



Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Newsletter

Autumn Term 2

December 2024

Message from the Principal

As always, this has been an incredibly busy term, with so many positive things happening, both in and out of the classroom. Even in this last week of term, we have had the majority of Year 7 students involved in a superb trip to Wales, where they have been enjoying abseiling, gorge walking, toasting marshmallows on the campfire, and so much more. If you would like to see more, please do look at the posts on X (Twitter) @soarvalley16, where there are plenty of photos from this and other recent activities. There is also news on many activities and events included in this newsletter, which we hope you find of interest.

At the end of term, we say goodbye to a couple of members of our staff team and wish both Ms Davison and Mrs Horsley-Jones all the very best for their next steps. We will be welcoming new members of staff in January to replace them – Mr Head, Mrs Messenger and Mr Patel.

We were delighted to welcome back the class of 2024 this half term, all to collect certificates and some of them to a smaller event where our most prestigious awards were given out. Many of these have been donated to the school by ex-staff and have a long history associated with them. They recognise excellence in subjects or where students have shown tremendous effort and positivity, in general encapsulating the Soar Valley Way. Meanwhile, our current Year 11 students have had mock exams this half term and conducted themselves in an exemplary fashion. It bodes well for the final exams in the summer, and I know they will continue to work hard as we move closer towards those exams.

The end of a term is also a good time to say thank you to all parents and carers for your incredible support. The successes at Soar Valley are always a result of combined efforts, with families and school staff encouraging and supporting children together, and we thank you for your positive input and contributions. Feedback obtained at the Year 7 and Year 9 Parents' Evenings this term was overwhelmingly positive, and highlights have been passed back to parents of those year groups.

We would like to wish all those connected with Soar Valley a very enjoyable holiday, and we look forward to seeing students back with us on **Tuesday January 7th at 8.45am.**

Best wishes,

Mrs J. Robinson

Vox at the Venue

On 3rd December some of Vox, our newly formed vocal group, went to De Montfort University's The Venue to sing as part of the Music Hub's singing workshop, with around 150 other students from seven other schools.

The workshop was led by singer songwriter and composer Emily Barden and the students performed two of her songs alongside other well-known pieces. It was a great opportunity to be conducted by the composer!

The day culminated in our singers helping to inspire the next generation of musicians in a performance to five primary schools who came to watch before taking part in their own performance.

Our students were wonderful from start to finish and performed with emotion and confidence - making friends with students from other schools along the way. A massive thank you to Miss Tierney for organising the trip and to Miss Brett for safely delivering the students and joining them in a singalong on the way home!





The House System @SVC

What an incredibly busy half-term it has been at Soar Valley College! Our students have been actively engaging in a wide range of exciting activities, showcasing their creativity and school spirit.

Children In Need

As part of our support for Children in Need, all students attended house assemblies. During these assemblies students had the chance to learn more about this important cause and had the opportunity to strengthen their sense of belonging to their houses. It also allowed our newest Heads of House – Mr. Megginson, Miss Evans, Mr. Cherrington, and Mr. Badshah – to formally introduce themselves to their respective houses.

Additionally, the assemblies provided a platform to promote the various Children in Need Fair activities and Wear What You Want Day which were planned to raise money for this worthy cause.

Our students demonstrated incredible enthusiasm and teamwork by participating in a range of exciting activities during the Children in Need Fair. The Castle Welly Wanging competition saw Abbey House take the top spot as Jay 11.7 threw the welly 18.80 metres. This made him the overall winner for the second consecutive year! Abbey House also claimed victory in the Abbey Ping Pong Pursuit, which showcased students' ability to think tactically and use their hand-eye coordination. In Bradgate's Guess How Many Sweets Are in The Jar competition Victoria House secured first place as Tyga-Lilly 7.5 used her critical thinking skills to guess that there were exactly 88 sweets! Overall, both the CIN Fair and the Wear What You Want Day were a huge success. It was a wonderful display of our school's commitment to supporting others. In total, Soar Valley managed to raise an incredible £1257 for Children in Need. This generous amount will make a real difference to children across the country.



