



BENENDEN

2019/20 VOLS.2&3  
SPRING & SUMMER

# THE TERM

## A YEAR WE'LL NEVER FORGET





## From the Headmistress

Welcome to the second volume of this year's edition of *The Term*, summarising the Spring and Summer terms which have been nothing short of extraordinary.

When we published the first volume at Christmas, nobody could have foreseen how the rest of the academic year would unfold. Certainly, 2020 will be a year that we won't forget and our archives have been enriched in a way that we hadn't anticipated only six

months ago. For the first time since the Second World War public exams were cancelled; the School site had to be closed for the second time in the School's history; it was the first time that all lessons were delivered remotely; all trips were cancelled; and Speech Day was broadcast live over the internet.

Most disappointingly, our Six Two leavers have not received the farewell that they deserve. However, the girls will have their turn through the floral arch when they return to us in December for a special day when we can all say goodbye in person followed, of course, by the Leavers' Ball. Nevertheless, it is not the departure from Benenden that we would have wanted to give these girls, which is why we have celebrated each of them on our cover of this special edition.

I have been incredibly impressed by, and very proud of, how the entire Benenden community – staff, girls, governors and parents – has come together to keep the School running remotely to ensure that the girls' education has continued to progress. Furthermore, considerable focus has been given to ensure that the School continues to operate efficiently: current

projects such as the Hall and Music School progress – with the roof now on the Hall – and future planning remains a focus.

It would, however, be unfair if this edition focused entirely on the challenges presented by coronavirus. The School operated normally for almost the entire Spring Term and, as you will read, the community continued to be very active while working remotely. The magazine reflects this reality: we have allocated a considerable proportion to reporting on the lockdown, but the remainder is devoted to the numerous highlights and the sheer fun of Benenden life since Christmas.

Some of the events and activities now seem a long time ago but the wonderful Lower School play, Charles Dance's visit, Cultures Week and the 1st team reaching the National Lacrosse final, all remind us that there has been more to 2020 than just the pandemic.

Elsewhere, we celebrate our Scholarship Programme and it is great to see Science taking enormous strides forward, with a series of research projects underway and an array of activities inspiring the scientists of the future.

I do hope that you enjoy reading through Benenden's experience of the last six months. Even through these challenging times it is uplifting to be reminded of all that the girls have done – and we very much look forward to them creating plenty more highlights when we all return in September.

With very best wishes  
Samantha Price

## CONTENTS

### News

- 3 Benenden Connects Launch
- 4 Equality and Diversity Review

### Lockdown 2020

- 5-23 Six Two Girls' Farewell Lunch; Community Response to Coronavirus; 'Ensuring the Covid cohort won't be defined by their cancelled exams'; Leap Programme; Virtual Enquiry Week; Learning Curve; Keep Calm and Carry On; What I've Missed...; Lockdown Literature, Girls Start Returning

### Academic

- 24-29 Scholarship Programme Special: Benenden Scholarship Programme; Sixth Form; Scholarship Projects; Views from the Scholars; Project Qualification Presentations
- 30 Benenden Diploma
- 31 Winning in the Workplace
- 32 Enquiry Days
- 33-35 Professional Skills Programme: Life Skills; Enterprise Challenge
- 36-37 Speakers

- 38-39 Science Research Projects
- 40-41 Flames, Fission and Fun!; My STEM Experience
- 42-43 Work of Art
- 44-45 World Book Day; Pyjama Party in the Library
- 46-47 'It makes your head hurt slightly (in the best way)'
- 48-49 Creative Writing
- 50-51 Careers; Careers, Higher Education and Futures Convention

### Trips

- 52-53 Nepal Trip

### Co-Curricular

- 54-55 Music
- 56-57 Wickenden Hall
- 58 MUN
- 59 House Shout
- 60-61 Weekend Programme
- 62-63 Constructing a Microlight
- 64 CCF Goes from Strength to Strength; Duke of Edinburgh's Award Success

### Outreach

- 65 Charity
- 66 John Wallis Mentoring

### Around Benenden

- 67 Reducing our Impact on the Environment
- 68-69 Celebrating International Cultures Week
- 70 In the News; Southern Schools Book Awards

### Comings & Goings

- 71 New Pupils; Scholarships Awarded in 2020
- 72-73 Farewell!
- 74 New Staff
- 75-77 Staff Farewells
- 78 School Officials

- 79-85 Speech Day 2020: Speech Day Broadcast Live; An Historic Headmistress' Speech; Head Girl's Speech; The Chairman of Governing Council; Prizewinners, As Announced on Speech Day; Behind the Scenes of Speech Day

### Developing

- 86-87 The New School Hall and Music School

### Sport

- 88-90 Lacrosse
- 91 Hockey
- 92-93 Netball
- 94 Independent Schools Ski Championships
- 95 Sport Scholarship Programme Review
- 96 Trampolining; Squash
- 97 Swimming; Rugby

### Parents & Seniors

- 98 Parents' Events; BSPA Roundup
- 99 Seniors' 25th Reunion
- 100 Farewell and Thank You to our BSSA Chair; Meet the New Chairs

### Exeat

- 101 The Pioneers Return from Newquay
- 102 From the Archives
- 103 Closing Message from Mrs Price

*Front and back cover shows all 92 Six Two leavers, as featured in the 'floral arch video' shown on Speech Day*



# Benenden Connects Launch



## February saw the relaunch of the Benenden Society, as well as Benenden Connects – the new School community portal

Through Benenden Connects, members of the Society can engage with each other, reconnect with old friends and enjoy meeting new members of the Benenden community.

Members of Benenden Connects have the opportunity to attend social gatherings and special interest events, grow their personal and professional network and advance their career, keep up-to-date with the latest news from Benenden, access photo albums and post job openings and find job leads. There is also an opportunity to advise or act as a mentor to a young Senior or Sixth Form student.

We're delighted that over 1,100 people have now joined Benenden Connects. Currently members are based in over 30 different countries, and 40 per cent have volunteered to help; for example with careers mentoring for young Seniors. Users include parents of current pupils, Seniors, Honorary Seniors (former staff), parents of Seniors (known as Friends of Benenden) and current members of staff.

Samantha Price, Headmistress, is full of praise for Benenden Connects and said: "I am delighted with the launch of Benenden Connects, the new online home of the Benenden Society.

"Following an incredibly helpful trial phase, and having incorporated a great deal of valuable feedback from the parents, Seniors and Friends of the School who kindly participated, we are confident that Benenden Connects will simplify and enhance how every member of the Benenden Society engages with the School and each other."

Recent posts on Connects include a morning Prayers for Seniors which has been filmed by Revd Tracey Bateson, Benenden's new Co-Chaplain who joined in January and has been joined by her husband, Revd Jack Bateson, as Co-Chaplain from this term.

Sixth Formers have also now joined the platform so they can start asking other members of our community for advice in their chosen academic or career path. Inevitably, we'd like to have the most diverse possible body of Seniors and parents with the broadest range of educational and professional experiences on-hand to help current Benenden Sixth Formers and Seniors to flourish in the future. So, if you're willing to offer ad hoc guidance, answer questions about your area of expertise, or even mentor a young Benenden pupil or young Senior and you haven't signed up already please do so.



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### New Medics Club

Six One pupils JB van Pelt and Kate Gouriet have set up a weekly discussion-based Medics Club.

After the first session, which featured a discussion on euthanasia, JB said: "Medics Club was set up to allow students to expand on topics outside the school curriculum or extend on topics that are mainly ethical based and medical/science based. It allows students generally interested in the topics to join or specifically to expand on topics that would be introduced whilst studying medicine."

### Debaters Qualify for National Final

In March, Nicole Lee, Sophie Moody-Stuart, Marianne Balogun and Pantara Kambhato competed in the regional round of the Oxford University Schools' Debating Competition. There were 65 teams competing at Dulwich College. The girls competed in pairs and all four of the debaters did an excellent job but particular congratulations go to Sophie and Nicole who, as a pair, qualified for the national finals.

### Spanish Hospital

To finish covering the topic of health in Spanish, in February the Lower Fifth became part of an ER department at a hospital and created a fantastic video. The girls performed different roles and situations and had a lot of fun putting all the language they had learned into practice.

### UK Linguistics Olympiad

In February, 25 girls took part in the UK Linguistics Olympiad (UKLO) – a fun, voluntary competition in which competitors have to use their logic and decoding skills to decipher unknown languages.

This year's problems included Double Dutch and Norwedish along with Cuneiform (ancient Babylonian), Idalion (a Cypriot dialect of ancient Greek carved in stone) and Chintang (a Nepalese language related to Chinese and Tibetan).

We are thrilled that we had six entries at Intermediate level, three of whom achieved a silver award. All the Intermediate entries deserve special credit because the Idalion problem was exceptionally difficult.

**The MFL (Bilingual) Prize**  
Alzbeta Seippel

**The Confucius Award**  
Sophie Moody-Stuart



## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Turner Contemporary Success



Amelia Lewis, in the Fifth, has been awarded Highly Commended in her category for the Turner

Contemporary Portfolio 2020. The judges' feedback on Jungle Eyes was: "In this piece Amelia showed real technical competence, we enjoyed the great use of colours and the sophisticated symbolism."

This is an exciting accolade for such a young artist.

## Amelie's Debut Album released

The debut album by Six One Amelia Jat is out now on all digital platforms.

Resurrected features ten superb original songs, written over the past year, and she has worked incredibly hard on it here in School and at home in Hong Kong. Fifty per cent of the proceeds are going to OCD Action.

## Success at Public Speaking Competitions

Two teams were entered into the Rotary Club Public Speaking Competition at Towers School in Ashford in January. The Intermediate Team, made up of Upper Fourths, had to speak on the subject of 'Is CCTV in public places an invasion of our privacy?'. The Senior Team had to speak on the subject of 'Should we positively discriminate for people with disabilities?'.

Both teams did exceptionally well and our Senior Team did so well they won and were put through to the next round – where all the winners from the South East go head-to-head.

## Jessica and Minty Selected for England

A huge congratulations to Six One Jessica Platts and Six Two Minty Loxton-Barnard, who have been selected for the England U19B Lacrosse Team for the home internationals – another example of Lacrosse continuing to flourish at Benenden.



Samantha Price,  
Headmistress

## Equality and Diversity Review

**The appalling death of George Floyd in Minnesota has rightly led to worldwide examination and condemnation of racism and racial inequality. At Benenden we will not tolerate racism in any form and to this end we are reflecting again on how we can better support our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community and counter all forms of discrimination.**

Benenden prides itself on being culturally diverse. We are grateful to have recently received feedback from the wider school community, and we are sorry to anyone who felt that on occasions the behaviour of others towards them was in any way discriminatory or biased – and we have held very meaningful subsequent conversations as a result of this. We recognise that there is more to do to ensure that our BAME pupils are fully understood within our school community and we will be acting on this.

We would like to emphasise our ongoing commitment to ensuring that everyone who passes through our school community has equal opportunity, attention and support. We are always listening, and we will continue to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that Benenden is a truly inclusive environment in which all girls feel comfortable and thrive.

The School leadership, in collaboration with the School's Equality and Diversity Committee, which comprises staff and pupils and was established more than a decade ago, is reviewing our policies and procedures in order to strengthen our community where every pupil is valued equally.

Benenden welcomes girls from all ethnic backgrounds and this diversity is integral to our happy school community. It is therefore essential that all girls are given equal opportunities at the School to thrive and that the School's values, ethos and curriculum reflect a complete understanding, empathy and respect for everyone within our community.

