Bate, joined the Department this year as Lacrosse Coach and has already proved to be a real asset to Withington Lacrosse. With major rule changes coming in this season and the added challenge of adapting to additional rules in light of the pandemic, Miranda's experience and expertise have been invaluable. We look forward to the start of 2021 and enjoying competitive fixtures once again.



KEY STAGE 3 NETBALL

MRS SOPHIE HETHERINGTON Teacher of PE

I am delighted to share the highlights of what has been one of the most successful seasons that Withington Netball teams have ever had. The strength and depth of our squads continue to grow with many girls committing to extra-curricular netball and fixtures. With growing numbers at practices, we wanted to develop more opportunities for B Team fixtures. This year we entered the U12B and U13B Teams into the Manchester Schools League, which has been a roaring success in guaranteeing more exposure to competitive Netball and ultimately increasing the number of girls that represent the School.

The U12 netball squad has had a fantastic year, an extremely talented group saw over 30 girls regularly attending practices. The A Team showed rapid improvement from the U12 Festival in September by going on to play 11 matches in total, winning 10 matches to be crowned South Manchester League Winners. The only loss of the season was in the National SNS Cup Regional Final against The Grange School. Reaching the final eight teams in the country was an outstanding achievement and all girls should be very proud. The U12B Team went one better finishing the season unbeaten in all fixtures and winners of the Manchester Schools Division One League which was brilliant. They also reached the finals of the Manchester Schools Netball Knockout but unfortunately the event was postponed.

The U13s have also been hugely successful. The A Team started strongly by winning the Manchester District Tournament in September then going on to win 15 games and losing only two. They were unlucky to finish a close second place in the South Manchester League behind Cheadle Hulme School. Their most notable success was their journey through the Independent Schools Netball Cup with some fabulous wins against Woodhouse Grove, King's Macclesfield and South Hunsley to reach the Quarter Finals. We made the long trip down to Guildford High School in Surrey where we faced a strong, well-drilled team. The girls had to shake off the 4-hour journey and in true Withington style came out victorious 37-27 to go through to the semi-finals and the last four in the country. A home game against Putney High School went to the wire and showcased an incredible comeback from the U13s from ten goals down to bring it back within four; unfortunately we ran out of time but the resilience shown by the whole team was admirable and a credit to them. The A Team finished a strong season by winning the Greater Manchester County Tournament, beating Saddleworth in the final. The U13B Team improved with every game, winning a total of seven games and only losing two, finishing third place in the Manchester Schools League where they competed extremely well with other schools' A Teams which is fantastic and represents the strength and quality of Netball across the Year group.

The U14 Netball squad has been outstanding this year with their best season yet. Off to a flying start in the SNS National Cup scoring over 100 goals really set the tone for the season ahead. This is the first age category when the girls can compete in the prestigious England Netball National Schools Competition and hopes were high for success. First up was the County Round and the U14s were undefeated Greater Manchester County Champions after beating fierce rivals Stockport Grammar School in the finals. Next up was the North West Regional Round; the girls breezed through the group stages to face The Grange School in the semi-final. After an end-to-end game, the girls held their nerve to win and progress to the final where we once again faced Stockport Grammar School. The U14s were unstoppable with an incredible display of netball we were officially crowned North West Champions and had booked our place at the National Finals down in Hertfordshire. The SNS Cup success continued, beating Lymm High School, Cheadle Hulme, King's Macclesfield and Stockport to reach the National semi-finals. Unfortunately, the season was cut short due to COVID-19 and the semi-final was cancelled. I am so proud of this team and the determination they have shown to improve over the last three years, they thoroughly deserved all the success they enjoyed this season.



KEY STAGE 4 NETBALL

MISS KELLY MOTTERSHEAD Teacher of PE

The U15 netball squad had a fantastic season with a very closely played South Manchester league, facing some tough opposition. The main achievement for the U15 team was getting to the semi-finals of Independent Schools Netball Plate, where they unfortunately couldn't carry on and play further due to the national lockdown. They met South Hunsley School in Round Two of the competition and beat them with a very convincing win of 60 – 26. They went on to play King's Macclesfield in a very tense match. At the changeover of the last quarter the score line was very even with only one goal in it. The team worked extremely hard and held their nerve going on to win 40 – 37. The quarter final was against Cheadle Hulme School in another battle with a very close score line towards the end. The team stuck to the game plan and won 28 – 5. The team progressed to the semi-final in March, due to play King's School Worcester; unfortunately this was cancelled due to the pandemic.

The U16 team had a very good season, winning the South Manchester League and they then went on to reach the fourth round of the Sisters in Sport National Cup. They beat Manchester High School for Girls 23 -10 in the first round and went into round two facing Parrenthorn who they beat with a very convincing 33 – 19 score. The third round brought the challenge of the Grange School and again another fantastic win of 46 – 37. The team unfortunately lost to a very strong Bury Grammar School in the fourth round.

The U19 team had a rollercoaster of a season with a bit of a rocky start. The team were new to playing together and took several matches to settle. The girls worked hard over the season and managed to achieve third place in a very competitive Greater Manchester County Tournament, which was wonderful to finish their season on a high note.

Overall, the Withington netball teams have gone from strength to strength and are viewed very highly within the region for their netball. The South Manchester League is played from September to March and involves 13 schools. Withington finished winners or runners up in five out of six age groups. This goes to show the talent and dedication of the netball teams and we hope this continues in the future.



SPORT COLOURS & AWARDS

MRS LIZ O'NEAL Head of PE

JUNIOR COLOURS

Awarded to girls who have shown commitment and reliability throughout the season, attending practices regularly and having the opportunity to represent school in fixtures.

FOOTBALL

Aysha Ahmed	Ananya Kori	Mariam Siddiqui
Zara Chakrabarti	Isha Majid	Margot Tatton
Emilie Claymore	Anna Martin	Faatimah Umar
Erika Hope	Inayah Munir	Lucy Walton
Amaya Juneja	Shairah Rashid	

NETBALL

Sofia Ahmed	Nya Grant	Sophie Ryles-Dean
Charlotte Allinson	Sarah Knight	Dhaani Singh
Valentina Burns	Reesha Kumar	Margot Tatton
Emilie Claymore	Anna Martin	Lucy Walton
Sophie Forster	Zaynab Mustafa	

LACROSSE

Sofia Ahmed	Erika Hope	Margot Tatton
Charlotte Allinson	Amaya Juneja	Lucy Walton
Emilie Claymore	Anna Martin	

GYMNASTICS

Sofia Ahmed	Harmony Coleman	Maya Rajput-Driver
Charlotte Allinson	Nya Grant	
Emilie Claymore	Inayah Munir	

HOCKEY

Aleezeh Adeel	Charlotte Allinson	Anna Martin
Sofia Ahmed	Sarah Knight	Arfa Waseem

SPORTSHALL ATHLETICS

Anna Martin

WINTER COLOURS

NETBALL

JUNIOR

Georgia Campbell
Sahara Carter
Lottie Franey
Rosie Jones
Amelia Poole
Sarah Shakir
Effa Tariq
Anna Wiggetts

HALF COLOURS

Mayo Adetujoye
Savannah Arora
Charlie Bell
Mia Bowie
Maya Davies
Luisa Edwards
Erin Howells
Hannah Jenkins
Noor Kabbani
Sarah Kinney
Asha Kochhar

Grace Mather
Silvia McCarthy
Evelyn Morris
Kim Muñasque
Abi Sanders

FULL COLOURS

Kea Bell
Eléna McLean
Freya Metcalf
Charlotte Westbook

LACROSSE

LOWER FIFTH

Lottie Franey
Anna Wiggetts
UPPER FIFTH
Charlie Bell
Mia Bowie
Molly Dow

Karma Kabbani
Evelyn Morris
Lucy Pooler
Abi Sanders
Jasmine Torevell
Annie Williams

