



# Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

**ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE**

Newsletter

Autumn Term

October 2021

## Message from the Principal

It has been an absolute delight to see the students back in school and returning to some sort of normality this term. Our new Year 7 students have made an excellent initial impression and we look forward to great things from them, as we do all other year groups of course! All Year 7 students have been given commercially produced English and Maths workbooks so that they are able to do additional home learning, the aim being to fill some of the gaps resulting from the disrupted year at the end of primary school. Support of parents with this is greatly appreciated, and we will be sending details of which sections of the books each child would benefit most from in the next few weeks.

Soar Valley always has a broad and vibrant extra-curricular programme, and it is great to see this is also getting back to some sort of normality this term. Lots of students have been taking part in activities, some of which can be seen in this newsletter, and we would encourage all to go along to something which interests them, or perhaps to try something new.

On wider issues, parents may recall information sent out about changes to the roads around the school, due to take place after the half term holiday. We can now report that the plans have been halted, and so the road closures and 'bus gate' will not be put into operation. We will keep you informed of any further news on this. We would also like to reinforce the importance of reducing the amount of traffic outside the school, which can be very heavy and potentially dangerous. Please, please, please, can parents pick up and drop off students away from the school; better still, encourage children to walk or cycle – not only is it saving the planet but also more healthy!

We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a restful break next week, and we look forward to seeing all students on Monday October 25<sup>th</sup>, on time and looking smart as usual.

Best wishes,

Mrs J. Robinson

## A Brilliant Start for the New Soar Valley Year 7

It has been a great first month for our new Year 7 intake, with students really finding their feet as they transition into secondary education. They have certainly impressed us with their enthusiasm and their eagerness to be perfect Soar Valley students.

Miss Patel, Head of Year 7, says, *"It brings a smile to my face to see our new intake of Year 7 students enjoying all the opportunities that SVC has provided for them. This ranges from the vast number of new activities and experiences they are encountering in their subjects to participating in extra-curricular clubs, as well as taking the opportunity to select their own food from the delicious options on offer each day. The laughter and buzz at lunch time on the field has been amazing as they play football or simply sit with their new friends chatting about their favourite teacher or what practical they just did in science!"*

Mrs Withers, Associate Head of Year 7, has a very similar view. She says, *"The Year 7 students have made a great start to the new academic year at Soar Valley. Despite the challenges and disappointment of not having the usual Year 6 experience due to Covid they have shown a great deal of determination and resilience. Their behaviour, manners and enthusiasm are a credit to their parents and primary schools."*

### Important Update:

We would like to take this opportunity to inform parents of some minor changes to the arrangements related to our same day detention system.

Same day detentions occur at Soar Valley for issues related to uniform and punctuality to school. We have revised how we notify parents of a same day detention and you should now be informed via **TEXT MESSAGE**. This is to ensure you are notified as soon as possible.

However, the SchoolGateway app remains the portal for all of our other communications. To read more on our same day detention systems please read our Behaviour Policy on the school website.



# The House System @SVC

The Soar Valley College house system is off to an amazing start in 2021/2022, with some great events already under our belt and plenty more to come in the months ahead. There are a number of new Heads of Houses chomping at the bit to win their first interhouse competitions: Miss Wood has taken over the leadership of **Abbey House**, Miss Underwood of **Watermead House** and Mr Hatto **Beacon House**. Despite the ongoing restrictions, the Heads of House and House Captains are working tirelessly to still deliver a range of exciting house competitions that appeal to all students.

## The Decibel Challenge

The collective House spirit of students and staff alike has been obvious in the first half term of the year. This was particularly evident in the first event of the year, *The Decibel Challenge*.

In their House assemblies students and staff competed against the other Houses to test which House was the loudest. The atmosphere was electric as everyone roared their House name and showed their pride in belonging .

All Houses hit the “Extremely Loud” level - somewhere between a trombone and a police siren. And, although the competition was close, Victoria House were victorious!



House	Rank	House Points	Decibel Score
Victoria	1	150 pts	118
Watermead	2	120 pts	117.4
Bradgate	3	100 pts	117.2
Castle	4	90 pts	117.0
Abbey	5	85 pts	116.3
Beacon	6	80 pts	115.6



## Take the Strain!

On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September Soar Valley saw an enormous amount of straining and heaving as students took part in our first inter-House tug of war competition. Teams of students competing for each House – two from each year group – faced off against each other in a competition designed to test both teamwork and strength.

