

October 2019, Issue 83

Newsletter

A Message from the Headteacher

Term 1 has absolutely flown by and we can now begin to reflect on what has been an excellent start to the new academic year. We have welcomed the second of our nine form entry year groups and have seen student numbers reach 1250. I have been hugely impressed by our new Year 7s. They have settled quickly, are polite, confident and making the most of their learning opportunities. I am very much looking forward to working with them over the next 5 years.

You will know from communications last academic year that we have made some significant changes to the operation of our Behaviour Policy, to our uniform and uniform expectations, to the structure of the school day and to our core curriculum offer. What is extremely pleasing is that we can already see a demonstrable impact of these changes in many aspects of school life. We have raised our expectations and the students have risen to the challenge. We are seeing a calmer, more purposeful school. Our students look smarter. They are benefitting from guided reading in KS3 and from prep in KS4. They are also benefitting from not having mobile phones. Seeing these improvements, we are hungry for more. This work will be central to our school improvement plan from 2019-20.

August seems a long time ago now but it is important to reflect on the success enjoyed by the class of 2019 in their GCSE exams. They delivered the strongest set of exam results in the school's history with significant improvements in both the 5+ and 4+ English and Maths figures. The school's performance exceeded national averages on both measures and compared very favourably to similar schools locally.

We all know that school is about more than just the formal curriculum and that our extra-curricular provision is key to helping us develop more rounded individuals. This term has seen many examples: our annual trip to Skern Lodge, our many English clubs including our first spelling bee, a netball / hockey tour to Belfast, our Drama group preparing for their performance of Romeo and Juliet as part of the Shakespeare Schools Festival, our many sports clubs which have seen 250 + students a week taking part. Once again a real highlight has been our partnership with the Cheltenham Literature Festival. This has seen 100 + students experience this great festival including our students taking part in debates on stage in front of a live audience. We know we want to offer even more opportunities for our students. Further developing extra-curricular provision and its take up is another of our whole school improvement priorities.

All that is left for me to do is to wish you and your family a restful break. We look forward to welcoming the students back on Monday 4th November.

Richard Johnson
Headteacher

IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday 5 th November 2019	Shakespeare Schools Festival – rehearsal day & evening performance
Tuesday 12 th November 2019	Art mock – 11W/A1 and 11X/A2 (all day)
Thursday 14 th November 2019	Chelsea’s Choice Year 8 – P.1, Year 9 – P.2
Thursday 14 th November 2019	Year 7 Tutor/Parent Evening
Friday 15 th November 2019	Year 11 Trip to Cyber Security Associates
Thursday 21 st November 2019	Class of 2019 Awards Evening 7.00-8.30pm
Wednesday 20 th November 2019	Sociology Mock p.1-4 (Gym)
Friday 22 nd November 2019	Year 8 Empower Cyber Trip
Thursday 28 th November 2019	Flexible Learning Day 1
Monday 2 nd December 2019	Year 7 Progress Tests (Maths and Science)
Monday 2 nd December 2019	NYC Parents Evening 1 6.00pm
Tuesday 3 rd December 2019	Year 8 Progress Tests (Maths and Science)
Wednesday 4 th December 2019	Year 9 Progress Tests (Maths and Science)
Thursday 5 th December 2019	Year 11 Parents’ Evening + Gradecards distributed
Friday 6 th December 2019	CPD Day – School closed to the students
Monday 9 th December 2019	Year 7-10 Gradecards Home
Thursday 12 th December 2019	Year 11 Science Mock p.1 & 2
Monday 16 th December 2019	Year 11 Science Mock p.1 & 2
Tuesday 17 th December 2019	English Literature Mock p.1 & 2 (into break)
Tuesday 17 th December 2019	Winter concert 6.00-8.00pm
Thursday 19 December 2019	End of Term 2 12.30pm

UNIFORM REMINDER

We believe Severn Vale students are looking smarter than ever before. We think that when students get the "small things" right, they are able to focus on learning. This has certainly been the case in our first two weeks, with record lows for disruptions to learning and detentions.

