

WITHINGTON GIRLS' SCHOOL

# PARTNERSHIPS IN A PANDEMIC AUDIT

J U L Y 2 0 2 0 - J U L Y 2 0 2 1

£15,444.<sup>87</sup>



AMOUNT RAISED ACROSS THE SCHOOL FOR CHARITY

410

HOURS SPENT BY WGS STAFF IN THEIR GOVERNOR ROLES AT MAINTAINED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER

314.5<sup>KG</sup>



OF FOOD COLLECTED BY THE JUNIOR SCHOOL FOR HARVEST FESTIVAL DONATED TO A LOCAL FOODBANK

199 WGS PUPILS



PARTICIPATED IN THE VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC CONCERT FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

61

CHILDREN FROM A LOCAL MAINTAINED PRIMARY SCHOOL ACHIEVED THEIR DISCOVER ARTS AWARD THROUGH OUR HERITAGE ARTS PROJECT

19 WGS CHEMISTRY STUDENTS



CREATED THREE ONLINE CHEMISTRY SHOWS DELIVERED AT LOCAL MAINTAINED PRIMARY SCHOOLS

60

CHILDREN FROM A MAINTAINED PRIMARY SCHOOL ENJOYED ONLINE LATIN LESSONS DEVISED BY WGS PUPILS

282



LETTERS WRITTEN BY WGS PUPILS TO LOCAL SENIOR CITIZENS IN DECEMBER

85

MAINTAINED PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS ATTENDED OUR ONLINE SHINE TOGETHER SATURDAY MORNING SCHOOL

# INTRODUCTION

As a forward-thinking, outward-looking School, Withington Girls' School is very proud of our Projects and Partnerships work within our local community, and beyond. We have a strong track record of delivering programmes that benefit both our own School community and children attending Maintained Schools. The pandemic afforded us the opportunity to continue to consider how we could sustain and even expand our current Projects and Partnerships programme. Although some of our work could not take place due to the nature of these interactive events and the required safety procedures, we are delighted with the way many of our programmes transferred successfully to digital and online formats. Our Projects and Partnerships focus this year has been to develop our Primary Partnerships with Maintained Schools and to assist where possible with the Covid recovery curriculum. We are also pleased that our digital Partnerships have opened up access to pupils in different parts of the country and reached people in our local community that may not in the past have been able to attend events in person at our School.

The main examples of our Educational Partnership programmes include our hugely successful Withington SHiNE Together online Saturday morning classes for boys and girls in year 5 and 6 in a range of subjects, as well as our new Heritage Arts Award Project. Our Chemistry Communicators programme, which was unable to run due to lockdown last year, transferred seamlessly this year to a mixture of online and live Chemistry demonstrations for local children. We have also run smaller programmes with individual schools in subjects such as Physics and Classics with lessons delivered either virtually or in person, once restrictions allowed. Many staff continue to hold Governorship positions, including two Chair of Governors, in both Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools across Greater Manchester.

We are proud of the work we have done with Maintained Primary Schools over the pandemic, but our Partnership programme extends far beyond this. Hundreds of local Senior Citizens who would previously have been invited into School to enjoy refreshments and entertainment at Christmas and during the Summer term, have continued to enjoy digital musical performances. We have maintained contact with our Senior Citizens and will continue to offer our digital performances to house-bound seniors who cannot attend concerts at School in future times when all restrictions are lifted. Withington has forged strong links with The University of Manchester and their teacher training programme over many years and we continue to support our new colleagues as they begin their teaching careers. Links with overseas communities, including schools and projects in The Gambia have been supported for over 17 years with funding and visits focused on providing practical support for both students and staff. We have not been able to visit this African country since December 2019, however girls have continued to fundraise for various projects, and we hope to return as soon as restrictions allow.

Our Voluntary Service Scheme enables Sixth Formers to help others in a range of settings during their free periods and all girls from across the Junior and Senior School are involved in raising money for their chosen charities; the amount last year reaching over £15,000 despite it being an unusual school year.