LOWER SIXTH

Ellie Bridge
UPPER SIXTH
Miranda Bate
Daisy Kay
Libby Morris

HOCKEY

JUNIOR

Emily Booker
Penny Hirst
Vaani Jairath
Maisha Lorgat
Shreya Mehta

Ellie Noakes
Rowan Rutherford
Aisha Slater

HALF COLOURS

Charlie Bell
India Clarke

Brontë Horsfield
Lucy Pooler
Jasmine Torevell

FULL COLOURS

Maya Fullwood
Charlotte Westbrook

FOOTBALL

THIRD FORM

Orli Garnett
Ava Greenwood
Charlotte Hunt
Simrita Kathuria
Karinne Leong
Chloe Lowndes
Zara Smith
Tomi Taiwo

LOWER FOURTH

Uma Abbas
Sophia Babalola
Zaynab Chowdery
Scarlett Holmes
Ayla Kabbani
Tunmidalola Kajopaye
Ariella Shapiro

LOWER FIFTH

Fareha Abbas
UPPER FIFTH
Ifra Ahmed
Freya Demby
Karma Kabbani
Aleena Khan
Asha Kochhar

GYMNASTICS

JUNIOR

Sienna Basso
Carys Bucknall
Daisy Davidson

Sofia Dhawahir-Scala
Cara Mooney
Kit Towers
Matilda Wright

HALF COLOURS

Alysa Choudhry

SIXTH FORM SPORTS AWARDS

These are special awards to girls who have been committed and reliable throughout their time at WGS. This is in recognition of their hours of dedication to attending practices and playing in matches both midweek and at weekends and the fact that they have been able to organise themselves and prioritise their attendance even during the busiest of times in Lower and Upper Sixth.

Miranda Bate
Kea Bell
Maya Fullwood

Daisy Kay
Charlotte Marsh
Eléna McLean

Freya Metcalf
Libby Morris
Charlotte Westbrook

CUPS & TROPHIES

After growing success in athletics, tennis and rounders over the last couple of years it is a shame that this year we have been unable to defend our records and titles. It also means that we are unable to award the Athletics Trophy and the Lipson Cup for Tennis.

WHITTON CUP

Best all-round performer
in Third Form:
Ava Greenwood

CLUCAS CUP

Best all-round performer
in Upper Fourth:
Grace Adams

FERROL SHIELD

Best all-round performer
in Lower or Upper Fifth:
Charlie Bell

CAHILL CUP

For services to football:
Karma Kabbani

ROSEBOWL AWARD

Best all-round performance throughout their time at school:
Miranda Bate

CAPTAINS & VICE CAPTAINS 2020-21

NETBALL

Captain: Noor Kabbani
Vice: Erin Howells

HOCKEY

Captains: India Clarke
Brontë Horsfield

LACROSSE

Captain: Ellie Bridge
Vice: Charlie Bell

FOOTBALL

Captain: Karma Kabbani
Vice: Ifra Ahmed
Asha Kochhar

A long-standing and popular fixture on the Withington calendar is the annual Gym and Dance Competition.

Held during the school day in the first week of February, the first stage of the competition gave individuals the opportunity to perform their own gymnastics routine before a judge.

The Gym and Dance Display followed a few days later, and featured the Gym Competition winners, all Junior pupils, solo and ensemble dance groups and Senior School gymnasts. With around 160 girls taking part, it was, as always, a heart-warming and breath-taking occasion demonstrating not only the girls' courage, flexibility, agility and imagination, but also trust in one another to be caught or supported at the right moment!

UPPER II

- 1st Maya Rajput-Driver
- 2nd = Nya Grant, Emilie Claymore
- 3rd Charlotte Allinson

Highly Commended:

Aysha Ahmed, Sofia Ahmed, Harmony Coleman, Sophie Forster, Astrid King, Inayah Munir & Margot Tatton

THIRD FORM

- 1st Daisy Davidson
- 2nd Sienna Basso
- 3rd Cara Mooney

Highly Commended:

Sofia Dhawahir-Scala, Ava Greenwood, Macey Haworth, Rafaella Ingleby-Castleton, Aastha Khandelwal, Saleha Malik, Grace Marando, Maisie Nolan, Henrietta Peach, Ava Robinson, Olivia Sawney, Matilda Wright & Mancy Yu

JUNIOR GROUPS

- 1st Poppy Higgins, Henrietta Nelstrop & Ava Shah
- 2nd Charlotte Allinson, Emilie Claymore, Nya Grant, Lara Gupta & Fiona Ingersoll
- 3rd Lexi Peach & Alexa Dhawahir-Scala

SENIOR GROUPS

- 1st Sienna Basso & Daisy Davidson
- 2nd Sofia Dhawahir-Scala & Cara Mooney
- 3rd Carys Bucknall, Kit Towers & Matilda Wright

OVERALL JUNIOR CHAMPION

Nya Grant

TRANSITION

- 1st Sophia Bird
- 2nd Arabella Higgins
- 3rd Emily Cao

Highly commended:

Izzah Ahmed, Layla Iqbal, Alayna Kumar, Katie Liang, Isla Smith, Saratha Srinivasan & Jasmine Wallace

FORM I

- 1st Ellen White
- 2nd Serena Omeje
- 3rd = Imeia Grant & Azra Yavas

Highly Commended:

Katie Askander, Jessica Goldsmith, Ediomabasi Inyang, Kitty James, Anushka Khunger, Ava Lin, Pia Syal & Emma Tan

LOWER II

- 1st Frances Dunn
- 2nd Lara Gupta
- 3rd Poppy Higgins

Highly Commended:

Katie Conway, Lexi Peach, Aditi Ranganath, Avika Rao, Jasmine Sastry, Ava Shah & Eva Stallard



CHEMISTRY

GOLD CREST AWARDS Upper Sixth 2019-20

Isha Aggarwal	Saba Khalil	Teodora Milanović
Lara Al-Asady	Maisie King	Alice Mister
Miranda Bate	Tara Kinney	Safiyah Mansoor
Niharika Chokkapu	Zara Kurdo	Sanjani Murugesu
Roya Fazliani	Victoria Li	Imaan Naeem
Henna Hameed	Eléna McLean	Inaiah Naeem
Marielena Iacovides	Katie Mei	Tara Power
Nethmi Ingirige	Freya Metcalf	Charlotte Westbrook

CHEMISTRY COMMUNICATORS Lower Sixth 2019-20

Lamisah Aamir	Ella Clare	Megan Pogson
Sarah Abdelrazeq	Seren Conway Lai	Evie Raja
Lucy Aherne	Sanaya Jairath	Ishika Ruia
Farah Akbar	Saakshi Kapoor	Shreya Saravana
Mia Alexander	Aanya Khandelwal	Tanvi Shah
Maya Asim	Opeyemi Lamina	Cody Taylor
Michaela Baek	Zara Liu	Scarlett Williams
Jeevan Bijral	Keeya Modi	
Ezhil Chandrasekaran	Amber Naeem	

THIRD FORM CREST AWARDS

Nitika Banerjee	Macey Haworth	Cara Mooney
Jessica Chen	Rafaella Ingleby-	Laura Parsons
Camille Corbett	Castleton	Henrietta Peach
Rebecca Coughlan	Maria Khan	Sana Sarkar
Emily Edge	Sasha Leach	Olivia Sawney
Tarushi Fernando	Clara Luke	
Kavitha Gnanalingham	Jasmine Meftah	

CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD Upper Sixth 2019-20

GOLD	Humna Amar	Eléna McLean
Marielena Iacovides	Miranda Bate	Katie Mei
Jessica James	Isabelle Carley	Freya Metcalf
Saba Khalil	Gunjari Chakraborty	Charlotte Westbrook
Teodora Milanović	Roya Fazliani	BRONZE
Diya Salahudin	Zihan Guo	Isha Aggarwal
SILVER	Tara Kinney	Julie Bonnet Durville
Humaira Ahmed	Zara Kurdo	Alice Mister
Lara Al-Asady	Victoria Li	Chloe Tsang