Please remember that students should not come back to school after the break with false nails or dyed hair. School trousers must meet shoes and none of the leg should be visible. Thank you again for your continued support and we appreciate you working with us to ensure all students are a "positive walking advert" for the school.

Mr Wakeford
Deputy Headteacher

SAFEGUARDING

Instagram expands its 'Restrict' tool to fight online bullying



Instagram has globally launched a new tool allowing its users to hide abusive messages. The 'Restrict' tool is designed for people to "quietly protect" themselves from bullies by blocking and hiding messages from toxic accounts. The platform has tested this tool on a sample of users earlier this year, to find the best way to tackle this 'complex issue, as many people said they fear taking direct action against harassers would lead to more abuse.

Instagram boss Adam Mosseri said the aim of the Restrict tool was to enable users to keep an eye on what a bully is doing online while also silently blocking out their attempts to contact them. "We wanted to create a feature that allows people to control their Instagram experience, without notifying someone who may be targeting them," he said. "Once you Restrict someone, comments on your posts from that person will only be visible to that person. You can choose to make a restricted person's comments visible to others by approving their comments. Restricted people won't be able to see when you're active on Instagram or when you've read their direct messages."

Restrict can be accessed by swiping left on a comment, through the Privacy section of the Settings menu or directly from the profile of the account a user wishes to restrict. Instagram has been among the social media platforms repeatedly criticised for failing to act quickly enough in removing abusive and other potentially dangerous content from the platform. Politicians and campaigners around the world have called for greater regulation to be introduced to enable better policing of social media and hold sites to account for not protecting their users.

When first discussing Restrict earlier this year, Mr Mosseri said: "Our mission is to connect you with the people and things you love, which only works if people feel comfortable expressing themselves on Instagram. "We know bullying is a challenge many face, particularly young people. We are committed to leading the industry in the fight against online bullying, and we are rethinking the whole experience of Instagram to meet that commitment. "We can do more to prevent bullying from happening on Instagram, and we can do more to empower the targets of bullying to stand up for themselves."

Article Source: www.safeguardingessentials.com

GOVERNING BODY

We are now at the end of the first term of the new academic year, it seems to have flown by with governors visiting the School on many occasions to monitor procedures in place and continue to provide support in terms of the strategic direction in which the School is moving.

This term I would like to explain in more detail some of the work the Curriculum and Achievement (C&A) Committee do. Two of the areas this committee is responsible for are oversight of student progress and ensuring high quality learning experiences for the students. C&A scrutinise a lot of data, at the start of the year they spend time looking at the GCSE results from the summer, questioning;

- What went well and why?
- What areas might we need to focus on to improve outcomes for students?

It was a pleasing to see the good results our students achieved this summer giving them a platform to move forward to the next exciting stage of their lives as they move on to post 16 provision.

There have been changes to the school day this year with the introduction of Guided Reading for students in KS3 and 'Prep' for those in KS4. Members of C&A have carried out visits to the School to see this in progress and report back to the Governing Body on the procedures and their impact. Although in the very early stages, it was encouraging to see students fully engaged in the Guided Reading, following the text in the books as they were being read to by both their tutor and members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Some challenging and inspirational books have been chosen to help develop students' vocabulary and knowledge which in turn has been shown to help them improve their writing skills; this is even more important with the new GCSE exams in place.

Governors were also able to visits KS4 classrooms to see how 'Prep' operates. What they saw was time being used very well by students to prepare revision materials, revise for assessments and update notes in their revision files. In addition to seeing 'Prep' in action a Governor was also able to speak with a group of Y10 students to hear how they felt about it. They were very positive and valued the opportunity to have this time to focus on their learning and revision, they also felt they were much more focused and ready to learn when they went to their first lesson following 'Prep'. It is very important for Governors to listen to our student voice so that we are able to review the impact of changes from both students and staff perspectives. Parent views are also very important to us and these are collected via our Parent Voice Forum.

We now look forward to term 2 of this academic year, so I take this opportunity to wish everyone a relaxing break.