House Emblem Design Competition

Our students have also been involved in a variety of creative and competitive activities recently. In the House Emblem Design competition, Beacon House triumphed with a fantastic winning design from Saakshavi 10.2 who displayed her incredible artistic abilities. Additionally, for Black History Month, students took part in a meaningful competition where they had to research and create a poster about an influential Black person. Grace 7.5 steered Castle House to success and earned first place for her innovative and thought-provoking work. These events not only highlight our students' talents but also their commitment to their houses and to celebrating diversity.

Bake off Competition

In another highlight, our students from Years 7, 8, and 9 flaunted their culinary talents in the DT Bake Off competition. Ramsha 7.9 and Maryam 7.3 seized first place for Bradgate House. Their beautifully decorated cupcakes not only demonstrated impressive baking skills but also attention to detail. This further showcased the range of house competitions on offer to our students. The Magic the Gathering card game competition also saw great participation with Watermead House emerging victorious in this dynamic game of strategy and fantasy.





The House System @SVC

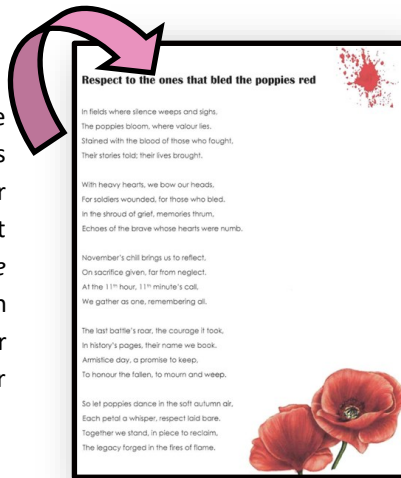
Winter Bookmark Competition

In the lead-up to Christmas, our students have been fully embracing the festive season by taking part in several library house competitions. Firstly, Watermead House won the Winter Bookmark competition, with students creating festive house-themed bookmark designs. Khushi 8.12 from Castle House snatched the top spot in the Design a Christmas Bauble competition. The bauble entries are also on display in the library, which certainly adds to the festive atmosphere. Lastly, Fatima and Inaayah 7.7 from Abbey House excelled in the Snowman Building competition. In this competition, students used a range of materials to build their own snowmen. Well done to all who took part in the festive fun, and congratulations to the winning houses for their outstanding efforts!



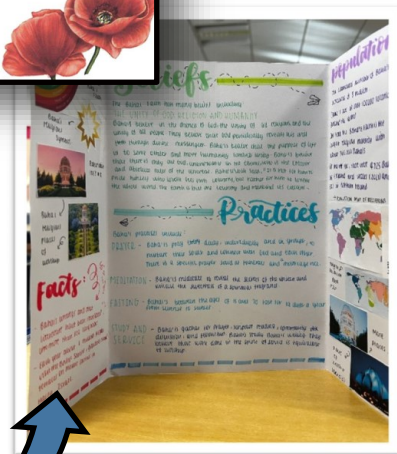
Poetry Competition

In the House Poetry competition, students had the opportunity to write poems on themes such as Remembrance Day, Black History Month, Diwali, or Halloween. Watermead House rightfully earned first place with their poignant poem titled *'Respect to the ones that bled the poppies red'*, which focused on Remembrance Day. Watermead's entry stood out for its depth and emotion, well done to Tegal 10.6 for engaging so meaningfully with this important topic.



Religious Symbol Sudoku Competition

In the newly introduced Religious Symbol Sudoku competition Watermead House excelled: they had both the highest number of correct entries and the highest participation rate overall. Additionally, several students went the extra mile by completing the stretch task, where they researched minority religions within the UK and created impressive posters or fact files. Some of the most impressive fact files were from Beacon House, with Sumayyah 10.8 created a vibrant fact



Inter-House basketball competition

Earlier on in the term, our Year 7 students participated in Inter-House Basketball competitions. All students displayed fantastic teamwork, determination, and skill throughout the competition, but Abbey House secured first place with a well deserved win. Furthermore, our Year 9 students recently competed in Inter-House Football competitions where, again, Abbey House conquered. Well done to all the participants for their efforts and sportsmanship!