CHEMISTRY CHALLENGE Lower Sixth 2019-20

ROENTGENIUM	Priya Jari	Qudsyyah Bint Yaseen
Zainab Shah	Amber Naeem	Ezhil Chandrasekaran
GOLD	Megan Pogson	Ella Clare
Shuhan Li	Ishika Ruia	Saakshi Kapoor
Zara Liu	Imaan Saeed	Aanya Khandelwal
Manasa Rajashanker	Safa Saeed	Evie Raja
Cody Taylor	COPPER	Shreya Saravana
SILVER	Sarah Abdelrazeq	Lakshmi Shivakumar
Tanya Aggarwal	Farah Akbar	Iman Sultan
Lucy Aherne	Savannah Arora	Scarlett Williams
Mia Alexander	Michaela Baek	
Seren Conway-Lai	Jeevan Bijral	

PHYSICS

PHYSICS OLYMPIAD

COMMENDATION	Julie Bonnet Durville	Sana Khalil
	Athena Critchley	Hannah Landsman

PHYSICS CHALLENGE Lower Fifth 2019-20

GOLD	Grace Lu	Rosie Jones
Fareha Abbas	Ananya Pureti	Zahra Karim
Ananya Agarwal	Riya Vasireddy	Fiona Meng
Emily Liu	Anna Wiggetts	Raabiya Mirali
Dina Taher	BRONZE	Francesca Pye
SILVER	Mahaab Ahmed	Hannah Sakhdari
Rebekah Babar	Zahra Ali	Swetha Selvarajan
Emily Bate	Hazel Barrett	Sarah Shakir
Olivia Clegg	Eve Beckford	Leila Shakoor
Charlotte Franey	Georgia Campbell	Nanaki Singh
Nimrah Haroon	Sahara Carter	Aisha Slater
Mariam Hussain	Aleena Chaudhry	Effa Tariq
Vaani Jairath	Zahrah Chowdhury	COMMENDATION
Maryam Jawad	Penny Hirst	Sophie Hobson
Sienna Jones	Sofia Hussain	
Amelia Khan	Fatimah Iqbal	

AS PHYSICS CHALLENGE

SILVER	COMMENDATION	Zainab Shah
Shuhan Li	Farah Akbar	Manasa Rajashanker
BRONZE	Ellen Brabban-Brown	Lakshmi Shivakumar
Amy Ponter	Grace Mather	Alex Sykes
	Areej Naqvi	

GCSE PHYSICS CHALLENGE

SILVER	Aleena Khan	Salmah Elwerfalli
Ayokunmi Alade	Mallika Kumar	Rivonia Goswami
Arabella Allen-Kyng	Maryam Mahmood	Noor Khan
Tuhina Rao	Liana Maiti	Amelia Kloss
Sara Sherwood	Hannah Whiteson	Asha Kochhar
BRONZE 1	BRONZE 2	Hana Kurdo
Grace Adebawale	Mayo Adetujoye	Kimberly
Anna Grayson	Ifra Ahmed	Muñasque
Rachel Horton	Bianca Baier	Layan Nassier
Leah Hussain	Charlotte Bell	Zahra Shah
Sophie Jayson	Freya Demby	

BIOLOGY

BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD

Gold	SILVER	HIGHLY COMMENDED
Jessica James	Saba Khalil	Humna Amar
Teodora Milanović	BRONZE	
Diya Salahudin	Miranda Bate	
	Marielena Iacovides	

UKMT JUNIOR CHALLENGE

GOLD AWARD

Uma Abbas	Maria Khan	Anika Ramesh
Brianna Cui	Hannah Lam	Arya Saravana
Mimi Gu	Haidal MacDonald	Rhea Sud
Florence Hannaby-Cummins	Bella Mulcock	Jessica-Dior Williams
	Vaishnavi Rajeev	

SILVER AWARD

Gauravi Amandakone	Orli Garnett	Holly Moors
Haleema Ashraf	Niha Gudena	Lilly Nguyen
Sophia Babalola	Emma Gumbley	Nishi Panwar
Megan Ballantyne	Bridget Heath	Melika Rajabi
Eleanor Bayes	Maryam Hossain	Satu Rajashanker
Sophia Betesh	Flora Liu	Zoe Salmon
Poppy Button	Meera Mahadevan	Daisy Simpson
Nikita Chakraborty	Zaara Mahmood	Kimi Tokala
Louisa Davidson	Liyana Malik	Zainab Vohra
Nihaan Dawood	Harriett McDermott	Miranda Whiteson
Katya Dickson	Jasmine Meftah	Mancy Yu
Anequa Fazal	Eleanor Mitchell	Isabel Zhao

BRONZE AWARD

Aleeza Ahmed	Holly Jackson	Laura Parsons
Rayanna Ahmed	Ziva Jacobson	Henny Peach
Munza Baig	Lucy James	Danae Petrouis
Sienna Basso	Maanya Jasti	Evie-Rose Pietkiewicz
Krishna Bhagdev	Ayla Kabbani	Emily Porter
Anyia Borland	Tunmidalola Kajopaye	Imaan Rashid
Isabelle Burns	Layla Karski	Isha Reddy
Natasha Butterfield	Yara Kayali	Ava Robinson
Isabella Caldwell	Scarlett-Rose Kennedy	Amelia Sajhad
Siena Chae	Ruby King	Erin Samaranayaka
Rebecca Coughlan	Aarya Kumar	Sana Sarkar
Maisa Farrukh	Sasha Leach	Olivia Sawney
Tarushi Fernando	Karinne Leong	Ariella Shapiro
Alice Fines	Eva Mackey	Zara Smith
Macey Haworth	Cara Mooney	Paavana Sugumar
Scarlett Holmes	Meira Narayan	Tara Sumra

SENIOR KANGAROO

MERIT

Diya Salahudin	Imogen Breeze	Jessica James
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MATHEMATICAL OLYMPIAD FOR GIRLS (MOG)

DISTINCTION

Imogen Breeze

UKMT INTERMEDIATE MATHEMATICAL CHALLENGE

GOLD AWARD

Grace Adebowale	Rachel Horton	Grace Lu
Mahaab Ahmed	Sonali Koku	Maryam Mahmood
Ayokunmi Alade	Hannadige	Tuhina Rao

SILVER AWARD

Ananya Agarwal	Salmah Elwerfalli	Eilis Mathur
Rebekah Babar	Eleanor Fernie	Reanna Meadows
Bianca Baier	Charlotte Franey	Fiona Meng
Emily Bate	Penny Hirst	Kimberly Muñasque
Eve Beckford	Mariam Hussain	Ananya Puroti
Anna Bocharova	Zahra Karim	Francesca Pye
Sarah Cowan	Matilda Kelly	Rowan Rutherford
Anisha Das	Noor Khan	Sarah Shakir
Raya Dasgupta	Asha Kochhar	Sara Sherwood
Jodie Davidson	Mallika Kumar	Aisha Slater
Maya Davies	Emily Liu	Larissa Yip
Freya Demby	Maisha Lorgat	

BRONZE AWARD

Fareha Abbas	Rivonia Goswami	Swetha Selvarajan
Arabella Allen-Kyng	Anna Grayson	Leila Shakoor
Hazel Barrett	Nimrah Haroon	Nanaki Singh
Charlotte Bell	Phoebe Heath	Dina Taher
Mia Bowie	Katie Hine	Chiara Tether
Georgia Campbell	Fatimah Iqbal	Amelia Thompson
Sarah Chan	Sophie Jayson	Victoria Wang
Emily Chiu	Aleena Khan	Hannah Whiteson
Olivia Clegg	Hana Kurdo	Anna Wiggetts
Monique Conlan	Ayrah Majid	Annie Yip
Hannah Cope	Maya Misra	
Alex de Meza	Layan Nassier	

UKMT SENIOR CHALLENGE

GOLD AWARD

Imogen Breeze	Shuhan Li	Diya Salahudin
Jessica James	Amy Ponter	

SILVER AWARD

Marialena Iacovides	Lucy Mehandjjeva	Megan Pogson
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BRONZE AWARD

Tanya Aggarwal	Sana Khalil	Areej Naqvi
Milly Allweis	Bonnie Li	Manasa Rajashanker
Savannah Arora	Zara Liu	Anam Saleem
Priya Jari	Shaila Mulchand	
Aanya Khandelwal	Grace Mather	

DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNAE NEWS

THANK YOU FROM THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

MRS LESLEY DOWDALL Director of Development



In what has been an unusual and challenging year for us all, we are extremely grateful for the incredible support that we have received from our alumnae and wider Withington community. Support has been offered in a myriad of different ways – from contributions to virtual assemblies and participation in our new virtual careers sessions, Rise:Live, through to the launch

of our new podcast series, Spotcast On (see page 63). The sense of community has always been a special part of Withington and never has it been more important than over the last year.