Jane Ireland
Chair of Governors

To contact the Chair of Governors, please telephone the Clerk to Governors, Mrs Lyn Woodrow at the school, on 01452 720458 ext 256

MEMBERS

Mrs J Ireland
(Chair of Governors)

PARENT GOVERNORS

Dr S Cockin
(Joint Vice Chair)
Mr R Rankin
Mrs V Seymour
Mrs L Adams
Rev P Millward

ORDINARY GOVERNORS

Mrs S Hawkins
Mr A Ayland
Mr I Pogue
(Joint Vice Chair)
Mr S Wilson
Mr D Clark

LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS

Mrs L Berry

STAFF GOVERNORS

Mr R Johnson
(Headteacher)
Ms Bagworth

ATTENDANCE

Attendance levels at Severn Vale school are on the way up.

Attendance Ladder



The good news is that Severn Vale School's absence figure for 2018/19 is up on the previous year at 94.24%, however we need to do better. Last year we had a number of Year 11 students whose attendance was at such a low level that it had an adverse effect on their GCSE grades with their results reflecting their attendance level rather than their academic ability. Students should be aiming to be in school every day the school is open and they should be aware of their current level of attendance and, if applicable, what they can do to improve it. To this end, on Friday 11th October, tutors had discussions with each student on what their attendance rate was for last year and what it is so far for this year and hopefully made it very clear to the students that, unlike in an academic test, 90% attendance is not a figure to be celebrated.

Why 90% is not a good level of attendance

If a student has 90% attendance it means they have missed **20 days of school**. 20 days of school is equal to 100 lessons which could result in a student with 90% attendance missing 18 maths lessons a year. The link between attendance and attainment in school is clear. The more a pupil is in school the more they increase their opportunity to fulfil their potential.

It is never too late to improve attendance. When a student improves their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and career chances. I read recently an interesting article on attendance about research that had been conducted with students aged 11-16 years old which proved that absenteeism in the first month of the school year can predict poor attendance through the school year. Half the students who missed 2-4 days in September went on to miss nearly a month of school. My plea to Severn Vale parents and carers is do all you can to encourage your children to come to school every day, as every day in school counts.

If you would like to discuss any attendance concerns please either contact the relevant Head of Year or email the Attendance Improvement Manager Virginia Martin:

vmartin@severnvaeschool.com

YEAR 11 ASK THE PROFESSIONAL - 1ST OCTOBER 2019

On Tuesday 1st October Severn Vale School invited 32 employers / colleges / 6th forms / universities to an Ask the Professional Event run in the main hall at school. The “Ask the Professional” event provided students the opportunity to ask employers about what they are looking for in new recruits, what makes an application form / good candidate stand out for them and what a new recruit could expect to do in their first few years in the organisation. Y11s were also able to ask colleges, 6th Forms and universities about the courses they offered and the application processes involved in applying to their institutes.

Feedback from the students included them suggesting the event went on for longer as they really enjoyed talking to representatives from the different sectors. Feedback from the employers included them praising our students for being interested and asking good questions.



YEAR 11 TRIP TO THE APPRENTICESHIP SHOW - 2ND OCTOBER 2019

On Wednesday 2nd October 2019 70 Year 11s visited the National Apprenticeship Show in Cheltenham. The aim of the show was to bring together employers, colleges and provides with students wanting to find out more about what apprenticeships can offer.

Over 60 exhibitors took part including Renishaw, Greene King, Ministry of Defence and Mira Showers. Students had the opportunity to talk to current apprentices and were able to ask them about the pros and cons of taking up an apprenticeship rather than going post-16 to college or a 6th Form. In addition, a number of the exhibitors had hands on displays which enable the students to try out some of the skills needed for particular jobs. Not only did our students do very well with the physical and mental challenges the Army set them but Severn Vale Students also displayed a talent for pulling a decent pint. Our student's drive even stretched to ensuring they were top of the leader board for competitive table setting (who knew it was 'a thing').



THE YEAR 7 MUSIC LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Weekly music lessons are typically a significant change for pupils when they start in Year 7 having come from a Primary experience where the experience of learning music varies significantly depending on its place within the KS2 curriculum within the Primary school.

This year has seen a significant change in how music is delivered in year 7 with the introduction of a specific learning framework which has been devised to promote singing, music theory, and listening & appraising.