And finally...

As we approach the end of term and the festive break we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support throughout the term. It has been a busy and exciting time for our students, and we are incredibly proud of all they have achieved. From participating in a range of competitions to showing resilience and determination in their studies, they have truly excelled.

We hope you all have a restful and enjoyable Christmas break, and we look forward to welcoming students back in the new year for another term of achievements and growth.

Best wishes,

Heads of Houses





Your PASSPORT to SUCCESS

At Soar Valley we are clear that EFFORT IS EVERYTHING. Participation in extra curricular opportunities and House competitions is a great way to stretch yourself and make the extra effort needed to push beyond what you thought was possible.

Young People's Council

In November, students were invited to stand for election as representatives of Soar Valley in Leicester City's Young People's Council. This initiative offers students the opportunity to voice their opinions and influence decision makers, providing a platform for them to represent their peers.

Those who put themselves forward demonstrated commitment and focus, undertaking tasks such as writing a manifesto and creating a hustings video to support their campaign. After a competitive process the final five candidates presented their ideas, and following a school-wide vote, Asiya and Muhammad were selected to represent Soar Valley.

Congratulations to all of the participants, and especially to Asiya and Muhammad, for their hard work and dedication. We wish them every success in their new roles on the Young People's Council and look forward to hearing about their contributions to the local community.

Muhammad 11.11 said, *"Thanks everyone for the votes, I aim to do my best to improve Leicester for young people. I am looking forward to the opportunity to represent you over the next two years."*

Asiya 11.9 said, *"I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to represent our community after winning the election, and I sincerely thank everyone who placed their trust in me. My goal for the Leicester City Young People's council is to empower young voices, drive meaningful change, and ensure that the aspirations of our youth are heard and acted upon!"*



Careers Update

Once again, we have had another busy half term for careers education at Soar Valley. Year 11 students have now completed their college applications and tutors are busy writing their references for their tutees.

Year 10 work experience placements are being organised and more information will be shared with you in the new year.

A small number of our Year 9 students took part in a wonderful sports event with FSD football academy. Students took part in a practical workshop and had the chance to make their own sports drink.

The recent STEM day was an incredible event enabling students from all year groups to experience the world of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths through a series of practical workshops.

Please could we ask that you encourage your child to log on to their Unifrog account. You can help your child to use this tool by exploring the range of resources available including a career library, Post 16 information and labour market information.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or feedback regarding the careers education programme at Soar Valley College, please do email careers@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk.

Christmas Crafts

Year 9 have been getting in the festive spirit and have created some delightful decorations to hang up at home. They all enjoyed being creative whilst drinking hot chocolate and eating marshmallows.



Football finesse!

A group of Year 9 students took part in a fantastic opportunity led by Matt Piper's FSD Academy. The group thoroughly enjoyed showing off their football skills in a training session and they were excellent ambassadors for the college.

They also had the opportunity to learn more about studying sport at Post 16. In conjunction with Loughborough University, they created their own sports drinks and they all agreed that they were very flavourful.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths [STEM] Day

On Wednesday 11th December Hyett Education came into school to work with our students on their robotics, programming and engineering skills. The students had a fabulous experience.

Year 9 and Year 8 took part in workshops where they looked at how artificial intelligence is linked to machines and had the opportunity to build robots and programme them to carry out specific tasks. They also took part in the Defence Nuclear Engineering workshops that enabled students to build and code robots to complete a range of missions linked to various STEM themes. The challenges encouraged teamwork, problem-solving, creative thinking and coding/cyber skills.

Year 10 were involved in an Advanced STEMbotics session. The workshop challenged students to design, build, and code LEGO robots using Python, a powerful text-based programming language.

Year 10 learned core coding principles such as sequencing, selection, and iteration. They engaged in hands-on robotics projects, building and programming robots to solve challenges. This workshop enabled them to apply the knowledge and skills they have from their computer science lessons.