This powerful community spirit was perhaps most prevalent in the wonderful response to our Bursary and Hardship Appeal (see page 111). We asked for help to support girls with true potential who would otherwise miss out on all that a Withington education has to offer and to help ensure that no pupil is faced with the distressing possibility of leaving Withington due to a change in family circumstances brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. And the Withington community responded with warmth and generosity. You helped us to raise an incredible £114,338. Special

thanks to one alumna, who wishes to remain anonymous, who very kindly agreed to match so many of your contributions to help us reach this wonderful total.

We've also had the opportunity to meet many of our alumnae during virtual reunions and have been thrilled to welcome alumnae from across the globe to these events. It has been so much fun hearing of their time at Withington and their journey since.

A special welcome to the Class of 2020 as you officially become Withington alumnae. I am sorry we did not have the chance to celebrate your graduation in the way we would have wanted but I look forward to the day we can welcome you all back to school. In the meantime, do keep in touch. We would love to hear about your future successes, of which I am sure there will be many.

The Development team have been thrilled to be able to lead on, and contribute to, a range of new initiatives over the last year which we hope have supported and enriched the experience of our pupils, as well as our alumnae and wider members of the Withington community, including:

- International Women's Day p.69
- RISE Live Careers, p.64
- Key Worker Portraits, p.58
- MUN Live Event, p.79
- Manchester Lit & Phil Live, p.65
- Spotcast On, p.63
- Virtual VE Day, p.97

AD LUCEM AWARDS - YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO NOMINATE



We are very proud to announce the launch of the Withington Girls' School Ad Lucem Alumnae Awards. We know that our alumnae are an amazing group of women, excelling in so many different ways and in so many different areas and we wanted to celebrate some of these achievements, as well as inspire our current pupils.

The recipient of an Ad Lucem Award will be a Withington alumna who has made an outstanding contribution to society, or who acts as an inspirational role model, either in a professional, voluntary or philanthropic capacity, or through their personal endeavours. Their achievements, outlook and conduct will demonstrate that they continue to reflect the school's ethos and values, making them an exceptional public ambassador for our school community.

Anyone, including pupils and current parents, is welcome to make a nomination but please note:

- Nominees shall have attended Withington Girls' School
- Nominees shall not be current WGS staff members
- Awards may be considered posthumously
- Nominees should be nominated by someone other than themselves.

There are two categories, the **Ad Lucem Award** and the **Ad Lucem Young Award** (for alumnae under the age of 30 at the nomination deadline, 28th May 2021). These will be awarded biennially, commencing in 2021 and be announced and presented at our Founders' Day celebration. In conjunction, the Design & Technology Department have launched a competition for our current Senior School pupils to design the awards.

A shortlist of nominations for each category will be identified by the selection committee which will include the Head Girl team. The Senior School pupils will be asked to vote for their preferred nominee in each category.

You can email development@wgs.org to make a nomination.

Click here or scan for more information about the Ad Lucem Awards



BURSARY APPEAL 2020 - THANK YOU!

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all who responded to our Bursary and Hardship Appeal launched in the summer. The response has been astonishing. Thanks to your generosity, the appeal has raised £114,338.75

We were delighted when an alumna who wishes to remain anonymous agreed to match the first £12,633 (equivalent to a full year's fees). She was so impressed with the response that she matched further donations received throughout August.

This year more families than ever are facing financial hardship as the coronavirus pandemic affects income and livelihoods. We expect greater calls than ever before on our Bursary Fund from those seeking a place at Withington and some families needing short-term support to enable their daughter to continue her education with us.



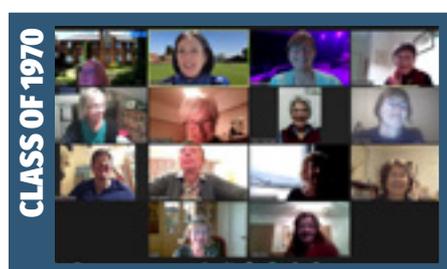
These funds will be used to support girls with true potential who would otherwise miss out on all that a Withington education has to offer and to ensure that no pupil is faced with the distressing possibility of leaving Withington due to a change in family circumstances.

A big and heartfelt THANK YOU to all who supported this campaign.

"In June it was already obvious that the coronavirus pandemic would have a catastrophic effect on many fee-paying families. I didn't want any pupil to have to leave WGS midway through their education. Immediate help in the form of additional bursaries and hardship funding was the only solution to the unprecedented crisis. I am absolutely delighted with the response from fellow alumnae and extremely proud of what we have achieved together as a community."

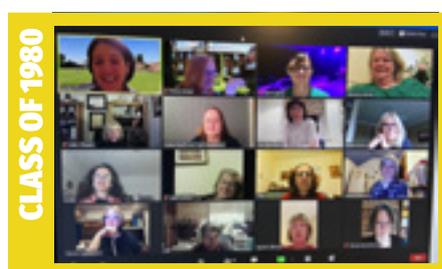
Alumna who match funded donations to the appeal

GOOD TO (VIRTUALLY) SEE YOU!



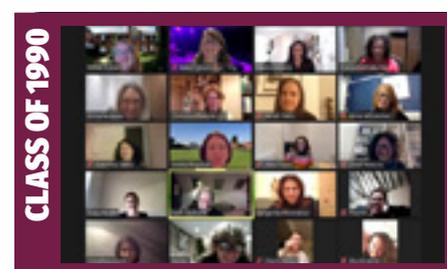
Whilst we had to cancel all our face to face events from March onwards, we were determined to help those alumnae groups celebrating special anniversaries in 2020 to get together, have a chat and reminisce.

Our virtual, online reunions have proved popular and have allowed alumnae who wouldn't normally be able to participate, the opportunity to join us wherever they are in the country or, indeed, the world. Whilst some were raising a celebratory



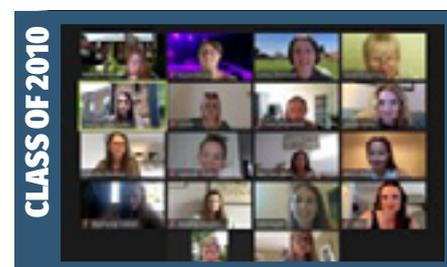
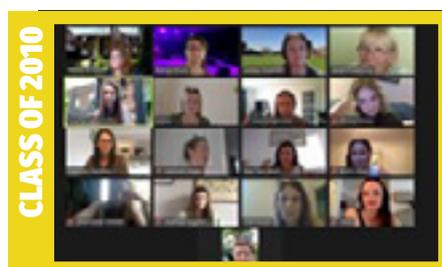
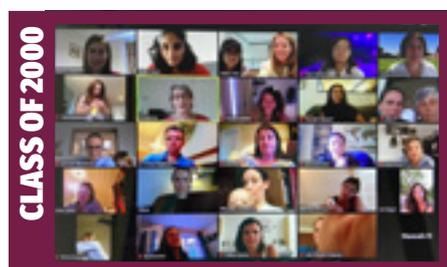
drink in the evening, others had set an early alarm and were joining us in pyjamas with their first cuppa of the day from New Zealand, or had taken time out of a busy schedule to tune in from their office in New York. Closer to home other alumnae were able to introduce their children to their former classmates via our Zoom events.