Singing is a focal activity in our lessons. It is something ALL students can do (you were doing it before you could speak!) and has many musical and non-musical benefits. Singing is integral to developing fundamental musicianship skills such as pitch and rhythm. It is a collaborative ensemble experience, which has social as well as musical benefits. It is expressive and explores emotional, as well as oral, communication and literacy.

Music Theory is core to our pupils' musical learning. Music is an expressive language and, as with any language, you need to understand grammar in order to be able to communicate effectively. During term 1, pupils have been learning how to read, write, compose and perform rhythmic patterns using a variety of note values to form extended rhythmic patterns. This progresses on to pitch notation in term 2. The increased emphasis on music theory means that more pupils will be able to access a range of pieces and understand what they are playing, rather than learning it by rote from an online tutorial video (which can have errors and results in pupils 'learning' mistakes).

Critical listening is the ability to analyse and describe the features of a piece of music and how these combine to result in the experience for the listener. This often poses for pupils as they need to develop their understanding of musical concepts and terminology as well as realising the difference between 'hearing' and 'listening' to a piece of music. One disadvantage of what is the 'playlist' culture is that young people tend to skip through listening to pieces of music rather than listening to a complete piece and gaining the full experience. All year 7 pupils will at some point in the year, present a piece of music that they have listened to, to the rest of the class and describe the features of the piece, contextual information and why they have chosen the piece.

Please contact your child's music teacher if you have any questions about their lessons or want any information on how you can support your child's musical development.

Mr Khokher

Subject Leader

MUSIC PERFORMANCE PLATFORMS

In the last week of term 1 the music department once again hosted their lunchtime performance platforms. This was however the first time we have been able to offer all 5 lunchtimes for students to perform, which was met with enthusiasm from approaching 50 keen musicians across Year 7 - 11. We also saw various additional students signing up for remaining vacancies during the week - always encouraging to see.

The performances included lots of soloists (singers, a pianist and drummer), a couple of duets (with some students accompanying themselves), our brass group and choir all ready to showcase their recent progress. It was encouraging that pop, rock, renaissance and romantic music as well as songs from musicals were featured, as well as several students performing their grade exam pieces too.

The platforms always give our music teachers an indication of student's musical progress, prowess and those wanting to start sharing their talents. The performances from the last week of term show our next concert will definitely be an evening with a broad variety of music, but also very impressionable musicianship from our students. Do join us on Tuesday 17 December, 6pm in the main hall for this Winter Showcase.

Any students keen to start instrumental / vocal lessons at Severn Vale School should check our website, under the "teaching and learning" menu and "music tuition" and parents / guardians making direct contact with our peripatetic staff.



EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES 2019

It's wonderful to celebrate diversity and for pupils to appreciate and respect other languages and cultures.

On Thursday 26th September we celebrated the European Day of Languages. Traditionally this day is held on or around the 26 September, and celebrates all languages, not just European ones. The European Council represents 800 million people across 47 member states. The Council aims to encourage people to learn more languages, at any age. They are convinced that linguistic diversity is a tool for achieving greater intercultural understanding and a key element in our rich European heritage. There were events held across the UK and Europe to mark this day, in schools and in the media. Here at Severn Vale School, pupils were greeted in lessons, prep time and in line up across the school in different languages. There was also a European flavour to the food in the canteen.

During Line-up, SLT and other members of staff spoke in French, German, Spanish and Welsh. In prep time, pupils were completing cultural knowledge quizzes to think about the importance of learning languages and to improve understanding of other cultures. Lots of our staff proudly wore badges which highlighted the different languages they knew and pupils were buzzing about who could speak what! In MFL, we dressed up in either French or Spanish costumes and next year, we hope that other departments will join us!



At Severn Vale, we have a multitude of cultures and we are very proud to celebrate different cultures and languages with our staff and pupils. Our English as an additional language (EAL) teacher Emilia Nichols worked with some very bright and motivated students that week on different projects to celebrate their culture and backgrounds. They produced projects on Greece, Afghanistan, Poland, Serbia, South Africa and many other countries. Thank you for all who supported us in bringing Languages alive in our school!