Year 7 students that took part in our Drone Coding workshop learned to code the flight patterns of their drones using block programming or the Swift coding language, the same technology used to develop apps on iPhone and iPad.

The students created algorithms for their drones, enabling them to take off, land, perform flips and rolls, and navigate various altitudes and distances. They programmed their drones to safely manoeuvre through a course or execute a coordinated routine, developing practical coding skills along the way.








The whole day was designed to help students develop problem-solving and computational thinking skills while gaining experience with tools used in real-world STEM careers. It was a fun and engaging way to introduce programming, bridging the gap between visual programming and more advanced techniques. It was a memorable experience for all students involved.

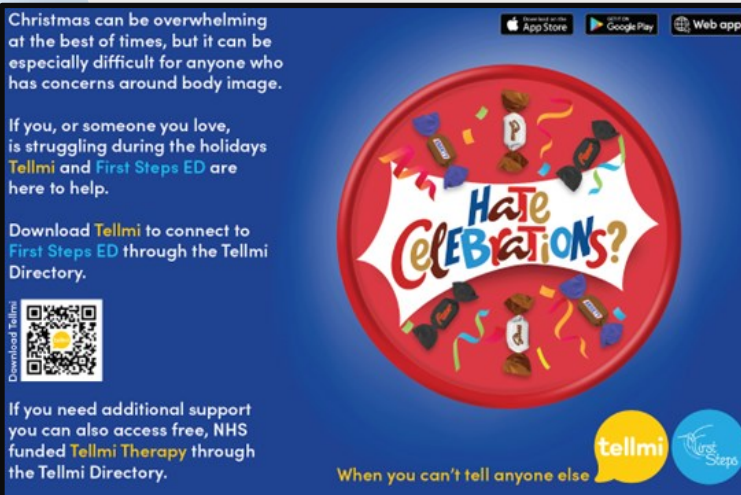


What else is going on @SVC?

Safeguarding information

The Christmas holiday can be a wonderful time for families and children to come together and celebrate. It can also be a challenging time for those who are struggling. There is a lots of help and support out there if you or a loved one needs. These are a few trusted sources with web links from the logos if you are viewing this online.

<p>Domestic violence can happen to anyone. If you or someone you care about is a victim then <i>Freeva</i> offer support, advice and guidance.</p> <p><i>Living Without Abuse</i> [LWA] also support in our local area and you can access this through the web link or the local helpline 08088020028</p>	 
<p>It's safe and easy for you to speak to a qualified health professional: just send a message to <i>Chat Health</i>; you don't have to give your name. You'll get confidential advice from trained health staff in your area.</p> <p>The <i>Health for Teens</i> website has resources to support with physical and mental health.</p>	 
<p><i>The Mix</i> offer an online service for young people to help with challenges they may face, from mental health to money, from homelessness to finding a job, from break-ups to drugs. They offer expert advice, apps and online community support and they link with the <i>Shout</i> counselling service.</p>	
<p><i>Tellmi</i> is a digital mental health service for anyone over the age of 11 that is available free of charge, commissioned by the NHS in our area. It is a safe, anonymous app where users can talk about absolutely anything from anxiety to autism, dating to depression, or self-harm to self-esteem.</p>	
<p>There is more information about safeguarding and online safety on our school website.</p>	



Christmas can be overwhelming at the best of times, but it can be especially difficult for anyone who has concerns around body image.

If you, or someone you love, is struggling during the holidays **Tellmi** and **First Steps ED** are here to help.

Download **Tellmi** to connect to **First Steps ED** through the Tellmi Directory.

Download Tellmi

If you need additional support you can also access free, NHS funded **Tellmi Therapy** through the Tellmi Directory.

When you can't tell anyone else

App Store, Google Play, Web app

tellmi, First Steps

Please remember:

If you have concerns about the welfare of a child. Please call **Leicester City Council CASP (0116) 4541004**.

If it is an emergency please contact **Leicestershire Police on 999** for an urgent response or **101** in non-urgent situations.