In addition, we would like to take this opportunity to share with parents the outline for how we will be approaching this work.

Phase one involves training for staff, starting with Senior Management, and this is already underway. In addition, the School will review all aspects of the Complete Education. Looking back over several years' worth of data, we will seek to identify where there may be trends showing a historic lack of equality – for example, among visiting speakers, sports team representation or in our complaints log. The next stage will be to develop plans to address any areas lacking equality, most likely through training and changing existing practices. We will share these plans for improvement with our community.

This work is to be reviewed alongside the School's policies and ratified by the Governing Council on an annual basis.

The areas identified for review are as follows:

Admissions  
Allocation to Houses  
Behaviour Log  
Bullying & Safeguarding Log  
Complaints & Concerns  
Curriculum:  
Academic  
Drama  
Music  
Sport  
Trips  
Weekend Programme Activities

Staff:

Disciplinary  
Induction  
Recruitment  
Training

Pupil Induction

Pupils:

Leadership Appointments  
Lecture Programme  
Personal and Professional Programme  
Prayers topics  
Referrals  
Societies

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee:

Discussion Topics

Representation on:

BSPA  
BSSA  
Governing Council  
School Advisors

Marketing Representation:

Publications  
Website

Review of Policies:

Admissions  
Aims and Values  
Behaviour and Safeguarding  
Bursaries  
Curriculum  
Equality and Diversity  
Peer on Peer Abuse  
Recruitment

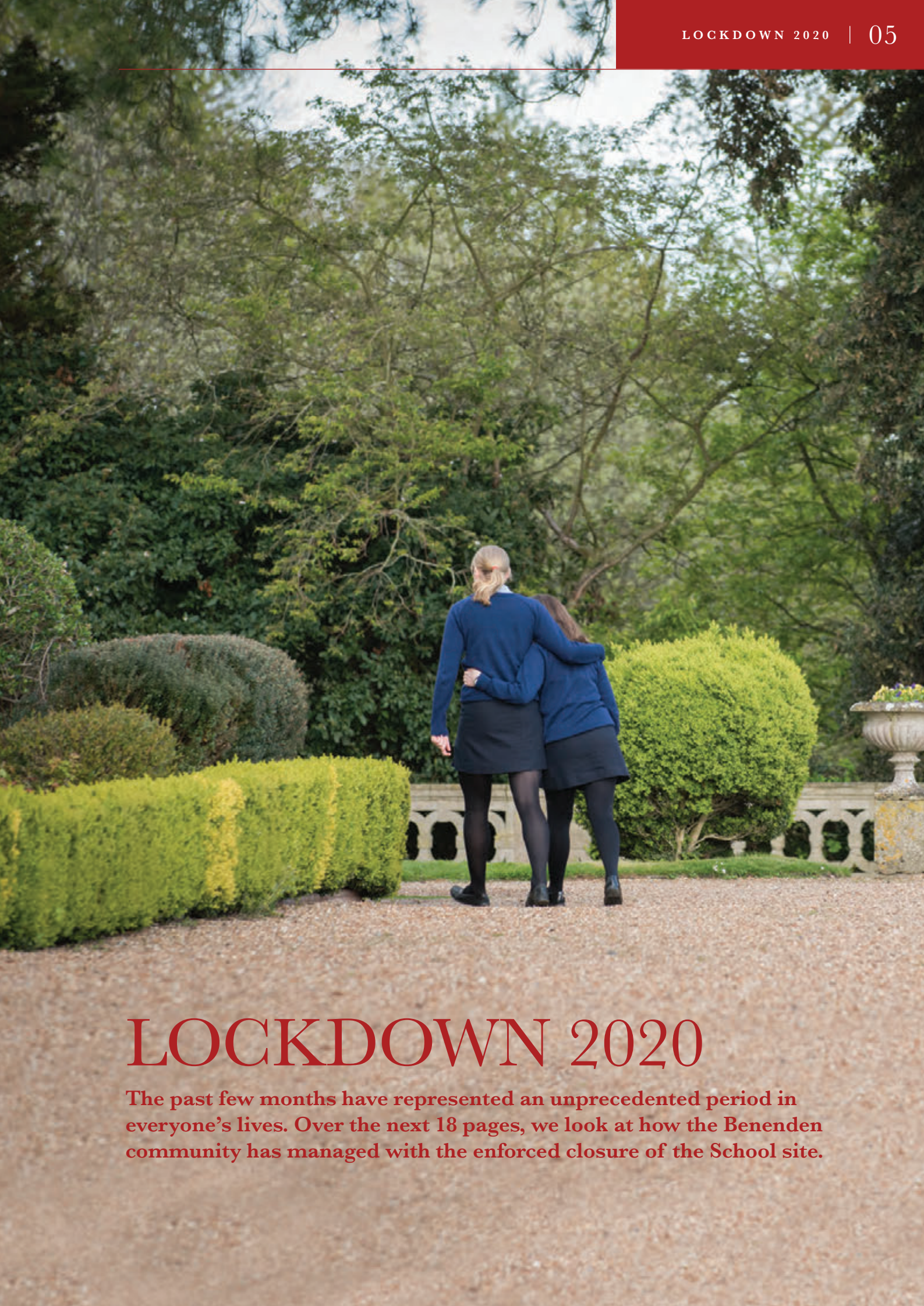


## Message from the Benenden School Seniors' Association

**"We are encouraged by this crucial first step the School is taking with this review, as well as the open and collaborative approach the School's leadership has adopted, and we look forward to updating the community of Seniors on outcomes of the review and the actions the School takes as a result."**

**Ali Chiu, BSSA Chairman, and Ron Babalakin, Junior BSSA Chairman**





# LOCKDOWN 2020

The past few months have represented an unprecedented period in everyone's lives. Over the next 18 pages, we look at how the Benenden community has managed with the enforced closure of the School site.



# Six Two Girls' Farewell Lunch

With a nationwide lockdown imminent and some overseas girls having already returned home, the remaining Six Two girls enjoyed a farewell lunch to remember.

On Thursday 19 March the School hosted a special year group lunch for the Six Two before they left Benenden at the end of the Spring Term, unbeknown at the time that the girls would not be returning before becoming Seniors. Unfortunately not all the girls were here to enjoy the event but it was lovely to see that many of those who had returned home were included remotely using video calls.

The event started with Mrs Price and members of SMT and Founders – suitably dressed as characters from *The Princess and the Pea*, in the outfits the Six Two had worn on World Book Day – inviting the girls into the Terrace Room, which is usually used for staff but had been specially reserved for the Six Two for this occasion.

Each girl was given a beautifully wrapped toilet roll (not a typical Benenden gift but it seemed appropriate at the time in the context of the toilet roll shortage!), a leaflet introducing them to life as a Benenden Senior and a branded keyring courtesy of the Benenden School Seniors' Association (BSSA).

The girls enjoyed a delicious meal and a glass of wine before giving the catering team a really heartwarming vote of thanks, led by School Captain Teniola Adesanya, and the event was rounded off when the girls all filed out into the Entrance Hall for an off-the-cuff rendition of the School hymn.

It was a lovely way to say goodbye and while it was something of a bittersweet event, given the unexpected announcement about the cancellation of exams the night before, it hopefully sent the girls off on a positive note. The School is holding a leavers' event at Benenden, followed by the Leavers' Ball, for Six Twos on Wednesday 9 December.



Fikemi Olayinka, Isabella Scott Wells and Jacinta Smart



Izzy Gibbs and Teniola Adesanya



Staff dressed up as characters from *The Princess and the Pea*

## Timeline How the events unfolded at Benenden

**28 January:** As cases grow in mainland China, Benenden asks families and visitors to avoid coming to School if they are feeling unwell after visiting China.

**29 January:** As many airlines stop flights to China and the UK imposes

a 14-day quarantine on anyone returning from Wuhan, Benenden requests that girls do not return to China or Hong Kong during Half Term.

**30 January:** Chinese New Year Prospective Parents' morning moved off site to London.

**31 January:** As the first coronavirus cases are reported in the UK, parents are asked not to attend events at School if they have recently been in an affected country or area, or have symptoms.

**12 February:** Benenden asks anyone returning from nine identified affected countries, mainly in South East Asia, to self-isolate for 14 days before returning to School. All visitors asked to confirm they have not been to regions affected





Although an unusual party favour, the toilet roll was a hit!



Girls were in high spirits



The girls enjoyed a delicious meal



Elizabeth Fairweather and Chloe Tung



The girls sang an off-the-cuff rendition of the School hymn

by the coronavirus, the disease of which is now called Covid-19.

**26 February:** The list of affected countries grows and an outbreak occurs in Northern Italy during Half Term; several Benenden girls who were in the area are

asked to return home as a precaution.

**29 February:** Benenden parents notified that forthcoming overseas trips are under review. Planning begins for an 'Easter camp' to support girls serving quarantine or who

are unable to return home during the Easter holidays.

**6 March:** Fourths' Toledo and Carcassonne trips postponed.

**7 March:** Parents advised to avoid particular areas, including some in the

UK, during the Easter holidays. Overseas girls advised they can return home for Easter early, from the 21 March Exeat, as long as they join lessons remotely for the rest of that week.

**11 March:** As several countries look likely to impose restrictions on travellers arriving from the UK, overseas girls are advised they can return home immediately and remain at home, joining lessons remotely, until after the Easter holidays.



# Community Response to Coronavirus

As the nation went into lockdown due to the pandemic, members of the Benenden community pulled together to support those in need and assist the NHS and key workers.

During the coronavirus pandemic and consequential lockdown across the country, and indeed the world, the School and its staff, pupils, Seniors and friends worked hard to support those in need.

Several members of staff from the School's Technologies and Science departments donated their time and expertise to produce vital PPE (personal protective equipment) for healthcare professionals. The project involved the donation of stationery pins from local residents, which were used to construct the visors. Head straps were also laser-cut on-site to aid the creation of the visors – ultimately 1,525 visors were produced in Benenden's workshop.

The visors were donated to the Headcorn 'Hot Hub', the pop-up assessment centre for those experiencing Covid-19 symptoms, and The Grange, a care home for adults with learning disabilities in Benenden.

The School also loaned two defibrillators to the assessment centre, along with examination beds, pulse oximeters and various disposable supplies. Kath Willdridge, the Senior Nurse usually based at the Medical Centre at Benenden, also volunteered her time to assist at the Headcorn assessment centre.

Also donated to the local Covid response team was the School's supply of gloves, goggles and masks from the Science and Technologies departments. As well as this, some generous parents from overseas donated a large supply of face masks for the School.

In addition, the School site was offered as an overspill car park for Benenden Hospital and the School contacted Kent County Council to offer to support children of key workers. In the end neither of these provisions was taken up. Several members of staff were also actively involved in the Benenden Action Team and, on a smaller level, the daffodils from the grounds were cut, bunched and distributed to local self-isolating elderly people.

While the girls were not on site, the School was happy for members of the village to use the School grounds to walk and run in, ensuring social distancing measures were in place at all times. While the government allowed us all one hour of outdoor exercise a day, this was helpful to local residents looking to enjoy their daily outdoor activity in beautiful surroundings.

The School also joined forces with Food4Heroes – a national charity coordinating the delivery of nutritious, professionally cooked meals to frontline NHS staff – to provide meals for healthcare professionals.