Ms. Wright and the Languages team

NICOLA'S HALF-MARATHON



One of our Science Technician team, Nicola Richardson, did us all proud on Sunday as she completed the Cheltenham half-marathon. Nicola was fundraising for Meningitis Now, a charity which is very close to her heart. Nicola and her family raised a total of £950 in memory of her daughter, Abigail.

Considering Nicola had never run until April this year, when she started with 'couch to 5k', this is a massive achievement. She completed the 13.1 mile course in 3hrs 30 minutes.

Fantastic – HUGE well done from all at Severn Vale.

SCHOOL PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS



Well another round of Year Council elections and another window into just how great our students are. The whole school had a week of assemblies where the Student Leadership Team spoke with great passion to the students about stepping beyond your comfort zone and making a difference.

If this picture doesn't make sense, ask your children!

The message was not lost as students stood in record numbers to be selected as the representative for their tutor group in the year ahead. Hustings were held in Prep' and students spoke of their commitment to representing others and impacting their school for the better. What really stood out to me was that many candidates chose to focus not on the things they want or the ideas they have but on who they are. Students spoke of how they were kind, empathetic, reliable people who would champion the needs of others. What an important message this is. It's not about your intellect but your actions. I once read that 'the measure of a life is in how much of it is given away' and this week our students have modelled this value in spades.

A huge congratulations to everyone who stood and I'll finish by echoing the words of Mrs Prescott; "I truly believe that our students could show the current government a thing or two about integrity, commitment, passion and simply how to "fight fair".

Well done everyone and thank you to you all.

Mr Hockaday
Subject Leader

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Year 4

The DofE award is the world's leading achievement award for young people and is considered by employers to be the number one rated extra-curricular activity undertaken in schools.

The 2019-20 cohort consists of **44 new bronze participants**, as well as **7 Silver participants**.

This will be our fourth year of running the programme at Severn Vale School. Students can achieve their award by completing a personal programme of activities in four sections:

1. **Volunteering**: undertaking service to individuals or the community
2. **Physical**: improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities
3. **Skills**: developing practical and social skills and personal interests
4. **Expedition**: planning, training for and completion of an adventurous journey

By participating in The Duke of Edinburgh's award students will experience new opportunities and gain several key attributes such as: leadership, teamwork, self-motivation, organisation, communication, confidence, consideration, and ability to learn in different way.

eDofE

On Tuesday 24th September, participants attended an after-school session where they were given their packs and logins for eDofE. The majority then logging in and set out their activities. A lot of these have now been approved, so they can begin their chosen activities.

A couple of reminders to help those who have not yet had their activities approved:

1. The assessor cannot be a family member – if you are doing it at home then your group leader can be your assessor if you are uploading evidence like photos of you doing the activity and a log of when you did them to eDofE.
2. We need an assessor's e-mail or telephone number

Participants must check that their activities have been approved or it might not count toward their DofE award.

It is the participants responsibility to log and upload evidence whilst completing their sections. Loading evidence can be done by visiting www.edofe.org or if a student has a smart phone, they can do this by downloading the DofE App.

Good evidence can include many things, you may like to collect photographs, scans of certificates, letters etc. You can take audio files, photos or video footage with your phone or camera. You can use the pages in the *Keeping Track* booklet and scan it in/photograph it, you can also upload documents or just type a short written update of your activity straight into eDofE account.

 GOoutdoors.co.uk Extra 10% off the GO Outdoors Discount Card price. Inspiring everyone to get outdoors, for less... and love it as much as we do.	 Blacks.co.uk 15% off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items. Proud to be a part of your outdoor life.	 Milletts.co.uk 15% off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items. The destination for family adventure.	 Ultimateoutdoors.com 15% off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items. The number one destination for all things outdoors.	 Tiso.com 15% off the retail price. Scotland's leading specialist retailer for outdoor clothing, camping equipment and climbing gear.
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**Always show your DofE Card or Voucher.
You'll get the best savings and help support young people to do their DofE.**

Fleeces

As part of the DofE package, we provide the new Bronze participants with a fleece. Most of these have been handed out and look very smart. If you have still not collected your fleece, then please see Mr Higgs in the admin office (by the entrance to the PE corridor).