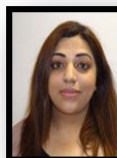
Our students, as they always do, made us incredibly proud as they threw themselves into the competition, whether as competitors or as spectators. The sense of camaraderie and competition was fantastic and staff and students alike cheered on the teams. Some of the staff were certainly glad of the weekend to recover their voices!

On the day there had to be a winner, and on this occasion it was Victoria—winning their second victory by beating all 5 of the other Houses—but the gauntlet has been thrown down to the other Houses now, and plans for the next event already include more students taking part and a staff competition.

All in all, a great addition to the college calendar of events! Huge congratulations to all involved for showing such resilience and determination throughout.



House	Rank	House Points
Victoria	1	150 pts
Bradgate	2	120 pts
Abbey	3	100 pts
Watermead	4	90 pts
Castle	5	85 pts
Beacon	6	80 pts



At Soar Valley we are really proud of our provision for sport both within and beyond the curriculum. And we are lucky to have students and teachers who invest their time and energy to keep sport and sporting achievement high on the agenda. We firmly believe that it is crucially important in today's world for children to be physically active and so a massive range of activities is offered at the school, designed to find something to engage everyone.

**Make A Difference – Kit Out The Nation** was a month long BBC campaign that ran throughout September. It was aimed at taking unwanted sports kit, in good condition, and distributing it to children and teenagers who need it in order to take part in sport. SVC is very pleased and proud to have been involved. Having the right equipment will obviously help young people to engage confidently in sports and we hope our contribution helps someone towards sporting excellence.

If, in a similar vein, you are keen to support the future sports stars of our school then **we are always on the lookout for football or rugby boots of various sizes!**

## Students Take the Lead...and Do Us Proud!

The PE Department held its first Primary Sports Festival in almost two years on Wednesday 22nd September. 40 Year 5 and 6 students from Mellor Community Primary School, Rushey Mead Primary School, Sandfield Close Primary School and Taylor Road Primary School came to Soar Valley for an afternoon of Tag Rugby. A close competition saw Sandfield eventually run out as winners. Eight of our Year 10 OCR Sports Studies students (Hemal, Bhargav J, Bhargav D, Dhruvit, Mason, Luv, Miftah and Margin) supported the festival by acting as Sports Leaders for the afternoon. According to Mr Dunstan they did "a fantastic job - leading warm ups, working on tactics, refereeing the games and cheering the players on." We're very proud of how they represented PE @ SVC.



## Well Done Mrs Loasby!

Congratulations to Mrs Loasby, who has finally realised her dream of running the London Marathon. After two cancelled marathons, and an awful lot of training, she had the "pleasure" of joining 45,000 other runners who completed the marathon this year. And she raised a whopping £2500 in the process, £700 of which was raised at SVC. A true inspiration!



This term the PE Department has relaunched inter-house competitions beginning with a Year 11 mixed basketball competition. It was a delight to see Year 11 back on the court, representing their Houses and working as a team. Bradgate impressively secured their first win of the year with an outstanding team who fought hard against their opponents. They were closely followed by Victoria in second place and Castle in third place.

The following week, it was time for Year 10 to show their basketball abilities. After a fierce competition, with all teams fighting for the number one spot, it was Castle who conquered. Students showed excellent teamwork and drive throughout the hour. In joint second were Victoria and Watermead, followed by Beacon in fourth place, Abbey in fifth and lastly Bradgate in sixth place.

Year 7, 8 and 9 are yet to compete but keep an eye on the bulletin for these results over the next few weeks!

Throughout October at Soar Valley we have been celebrating Black History Month. Here's what's been going on...

## The launch:

The month kicked off with assemblies for all year groups where they learnt about the origins of this month focused on Black history and the representation of Black people in the media.

One focus of the assembly was ensuring that students understood the two aims of the month:

- To mark the contributions of Black people throughout history.
- To recognise the contributions of Black people to the economic, cultural and political life in the UK.

## The Student Bulletin:

As our primary medium for communicating key messages to students we utilised the bulletin to continue to spread the core messages of Black History Month. Each day we celebrated a different person of Black origin. Student volunteers, along with staff from each subject area, created a fact file about someone who we should know more about in terms of how they have positively impacted on the society in which we live.

## Registration:

Students also had the opportunity to discuss the under representation and misrepresentation of Black people in the media that we see every day, whether that be films, news, video games or commercials, and our role in tackling those misconceptions. We also used this time to make students aware of the many different projects around Black History Month such as Black to Front by Channel 4.

## The Library:

Students were provided with a vast reading list of texts within our own library that feature Black leading characters or are written by Black authors. This had a fantastic response from students with the number of these books being taken out of the library significantly increasing on the back of the assembly.