In collaboration with Food4Heroes, Benenden provided 250 meals a day (including weekends) to local healthcare staff. The initiative was led by Sue Franklin, Domestic Bursar, along with Benenden's Head Chef Hugh Franklin, who coordinated a team of volunteers to help cook and deliver the meals.

Benenden always works very closely with The John Wallis Church of England Academy, the school in Ashford that we sponsor; in light of the situation the School offered remote careers and higher education advice to John Wallis students.

As the lockdown progressed and it became clear that across the country children would not be returning to schools before the summer holidays, our Heads of Department worked with their counterparts at John Wallis to share advice and offer guidance on remote learning best practice to ensure their pupils were able to continue learning throughout the lockdown.

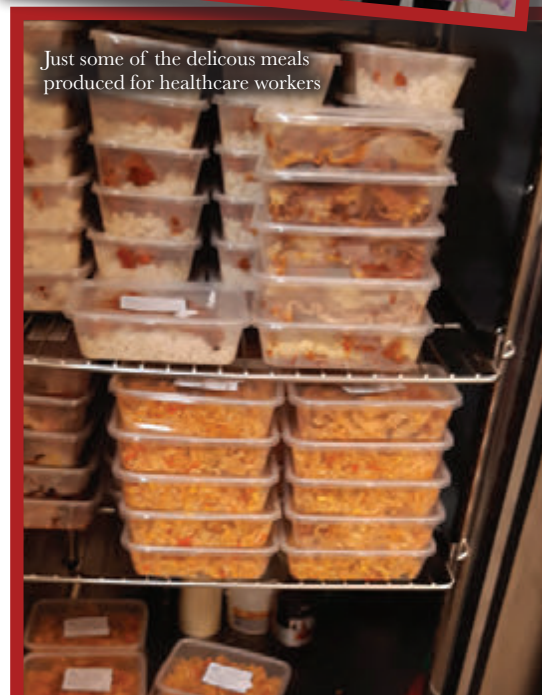
Throughout the pandemic it was 'business as usual' for the girls as much as possible, and a full timetable was delivered remotely. The usual timetable of the day was adapted to help the staff and girls better manage the demands of remote learning and overall the migration to a fully remote timetable was a success.



Carol Battson volunteered at the local Covid response centre



Stacey Large, Norris' Day Matron, produced scrubs for NHS staff



Just some of the delicious meals produced for healthcare workers

**13 March:** Benenden announces that girls in Upper Fifth and Six Two should aim to return early after Easter to consolidate their learning ahead of their public exams. All trips and off-site outings are cancelled as a precaution. Benenden intends to

remain open until the start of Easter holidays on 26 March.

**16 March:** With large numbers of girls at home overseas, 'hybrid' lessons begin, with some girls joining remotely and others in the classroom.

**17 March:** As speculation grows that the UK Government will order all schools to close, Benenden announces that all girls will leave the site at the weekend (20-21 March) and join lessons remotely for the final week of the Spring Term.

**18 March:** The Government announces that schools in the UK are to close at the end of Friday 20 March – and that A Level and GCSE exams are cancelled this year. Benenden tells Upper Fifth and Six Two girls they can return home the following afternoon.

**19 March:** The remaining Six Two girls enjoy a special end of term lunch.

**20 March:** All Benenden girls leave site to join lessons remotely for the rest of the term. UK schools close, except for children of key workers.





Lynda Hildige and Michelle Foley volunteered their time to cook meals for NHS workers



Verity-Jayne Fahy made many visors



Dave Challoner and Chris Fahy produced visors

More than 1,500 visors were produced in our workshop



**23 March:** All Benenden pupils join remote lessons. Benenden runs its first virtual Prayers. The Government places the UK in lockdown.

**26 March:** The Spring Term is officially brought to an end by a virtual Mark Reading.

**Easter Holidays:** Staff support the community effort, including by donating PPE and producing visors in the DT lab.

**3 April:** Ofqual announces that A Level and GCSE grades will be given as predicted grades

by teachers in the first instance, with these recommendations then moderated by exam boards to provide a final grade.

**18 April:** Benenden and Tonbridge schools send parents a booklet aimed at encouraging their children to develop important

housekeeping skills during lockdown (to the amusement of parents and the disdain of many pupils!)

**22 April:** The Summer Term begins, with all staff and girls operating remotely. A temporary timetable is

in operation, running from 8.30am until 4.10pm with no Saturday lessons.

**5 May:** The School runs a survey for girls on how they have found remote learning so far. As a result, measures are introduced to give girls

*continued over* ➔



# ‘Ensuring the Covid cohort won’t be defined by their cancelled exams’

An entire cohort of pupils will not be sitting public exams this year. Yet rather than dwelling on what they didn’t do, the class of 2020 should be remembered for what they did do during this unprecedented period, says Lesley Tyler, Executive Director – Curriculum and Professional Excellence.



## ‘When your exams were cancelled, what did you do instead?’

We are acutely aware that this year’s GCSE and A Level students will inevitably face this question in future job interviews. In common with every senior school in the UK, when it was announced that this year’s exams were cancelled, we faced the dilemma of how to help the students make best use of this unexpected additional time to give them the skills, knowledge and experiences that will prepare them for the next stage in their lives.

Firstly, we have been delivering a full teaching timetable remotely to all year groups since lockdown began in the UK in March (and a few weeks earlier for our overseas students) but we also launched a programme devoted to giving the Upper Fifth and Six Two an array of new opportunities that we hope will stand them in good stead for the future.

This bespoke programme, called Leap, was intended to bridge the gap between GCSEs and A Levels, or A Levels and university. As well as an academic core of foundation A Level lessons for Upper Fifth or university-style study in subject-based groups for Six Two, the girls had to work in teams to explore multidisciplinary topics such as Youth and Age, Nature and Nurture and People and the Environment and create recorded and researched debates on these topics. In this way we encouraged both subject specific depth and the connective, creative thinking required by universities and employment. A series of seminars to teach and reinforce study skills underpinned the academic programme.

Alongside this academic core, we offered more practical courses such as Excel, coding, TEFL, First Aid, childcare, film studies, cookery and food hygiene.

The third part of Leap was a range of over 40 lectures in topics as esoteric as Why is it hard to kill a Fruitfly? and The Stiletto: Symbol of Oppression or Liberation? which stimulated connective and curious thinking.

Yet these weeks without revision and exams were not wholly devoted to virtual classroom learning: philanthropic endeavours

are just as important life skills and lockdown presented an opportunity for such activity. Many students have sought out ways to volunteer within their local communities, either by fruit picking, working in care homes or writing letters and sending artwork to care home residents. Along with many other schools, our DT department have been making masks and many of the girls and staff have been sewing scrubs, headbands and face masks.

Returning to the question of ‘what did you do when exams were cancelled?’, students at Benenden had no excuse to be idle during lockdown. We reviewed the co-curricular provision, which typically offers around 150 clubs each week, to put together an after-school programme of some of the most popular or accessible activities. Choirs, music lessons, drama lessons, art club and STEM activities – to name but a few – all continued remotely.

Many girls have chosen to use the extra time at home to undertake an Extended Project, enter essay competitions or attend TED talks and access some of the free modules offered by universities: the School has made a compendium of suitable resources for each age group with hyperlinks and it has been heartening to see how many of the students – and their families – have used these extension materials and capitalised on the chance to broaden their minds and explore new areas of learning.

We talk a lot in School about the importance of developing independence and resilience. Looking at the hundreds of girls at Benenden shrugging off the strange circumstances, making the best of it and getting on with their learning, it reassures us that they will be able to quickly adapt when facing challenges in future.

We hope that our students will have a compelling story to tell in years to come when challenged on how they made best use of their exams being cancelled, and they have certainly proved the Benenden motto true: We don’t mistake a syllabus for an education.

• See next page for more about the Leap Programme

more time away from their screens, including shorter lessons for the Lower School and removing some other sessions.

**11 May:** The Leap Programme for the Upper Fifth and Six Two begins in place of their exams. Sessions include

cookery, sign language, the Extended Project, R coding, Russian for beginners, Excel and archaeology, as well as the Foundation A Level courses for the Upper Fifth and the start of the university-style academic project and TEFL course for Six One.

**12 May:** Following the Government’s announcement that Year 10 and 12 should return to school before the end of term, Benenden starts planning for Fifth and Six One to return in some form, with consultation with parents in those year groups.

**22 May:** Half Term begins. Benenden announces the Summer Term will finish three days early, on Tuesday 30 June, that Fiftths and Six Ones can return from 15 June on a day school basis to continue their remote learning from School, and that

Speech Day will proceed on Saturday 4 July as planned – but remotely.

**9 June:** As part of its planning for a return in September, Benenden asks overseas parents to complete a survey on their views.

**15 June:** A small number of Fifth and Six One girls





# Leap Programme

With all GCSE and A Level exams cancelled, the girls set to work on the Leap Programme which set them up with vital skills for university and life beyond.

The Summer Programme for Upper Fifth and Six Two got off to a flying start with sessions on Day One on cookery with the recipe for Benenden's famous Katsu chicken, sign language, the Extended Project, R coding, Russian for beginners, Excel and archaeology, as well as the Foundation A Level courses for the Upper Fifth and the start of the university-style academic project and TEFL course for Six One.

The first week of the programme lectures included How to Read a Scientific Article, The Invention of the Jet Engine, The Invention of Ignorance, Politics for Dummies, and Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics – an introduction to statistics for girls going onto humanities and science courses at university who haven't studied A Level Maths.

Six Two students began their Level 3 Award with the Institute of Leadership and Management, and other girls in both years began studying towards certificates in Excel, First Aid and nannying – with 21 girls taking a 168-hour university level TEFL qualification.

On to week two of the Leap Programme and the Film Studies session focussed on Legally Blonde: The Male Gaze, an examination of the presentation of women in cinema, and the cookery sessions showcased Korean chicken, bao buns and donuts. Other activities

continuing through the Leap Programme included art, archaeology, chess and touch typing.

Girls also took advantage of an amazing free opportunity to learn about the world of investment and finance in a three-hour online session run by Amplify Trading's professional traders and analysts. Even though live work experience opportunities are somewhat limited at the moment, the older girls were offered many opportunities to learn about the world of work through recorded sessions with a variety of employers.

In to the third week of the programme Upper Fifth, Six One and Six Two girls attended a session on how to prepare for psychometric testing – often a key feature of interviews. Some Six One pupils also took advantage of the extra time to learn a new skill such as the piano, French or baking, and many had got their EPQs underway – with a significant number of girls taking the opportunity to work for charity, raise funds and support their communities.

Stage Two of the Leap Programme saw the girls complete their Foundation A Level lessons (Upper Fifth) and research essays (Six Two) as well as their chosen enrichment courses in TEFL, sign language, First Aid, cookery, film studies, Excel, Russian, Mandarin, archaeology, global studies, coding and more.

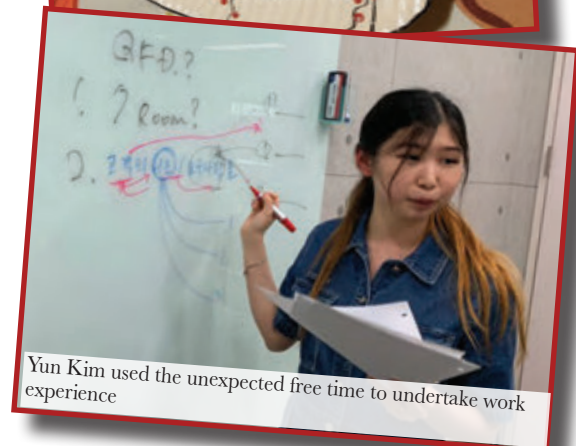
*continued over* ➔



Tallulah Haycock enjoyed taking part in the Leap Physics course



Alisha Hsu's recreation of Benenden's famous Katsu chicken



Yun Kim used the unexpected free time to undertake work experience

return to School on a day basis, with extensive measures in place to ensure staff and pupils are protected.