These are the participants to do with as they choose but should be brought on their expeditions, as they are ideal as a warm layer and can also be used whilst completing other DofE activities.



Don't forget The DofE Team, Mr Higgs and your group leader, are here for you! If you are unsure of anything, finding it difficult to organise a section, don't know what to do next, come and speak to one of us. We will help you!

Mr Higgs
DofE Coordinator

THE GREAT WESTERN AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY DELIVER CPR TRAINING TO OUR STUDENTS

October 16th is Restart a Heart Day and our KS4 Health and Social Care students got the opportunity to learn CPR training with the volunteers from the Great Western Air Ambulance Charity on their Great Western Heart Starters (GWHS) programme.

The GWHS programme aims to create a generation of lifesavers in our region by raising awareness that everyone can learn CPR. As part of the GWHS programme the 34 students worked to complete a series of training activities. The activities were delivered by a team of volunteer medical professionals (doctors, nurses, paramedics and medical/healthcare students) and were interactive and hands on, ensuring the training process was fun and stimulating as well as really informative. All of the students were all involved in putting the visitors in the recovery position and using the resuscitation dummies to perform chest compressions.

The Health and Social Care students are studying First Aid as part of their coursework and enjoyed this fantastic opportunity. This visit builds on the hands on experiences that the students have had, after all becoming 'Dementia Friends' last year when the Dementia Friends charity came in to work with the students and offer practical strategies for people with the condition.

The feedback from all the students involved was really positive and the school is truly grateful to the Great Western Air Ambulance Charity for their support with this great programme.

Mrs Stead
Subject Leader



YEAR 10 GCSE CITIZENSHIP & POLITICS STUDENTS VISIT TO PARLIAMENT

This term, students from Yr10 headed down to London for the day to visit Westminster and have a tour of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Before heading into Parliament we went on a tour of London taking in some of the major political landmarks along the way. This year our trip coincided with the protests by Extinction Rebellion so we found a very different London to previous visits. Whitehall was deserted with roads blocked off to prevent protestors blocking the Queen's access for her upcoming speech.



When we arrived in Trafalgar Square we encountered a tented village of protestors (some superglued there!) and plenty of police. Your young people were outstanding! They circulated amongst protestors, spoke to some and were both intelligently measured and respectful in their response to people giving their time to exercise their democratic right to free speech. Some of us remain unconvinced by their methods but everyone respected the

dedication and passion of people trying to tackle what we all agree is a climate crisis that goes beyond politics. Our boat is sinking and it's time we stopped fighting over seats and started plugging holes!

After our tour of Parliament students took part in a workshop run by the parliament education service, where they explored the voting systems in this country.

The day then finished with a Q&A session with Lord Paddick where students got to ask him questions covering anything from his time in the Metropolitan Police or his role in the House of Lords, through to his time on I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here!

Another excellent visit enjoyed by all!

Mr Hockaday
Subject Leader



TRAILBLAZER PROGRAMME



We are delighted that our school has been given the opportunity to take part in a new, national programme to help make mental health support for children and young people more available when they need it.

We are delighted that Severn Vale School has been given the opportunity to take part in a new, national programme to help make mental health support for children and young people more available when they need it. We are one of 72 schools from Cheltenham, Gloucester and the Forest of Dean to work with the NHS in Gloucestershire to introduce Mental Health Support Teams into schools.

We hope that these teams will provide valuable support to our pupils to help them with life's ups and down, for example, with issues such as anxiety, friendship concerns, exam stress and challenging behaviour.

This may involve group work and/or individual, one-to-one support, either at school or elsewhere. Where appropriate, the Mental Health Support Team will also link up with the specialist mental health services in Gloucestershire. They will also support parents and teachers to help children and young people who are experiencing difficulties.

If you have any questions, please contact me at djorden@severnvaeschool.com

Mrs Jordan
Inclusion Manager

SKERN LODGE



Our annual trip to Skern Lodge saw 55 students enjoy a weekend of outdoor activities in the late summer sun.