## Staff Reading Recommendations:

To further support this all staff have contributed by updating their 'I'm currently reading...' signs on their classroom/office doors to books from this very list or expanding the students' horizons with other related books.



# Everybody's Reading Week

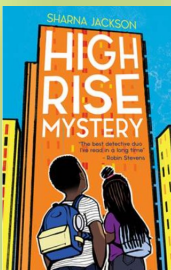
Soar Valley recently celebrated our annual Everybody's Reading Week. This involved lots of challenges and competitions as well as discussing our favourite reads. Students designed brand new bookmarks, and the best designs will be printed and made into new bookmarks for use in our library.

Form groups also competed in a range of challenges including designing a glass jar to represent a favourite book, reading ebooks on our online system, and even guessing how many pages of books our librarian Ms Codling will read this term (as part of her new role as a judge for the famous Carnegie and Kate Greenaway book awards).

Well done to everyone who took part in this exciting week of reading!



**Worth a Read:**



I really enjoyed it. The characters feel real, the dialogue is sharp and funny, and the mystery has enough of a twist to keep you gripped right to the end.

Mr Cumming



## Student Helpers Get Started

This term our brand new cohort of Student Library Assistants have been taking up their roles and supporting the work done in the library. Students from Year 8 and above were chosen at the end of last year after an extensive interview process, and will be involved in the everyday running of the library.

If you need book advice from them be sure to look out for them in and around the library. They wear green badges (👉) and are always willing to help others and give book recommendations.

With research showing that children who read more perform better across the curriculum, it's never been more important to get new and exciting books into the hands of our students. And our Year 7 students are in for a treat later this year because the school has signed up for an amazing initiative called BookBuzz, which means every Year 7 will receive a free book! Year 7 students have used their recent library lessons to choose which of the **17 brand new titles available** they would like to take home. The books will arrive after the Christmas holidays, but already the excitement is building! We can't wait to see which ones are the most popular.



If you would like any support with encouraging your child to read for pleasure then please feel free to get in touch with our librarian, Ms Codling

## Art Clubs Go From Strength to Strength



This half term saw the start of **Clay Club** for our Year 8 and 9 students. Miss Stafford has taught the students how to use a coil method to create their very own bowls. We can't wait to see what they look like when they are glazed!

Year 10 **Graphics** students have been learning about typography this half term. They have been exploring a wide range of different font styles and materials. They really enjoyed working with coloured inks.



## BTEC Students Successfully Launch Albums

Wednesday 6th October saw the much anticipated **BTEC Album Launch**. Students have been both practising their performances and thinking about how to market their albums. A great evening, which parents, students and teachers thoroughly enjoyed. Here (➔) one of our Year 11 students talks about their experience.



### Students' Eye View

The album launch was a brilliant experience from the moment I got there for the sound check to the moment I left to go home.

I was nervous as this was the first concert the school had held in 2 ½ years. However, as we performed my nerves calmed down and it was good fun; I had a great time on stage.

As my band was the opening act, after we had performed we were able to sit down with the rest of the performers and enjoy the show along with the audience, which consisted of friends, family and teachers. At the end, all of the acts got up and stood facing the audience for the final bow of the evening.

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### Drama News



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It's been a busy term in the Drama Department with all year groups developing their understanding of genre and character. For example, Year 8 have been exploring how different genres of drama are made and created using a range of stock characters. Students have been developing the skills learned in Year 7 and then using these to perform scripts in the genre of melodrama. Toward the end of the unit, students had to create their own scripts and then learn and perform these for an audience.

This half term has seen Year 10 performing arts students embark upon their first performance study, focusing on Hairspray the Musical. The group even had the chance to head off to the Curve in Leicester to watch the hit musical live on stage.

Meanwhile Year 11 have begun their examined performances where they have to learn and perform a professional performance piece. Students are exploring a real range of pieces, including extracts from Annie, The Woman in Black and The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time. Attendance at after school workshops to hone their performances has been excellent.





# MFL @ SVC

## Spelling Bee!

There is a buzz\* in the air this term as Year 7 students in French have been busy bees learning all of the spellings required for the department's Spelling Bee competition.

\*Sorry!

Students have been given 10 words or phrases to learn every two weeks and will be tested in class on these words in the competition. Students are challenged to not only write the correct words but also to spell them correctly. No mean feat I am sure you'll agree!

At the end of the autumn term we will hold class competitions to see which three students from each class have excelled.