**19 June:** Benenden announces its September return plans, which include a phased return by year group, that

additional teaching time will be created in the Spring Term 2021 and that a shorter timetable will be in operation for the Autumn Term, but with Saturday lessons reinstated. Additionally, Benenden plans for the girls to board in year groups during

the Autumn Term, so that each year group is a separate 'household bubble'.

**25 June:** Benenden holds its first virtual Open Morning.

**2 July:** The Government announces that schools will be reopened to all

pupils in September.

**3 July:** The Government announces that it is cancelling quarantine restrictions on travellers from numerous countries. Nonetheless, Benenden intends to continue with its plans to open a boarding

house early for overseas families who either still need to isolate before the start of the Autumn Term or who had booked travel based on the quarantine rules.

**4 July:** Benenden holds its virtual Speech Day.





Lily Phillips worked as a nanny as part of a work placement

# Virtual Enquiry Week



In June the Fourth, Upper Fourth and Lower Fifth all took part in a remote enquiry experience with the theme of Fix the Future.

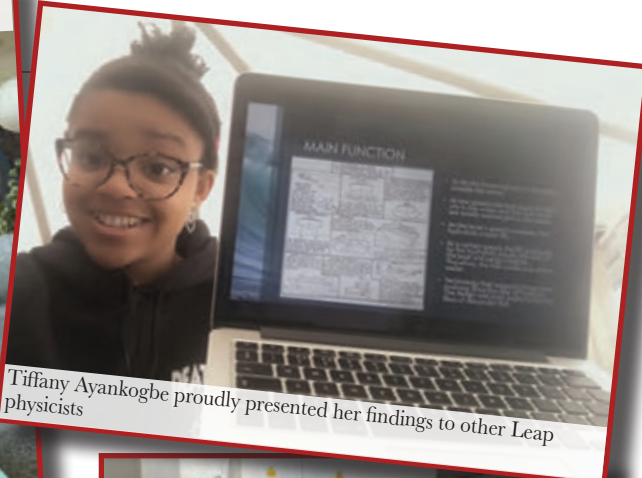
As part of Enquiry Week pupils were in role as youth delegates at a conference about Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and worked in mixed age groups of 12 on one of the goals, researching the problems and current projects addressing the issue.

Groups of pupils present their recommendations of projects from around the world, all projects that the pupils believe deserve additional funding because of the likely impact they will have.

This is the first time the School has run an Enquiry Week remotely, however the girls have thoroughly enjoyed working as part of a group and presenting their work to others, albeit virtually!



Tiffany Ayankogbe proudly presented her findings to other Leap physicists



The First Aid course was a hit with students



Emily Brown assisted in her local bakery as part of her work placement



One pupil really enjoyed the Leap Excel course!

← from previous

The final stage of the Leap Programme took the form of Campus to Corporate Week. The programme of activities, which spanned the last full week before the end of term, were all associated with gaining the skills necessary to thrive in the workplace. Sessions included creating a professional CV, making the most of internships and work experience, using LinkedIn, understanding employment law, working well in teams, Maths for the workplace and the importance of savings and pensions.

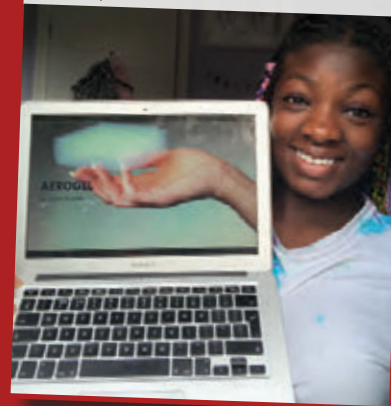
Some girls used this week to undertake volunteering, remote or live work experience and internships to give them a taste of the world of work. Several Seniors and parents also spoke live during this week about their careers as part of Career Journeys; a new series of films which sees leading employees from a variety of professions speak out about their jobs and what they entail.

More than 20 Six Two students have capitalised on this unexpected period of free time (due to exams being cancelled) to undertake a university-level TEFL course, some have taken part in a remote international exchange with US students while others have completed a Level Three Institute of Leadership and Management Award. Alternatively, some girls decided to follow a programme of academic lectures and have produced fascinating 2,000 word essays.

Nima Mouen-Makoua was one of the Leap physicists



Jessica Popoola enjoyed presenting to her Leap Physics class





# Learning Curve

Although we have spent more than three months in lockdown, the School community has been its usual hive of activity. Girls showed incredible resilience and have continued to learn, succeed and achieve. Over the next four pages we explore the numerous highlights.

## Caitlin's Song Shows Support for those Affected by Coronavirus

Caitlin Chiu, one of our talented students in the Fifth, wrote a song called *Fighters* (Song for the Coronavirus) to show support for medical workers and all the people affected by the coronavirus around the world.

Caitlin said about her inspiration for writing the song: "As a Hong Kong citizen but currently studying in the UK, when I saw all the reports about the



coronavirus affecting families from many countries, I felt helpless.

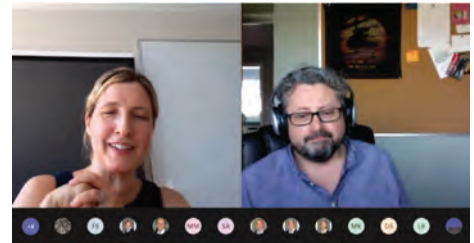
"I thought that the only thing I could do was to write a song to thank all the medical staff for their restless efforts and encourage all affected citizens and families. You are all fighters! Keep fighting, we will win this battle together."

## Laurence Connor Q&A

During the last week of term the GCSE, A Level and Drama Scholarship students were given the opportunity to hear from Laurence Connor, West End and Broadway director. He has directed musicals such as *Les Misérables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Miss Saigon* and *School of Rock* and is currently working on Andrew Lloyd Webber's new musical *Cinderella*.

Fifth pupil Philippa Kearsey and her sister Annabel, in the Upper Fourth, reveal what they took from the session with Laurence.

"We were very excited to be able to ask Laurence many different questions about his life, and how he got into directing some of the biggest shows in the world. Laurence was able to give us advice about the world of musical theatre, for example, how he casts a show. The



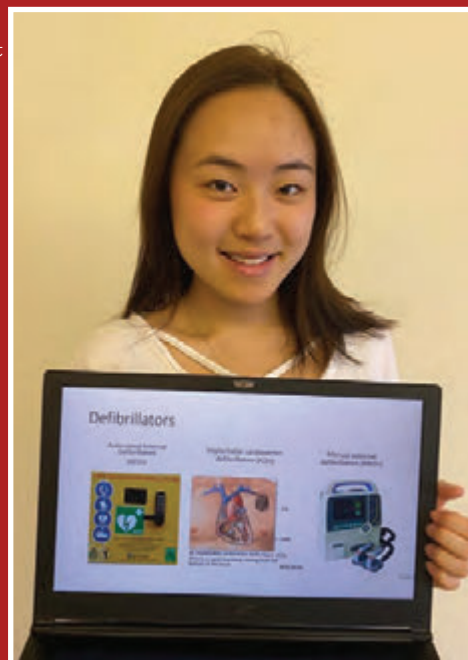
role of a director is really diverse, it must be an amazing experience to see all of your ideas come alive in one show, but also quite daunting too.

"We never knew how much work goes on in the background to create musical theatre and will now have a much better appreciation of what goes on behind the scenes the next time we see a show. We are very much looking forward to welcoming Laurence to Benenden when he joins us to take a masterclass in directing."

## Physicists' Virtual Research Presentations

This period of quarantine hasn't meant that live presentations have stopped; Six Two Physics students have been sharing their elaborate research presentations with the rest of their class via Teams.

The girls were free to choose which topic to focus on and worked on their research presentations over the Easter break. Subjects of research included understanding MRI and its use in psychological research, capacitors in medicine, the beginning of the universe, resonance, laser cooling and simple harmonic motion.



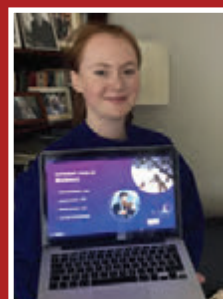
Emily Wong



Flora Shen



Kemi Bower



Cordelia Cook



Charlotte Elliot



## Upper Fifth Produce Creative Revision Videos



Fully embracing remote working, Upper Fifth produced revision videos to share with their class.

Students had full creative freedom and were given a topic in pairs – the only limit was a three minute cap and their imagination! Girls produced videos on deforestation impacts filmed with Lego, innovative ideas for 'group' presentations using a phone so they could speak at the same time and whiteboard revision films on climate change.

## Meet The Scientist Webinars



### WHY DO I LIKE MY JOB?

- Good mixture of technical content as well as communication
- Projects tend to enable people in the future
- Always meeting new people (same company and clients)
- Problem solving
- Based in London

Pupils heard from a range of scientists, each specialising in a different subject

During lockdown Benenden students took part in a series of webinars entitled Meet the Scientist, hosted by Sue Harris, Benenden's STEM Outreach Coordinator, and Professor Becky Parker, Benenden's Head of Science.

The regular Wednesday afternoon initiative showcased a number of speakers from a diverse range of STEM environments who provided pupils with a 15-minute insight into their world of work and answered any questions they had. The webinars are part of an ongoing enrichment and extension programme, which includes opportunities to take part in online research projects, as well as completing Bronze and Silver CREST accreditations.

The first webinar was particularly topical as Dr Vladimir Gubala, from the



The Meet The Scientist webinar series was a hit with pupils and staff

University of Kent School of Pharmacy, discussed antibody testing with 34 participants. Other topics explored in the webinar series included climate change, the chemistry of fireworks, cleaning up with chemistry, the chemistry of crystals and a day in the life of an engineering consultant.

## At-Home Science Experiment

Phoebe Kinnings, in the Fourth, proved that it is still possible to conduct exciting Science experiments at home, with a fantastic pH experiment.

Phoebe tested and analysed the pH level of various different household products, going on to look at the effects of mixing an acid with an alkali and neutralisation. She showed such resourcefulness undertaking this experiment at home, well done Phoebe!



Phoebe Kinnings analysed the pH levels of different household products

Phoebe Kinnings undertook her own experiment

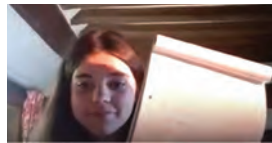
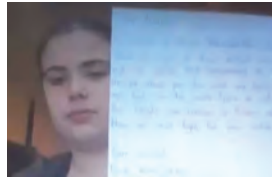




## Girls Write to War Veterans

At the beginning of the lockdown girls in the Lower Fifth took time during Form Order to write letters to war veterans at a care home in Bexhill, East Sussex. The girls hand-wrote letters saying they were thinking of the veterans in the context of both the coronavirus and the 75th anniversary of VE Day.

We felt this was a lovely gesture from the girls and the care home residents were delighted to receive these letters.