55 students and 8 staff left school on Friday afternoon for Skern Lodge in Devon for the weekend.

Upon arrival the students found their allocated rooms and heading straight down for some dinner of chicken curry, rice and salads. Once they had eaten they had a tour of the site before starting the Friday night Skern Lodge Olympics. Half the group went into the swimming pool where they raced up and down in teams. They then swapped over with the other half who had been into the back field for team games in the dark - such as how far you can run on one scream.

Saturday morning brought a cooked breakfast and then out in the minibuses for rafting down the river Torridge through Bideford. The weather was lovely and there was as much swimming as rafting. Then in the afternoon some groups went onto the climbing and abseiling wall. Saturday evening was spent jumping from the quayside in Appledore into the river estuary before heading back to Skern Lodge to dry off with a campfire and some marshmallows.

Sunday morning was surfing on Westward Ho! beach, where some people were showing off their skills - including Mr Connor who stood up for the first time. In the afternoon we returned to Skern Lodge to attempt the high ropes confidence course – it was impressive to see the students giving that a go.

Goodbyes and thanks were said to staff at Skern Lodge and certificates were handed out before a tired bus headed home to Gloucester on Sunday evening. A good weekend had been had all round, and we hope to return next year.

Mr Watkins

A SEVERN VALE PRODUCTION OF 'ROMEO AND JULIET'

Over the last few months, a group of amazing students from Years 8, 9 and 10 have been working together to create an original performance of *'Romeo and Juliet'* as part of the Shakespeare Schools Festival programme. The students who began rehearsing in July of this year will eventually be performing an abridged version of the Shakespeare classic at The Roses Theatre in Tewkesbury, on Tuesday 5th November, alongside other schools from the area.

Their journey started way back in July where students were asked to audition for the iconic Shakespeare play, and it was clear from the beginning that this was going to be a great performance due to the incredible talent showcased by so many members of our student body.

From this point on, the students have worked extremely hard in after school rehearsals, lunchtimes and theatre workshops, giving up their free time to learn their lines and hone their craft. They have done themselves and the school proud and it would be fantastic to see as many parents, staff and students as possible turning up to support them on the night.

For those who cannot join us, I know you will be wishing all our performers good luck in this endeavour, and for those who will be joining us, I know you are as excited as we are to see our students' debut on a professional stage.

Huge thanks must go to the FOSV without whose generous support this could not have happened. Their sponsorship has meant 25 students have had the opportunity to work with professional directors and stage crew in a professional theatre in front of a paying audience and we are so grateful for this support.

Miss Evans, Miss O'Neill and Miss Embling, along with the rest of the school, would like to wish the entire cast good luck for November 5th. As they say in the theatre; break a leg!

If you would like to buy tickets for the show, please visit:

<https://uk.patronbase.com/RosesTheatre/Productions/S19/Performances>

Note from the DT Department

The DT Food department have managed to accumulate a vast amount of plastic tubs, lids, bottles, casserole dishes and plates etc. that have been left by students when cooking. If your child has left any by mistake please can we ask that these be collected by Friday 8th November, end of school. Thank you

SEVERN VALE SCHOOL AT THE CHELTENHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL



Once again our students get to experience and perform at the Cheltenham Literature Festival.

Over 1 week, we have taken 149 students to see 7 inspirational talks, had 6 students perform and had 65 books signed at the Cheltenham Literature Festival.

On Monday, a group of year 7 students went to see Hillary McKay talk about her heart-warming WWI novel, *Skylark's War*. That same afternoon, 50 year 8 and 9 students witnessed Kit De Waal and Kiran Millwood Hargrave discuss how their novels address the forgotten female voices from classic literature.

Wednesday saw one of our brilliant year 8 students get to the final round of the Dystopian Battle of the Books, championing *We See Everything* by William Sutcliffe. A group of year 7 students were truly inspired by Candy Gourlay's discussion of her novel *'Bone Talk'*.

And in the afternoon, a small group of year 9 writers attended a workshop which gave them ample ideas to get them writing their own dystopian novels!