Class winners will be invited to the next stage of the competition and will compete in a school wide competition, which will take place in front of staff, students and parents in the spring term.

Winners from this stage will have the chance to compete against other students from across the East Midlands, and potentially nationally, with the grand final taking place at Cambridge University!

The chance to represent Soar Valley in a prestigious national competition is one not to be missed!

## Enthusiastic Response to Language Leaders Opportunity



The department has been inundated with applications from students wishing to become **Language Leaders**. The programme is facilitated by the organisation 'Routes into Languages' and upon successful completion students receive a nationally recognised certificate of achievement.

The programme aims to help students build their confidence whilst gaining leadership skills through teaching younger students.

Students selected for the programme attend planning sessions after school where they work collaboratively to create lessons which will then be delivered to Soar Valley staff, Year 7 classes and students in our local primary schools.

A big thank you to all for the enthusiasm shown by Year 9 and best of luck for your selection. Successful applicants will be informed after half-term.

## And the Winners Are

To celebrate the **European Day of Languages** the MFL Department ran a KS3 house quiz. Students were challenged to recognise famous Europeans, both past and present. The results are shown in the table on the right.

House	Rank	House Points
Abbey	1	150 pts
Victoria	2	120 pts
Watermead	3	100 pts
Bradgate	4	90 pts
Castle	5	85 pts
Beacon	6	80 pts

## Next Up

Students in Years 9, 10 and 11 should look out for the "Design a T-Shirt" competition currently being advertised.

European Day of Languages 26 September

### MFL HOUSE COMPETITION

YOUR CHALLENGE IS TO DESIGN A T-SHIRT TO PROMOTE EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES 2022.

OPEN TO YR 9, 10 AND 11

ALL ENTRIES WILL RECEIVE HOUSE POINTS

THE BEST ENTRIES WILL BE ENTERED FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION, FOR WHICH THE WINNER GETS THEIR DESIGN PRINTED ON T-SHIRTS WHICH ARE SOLD ALL OVER EUROPE!

THE WINNER ALSO RECEIVES 10 T-SHIRTS WITH THEIR DESIGN ON.

DEADLINE: FRIDAY 26<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

GIVE YOUR ENTRY TO MRS MACEY IN F46

Year 7? Enjoy MFL? Then keep your eyes peeled for Mrs Simpkins's **MFL Culture Club**. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the culture of the countries whose languages we teach, and a good addition to your Participation Passport.

## Careers News

We are very pleased to announce that two of Soar Valley's students have performed brilliantly in a competition organised by a local charity, *Leicestershire Cares*, to coincide with **National Careers Week**.

The competition was judged in two stages, with the charity's education team and their business partners both having a say in who won.

We are very excited that Diya B was declared the overall winner and received a £50 Amazon voucher, as well as a certificate. The judges were impressed by the level of knowledge she demonstrated of her chosen career, veterinary nurse, and the confidence she showed when presenting, which included a quiz for the judges!

Ali P also received a certificate for being Highly Commended. His idea of creating a website to demonstrate the various careers in IT was described as "brilliant" by the judges.

Well done to both students, a real credit to Soar Valley and clearly Soar Valley stars.



Diya and Ali were presented with their certificates by Charlotte Robey Turner of Leicestershire Cares

### Post 16 Evening

We were very pleased to be able to host Post 16 Options Evening on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October. This evening provides invaluable opportunities for Year 11 students to talk with Post 16 providers such as local colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers. This event is crucial in supporting Year 11 students in making their important decisions on their next steps when they leave Soar Valley College.

### Coming Up

- Year 11 students' Post 16 applications are well underway and will be completed next half term.
- As we go to press Year 11 students have just had their mock interviews in preparation for their Post 16 interviews.



## Dates for Your Diary



Parents Evenings	
Year 9	November 18 <sup>th</sup>
Year 11	January 20 <sup>th</sup>
Year 8	March 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Year 10	March 24 <sup>th</sup>
Year 7	May 5 <sup>th</sup>

Term Dates	
Autumn Half Term Break	October 18 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup>
Autumn Term ends	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> December
Spring Term begins	Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January
Spring Half Term Break	February 14 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup>
Spring Term ends	Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> April
Summer Term begins	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> April
Summer Half Term Break	May 30 <sup>th</sup> – June 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Summer Term ends	Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> July

Other Events This Term	
Year 7 Settling In Evening	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> October
Year 7 Reports home	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> October
Year 11 Reports home	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> October
Year 11 Parents' Information Evening	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> November
Year 8 / 9 / 10 Reports home	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> November
Year 11 Mock Exams start	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November