## Experience Economy Masterclass

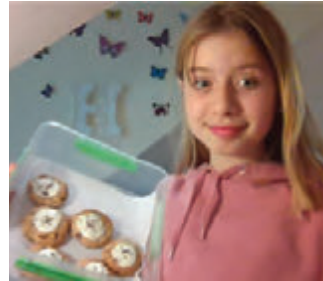
Students in the Upper Fifth and the Sixth Form had a taste of the Alps during lockdown as they took part in a masterclass with Fabienne Rollandin and Chris Astill-Smith, from the prestigious institutes Les Roches and Glion, Switzerland.

The session introduced pupils to some of the exciting sectors of the experience and hospitality economy including luxury business. It shared the entrepreneurial mindset and characteristics needed to start your own company, as well as the world of digital marketing to enhance visibility of companies and their branding.

## Bake-Off Challenges

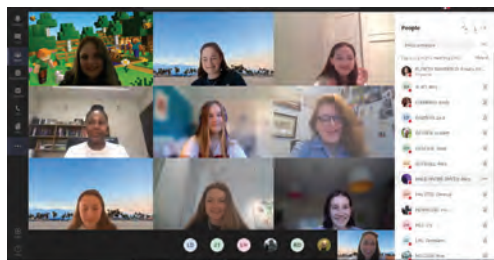
During lockdown Marshall Fourths and their Hm Mrs Bursey Faulkner, decided to make biscuits for their next virtual tutor meeting as part of a baking challenge. Each week the girls set themselves a different challenge to suit the strengths of each pupil.

Medway also enjoyed producing various bakes as part of their house bake-off, while Guldeford girls and staff took part in a VE Day bake-off with half working on a US theme and the other half a UK theme.



Photos (clockwise from top left): Annabel Behrens made vanilla swirls; Hannah Spencer made chocolate chip cookies; Skye Stapleton made sugar biscuits

## French Class Imagine New School Rules



Throughout lockdown the Fifts studying French were working on the topic of school and expressing rules more precisely.

The class was set the task of rewriting new rules for Benenden during the lockdown. They worked in pairs on Teams and created an array of new rules, some of which were quite amusing.

Some of the new proposed rules included:

- You cannot wear pyjamas during lessons
- You must resist the temptation to snack during lessons
- You must put your dog in a soundproof room
- You mustn't forget to blink when looking at a computer
- You must do your homework
- You must not spend more than eight hours a day on a computer

## Model United Nations

Six One pupils Oreoluwa Adeogun and Fara Bakare have been balancing their school work during lockdown with helping out with an organisation called MUN Impact.

Oreoluwa said: "I mentor up to 50 delegates from all around the world with ages ranging from 14 to 18 in a four-week programme on the basics of MUN and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, then we finish the programme with a final debate on Zoom which I assist in moderating with other mentors.

"Most students who take part in this are inexperienced, so seeing their drastic improvement has been incredibly fulfilling for me and I've picked up some useful resources that I plan on using in the future!"

Oreoluwa is one of the four Benenden MUN Student Officers (President of General Assembly) who is currently putting together arrangements for BMUN13 on Monday 7 December 2020, under the leadership of Secretary General Bee McDougall, and with Annabel Grut (President of Security Council) and Fara Bakare (Deputy Sec-Gen).

## Collaboration With US School

During lockdown a number of girls joined with a weekly international conference on coronavirus and its political, scientific and economic consequences.

Hosted by Miss Porter's School in Connecticut, USA, this was a truly international course with speakers and students from across the globe delivering lectures, hosting seminars and breaking into discussion groups.

Izzy Selby, in the Six One, enjoyed the international course and said: "The online seminar was a great way to connect with people around the world about the growing topic of Covid-19. It allowed me to learn about actions which are in place around the world but also the female involvement in the research which is going on and connect with senior women in the field of work."



Six One student Ella Bachrach has also learned a lot from the seminar series and said: "Miss Porter's

Global Seminar Series allowed me to gain new perspectives from outside the media bubble that I am routinely exposed to. I spoke in-depth about the different aspects of the pandemic with people from all over the world, and I was able to learn how different cultures are dealing with the global crisis.

"We discussed everything from UN peacekeeping efforts to how the pandemic is affecting people living in abusive households. The seminar culminated in a hackathon which gave us the opportunity to address a problem due to the pandemic, that we identified, and then create a solution. It was an eye-opening experience that challenged my preconceptions of the extent of the effects of the virus."



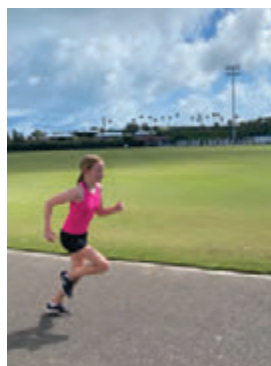


## ACE Screen-Free Day

In the last full week before the end of term the Fourth and Upper Fourth spent an entire day dedicating themselves to activities that didn't require the use of a computer or phone – the girls enjoyed a very well-earned screen-free day.

Grouped under the five ACE headings of Physical Health and Wellbeing, Mind and Spirit, Global Awareness, Skills for Life and Creativity and Culture, every girl selected different things from a suggested list of activities, all of which can be done away from a computer or phone.

The lovely weather we experienced certainly helped too, as the girls made the most of being outside and away from their screens. The girls enjoyed taking part in yoga, gardening and baking, amongst many other activities.



## Equestrian Success

The National Schools Equestrian Association hosted an online dressage competition, where riders were able to film a dressage test at home.

Our teams did very well in the online dressage competition. Particular congratulations go to Charlotte Roberts, Lily Hill, Sarah Witheridge and Belles Orgill who came 2nd in this national competition and have qualified for the National Championships.

Congratulations to the following girls too who also picked up individual qualifications to the National Championships: Charlotte Roberts who was 6th in the Novice test and Lily Hill who was 6th in the Preliminary test.

The girls in Equestrian Club have also been improving their knowledge of horse husbandry and understanding the health benefits of green space exercise during lockdown. They have earned their Pony Club badges in Working Dogs, Equine Behaviour and Points of the Horse. For the girls who have their horses at home, we had the added pleasure of the horses joining us on a few occasions!



Tati Martin was among the team that finished a respectable 12th in the online dressage competition

## Institute of Leadership and Management Award

Seven students from the Six Two undertook lessons in support of their Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Level 3 Award in Leadership and Management.

The lessons focussed on the differences between leadership and management, leadership styles, leader traits, effective leadership, leadership theories and team and individual development.

Issy Wilson said: "This has been very thought-provoking, and I can use my experiences of being Head Girl to see where my leadership styles differed according to varying situations."

## Online Debating Competition

Eight Benenden girls competed in an online debating competition. There were three debates over the course of the day on very tricky motions such as 'this house believes that hip hop has done more harm than good to the African American community' and 'this house supports private companies using social movements (feminism, Black Lives Matter etc.) as part of their advertisements'.



# Keep Calm and Carry On

As well as remote learning, the Benenden community found many creative ways to keep busy and stay productive during lockdown. Head Girl Issy Wilson produced a fantastic video montage which documented the activities pupils and staff were getting up to during this period of self-isolation. Over the next three page, we share some of the highlights.

## Outdoor Activity



## Miscellaneous





## Sport and Exercise



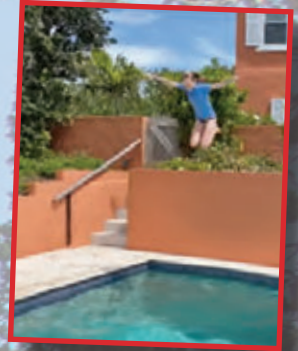
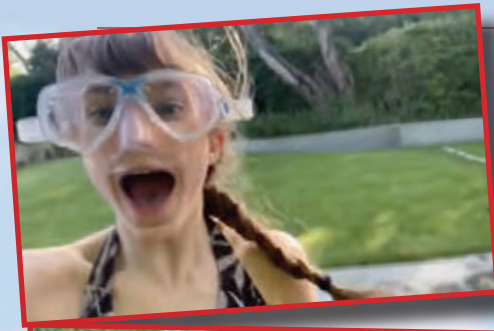
## Animals and Pets



## Miscellaneous

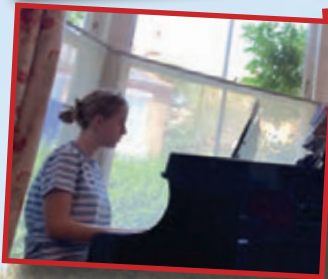




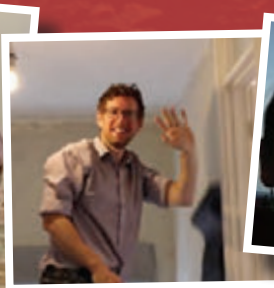
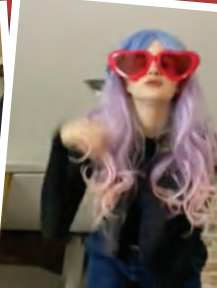
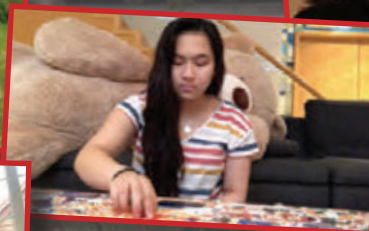


## Fun in the Water

## Musical Instruments



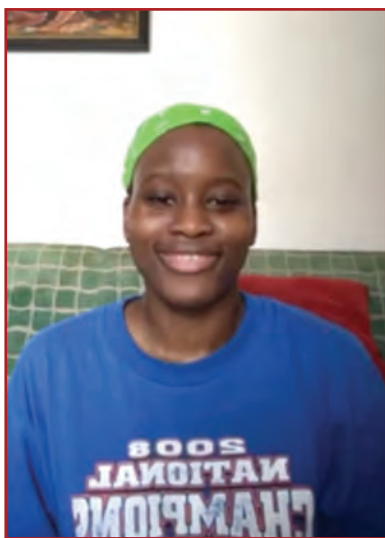
## Keeping Entertained





# What I've Missed...

The new Grey Jumpers introduced themselves (and their pets!) virtually as they revealed what they were missing the most about Benenden and how they had filled their time during lockdown. Here, we feature the highlights.



"I've been missing Benenden quite a lot, I miss hanging out with my friends in person, just going to the playground and hanging out. Especially because it is the Summer Term and the Summer Term is my favourite term. During this period of self-isolation and social distancing I have been keeping quite busy. I have joined as a mentor for the organisation MUN@Home which is a great organisation that makes MUN free and accessible to people all around the world."

**Oreoluwa Adeogun**



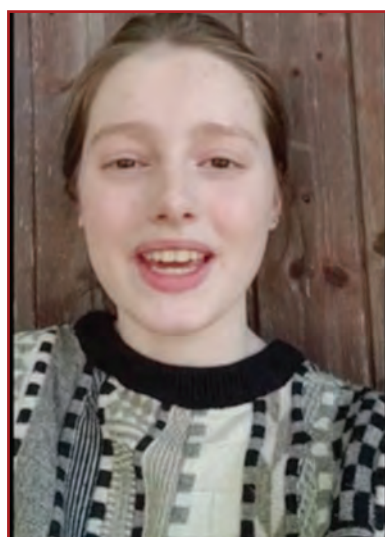
"The things I miss most about Benenden are definitely the simple things like spending break with friends or even walking to lessons. You don't realise how much time you spend with your friends until you can't see them for a very long time. During isolation I have been trying to keep myself really busy. My favourite thing I have done is painting my front door pink in the middle of the night with my sister to surprise our parents!"