Our whole School Citizenship Day in July is a yearly reminder to the entire School community of our commitment to being local, national and global citizens and the responsibilities we have towards others. We are delighted that Withington pupils have embraced this by embarking on their own ventures throughout the year like food collections for a Withington Foodbank and individual fundraising for international appeals.

We continue to audit and assess the impact of our Partnership work yearly and the results of the 2020-2021 audit are featured in the document that follows. This information is also shared on the Schools Together website which celebrates Partnerships across a range of schools and provides more detail on each of our Partnerships.

Many of our Partnerships are long-standing, sustained and mutually beneficial and very much built into our whole School ethos of respect for self and others. This academic year has been unprecedented and many of our usual Partnership activities have had to be reimagined to fit with the current climate. We were delighted to be recognised by The Week Schools Guide 2021 as a contender in the category 'Great for Community' and look forward to seeing some of our Partnership work celebrated in the Independent Schools Council Celebrating Partnerships booklet to be published in November.



**MRS C EDGE** PARTNERSHIPS COORDINATOR



**MRS A COLLARD** ASSISTANT PARTNERSHIPS COORDINATOR

# STRUCTURE OF RESPONSES

In reviewing the responses from all staff about their Partnership work, it was clear that our Partnership activities could be grouped into one of four categories:

- Delivering classes for children from Maintained Schools
- Providing support, including governance, and sharing resources with children/teachers from Maintained Schools
- Supporting Community Initiatives
- Supporting Developing countries

## A SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES

	HOURS SPENT			PEOPLE BENEFITING		
	WGS PUPILS	WGS STAFF	TOTAL HOURS	PUPILS	OTHERS	TOTAL
<b>Delivering Classes for children from Maintained Schools</b>	1287	849	2136	426	29	455
<b>Providing support and sharing resources with children from Maintained Schools</b>		604	604	3627	34	3661
<b>Supporting community initiatives</b>	780	1027	1807	285	1702	1987
<b>Supporting Developing countries</b>	532	38	570		1000	1000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2599</b>	<b>2518</b>	<b>5117</b>	<b>4338</b>	<b>2765</b>	<b>7103</b>

This table shows that Withington staff and pupils spent approximately 5117 hours on a wide range of Partnership

activities last year. Their activities benefited approximately 7103 people, including 4338 children from Maintained Schools.



# DELIVERING CLASSES FOR MAINTAINED SCHOOL PUPILS

The audit shows that classes taught between September 2020 to July 2021 benefited 426 children from a range of Maintained Schools across Greater Manchester.

SHiNE Together, our education programme for local pupils from Maintained Primary Schools which has been run by the school on Saturday mornings for 13 years, went ahead successfully online this year. 68 boys and girls from nine Maintained Primary Schools attended Shine Online for courses in Art, Computing, Creative Writing, Design Technology, Drama and Spanish. Courses were so popular that they ran for two more sessions than originally scheduled. Interactive Science lessons and experiments which usually take place in School and are always a very popular option with SHiNE Together pupils, continued with some modifications this year. Equipment parcels (including wrapped beakers and measuring cylinders) were sent out to children who worked independently to complete their Bronze Crest Award. 11 pupils gained these Bronze Crest Awards.

This is the sixth year that Withington's Latin department has been in Partnership with a local Maintained Primary School, Classics for All and the Manchester Classical Association by delivering Latin lessons in a fun and entertaining way to younger pupils. In previous years, Withington Sixth Form pupils have delivered sessions in person over two six-week blocks. This year, our pupils devised online videos and PowerPoints which staff at the Primary School have been able to share with their Year 5 classes. This has been particularly helpful as one of the staff members had no previous Classics experience. Staff at the Primary School have also appreciated the flexibility that online teaching has afforded.

Chemistry Communicators has been running at Withington since 2017 with pupils from local Maintained Primary Schools invited into School to participate in a series of workshops culminating in an exciting Science show. In 2021, 19 of our Year 12 Chemists continued to consider how their enthusiasm for Chemistry could be communicated to younger pupils via an online platform. The Year 12 girls planned, during lockdown, three superb kitchen Chemistry shows. Their experiments were filmed at home and were all kitchen-based involving ingredients that could be safely handled by younger children, either at home or in a school setting. Two of the shows

were delivered virtually to pupils in Years 5 and 6 at a local Maintained Primary School, and the third show was delivered to our Year 8 pupils. All shows included both live and recorded presentations, adapted to suit their respective audiences.