Thank you to all those who have joined us this year – The Classes of 1970, 1980, 1995, 2000, 2010 and former WGS staff. We've



loved meeting them all virtually and we very much hope that we will be able to meet some of our alumnae face to face in 2021.

If you are an alumna and would like to arrange an online or in person reunion for your year group, then email us at development@wgs.org and we will do our best to help.



STAFF FAREWELLS

MRS KATE EASBY

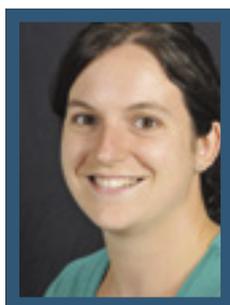


Mrs Kate Easby joined the Classics Department to teach part time in September 2015 and immediately fitted in very well. She taught across all ages in the school, from Transition and Upper II in the Juniors, to A Level Latin. Although she was not a specialist in Greek language, she became our expert for the GCSE Greek Literature and Culture background

paper. Mrs Easby was always very willing to try out new topics and teaching styles and extend her knowledge and expertise with careful research but she was particularly valued for her wonderful warm and encouraging manner with all pupils. The younger ones enjoyed well-presented lessons and grew to love Dr Massey's Latin songs and Mrs Easby's three cats, who often featured in PowerPoints! She also developed an excellent relationship with her GCSE and A Level pupils, who grew in confidence through her belief in them. This also made her an excellent shadow Form Tutor. Kate was generous with her time, helping at Classics Club and being willing to come on trips to London and Oxford at weekends, or even to local schools for Scrabble competitions. She was a huge support and great fun on our two most recent trips abroad to Sorrento and Athens. She has moved on to The King's School in Macclesfield but will be greatly missed by the Department and her pupils.

MRS JO HOWLING Head of Classics

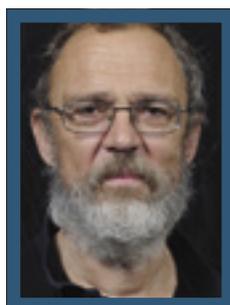
MRS HELEN CAREY



Mrs Helen Carey has left Withington to take time out of the workplace to enjoy motherhood following the birth of her son, Joshua, last year. Mrs Carey, who has a Master's degree in Chemistry from the University of Manchester, arrived at Withington as Miss Hardwick to provide maternity cover in the Science Department and then ended up staying for seven years and getting married along the way.

Mrs Carey introduced an annual science photography competition, inspiring girls to create some amazing images and also led a number of teams to success in Chemistry competitions. Mrs Carey also led the lunchtime society, Revive, a Christian club that welcomes girls of all religions and of none to discuss and debate religious matters. She was also very much involved in helping the Sixth Form Committee to organise the Annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Concert and the House Carol Competition.

MR IAIN LINDSAY DUNN



Mr Iain Lindsay Dunn retired from the School in July 2020 after 18 years of service. Mr Lindsay Dunn was the Assistant Premises Manager; for the last twelve years he reported to Mr Mark Morris and for the first six years to the late Mr Clive Stevenson.

Mr Lindsay Dunn's technical expertise shone through from the start. He very quickly became an expert on

the School's sophisticated boiler systems and was able to challenge external contractors accordingly. Mr Lindsay Dunn had a passion for the outdoors, and he worked alongside his wife, Ruth - long-time DoFE Coordinator at Withington - on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions. He very often gave up his time at the weekly Duke of Edinburgh meetings after School and accompanied Ruth on many weekend expeditions in Yorkshire, Cumbria and Derbyshire.

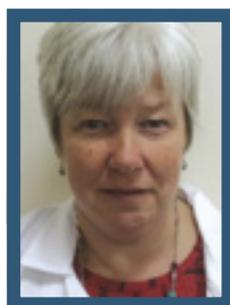
Mr Lindsay Dunn also took great care of the minibus and was the main driver for the School, willingly giving up his time to take teachers and pupils to events, fieldtrips and competitions.

His loyalty to the School and his willingness to 'go the extra mile' in providing a service to the whole school community is very much appreciated.

We wish Mr Lindsay Dunn well in his retirement.

MRS SHARON SENN Bursar

MRS HELEN SHARP



Chemistry Technician Mrs Helen Sharp is leaving Withington after 3½ years in the post. Mrs Sharp joined Withington at Easter 2016 from Dubai English Speaking College and will be joining cancer research agency Everest Detection Ltd which is located in Alderley Park.

Mrs Sharp said she has "much enjoyed being a Chemistry Technician at

Withington", particularly with the extra dramatic element of assisting and watching over the Chemistry Communicators' performances. She added: "It's been a real privilege to work with such lovely staff and students."

DR ANNE MAISEY



Dr Anne Maisey has retired after 24 years as a dedicated Teacher of Chemistry. Before joining Withington, Dr Maisey gained her BSc from the University of Birmingham and then her PhD from the University of London, followed by a PGCE at the University of Manchester.

In addition to her role in the Chemistry Department, Dr Maisey has also been very active in the extra-curricular life of the school, having run the annual Linguistics Olympiad in which, over the years, many pupils gained awards and some progressed to the international rounds of the competition.

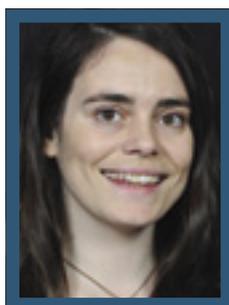
Dr Maisey also oversaw the Junior Scientific Society, a popular Science Club run by Sixth Form pupils for Third Form and Lower Fourth girls, and the Philosophical Society, aimed at Sixth Form students, and hosting weekly talks about various scientific matters presented by guest lecturers and researchers. She regularly accompanied younger pupils to annual Chemistry competitions such as the ChemQuiz, the Salters' Festival of Chemistry, the Catalyst Museum and the RSC Young Analyst Competition.

Dr Maisey was the school's Gifted and Talented Coordinator for several years and, for the last five years, was the School's Trips Coordinator, ensuring that all trips outside School were properly risk assessed and recorded.

We would like to thank Dr Maisey for her invaluable contributions to life at Withington and wish her all the best for the future.

DR CRISTINA VILELA Head of Chemistry

MRS NADINE DALTON-WEST



Mrs Nadine Dalton-West joined us in September 2007 from Priestnall School in Stockport. She immediately established herself as an energetic and inspirational teacher who involved herself in every aspect of School life. In the classroom she was inventive and original and her creative ideas and enthusiastic manner made her lessons both educational and

entertaining - even difficult and potentially dry topics such as the more obscure elements of English grammar were fun with Mrs Dalton-West!

She was always interested in what was going on in the world around her and this made her an ideal person to run Debating Club, which she did for several years. The girls benefited from her involvement in current issues and were able to explore challenging subjects under her guidance; it is not surprising that we enjoyed a great deal of success in national competitions.

During her time at Withington Mrs Dalton-West immersed herself in both the academic and extra-curricular life of the School. From theatre trips to see set texts in London to trips for younger pupils nearer to home, from helping with MUN to gamely participating in Form assemblies, talent competitions and staff pantomimes, Mrs Dalton-West was constantly revealing new talents: who knew she was such a talented singer?

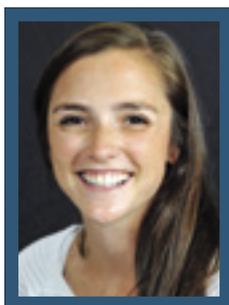
In 2017 she took on the role of Head of Enrichment, co-ordinating a range of activities for Sixth Form pupils. The breadth of subjects taught on this course - from Italian to yoga; from Film Studies to Astronomy - demonstrates Mrs Dalton-West's own breadth of interests and her interest in education in its widest sense. Keen to continue her own learning, she took a sabbatical in 2018 - 19 to work on her own writing and returned in September last year ready to share her insights about the creative process with her students.