**Ella Allfrey**



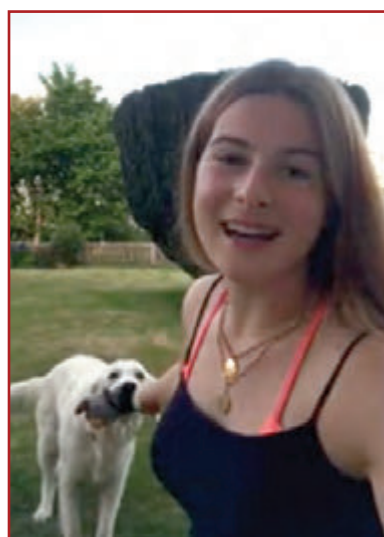
"Something I really miss about Benenden is the community and also the lifestyle – of course the academic side of things but also the co-curricular activities and sport and getting involved with lots of different things taking place at School. During quarantine I have been volunteering and working on a non-profit organisation I started called STEM in Africa."

**Fara Bakare**



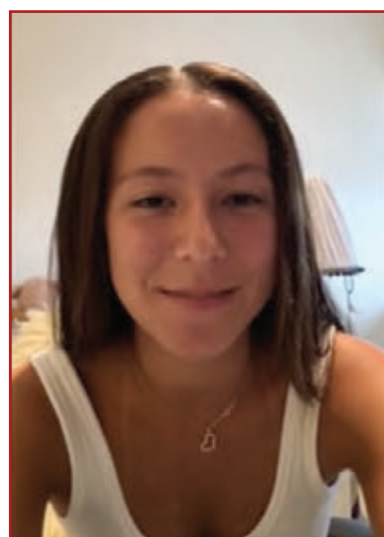
"If there is one thing I miss about Benenden it is the community and seeing people that aren't just my family. To keep busy I have been going on walks and have just been keeping myself active because I think it really helps my mental health."

**Sophie Brokenshire**



"During quarantine I have mostly been keeping this one entertained (her dog). I have also been doing a lot of painting – even though I am absolutely awful at it I find it is quite a fun way to pass my time. The thing I miss the most about Benenden is definitely just hanging out with my friends in the evenings and being able to talk to people in different years – and of course all of the teachers!"

**Poppy Heslop**



"Because I'm here in Hong Kong and the restrictions aren't as strict as other places, I have been going out swimming quite a lot as the weather has been really nice. I've been spending quite a lot of time with my family and seeing some friends who are also out here because all of the schools are shut. One thing I do miss a lot about Benenden, especially this term, is going out to play tennis with all of my friends after lessons because it is so much fun and is just such a laugh."

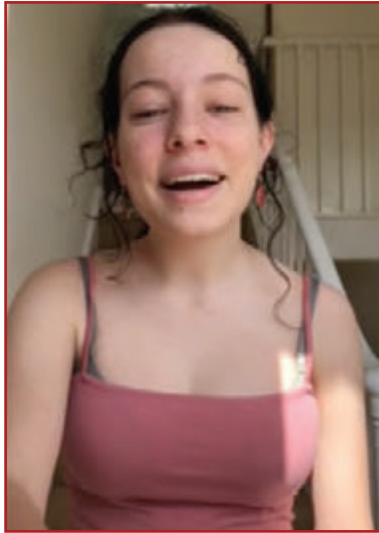
**Tatiana Leung**





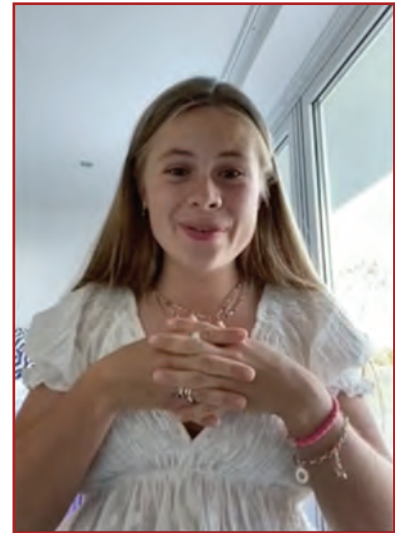
"I'm Pandora and this is my puppy Bodger. He is around five months old and is similar to my other dog Beetle. As you can imagine, I have spent a lot of my time in lockdown with him. The thing I have missed the most about Benenden is the summer barbecues and the food! The barbecues are the highlight of the summer and it is so sad to have not been there this term but I'm sure we will be back together soon."

**Pandora Mann**



"Something that I miss about Benenden is the fact that there is always something going on or someone to talk to. If you feel like doing something there is always just loads of different stuff happening. During quarantine I have been keeping busy by trying to teach myself how to roller-skate, I've been failing really badly and falling on my bum loads as a result!"

**Bee McDougall**



"What I'm missing the most about Benenden is definitely the whole Benenden community but also the amount of fun that we have at School. I'm trying to keep busy during lockdown by going on daily walks and runs, which is nice just to get a bit of headspace and I've been doing some swimming in the sea which has been quite chilly!"

**Izzy Selby**



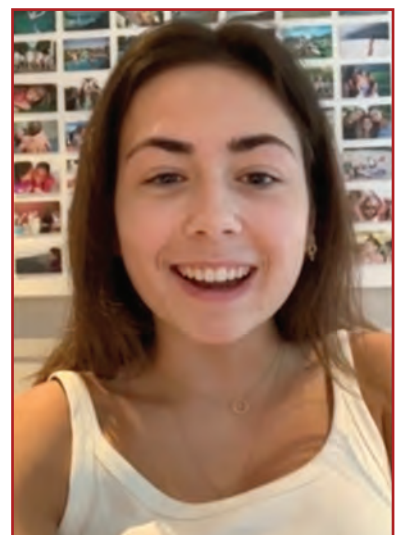
"I'm JB, I'm in Holland right now and something that I have been doing during quarantine to keep myself busy is going outside as much as I can. I've been walking my dogs in the forest near me or I have been going outside to read a lot. I really miss spending the evenings in House together, I really take those for granted and so I'm going to enjoy much more of those nights when we come back."

**JB van Pelt**



"I'm Zara and some things I miss about Benenden are being with my friends all the time and definitely the food! I also miss being in the 'Benenden bubble', especially at times like these. To keep busy during quarantine I have been improving my fitness by going on runs, I shaved my brother's head and I have been keeping in touch with my friends via Zoom."

**Zara Webb**



"To keep busy during lockdown I've been learning how to drive which has been really good because the streets aren't as busy as they would be usually. I've been going on a lot more family dog walks and I've been baking a lot more with my sister: we have been trying out lots of new recipes. One thing I really miss about Benenden is being in a class with people, the conversations and just the laughs you have at School."

**India Woolhouse**



# Lockdown Literature

Andrew Schagen, Head of English, pleads the case for Sherlock Holmes as the ultimate lockdown literature.



When news of the social distancing, lockdown and isolation broke in the UK a short while ago, we all needed to ask ourselves some fairly serious questions. For me, sandwiched right between 'I wonder where my next toilet roll is coming from?' and 'will my favourite pub survive the closure?' was the question, 'what on earth should I read?'

Of course, my brain went straight to things like Albert Camus' *The Plague* or Emily St. John Mandel's *Station Eleven*. But I gave my brain a severe talking to and together we came up with some criteria for the perfect lockdown read.

One, I wanted something long. Something I could really sink my teeth into as the weeks (and months) of lockdown roll on. Two, I didn't want to be disturbed. Peril was fine but peril with a sense of being in a safe pair of hands where things would turn out to be alright in the end. Three, I wanted people. I am bored of only seeing human faces on computer screens or from a supermarket trolley an edgy two metres away: I want to read about

people on thronging streets mingling in a way that seems almost unimaginable now.

So I give to you: *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* which in my opinion is the last word in lockdown literature. First of all: it's long. The edition I have in front of me (with the original Sidney Paget illustrations) is 1,406 pages long. There are 56 short stories and four novels: plenty to sink your teeth into.

Secondly, it's comforting. If you've read any of the stories before, Holmes and Watson will be old friends. If you haven't then you're probably fairly familiar with them anyway from the endless adaptations and general cultural knowledge.

And finally: they throng with life. Holmes and Watson will often leave London to solve a more provincial case. But, whether in the fog-shrouded metropolis or out of it, these are living, breathing stories of characters interacting, questioning, debating and solving problems face to face.

Six One pupil Hazel Lockey was inspired by lockdown to write the following poem.

## A Day in Your Life

The sixteen shops that flank your main street  
like tanks that glare across no-man's-land  
have closed their doors.

So you can peer—sorry, we're closed!—through  
slit shutters, squint to see  
the liquid sunlight pool on grey ironbark

Or stand in ordered rows outside Tesco  
fingers coiling round your trolley  
controlling the urge to ram

Its gridded metal teeth into the back  
of the woman in front of you  
just to feel something again.

And when you get home  
your books have been colour-coded  
dated-organised, Dewey-Decimal-classified

What more can you do?

In the shed, your red BMX gleams in  
half its former glory, half bathing in shadow  
cowering under creeping rust.

Outside, it is dark. Streetlights pave the murky roads  
in an artificial twilight, thick with  
recent nostalgia.

## What I've Been Reading

During quarantine I decided to read a well-known classic, *The Lord of the Rings*. I was recommended this book a few years ago — my friend is a Lord of the Rings fanatic — but I never got around to reading it until recently, and I regret not starting sooner.

Tolkien's worldbuilding is truly masterful. He has crafted several new cultures, complete with detailed accounts of their geography, history and languages, a feat most writers find extremely difficult to accomplish. Apart from marvelling at the worldbuilding, I also found the books very inspiring, especially during quarantine.

At one point in the book, Gandalf says: "I have found that it is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folks that keep the darkness at bay." We might not be able to take it upon ourselves to change the world in this day and age, especially in the midst of the pandemic, but seemingly trivial acts such as giving facial masks to a homeless person or providing words of encouragement, may be enough to make a difference.

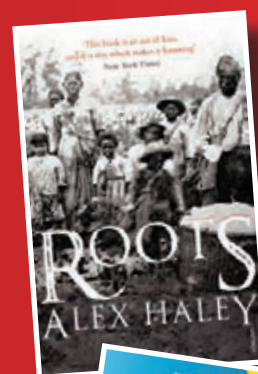
Keziah Cho, starting at Benenden in September



I have been trying to read a range of different books during this time in quarantine, including varied styles of writing and genres that maybe I would not normally reach for. My favourite two books that I have read recently and those I would strongly recommend to the Benenden community are *Roots* by Alex Haley and *This is Going to Hurt* by Adam Kay.

*Roots* is an astonishing story of an African American man's heritage dating all the way back to one of his ancestors, Kunta Kinte, being captured and put aboard a slave ship to colonial America. *This is Going to Hurt* is a collection of diary entries by a junior doctor working for the NHS. Especially in such unsettling times, this book helps you to understand how those working for the NHS must feel, as well as how grateful we are to them all.

Eve Bearfield, Six One





# Girls Start Returning

As lockdown restrictions began to ease, some Fifth and Six One pupils were able to return to School on a day-only basis.

On Monday 15 June a handful of girls from the Fifth and Six One chose to return to School where they were able to reunite with some of their friends and continue their remote learning, overseen by a member of staff.