Wheelchair Basketball

On November 13th, Soar Valley hosted a primary school wheelchair basketball event – the largest such event held in the UK. The event, which was jointly organised by Taylor Road Primary School and Make Change, was an amazing success.

Throughout the day we had 13 local Primary Schools attend and over 150 pupils getting to experience the excitement of wheelchair basketball. We had 12 of our Year 11 Sports Leaders on hand throughout the day who did a fantastic job of ensuring the event ran smoothly and all the primary school pupils had a day to remember.

Primary Festivals

This half term has been a busy one for our Year 10 Sport Leaders. We have had 4 primary school festivals - hockey, tag rugby, Key Stage 1 multisport and Key Stage 2 multisport. Each of these have given the pupils of Mellor, Rushey Mead, Sandfield, Taylor Road and Wyvern primary schools the chance experience a competitive sporting event at Soar Valley whilst developing their skills and having lots of fun.

In total we have had 35 Sports Leaders taking part in the running of these events who have also been developing their skills. They are becoming more and more confident with every event they are involved in and growing into a great set of leaders – well done all.



LIBRARY NEWS

If you would like support with encouraging your child to read for pleasure then please contact our librarian, Mrs Richardson

Welcome to our Soar Valley College Library winter term update. The library has been a hive of activity again this half-term. Our **Book & Biscuit Club** have enjoyed exploring a range of genres and book related activities relating to Remembrance Day, non-fiction texts, spooky books, and cosy winter reads.

Students from all years came together to produce a beautiful Remembrance Day Display, to honour those who served to protect us. December saw the annual, festive, inter-house snowman building competition which formed part of our wonderful Christmas themed, Winter Reads display. Throughout the month of December students have enjoyed lots of festive fun activities including making snowflakes and Christmas trees, made from old (well read) withdrawn books.

Our judges were blown away in particular by the high standard of the students' poetry and 100 word stories submitted in this term's Library House competitions.



Bookbuzz 2024

'A book is a gift you can open again and again.'

(Garrison Keillor, 1999)

In September, every Year 7 student selected a book of their choice from the wide array of Bookbuzz book titles. The order was placed, and as December drew near students' excitement grew. Then, as if by magic, the books appeared just in time for Christmas!

Along with the wonderful gift of a book comes the Bookbuzz challenge, filled with activities to further develop students love of reading, and the opportunity to earn lots of achievement points and prizes! Challenges include reading some of their book to a relative, carer, or friend; creating a reading list of other books by the same author or in the same genre; and writing a book review.

Students have until after the Christmas break to complete as many challenges as they can. Bookbuzz challenge sheets will be collected during Year 7's first library lessons in January. Copies of all the Bookbuzz titles are ready and available for students from all years to borrow from the library.

Bookbuzz



BookTrust
Bookbuzz



EVEN MORE...

LIBRARY NEWS

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8 for 8 Reading Challenge

Our **8 For 8 Reading Challenge** got off to a good start with lots of Year 8s signing up to read the eight highly acclaimed titles and in doing so challenging themselves to read titles from genres that they would not normally select.

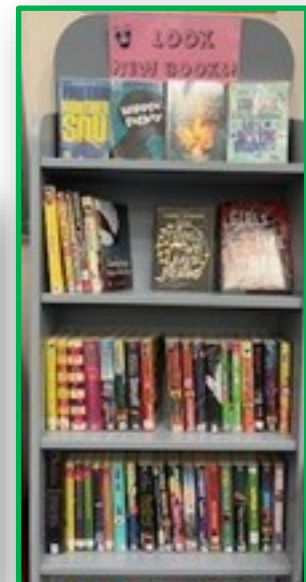
The 8 For 8 Reading Challenge runs until May 2025, so there is plenty of time for students to get involved. Along the way there are virtual author events, competitions, achievement points, and the opportunity to win prizes in the inter-school competitions run by Creative Learning Services.