It was with sadness that we said goodbye to Mrs Dalton-West this summer: we will miss her wit and energy, but we would like to wish her all the very best in her new job at The Latymer School and for her new life in London.

MS CHRISTINE DAVIES Head of English

STAFF FAREWELLS

MRS KATHRYN WILLIAMS



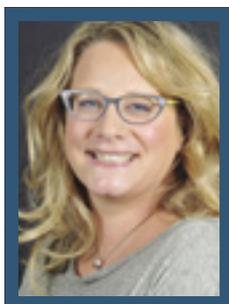
Mrs Kathryn Williams (formerly Miss Gardner) is moving back to her home country of Canada after teaching Withington Juniors for the past seven years. Since first joining WGS in 2013, Mrs Williams has taught Years 4, 5 and 6. She initially covered three maternity leave breaks before taking up a permanent position with the expansion of the Junior School in 2015.

She has been a co-ordinator for our SHINE outreach programme and in extra-curricular, she has enjoyed running the beginners' gym club for Years 3 and 4. Praising the girls for their enthusiasm 'for anything and everything', Mrs Williams also accompanied a School trip to Uganda, a lacrosse tour to America and a World Challenge trip to Sri Lanka. "These were all definite highlights of my time at WGS," she said.

Expressing her sadness at leaving 'the special and unique environment at Withington', she added, "The general atmosphere exudes warmth; the corridors are usually ringing with laughter! The girls are so curious and highly motivated that they have certainly kept me on my toes the last seven years – it has been a pleasure to teach them!"

Mrs Williams is now looking forward to her return 'to the oceans and mountains' of Vancouver with her husband and young son in time to commence her new role as a Year 4 teacher at the city's West Point Grey Academy in September.

MRS ZOË GOLDMAN



Mrs Zoë Goldman leaves Withington after 12 years in the Design and Technology Department, where she was originally Head of Department and more recently a part time teacher of DT.

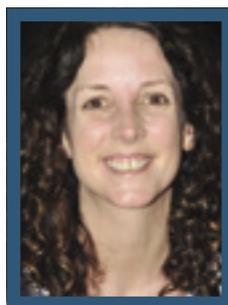
Mrs Goldman, who studied Textile Engineering at UMIST, originally joined WGS in 2006, but left in 2010 to study Art at the University of Arts, London, where she gained a Distinction. Mrs Goldman returned as a cover supervisor in 2012

then, in 2015, returned to the DT Department as a part-time teacher. One of her WGS teaching highlights was assisting in the introduction of a GCSE in Design Technology, which she views as 'very special'. "I see the subject being a huge benefit to our students because the world they will be working in is constantly evolving, as shown during the COVID-19 crisis. DT can equip students to be multidisciplinary and well-rounded in their future careers," she said.

Mrs Goldman is still deciding on her next steps but with a passion for arts and crafts, she is hoping now to have time to pursue her interests and perhaps study for a formal Arts qualification.

"I am so proud to have been able to say that WGS has been my workplace, it is a community like no other I have ever been a part of. I hope to continue to be in contact with the many friends I have made through the School. I will really miss WGS," she said.

MRS NICOLA BYRNE



Mrs Nicola Byrne, Withington's Human Resources Manager, has left Withington after six years in post to take up a new role at the Manchester office of German FinTech savings company Raisin GmBH.

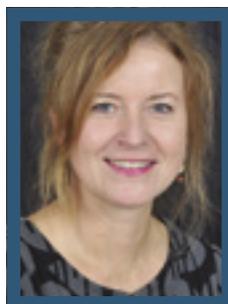
Mrs Byrne, who holds a BA in Business Administration from Huddersfield University, joined Withington in 2014 from Liverpool Football Club where she was Head of HR and prior to that she had spent 17 years in a similar role at healthcare

company SSL International. During her time at Withington, Mrs Byrne has been instrumental in supporting the recruitment of superb teaching and support staff to reflect the aims and ethos of the school and has been a much-valued colleague.

On leaving Withington, Mrs Byrne said:

"WGS has been a perfect place to spend the past six years of my career. Education was a new sector for me to work in. I will miss the staff greatly and also the support of the School as a whole. WGS is a special place and extremely supportive of both staff and pupils."

MS ILONA KISS



Ms Ilona Kiss is leaving Withington to relocate to Melbourne in Australia with her husband and two teenage sons.

Ms Kiss joined the WGS Design and Technology Department three years ago as a technician covering maternity leave but her role was later expanded to include teaching DT part time, a combination which she describes as the 'best of both worlds'.

Holding a BA in Theatre Design from the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and a Masters in Fine Art from the Manchester Metropolitan University, Ms Kiss has particularly enjoyed using both her theatre and art skills to design and make props for school plays - and working on the wonderful *Phantom of the Opera* and *The Lion King* productions have been amongst her favourite projects.

Ms Kiss has not yet finalised work plans for Melbourne where her husband will be taking up his post as Professor in Material Science at Monash University - but as a practising award-winning artist who has exhibited widely across the UK, Europe and also America, she says she will carry on painting and drawing.

"I will embrace the adventure coming but will miss WGS dearly! The girls, the fun and the biscuits!" she says.

MISS ELLEN SIDES



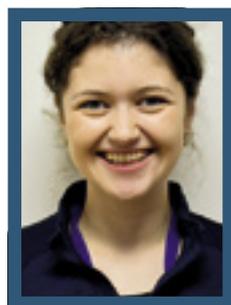
Miss Ellen Sides, who has been Withington's Music Administrator and a Junior School Assistant for the past year, is moving on to take up a PGCE Music teaching post at a Rochdale secondary school.

During the lockdown period, Miss Sides, who holds an MA with Distinction in Music from the University of Salford, became the voice of the popular Junior School podcasts.

An accomplished musician, Miss Sides has used her talents to support the School's extra-curricular musical activities including last year's Senior Citizens Christmas event, which she says was 'an amazing experience filled with happiness and with such a positive impact on the local elderly community'. She cites one of her favourite Withington moments as 'watching the amazing *Lion King* performance by the Junior School last June'.

"I feel so grateful to have been a part of WGS. I will certainly miss the vibrancy of the Music Department and will cherish all the wonderful memories made, especially all our happy times in Late Stay in the Junior School," she said.

MISS IONA WHYTE



Having graduated from Durham University with a first class degree in anthropology, alumna Miss Iona Whyte [2016 leaver] joined the PE Department as an assistant lacrosse coach in September 2019 and departed as a Junior School Teaching Assistant in July 2020. Her original plan was to stay until Easter and then go travelling, but when the pandemic and school closure intervened, Miss Whyte stayed on, supporting Junior pupils in the WGS Key Worker School, then working with Lower and Upper II when they were permitted to return to school for the second half of the Summer Term.

As a lacrosse coach, Miss Whyte supported lessons and practices from Juniors to Sixth Form, umpired and coached teams in matches and accompanied the U18 and U14 teams to National Schools tournaments, while also providing admin assistance in the PE Department.

Having been a WGS first team player and also for a time part of the England Talent Pathway, Miss Whyte had a truly positive impact on Withington lacrosse with both her experience and enthusiasm, also bringing these attributes to the care of Junior girls in school in the early stages of the pandemic. Miss Whyte is now working in a marketing role and still intends to see the world when possible again.

MISS ELLA ROSENBLATT



2019 leaver, Miss Ella Rosenblatt, worked at Withington from September 2019 until Easter 2020 in a dual role assisting both the Drama Department and the Admissions and Marketing team.

In her role as Performing Arts Technician Assistant, Miss Rosenblatt was an organised, efficient and motivated member of the department who was a great technician assistant, always keen to take on a challenge.

She worked extremely hard during the preparations for *Beasts and Beauties*. A real highlight was her work on the marketing material for the production. Miss Rosenblatt developed the most fantastic trailer for the production using shadow puppetry.