There were extensive measures in place to ensure staff and pupils were protected. The girls spend their day in year group bubbles and upon arrival each morning, they had their temperatures taken by staff in personal protective equipment before following a designated route to their assigned classrooms.

Social distancing measures were in place across the site, extra cleaning was in operation throughout the day and hand sanitiser was available throughout the School. The girls that returned thoroughly enjoyed being with their friends again – and of course being reunited with the School's wonderful food!



Extra hand sanitising stations are in place



One of the best things about returning to School – the food!



The girls continued online lessons at School



The girls thoroughly enjoyed being reunited with friends



Enjoying lunch outside in the glorious sunshine



A socially distanced game of croquet



Lively conversation and debate is to be had at the Scholars' Lunches

# The Benenden Scholarship Programme

One of the ways we continue to stretch our most able students here at Benenden is through our Academic Scholarship Programme, which gives them access to a wide range of ways to develop their learning skills and push themselves even further.

Here our two Scholarship Mentors, Alastair Couldrey and Ellie Fryer, explain more.

## What is the Scholarship Programme?

Alastair Couldrey (AC): It is a programme of events we have put together for girls who have come to the School on a Scholarship or have been recommended by their teachers to be part of the Scholarship Programme.

The idea is to push them further academically and ensure they have a greater number of opportunities to do that themselves – to encourage a love of academic learning, curiosity and give them the skills to help them.

## How do girls get on the Scholarship Programme?

Ellie Fryer (EF): We run the Scholarship Programme for Fourth through to Upper Fifth and then Chelsea Swales runs it for the Sixth Form (see side panel). Girls become part of the Programme either from their Academic Scholarship exams when they come into the School, or if they have been recommended by teachers to be part of the Programme.

AC: We do have students join the Programme further on, so for instance a few weeks into term we may have a number of teachers suggest a girl should be added or on the basis of end of year exam results.

## How many Scholars are there?

AC: From Fourth to Upper Fifth there are around 130.

## How does being a Scholar benefit the girls?

EF: It is an opportunity for them to think in a cross-curricular fashion, make links between different subjects and extend themselves beyond the curriculum they are doing in lessons.

AC: It also gives them more of an opportunity for debate and critical thinking and develops similar kinds of skills that are really useful and hopefully enjoyable.

## What kind of events are run as part of the Scholarship Programme?

EF: There are lunchtime talks based on our yearly theme from members of staff and also external speakers. We also run a project from September to May, when girls do their own independent project, based on a topic of their choice.

The project is heavily independent with a little guidance from us and their tutor.

## Each year the Scholarship Programme has a theme – this year it is Benenden's Futures Institute. Could you tell us a bit more about that?

EF: We set up a metaphorical Benenden's Futures Institute based on Oxford University's Futures Institutes. It is an organisation for researchers to develop solutions to problems we are going to face in the future to things we don't even know exist yet.

Things that come up quite commonly are climate change, artificial intelligence, space exploration, eco-systems, water shortages, population increase, that kind of thing. The girls are tasked with picking something that is going to be a problem in the future and looking at how they can solve it.

AC: The idea is, with all the themes, that they are cross-curricular and cover a broad range of subjects. So they can choose something specifically related to Science with space exploration or Geography with climate change for instance, but we particularly encourage projects that combine subject areas.



The Scholars' team of Alastair Couldrey, Chelsea Swales and Ellie Fryer





A Sixth Form Scholars' Lunch in action



Miss Fryer is on hand to provoke thought among the Scholars

We have Dr Hatfield, an astrophysicist, coming in to give a talk this year and he will be speaking about his research alongside a lawyer who specialises in referendums. They were considering how mankind would respond to alien contact and whether we would have a global referendum!

#### What kind of form does the finished project take?

**EF:** It can be anything the girls want. If it is a written report it has to be under 2,000 words. Last year we had some art pieces, a sculpture...

**AC:** An amazing stop motion video.

**EF:** Yes as long as they explain to us how they came to that idea – it can be any format they want. Art pieces, videos, presentations, some made scrapbooks last year, essays.

#### What are the qualities of a Scholar?

**EF:** Critical thinking – we try to encourage that as we do lunches where we give them discussion points. We've tried to get them to do critical thinking puzzles to develop that skill. Also independent learning – we want them to learn skills, not just to ask a teacher and reduce the reliance on being spoon fed information.

**AC:** Academic curiosity – being inquisitive. Most of the stuff we do is not on the exam board specifications, it is encouraging them, with some kind of guidance like reading lists on the Portal, to

go beyond that and think for themselves.

We've tied it into debating a bit and it is really enjoyable – that format of challenge for them. They find it really interesting, arguing about ideas and developing their ideas in a much more evidence-specific way. Another expectation is that academically, in the classroom, we would expect them to be the ones who are really pushing themselves.

#### Why did you want to get involved in the Scholarship Programme?

**EF:** Helping girls to develop that culture of learning outside of the classroom is quite interesting.

In lessons you are tied to the curriculum in what you have to teach, whereas this is quite fun for us because we can go off the specification and take it where we want.

It is also quite student led, so we get to read some really interesting things and we are not prescribing them what to do, we just give them a framework and they can take it whichever way they like.

## Sixth Form

We offer a dedicated programme for Scholars in the Sixth Form. Chelsea Swales, who runs this programme, explains more.

The Scholarship Programme for the Sixth Form typically has around 50 members. The programme at the Sixth Form builds upon what students learn in Lower School – especially the skills of independent learning, creativity and research. It is centred on the pursuit of supporting and challenging students as they develop their independent learning styles and grow into more confident, creative and critical thinkers.

The programme is anchored in weekly meetings in Six One – where students focus on refining their research skills, public speaking and critical thinking. There is a focus on general academic stretch and intellectual curiosity. During these weekly sessions and independent extension time, students are encouraged to take opportunities to explore their passions and apply these skills to specific areas of interest – such as potential EPQ topics – or more broadly, subjects they may wish to study at university.

Students often remember the 'controversial topic' presentations, the series on formal logic, debating skills and learning interdisciplinary approaches as the most inspiring highlights of the programme. Students this year questioned: 'To what extent should the government protect freedom of speech?', 'the philosophy of artificial intelligence' and debated whether there should be limits on human genetic engineering.

In order to encourage academic engagement as a way of life, Scholars' Lunches and Microsoft Teams are used to facilitate discussions with Scholars and Oxbridge candidates of both years as they meet to explore current events and undertake research with their peers and teachers.

In addition to this provision, the Scholarship Programme is complemented by essay competitions, independent projects and studies, departmental provision and EPQ support. By the end of our Scholars' time at Benenden, we hope they will have developed a passion for learning and engagement that will last for years to come.

**Scholars' Prize**  
**Charlotte Lai**



# Scholarship Projects

As part of the Scholarship Programme, more than 75 girls produced an independent project which they have been working on since the beginning of the year. All pupils chose their own title around the theme of 'The Benenden Futures Institute'.

All of the projects explore questions relating to issues we may face in the future and how we can solve them.

Some of the topics covered this year included:

- The future of the high street – Alice Sismey, Fourth
- What will jobs look like in the future? – Annabel Behrens, Fourth
- What challenges will healthcare face in the future? – Sophie Blake, Upper Fourth
- How will robotics help in medicine in the future? – Olivia Hall, Upper Fourth
- Should the UK replace or retire Trident? – Isabella Kirkwood, Lower Fifth
- Will there be a monarchy in the future? – Jessica Penny, Lower Fifth
- The future of social mobility – Carlotta Wright, Fifth
- Feeding the world in 2050 – Kara Dimond, Fifth
- The future of mental health – Rosie Fletcher, Upper Fifth
- Social media and democracy – Sophie Moody-Stuart, Upper Fifth

Featured here is a selection of the wonderfully creative projects that were produced, including essays, paintings, posters, magazines and even an animation!



How will climate change affect our future oceans – Imogen Kidd Lower Fifth



Impact of AI on society – Claire Wong, Lower Fifth



The future of sustainable fashion – Lily Hill, Fifth

## Pupil View

"My Scholarship project this year consisted of a presentation focusing on what the progression of medicine could look like in the future, looking specifically at the possibility of a much kinder and effective way of synthesising and administering chemotherapeutics for the human body.

"I initially chose to base my research around this area due to my interest into the study of medicine but lack of knowledge about certain topics, and also my passion for conducting research in general which I wanted to do more of. Looking into this had its challenges at times as the subject matter has been very minimally researched in the past, however with the help of some additional research carried out in the laboratories at School, I was able to gain a greater understanding of the whole concept."

**Scarlett Mansfield, Fifth**



What will humans look like in 1,000 years? Beatrice Hickman, Lower Fifth



## Pupil View

I decided to do my research on driverless cars. I originally picked this subject because I didn't know much about driverless cars at all and I had always been curious about the topic. I thought it would be an interesting experience for me to learn more about the new technology and how it has developed.

"My principal topics were how self-driving cars work, past accidents and the positives and negatives of using these cars instead of traditional cars. One of the hardest parts of doing my essay was finding information that was still current, since the knowledge regarding driverless cars has changed drastically in the past few years and continues to change.

"I found my topic very interesting and one thing I especially enjoyed learning about was the extent to which driverless cars might impact our lives in the future. This would include not just the way we get around but also our lifestyle – how we spend our time throughout the day. Although we know a lot about this subject, I didn't realise how much companies still have left to review to make lives in the future better for everyone."

**Dina Power, Upper Fourth**



The future of mobility – Izzy Hasson, Upper Fourth

## Pupil View

"My Scholarship project was on the future of the high street. I chose this subject because I once saw a sign in a high street shop that had closed down. It said that it had closed as it was unable to compete with online shopping. It made me start to think what the future of the high street would be like and if eventually there wouldn't be one at all!

"It was really helpful doing my essay and taking part in the Scholarship Project because in the future I will have experience when I need to write essays and I will know important skills like checking that a website is reliable."

**Alice Sismey, Fourth**



How does plastic affect the oceans?  
– Germaine Luk, Lower Fifth



The future of fashion – Ellie Montagu, Upper Fourth



The future of the workforce – Jamie Barbour, Fifth



# Views from the Scholars

Pupils give us their take on the Scholarship Programme.

"I have always found the Scholarship Programme to be an enjoyable part of my academic life. The discussions are always quick and animated, especially during the Scholars' Lunches where we try to approach the stimulus provided to us as creatively as possible. It's so much fun to engage in passionate conversation with people who have similar or different passions, and we always manage to challenge each other to think outside the box or change our minds."



"The Scholarship Programme is especially fun when we share and inspire one another and this year I found the 'controversial topic' presentations to be extremely beneficial. Not only did we research and present our own topic, thus practising our public speaking and interview skills, but we also got to extend across subjects as we listened to each other talk about sometimes niche areas of interest – using our own perspective to ask challenging and different questions that might not have been considered in the first place."

"I have found the Scholarship Programme to have helped me approach all my learning from many angles and perspectives, looking at interdisciplinary learning and finding more and more connections between what I love and what I experience every day. The Scholarship Programme has really helped me enjoy being passionate about a subject, whilst not feeling like I am separated from other areas of interest."

"I have found the Scholarship Programme to have helped me approach all my learning from many angles and perspectives, looking at interdisciplinary learning and finding more and more connections between what I love and what I experience every day. The Scholarship Programme has really helped me enjoy being passionate about a subject, whilst not feeling like I am separated from other areas of interest."