Our Science Partnership Programme also included the delivery of after-school Physics lessons to pupils at a local Maintained Primary School. Six Withington Physicists prepared and delivered sessions via Microsoft Teams. Our pupils planned experiments, risk assessed them, packed equipment and delivered the lessons. A pre-event teacher meeting was held before each session to ensure that experiments were suitable. Our Sixth Form pupils will be able to gain their Gold Crest Award for their involvement in this Project.

A new Partnership programme this year was the Heritage Arts Award where we were delighted to be working with a Maintained Primary School in Rusholme in collaboration with pupils from our Junior School. The project took inspiration from the heritage of both schools' local areas and the communities which have shaped where the pupils live and attend school. The Heritage Arts Award has incorporated History, English, Art, PSHE and research skills and has also assisted the Covid recovery curriculum in terms of the creative nature of the work. Each pupil was provided with a bespoke portfolio and young artists from both schools have followed the digital instruction videos prepared by a member of our Art Department to produce outstanding work which will gain them a Discover Arts Award accreditation. Children from both schools also attended a virtual art exhibition of each other's work. Our Year 10 pupils were able to gain some volunteering hours for their Duke of Edinburgh's Award by assisting with putting together portfolios and weaving boards.

Each year the School also runs a variety of Summer Schools; boys and girls from the local community participate in a multi-sports camp, Art (online this year) or dance sessions. This has been particularly important this year in providing an opportunity for children to catch up with activities, in particular sporting ones, that they had missed out on due to Covid. Summer Schools assist working parents as they offer early drop-off and late collection times.



# PROVIDING SUPPORT

*This includes governance and sharing resources with children/teachers from Maintained Schools*

Many departments across the School are actively involved in providing support and/or sharing resources with children from Maintained Schools. This represents approximately 604 hours of staff time. Our estimate is that this level of support benefits around 3,627 Maintained School pupils.

The Head of Politics meets with her counterpart at Xaverian College each half-term to discuss the Politics A Level specification and to share materials. The Head of ICT shares resources and is actively involved in collaborating with Maintained Schools through online groups including Computer at Schools (CAS) and the AQA Computer Science Facebook group.

We have for many years supported the University of Manchester with its Initial Teacher Training programme. This year the School took four trainee teachers over the course of the year - two who did a seven week block in the first term and then returned in the third term for another seven week block and two who did a seven week 'contrasting placement' in the second term. Subject mentors observe a lesson every week and have a weekly meeting with their trainee as well as being available at other times for informal guidance; the professional mentor has a weekly

professional studies session with the trainees and observes at least one lesson per placement. It is difficult to measure the impact on Maintained School pupils in this area as we do not always know which of our teacher trainees pursue a career in the Maintained sector.

These past two years we were delighted to be approached by Digital Awareness UK to collaborate on a digital wellbeing event for parents, this year entitled 'Digital Wellbeing in the time of Covid'. We offered this online event to our Partner Primary Schools from our SHiNE Together programme, as well as to parents from our own School. Over 120 parents attended this online event, of which 65 were from Maintained Primary Schools.

We also have numerous members of staff who fulfil a governance role at Maintained Schools, both primary and secondary, across Greater Manchester. Furthermore, two members of this group of staff have recently taken over as Chair of Governors at their respective schools. Our staff share their teaching, leadership, financial and safeguarding expertise and support hundreds of children who attend these schools in the process.