On Friday, a group of KS4 students attended a talk by Patrice Lawrence, an excellent YA fiction writer. Later that morning, five of our students who have been actively involved in the Words That Burn project in conjunction with Amnesty International performed their powerful poem about all the changes they'd like to see in the world.

It has been a busy week but many wonderful memories were made.

Miss James
English Department

A NIGHT WITH JOHN WILLIAMS AND THE STUDIO ORCHESTRA

Twelve students, three teachers and a trombone made their way to Cheltenham Town Hall on Friday 20th September to see the newly formed Studio Orchestra perform a selection of film music composed by the genius that is John Williams.

Twelve students, three teachers and a trombone made their way to Cheltenham Town Hall on Friday 20th September to see the newly formed Studio Orchestra perform a selection of film music composed by the genius that is John Williams. And to top that...the bass trombone was being played



by our very own Head of Music, Mr Khokher, who began his evening, head in embarrassed hands, as we paraded "We love Mr Khokher" banners outside the Town Hall! Well, we thought it was funny!

Smartly dressed, curious and quietly excited students took to their seats. We were soon greeted by a full orchestra of sound in the form of the 20th Century Fox Fanfare. This was immediately followed by the only piece that can follow this... the Star Wars main titles. "Wow...they're quite good aren't they!" was heard from the audience as they continued through themes from Harry Potter, ET, Hook, Jurassic Park, Superman, Indiana Jones, Close Encounters of the Third Kind and War Horse (did you know he did War Horse?!).

Two moments stick out above all: the theme from Jaws was actually, quite scary! You could tell that the audience consisted predominantly of those who had lived through it first time around... few of whom could sit still during this piece! How such a simple two note musical motif can be orchestrated so effectively and have such an impact is remarkable. But perhaps not quite as remarkable as the violin solo, played stunningly by Catherine Lawlor, from Schindler's List. "You need to find a better composer than I" was the reply John Williams gave when asked by Spielberg to compose for this movie. "I would, but they are all dead!" was Spielberg's response. The outcome: a theme that evokes the horror, poignancy and heartbreak that remains within anyone who has watched and listened to this exceptional movie. It was just beautiful, and a privilege to hear live. And yes...there were tears.

The orchestra finished with The Throne Room and End Titles from Star Wars (you know...the bit where Luke and Chewie compete for most straightly combed hair/s...and that cheeky grin between Han and Leia!) and a standing ovation ensued - in part for a fabulous debut from a very promising orchestra, and in part for Mr William's himself.

Mr Khokher's bass trombone expertly led the Emperor's March for our finale, and the concert came to an end with a standing ovation. For most of our students it was a first time hearing a full orchestra live...and what a way to do it. What could possible top it? An evening with Hanz Zimmer perhaps? We can discuss that one another time!

Mr Horton
Deputy Headteacher

SPORTS RESULTS TERM 1 ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-20
Girls
Hockey

KS4	vs	Belfast High 6 th Form	Lost 2-0 (Tour)
KS4	vs	High School	Drew 3-3

Football

Year 7	vs	Holmleigh Park	Won 14-4
U13 A	vs	Crypt	Lost 9-2
U13 B	vs	Barnwood	Lost 5-0
KS4	vs	Holmleigh Park	Lost 6-0
KS4	vs	Barnwood	Lost 5-0
KS4	vs	Ribston	Lost 4-2

Netball

Year 10 A	vs	Strathearn	Won 18-17 (Tour)
Year 10 B	vs	Strathearn	Lost 18-10 (Tour)

Boys
Rugby

Year 7	vs	Barnwood	Lost 40-0
Year 8	vs	Henley Bank	Won 55-15
Year 8	vs	Churchdown	Lost 40-25
Year 8	vs	Newent	Lost 22-17
Year 8	vs	Beaufort	Lost 30-5
Year 9	vs	Churchdown	Lost 25-5
Year 9	vs	Newent	Lost 21-17
Year 9	vs	Holmleigh Park	Lost 55-0
Year 10	vs	Gloucester Academy	Lost 40-35

Football

Year 8	vs	Downend	Won 5-2 (ESFA Cup R2)
Year 9	vs	Brimsham Green	Won 9-5 (ESFA Cup R1)