Non-Fiction November, Cosy Winter Reads & New Book Collections:

Throughout the school year hundreds of new books are added to our Soar Valley College library catalogue, and curated collections are showcased with the aim of broadening the reading horizons of our students, and boosting their love of reading for pleasure, their grades, and their health and well-being.

This half term our team of student library assistants helped curate our Remembrance Day, Non-Fiction November, and Cosy Winter Reads collections. Students can explore these, and other collections, by visiting the 'quick lists' section of the Soar Valley College Library webpage: Soar Valley College.



Geography Lecture

On the 20th of November Year 11 GCSE geography students were invited to attend a lecture on climate change hosted by the Geographical Association at The University of Nottingham.

This was a hugely enriching experience, delving into some of the concepts that are illustrated throughout the GCSE geography course; it further aided our understanding of the geography by showcasing the interconnectedness of several subtopics within the course.

Despite being a university lecture it was accessible to the students and we came away with the clear idea that we do not live on the Earth as individuals but as a collective body whose daily actions greatly impact the environment from a local through to a global scale. Issues highlighted in the lecture focused on drought, flooding and global warming; however, there was an optimistic element as it also revealed the ideas which must be implemented by governments in large scale projects, as well as more personal initiatives we could get involved with to sustain the Earth for future generations.

The lecture strengthened my desire to study A Level geography and exposed me a broad range of careers that might stem from studying geography at university. Thank you to the geography department for organising it.

Kesvy 11.7



Geography GIS Club

GIS, or Geographical Information Systems, is a technology used to create, manage, analyse, and map all types of data. The new geography GIS club has got off to a flying start this term with many Year 7 students taking the opportunity to have hands-on experience with multiple GIS applications travelling the world and manipulating data sets using the classroom smart board.

The students have journeyed from a rainy SVC to a nighttime view of Death Valley in California and a view over the developing skyline in Dubai. Students have experimented with various basemaps to see 3D models of different locations to appreciate some of the potential that is available through studying geography and the cutting-edge technology involved in the ever developing field of GIS.

Interfaith Event at City of Leicester College

On 19th November twelve Soar Valley students from Years 8 and 9 joined students from The City of Leicester College and St Paul's Catholic School for an afternoon celebrating *Interfaith Week*, at The City of Leicester College.

Interfaith Week is a national programme designed to increase understanding and awareness of different religions and worldviews that exist in the UK. Students spent their time asking questions of a variety of representatives from local communities, including Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Humanists and Muslims, learning about key practices and delving into beliefs around God and the afterlife.

Many of the religions were represented by a variety of types of believers, so students encountered a diversity of religious and non-religious voices through the afternoon, and came away with new knowledge and understanding of Leicester's diverse belief communities.



Speak Up

Speak Up students have been working really hard this half term on their creative projects. Speak Up will resume after Christmas on Tuesday 14th January. We would like to thank parents and carers for supporting your child in making this regular commitment to Speak Up.

Curve Theatre is Soar Valley College's "partner theatre" for this project and we are very excited to take part in all opportunities that this project presents.



Dates for Your Diary

Parents' Evenings	
Year 11	Thursday January 16 th
Year 8	Thursday February 27 th
Year 10	Thursday April 3 rd
Year 7	Thursday May 8 th
Term Dates	
Training Day [CLOSED]	Monday January 6 th
Spring Term begins	Tuesday January 7 th
Spring Half Term Break	February 17 th – 21 st
Training Day [CLOSED]	Monday March 31 st
Spring Term ends	Friday April 11 th
Summer Term begins	Monday April 28 th
Bank Holiday [CLOSED]	Monday May 5 th
Summer Half Term Break	May 26 th – 30 th
Summer Term ends	Friday July 11 th
Other Events Next Term	
Year 11 Reports Home	January 14 th
Year 11 Mock Results	January 14 th
Year 9 Reports Home	February 5 th
Y11 Targeted Mocks	W/B February 10 th
National Apprenticeship Week	Feb 10 th – Feb 14 th
KS4 Apprenticeship Talk	February 12 th
Year 9 Options Evening	February 13 th
Y7, 8 and 10 Reports Home	February 14 th