	WGS STAFF HOURS	NUMBERS OF PUPILS BENEFITING
<b>CAS(Computers at Schools) online group and computing Facebook groups</b>	50	70
<b>Digital Wellbeing</b>	13	123
<b>ITT partnership with Manchester University</b>	126	4
<b>Sharing resources with Xaverian College</b>	5	30
<b>Governance</b>	410	3,434
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>3,661</b>



# SUPPORTING COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Withington Girls' School is well-known for its support of a variety of community initiatives. A breakdown of the major events and activities which took place over this year is shown below. Our Music Department is most heavily involved in our Community Initiatives and many of the staff and pupil hours can be attributed to these activities. The annual Christmas Concert and Tea Party, traditionally hosted by our pupils every December for many years, is the highlight of seasonal festivities for many pensioners in our local community, as well as for us, and news that this year's event was to be cancelled due to the pandemic was received with deep disappointment. But, thanks to technology the School was able to ensure that over 200 of our elderly neighbours would receive a DVD or video link to the concert. Preparations began in September with Covid-secure and socially-distanced rehearsals for over 250 participating singers and instrumentalists. Filming took place in the Arts Centre in October with girls performing within their year group bubbles and working with social distancing rules that applied to musical performances. The production team then used technology to layer into the recording a range of different groups and individuals performing in their own time so that everything was ready for the virtual concert. Staff helpers delivered the DVDs and Christmas tea boxes (including drinks and festive snacks) as well as presents which pupils and their families at School had donated. Raffle tickets were also included and for an extra personal touch, pupils hand-wrote individual letters to pensioners. The Music Department also recreated digital versions of the annual carol service usually held at St Ann's and both Junior and Senior Christmas concerts. All money raised from our Christmas appeals went to our Partner Charities – Wood Street Mission, The Booth Centre and St Ann's.

As part of Citizenship Day in June, senior citizens within our local community are usually invited into School for a musical performance and refreshments. As this event could not take place this year, A Night at the West End was presented digitally and prepared in a similar way to our Christmas recordings. Girls filmed themselves at home, attended weekly online rehearsals and were then able to perform in year group bubbles once they returned to School. This enabled us to gather enough material to create a DVD to be distributed (alongside refreshments) to our local senior citizens. At the time of writing, we are preparing for Manchester Sings 2021, a large-scale choral event featuring seven Maintained Partner Primary Schools joining together with a Withington choir for a performance at Manchester Cathedral.

A new Partnership initiative known as 'Withington Connect' saw our Sixth Form pupils making contact with senior alumnae during lockdown to share common experiences and memories about School days and simply to talk. A powerful sense of community has long been associated with Withington and is often cited as one of our School's strengths. We know from the positive feedback received that our alumnae enjoyed the conversations and our own pupils have gained much from this experience. As well as a greater sense of connection during a time when social interactions has largely been confined to screens, they also gained new skills and understanding and have used the experience to contribute towards achievements such as the Duke

of Edinburgh's Awards. During the Pandemic a further 25 girls from our Junior School embarked on a PenPal scheme with senior alumnae. These relationships were particularly beneficial during Covid as children enjoyed spending time handwriting letters when so much of their learning and experiences were taking place online, and our elderly alumnae enjoyed feeling connected with the School when many were so isolated.

This year Withington has launched another new and exciting Partnership with I Can Be. I Can Be is a small charity that aims to break down barriers to opportunity for disadvantaged children. When organising this year's Withington Careers Convention, our Head of Careers asked participants whether they were happy to have their convention video passed on to I Can Be for their resources bank and/or be contacted about volunteering for I Can Be by hosting a virtual visit. Claire Daley (Deputy Director at I Can Be) also agreed to participate in the Careers Convention and produced a pre-recorded video and hosted a group seminar on the night. We are thrilled that because of this communication, throughout the Summer term ten WGS alumnae volunteers hosted 13 virtual visits for I Can Be. These visits included visits to 10 Maintained Primary Schools in six Boroughs of Greater London which impacted 110 girls aged 7–8, 52% of whom are eligible for Pupil Premium funding. I Can Be's Partnership with WGS was a fantastic opportunity for the charity to recruit new and inspiring volunteers to their visits programme, in order to expand the range of professionals in their network. Working with WGS therefore gave I Can Be girls the opportunity to meet a wider range of volunteer professionals, and to learn about an inspiring range of jobs and careers.

Our staff also volunteer at groups and for charities like Didsbury Good Neighbours, Trafford Domestic Abuse Services and Friends of Rosie. Three members of staff fulfil roles within their respective churches as warden and church group leaders. A Junior School teacher delivers Yoga classes for children at a local special school and a Down's Syndrome Support group once a month.