Her role in the Marketing team encompassed preparing content and proof-reading publications such as the *Newsletter*, capturing excellent photos and videos for use in marketing initiatives and assisting with a range of events.

Miss Rosenblatt left to pursue her degree course at Birmingham University and we wish her all the very best in her studies.

DESTINATION OF LEAVERS 2020

LIBBY ADLESTONE	University of Birmingham	<i>Business Management with Communications</i>
ISHA AGGARWAL	University of Leicester	<i>Medicine</i>
HUMAIRA AHMED	King's College London	<i>Medicine</i>
LARA AL-ASADY	Applying 2021	
TALA AL-KAMIL	University of Leeds	<i>Law with French Law</i>
MILLY ALLWEIS	University of Birmingham	<i>History of Art</i>
HUMNA AMAR	University of Manchester	<i>Medicine</i>
SAFA ANWAR	Applying 2021	
AISHA BASHIR	University of Oxford	<i>Experimental Psychology</i>
MIRANDA BATE	Applying 2021	
KEA BELL	Leeds Conservatoire	<i>Music (Film Music) with Foundation Year</i>
KATIE BHANJA	University of Edinburgh	<i>History</i>
JULIE BONNET DURVILLE	University of Nottingham (2021)	<i>Physics with Medical Physics</i>
IMOGEN BREEZE	Applying 2021	
ABBY BROWN	Durham University	<i>English Literature</i>
ERYN BURCH	University of Manchester	<i>Management (International Business Economics)WIE</i>
LARA CALMONSON	Applying 2021	
ISABELLE CARLEY	Imperial College London	<i>Chemistry</i>
GUNJARI CHAKRABORTY	Applying 2021	
NIHARIKA CHOKKAPU	Imperial College London	<i>Medicine</i>
ATHENA CRITCHLEY	Applying 2021	
AISHANI DATTA	Keele University	<i>Medicine</i>
IPSITA DAS	University of Edinburgh	<i>Politics and Economics</i>
ANTONIA DAVIES	Applying 2021	
SARA DIZAYEE	University of Liverpool	<i>Architecture</i>
ROSIE DOW	University of Birmingham	<i>International Relations with Spanish (4 years)</i>
ROYA FAZLIANI	University of Liverpool	<i>Medicine</i>
ANNA FRY	University of Leeds	<i>Geography</i>
MAYA FULLWOOD	University of Liverpool	<i>Maths and Business</i>
SHAMAE GRIFFIN	University College London	<i>Politics and International Relations</i>
ZIHAN GUO	Applying 2021	
ALICIA HARRIS	University of Birmingham	<i>Human Neuroscience</i>
HENNA HAMEED	Applying 2021	
DALIA HODARI	University of Leeds	<i>Fine Art</i>
PHOEBE HOUGHTON	Applying 2021	
MARIALENA IACOVIDES	University of Cambridge	<i>Natural Sciences</i>
NETHMI INGIRIGE	University of Leicester	<i>Medicine</i>
JESSICA JAMES	University of Cambridge	<i>Medicine</i>
DAISY KAY	University of Bristol	<i>Economics</i>
VENOS KEETHER	King's College London	<i>Philosophy, Politics and Economics</i>
ALEEYA KHALID	University of York	<i>Psychology</i>
SANA KHALIL	University of Oxford	<i>Physics (4-year MPhys)</i>
SABA KHALIL	King's College London	<i>Dentistry</i>
MAISIE KING	Lancaster University	<i>Medicine and Surgery</i>
TARA KINNEY	University of Edinburgh	<i>Medicine</i>
ZARA KURDO	University of Manchester	<i>Medicine</i>
HANNAH LANDSMAN	Applying 2021	
KATIE LENNOX	University of Bristol (2021)	<i>Film and English</i>
BONNIE LI	Imperial College London	<i>Medicine</i>
TANIYA MAHMOOD	University of Manchester	<i>History</i>
AMELIA MALTHOUSE	Manchester Metropolitan University	<i>Business Psychology</i>
SAFIYAH MANSOOR	Applying 2021	
CHARLOTTE MARSH	University of Nottingham	<i>Economics</i>
ELÉNA MCLEAN	University of Leeds	<i>Medicine</i>

KATIE MEI	Queen Mary University of London	<i>Medicine</i>
TALIA MESRIE	University of Leeds	<i>Geography</i>
FREYA METCALF	University College London	<i>Medicine (6 years)</i>
TEODORA MILANOVIĆ	Imperial College London	<i>Chemistry</i>
ALICE MISTER	University of Bristol	<i>Neuroscience</i>
HELENA MITSON	University of Bristol	<i>Economics and Management</i>
LIBBY MORRIS	University of Nottingham	<i>Sport Rehabilitation</i>
SANJANI MURUGESH	University of Nottingham (2021)	<i>Medicine BMBS (Nottingham/Derby pathway)</i>
IMAAAN NAEEM	Applying 2021	
INAIAH NAEEM	University of Leicester	<i>Psychology</i>
AMELIA O'HARA	Applying 2021	
MILLICENT OLIVER	University College London (2021)	<i>English</i>
DEIÀ PENN	Durham University (2021)	<i>English Literature</i>
ELLIE PINKUS	University of Leeds	<i>Geography</i>
TARA POWER	Applying 2021	
ALISHA QAZI	Durham University	<i>Computer Science</i>
SOPHIE REUBEN	Durham University	<i>Geography</i>
MISKI SAID	Applying 2021	
DIYA SALAHUDIN	University of Cambridge	<i>Medicine</i>
BHAVYA SOBTI	Applying 2021	
RISHA SOMAIYA	University of Warwick	<i>Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry</i>
CHLOE TSANG	University of Birmingham	<i>Medicine</i>
DIYA VIJ	King's College London	<i>Geography</i>
CHARLOTTE WESTBROOK	University of Nottingham	<i>Natural Sciences</i>
GRACE WHITEHEAD	Applying 2021	
ELEANOR WRIGHT	University of Bath (2021)	<i>Psychology</i>
LEYLA YOUSAF	Loughborough University	<i>Fine Art</i>

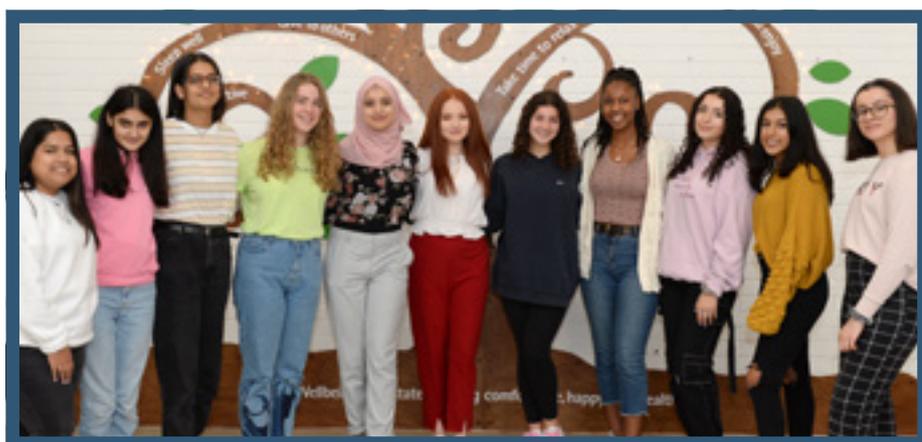
DESTINATION OF LEAVERS 2019

ANAUM ABBASI	Anglia Ruskin University	<i>Medical Science</i>
ANISHA CHAWLA	UCL (University College London)	<i>Social Sciences with Quantitative Methods</i>
ANASTASIYA JOURI	Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts	<i>Acting</i>
ALEXANDRA MARSH	Loughborough University	<i>Psychology with Criminology</i>
MANAAL MUDASSAR	University of St Andrews	<i>Medicine</i>
ELLA MYERS	University of Oxford	<i>History</i>
LEONA PAYKAZADI	University of Liverpool	<i>Medicine</i>
PHOEBE ROCHFORD	University of Leeds	<i>Dental Surgery / Oral Science</i>
ELLA ROSENBLATT	University of Birmingham	<i>Liberal Arts and Sciences</i>