All Forms at the School are actively involved in charity fundraising and this year raised £15,444.87 despite many fundraising activities not being able to go ahead as normal. Money was raised for a range of charities chosen by the pupils including: Children in Need; Manchester Children's Hospital; The Captain Tom Foundation; Young Minds; The Salvation Army; Wood Street Mission; Withington Hedgehog Care Trust; The Booth Centre and The British Legion. Although we have not been able to visit our Projects in The Gambia, girls have continued to fundraise for our work there. Money raised has been sent to the project manager and building work has continued on the Mama Temba Nursery School. We hope to be able to visit in 2022. Two Senior School pupils also raised £2,155.00 between them which they sent to the India Covid Relief Fund. Over the year we have continued to donate food items to The Booth Centre and the Fallowfield and Withington Food Bank, both venues which are visited by hundreds of people each week. The Junior School collected 314.5kg of food for the Fallowfield and Withington Food Bank at their Harvest Festival which equated to 731 meals.

# SUPPORTING COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Sixth Form Voluntary Service programme has been well-established at the School for many years. The pandemic presented girls with unusual difficulties this year as many settings where girls normally volunteer like retirement homes, special schools and charity shops were not taking any volunteers this year. Despite the programme being curtailed this year, pupils contributed approximately 400 hours of volunteering time.

In December our Year 11 girls were involved in responding to Santa's letters from a local Maintained Primary School. Our pupils became 'elves' writing replies to local Primary School children. The project creates an opportunity for personal development and

reflection as well as development of literacy skills. This year over 120 replies were sent and we are delighted that we could sustain this Partnership this year and were able to adhere to Covid safety protocols.

It is always difficult to quantify the number of people helped by many of our community initiatives as, for example, it is not possible to tell how many people have been positively impacted by our fundraising efforts or donations to local foodbanks. Recognising this, our charity partners are looking at ways to quantify the impact of our support and this will continue to be an area of development in subsequent audits.

	WGS PUPIL HOURS	WGS STAFF HOURS	NUMBERS BENEFITING
Harvest Festival	83	10	200
Foodbank collection	20	2	200
Leadership team for local church group		36	15
Church warden		90	
Senior Citizens Virtual Christmas Concert	64	242	282
Night at the West End digital concert	58	238	150
Santa's letters	80	4	120
Fundraising for various charities		60	
Pictor Academy/South Manchester Down Syndrome		28	35
Voluntary Service	400	20	
Volunteer at Didsbury Good Neighbours		25	
Leader at Children's Church		65	20
Trustee at Friends of Rosie charity		12	
Penpal Scheme	50	20	25
I can Be		10	110
Withington Connect	25	15	
Trustee Trafford Domestic Abuse Services		150	830
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>1,027</b>	<b>1,987</b>

# SUPPORTING A DEVELOPING COUNTRY

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Visits to The Gambia have been taking place for more than 16 years. Withington staff look after a separate charity, WithGambia, with the registered charity number 1109460, the purpose of which is to advance the education of children in The Gambia. Over the last 16 years, pupils at the School have raised thousands of pounds which have been invested in the facilities (educational and medical) and resources in The Gambia. A team of Sixth Form pupils have looked forward

to their annual visit to The Gambia for many years. Unfortunately, the trip has not taken place for the last two years due to Covid travel restrictions. This has not prevented girls from continuing to fundraise for our work in the country and over the past year pupils have held a teddy and chocolate tombola as well as ice lolly sales to raise funds to be sent to the Mama Temba Nursery. A team of girls hope to return to The Gambia in 2022.

## CONCLUSION

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This audit has highlighted the diverse range of support provided by Withington Girls' School staff and pupils through our Projects and Partnership work. There is clear evidence of well-established links with the Maintained sector and that the opportunities for Maintained School children to benefit is evident. We

are proud of the ways many of our Partnerships have developed and adapted over the pandemic and are delighted with the new Partnerships established this year. We aim to deepen and sustain our Partnerships and look forward to some new and exciting Partnership opportunities next year.