A LEVEL RESULTS 2020

LIBBY ADLESTONE	<i>English Language, Philosophy (Pre U), Spanish, EPQ</i>
ISHA AGGARWAL	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Spanish, EPQ</i>
HUMAIRA AHMED	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, EPQ</i>
LARA AL-ASADY	<i>Biology, Chemistry, French</i>
TALA AL-KAMIL	<i>French, History, Politics</i>
MILLY ALLWEIS	<i>Drama, English Literature, Mathematics</i>
HUMNA AMAR	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Physics</i>
SAFA ANWAR	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, EPQ</i>
AISHA BASHIR	<i>Biology, Mathematics, Psychology</i>
MIRANDA BATE	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
KEA BELL	<i>English Language, Music, Spanish</i>
KATIE BHANJA	<i>Art, English Literature, History</i>
JULIE BONNET DURVILLE	<i>Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics</i>
IMOGEN BREEZE	<i>French, Further Mathematics, History, Mathematics, EPQ</i>
ABBY BROWN	<i>English Literature, History, Psychology</i>
ERYN BURCH	<i>Economics, Mathematics, Politics</i>
LARA CALMONSON	<i>Biology, Economics, Psychology</i>
ISABELLE CARLEY	<i>Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Physics</i>
GUNJARI CHAKRABORTY	<i>Art, Chemistry, Mathematics, EPQ</i>
NIHARIKA CHOKKAPU	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Spanish</i>
ATHENA CRITCHLEY	<i>Computer Science, Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Physics</i>
IPSITA DAS	<i>Economics, Mathematics, Politics</i>
AISHANI DATTA	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
ANTONIA DAVIES	<i>English Literature, Politics, Spanish</i>
SARA DIZAYEE	<i>Art, English Literature, Mathematics, EPQ</i>
ROSIE DOW	<i>History, Politics, Spanish</i>
ROYA FAZLIANI	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Spanish</i>
ANNA FRY	<i>Economics, Geography, Psychology</i>
MAYA FULLWOOD	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
SHAMAE GRIFFIN	<i>Economics, Politics, Spanish, EPQ</i>
ZIHAN GUO	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
HENNA HAMEED	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Psychology</i>
ALICIA HARRIS	<i>Biology, Mathematics, Psychology</i>
DALIA HODARI	<i>Art, Biology, Psychology</i>
PHOEBE HOUGHTON	<i>Biology, Economics, Mathematics</i>
MARIALENA IACOVIDES	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Mathematics</i>
NETHMI INGIRIGE	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Spanish</i>
JESSICA JAMES	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics</i>
DAISY KAY	<i>Economics, History, Mathematics</i>
VENOS KEETHER	<i>Economics, History, Politics</i>



ALEEYA KHALID	<i>Economics, English Language, Psychology</i>
SABA KHALIL	<i>Biology, Chemistry, French, Mathematics</i>
SANA KHALIL	<i>Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Physics</i>
MAISIE KING	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Spanish, EPQ</i>
TARA KINNEY	<i>Biology, Chemistry, French</i>
ZARA KURDO	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
HANNAH LANDSMAN	<i>Further Mathematics, Mathematics, Physics</i>
KATIE LENNOX	<i>Drama, English Literature, Mathematics</i>
BONNIE LI	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
TANIYA MAHMOOD	<i>Biology, Chemistry, History, EPQ</i>
AMELIA MALTHOUSE	<i>Economics, History, Mathematics</i>
SAFIYAH MANSOOR	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
CHARLOTTE MARSH	<i>Economics, Geography, Mathematics</i>
ELÉNA MCLEAN	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
KATIE MEI	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Music</i>
TALIA MESRIE	<i>Economics, Geography, Psychology</i>
FREYA METCALF	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
TEODORA MILANOVIĆ	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Mathematics, EPQ</i>
ALICE MISTER	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Psychology</i>
HELENA MITSON	<i>Economics, German, Mathematics</i>
LIBBY MORRIS	<i>Biology, English Language, Geography</i>
SANJANI MURUGESH	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
IMAAAN NAEEM	<i>Biology, Chemistry, History, EPQ</i>
INAAH NAEEM	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Psychology</i>
AMELIA O'HARA	<i>Economics, History, Mathematics</i>
MILLIE OLIVER	<i>Art, English Literature, History</i>
DEIÀ PENN	<i>English Literature, History, Politics</i>
ELLIE PINKUS	<i>Economics, Geography, Spanish</i>
TARA POWER	<i>Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Mathematics</i>
ALISHA QAZI	<i>Biology, Computer Science, Mathematics, Spanish</i>
SOPHIE REUBEN	<i>Economics, Geography, Mathematics</i>
MISKI SAID	<i>English Literature, Latin, Mathematics</i>
DIYA SALAHUDIN	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
BHAVYA SOBTI	<i>Economics, History, Mathematics</i>
RISHA SOMAIYA	<i>Chemistry, Economics, Mathematics</i>
CHLOE TSANG	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, EPQ</i>
DIYA VIJ	<i>Geography, History, Psychology</i>
CHARLOTTE WESTBROOK	<i>Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics</i>
GRACE WHITEHEAD	<i>Art, Drama, English Literature</i>
ELEANOR WRIGHT	<i>History, Psychology, Spanish, EPQ</i>
LEYLA YOUSAF	<i>Art, Biology, Mathematics</i>



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Head of Junior School: **Ms B Howard**, BEd (Exeter)
Bursar: **Mrs S Senn**, ACA, BSc (Hull)

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Miss L Geoghegan, BA York (Lower IIX)
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Miss E Rosenblatt, Marketing/Performing Arts Assistant
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Mr A Grisedale, Cloud and Junior School Engineer
Mr D Ferrier, IT Technician

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Mrs V Bickerton, Assistant Bursar
Mrs V Brickhill, Office Manager, Attendance Officer & Assistant to the Pastoral Team
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Miss D Halfhide, Receptionist
Mrs L Hughes, Financial Assistant
Ms A Marsland, Receptionist & Assistant to Junior School
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Mrs M Steer, Junior School Secretary and Finance Administrator
Mrs D Vyas, Finance Administrator

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Mrs K Carter, MA (Oxon) Cover Supervisor
Mr D Farry, Assistant Site Services Manager
Ms A Firth, MA (Open University) Junior School Support
Mrs S Guest, BA (Middlesex) Cover Supervisor
Miss S Horsfall, BSc (Newcastle) School Counsellor
Mrs D Kerr, Senior Cleaning Supervisor
Mrs J Lane, Sports Coach
Sister J Lees, RGN, School Nurse
Mrs R Lockett, BA (Bradford) Junior School Assistant
Mr M Morris, NEBOSH Site Services Manager
Miss B O'Neal, MSc (MMU) School Counsellor
Mrs M Roberts, Health Care Assistant
Mr J Severn, Maintenance Officer
Mr D Whelan, BA (MMU) Librarian
Mr C Wood, BSc (Plymouth), Caretaker

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Mrs S Breckell, BSc (Dundee) Examinations Officer
Mr A Parry, BSc (Manchester) Assistant Examinations Officer

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Mr N Pheasey, Head Chef
Mr A Sosa, Executive Chef

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Natasha Arora

Deputy Head Girls

Tanya Aggarwal, Amy Ponter & Scarlett Williams

Sixth Form Committee

Sophia Ballin, Flossie Bird, Priya Jari, Ruby Kwartz, Amber Naeem, Imaan Saeed, Safa Saeed, Lakshmi Shivakumar & Emma Wilson

Peer Support

Senior

Sanaya Jairath & Zainab Shah

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Saravana & Lakshmi

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