**Iona Warne**  
Six One

"I think the most valuable part of the programme is the 'controversial topic' presentation we did. It allowed us to develop our research skills, gain feedback from the others and explore other topics that were presented. Microsoft Teams is convenient and useful for discussion and sharing resources such as podcasts and books, especially when we're not in School."



**Rachael Mak**  
Six One

"The Scholarship Programme has been a great experience so far. Weekly meetings help me extend myself in all my subjects, as well as my co-curricular activities. Learning about formal logic was fascinating and helped me to better understand the opinions of others. Also, knowledge of logical fallacies has helped me better criticise arguments in my A Level subjects."



The Scholars' Lunches provided a space where I could communicate with other Scholars and debate controversial and modern issues, which increased my general knowledge and refined my public speaking skills."

The Scholars' Lunches provided a space where I could communicate with other Scholars and debate controversial and modern issues, which increased my general knowledge and refined my public speaking skills."

**Oreoluwa Adeogun**  
Six One

"I have been in the Scholarship Programme since I joined Benenden in the Lower Fifth and have found it to be a really interesting opportunity to push myself beyond the limits of the curriculum. It has encouraged me to further my interests in subjects I previously did not have much knowledge about, namely activities like the Scholars' Project, where I researched new methods of drug delivery. It is interesting to see how everyone explores very different topics and tailors each idea to a specific interest, such as artwork or film-making, which I was able to do in my project last year by interviewing people with various careers."



"I particularly enjoy the variety of talks and lectures given by people from different fields, who come to the School to share their personal experiences. I have found them extremely inspiring, especially when it makes me submerge myself in a sector of the world I knew nothing about, such as firefighting. In the future, I know that the things I have learned from the whole programme will always help me strive for a sense of passion within any subject I come across."

"I particularly enjoy the variety of talks and lectures given by people from different fields, who come to the School to share their personal experiences. I have found them extremely inspiring, especially when it makes me submerge myself in a sector of the world I knew nothing about, such as firefighting. In the future, I know that the things I have learned from the whole programme will always help me strive for a sense of passion within any subject I come across."

**Scarlett Mansfield**  
Fifth

"The Scholarship Programme has manifested in many different forms this term. Lessons on formal logic, 'controversial topic' presentations prepared and delivered by us and the Scholars' Lunches were my personal favourites."



"I have found the courses have challenged me to use a cross-curricular approach to more critically assess topics in the news, topics such as prison and reformation, racism and genetic modification. I believe this challenging experience will be extremely valuable, especially in regard to my upcoming Oxbridge application, as I am forced to make links to my existing areas of knowledge."

"I have found the courses have challenged me to use a cross-curricular approach to more critically assess topics in the news, topics such as prison and reformation, racism and genetic modification. I believe this challenging experience will be extremely valuable, especially in regard to my upcoming Oxbridge application, as I am forced to make links to my existing areas of knowledge."

"I have also developed my listening and questioning skills. For example, since the session on 'causation versus correlation' I no longer accept claims or facts without first assessing their source – something I think is especially useful given the current climate and frequency of fake news in the media. I would recommend the Scholarship Programme to any person who is not only inquisitive but also able to present their perspective, with evidence, and be challenged on their beliefs."

**Mallory Greenberg**  
Six One

"To me, the Scholarship Programme is all about thinking about things differently and challenging us to pull together information and ideas on broader topics that we wouldn't normally cover in our subject classes. For example, last year the theme for our work was Exploration and I created a poster about exploring the Maldives and how climate change is threatening its fragile marine ecosystem. This year the theme is The Future and I am researching how autonomous driving cars could potentially change the way people travel, make our roads safer and even change the way cities are designed. At the end of the year, one or two people from each year group are awarded a Head's Commendation – which is a nice incentive for us all to try really hard!"



"To me, the Scholarship Programme is all about thinking about things differently and challenging us to pull together information and ideas on broader topics that we wouldn't normally cover in our subject classes. For example, last year the theme for our work was Exploration and I created a poster about exploring the Maldives and how climate change is threatening its fragile marine ecosystem. This year the theme is The Future and I am researching how autonomous driving cars could potentially change the way people travel, make our roads safer and even change the way cities are designed. At the end of the year, one or two people from each year group are awarded a Head's Commendation – which is a nice incentive for us all to try really hard!"

**Izzy Hasson**  
Upper Fourth



# Project Qualification Presentations

**We are one of a few schools in England that offers all three levels of Project Qualification to pupils. Presentations from the pupils are a vital component of the programme. Here, Ollie Hunter, the Project Coordinator, explains further.**

This year we entered over 100 students for Project Qualifications ranging from the whole of Upper Fourth, who completed Foundation Projects, to the 46 Six Twos who completed Extended Projects.

All of the levels of Project Qualification require students to complete the same three interrelated aspects; a production log (which charts their journey through the project process), the project itself (which can either be an essay or an artefact) and the presentation.

Through the presentation the girls have the opportunity to tell the story of their project from the initial idea all the way through to their final reflections. Unique among their experiences in the classroom, the presentation gives the student the chance to be the expert in the room. It offers them the opportunity to demonstrate and communicate their knowledge, understanding and passion for their project to a non-specialist audience. It also allows them to showcase their research skills and reflect on the overall project process.

There are various formats for conducting the presentation. The Six Two presentations are usually conducted through a lecture style lasting 10-15 minutes, but this year we trialled very successfully a 'market place' format with the Upper Fourth.

The 'market place' format is taken from the procedure used at many academic research conferences, where the researcher displays a poster outlining their work and gives a very short presentation followed by a live question and answer session. This format is ideal for large groups of students and it enabled all the Upper Fourth girls to give excellent presentations on their individual research to an audience of their peers and teachers in one session.

Although presenting to an audience of their peers and teachers can, for some girls, be quite a daunting prospect, the presentation is a vital part of the project process and allows pupils to increase their confidence and develop communication skills that will serve them well in the future.

**EPQ Level 1 Prize**  
**Olivia Hall**

**EPQ Level 2 Prize**  
**Sophie Moody-Stuart**

**EPQ Level 3 Prize**  
**Ella Cohen**

"The Scholarship Programme is very beneficial as it provides a further extension to the curriculum. It allows students to explore and research a topic of their choice to



extend their knowledge. This year, the theme is Benenden's Futures Institute, which allows students to acknowledge the issues the world will face in the future and suggest possible resolutions.

"There are a wide variety of lectures that highlight different aspects of the future, such as jobs and the changes that will come. The Scholarship Programme allows students to practise crucial skills such as teamwork and essay writing. The feedback you receive about your project at the end of the year is extremely helpful, as it allows you to reflect on the work you have produced. Overall, the Scholarship Programme is a great opportunity to share ideas and put your knowledge into practice."

**Annabel Airey**  
**Lower Fifth**

"It has given me an opportunity to extend my learning."

**Ellie Montagu**  
**Upper Fourth**



"As we were given the theme of exploration, my Scholarship Project last year was about the spread of the Felidae family across the world. The project gave me a chance to



combine lots of different subjects such as Art, Geography and Biology in one piece. My project was practical as rather than writing an essay, I painted a poster with a map of the world on it in acrylic paint – with watercolours of the different cats round the edge. The Scholarship Programme also hosted various lunches to help plan the projects and these really helped me to work out what I was going to do and finalise my idea."

**Rosie Dymock**  
**Fifth**

"This year I participated in a public speaking competition outside of School along with Aliya Adebawale and Zara Warne, which was a great experience for us



all. This was offered to us through the Scholarship Programme and we really enjoyed the event and qualified for the regional rounds. Furthermore, we have been working on our Scholarship Projects based on the theme, The Futures Institute.

"We have attended lunchtime talks to develop our project ideas and hear more about the titles that others have chosen. Having these lunches alongside the broad variety of talks that are organised is very beneficial, as it helps guide you when researching your project, as well as giving you new ideas due to the range of subjects these talks and lectures include. I have really enjoyed some of the lectures this year including Dr Emily Grossman's talk and found many of them very interesting and enjoyable."

**Jamie Barbour**  
**Fifth**

"My experience with the Scholarship Programme started in Upper Fourth and has been very eye-opening so far. Due to the stimuli given to students through the Scholarship Programme, I get to research and learn about topics outside the typical curriculum – this is always keeping me on my toes and making sure I am continuously expanding my research skills.



"Because of the Scholarship Programme I have become much more comfortable discussing topics with fellow students and teachers, even if I am not very knowledgeable in that topic. I have also become much more comfortable speaking in public since we have completed some projects on various topics which required us to present in front of one another, and take the criticism, which is always important."

**JB van Pelt**  
**Six One**



In February Ellie Montagu gave a presentation to other girls in the Weston Lecture Theatre about the myths and misconceptions around dyslexia.

Other girls who presented to their peers on the same day were Olivia Latimer, who told us about the history and different styles of dance, and Philippa Kearsey who educated us on the drawbacks of arts cutbacks in state schools.

Lara Croucher hard at work for her practical project



## Benenden Diploma

Over these past two terms, the Upper Fourths have been busy focusing on their projects, which represent the culmination of their two-year Benenden Diploma. This either takes the form of a dissertation-style essay or a practical piece of work which the girls present to girls and staff. Here, some of the girls share with us their experience.

### The Evolution of Language in Animals

As my EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) project for the end of the Diploma, I chose the topic 'Why have humans evolved to have a language when other animals have not?'.



My project explored different factors and theories as to why we have evolved to have a more complicated language than other animals, although I found that there is no definite answer to the question. Different scientists have different theories, some more likely than others, and the dates of when humans evolved to have a language were extremely varied – some said 5 million years ago, some said 50,000, so I had to narrow down my research and find the most likely or average dates.

During my presentation, I felt prepared as I had written about all the questions on my poster, and I was able to answer questions about my project from students and teachers.

**Olivia Hall**

### Demonstrating Changing Fashion

For my EPQ, I decided to base my project on fashion. My title was 'How can I show how fashion has changed from 1940 to now?'.



I chose this because for years I had wanted to be a fashion designer and was interested in how fashion had changed over time. Doing this project helped me learn how to use a sewing machine as well as hand sew. The reason I found this difficult was that I made my outfits on Barbie dolls; therefore, my designs were small and hard to sew. This project allowed me to take inspiration from my favourite fashion designers and make my own outfits too.

We had to do a presentation to some teachers and classmates and at the time I felt nervous, excited but also proud of what I had achieved.

**Lara Croucher**

### Hong Kong Protests

For my EPQ project, I researched the Hong Kong protests of 2019-2020 to find out what caused the riots and help others understand what is going on in Hong Kong today.



My essay and poster described a number of issues including: the controversial 'extradition bill'; what 'one country, two systems' means; how things changed when Hong Kong returned to Chinese rule in 1997; and the various reasons why many young people are unhappy with their government (over 1,700 protesters arrested in the past year were under 18 years old).

I chose this topic because I grew up in Hong Kong and I wanted to find out why it has been experiencing so much social conflict.

When I was delivering my presentation, I felt excited. I had worked hard on this project to show that the situation in Hong Kong is more complicated than it sometimes seems from TV news reports.

**Izzy Hasson**



# Winning in the Workplace

In March two of our Grey Jumpers – Minna Moody-Stuart and Clara Smith – organised a Winning in the Workplace event. Here they tell us about a wonderful evening.

As young women growing up in the 21st century, the possibilities and prospects for us are expanding. We are empowered to have confidence that we deserve every chance and opportunity in the world to pursue and achieve our dreams.

Yet, a typical browse of the business news, absent of many women, reinforces the notion that there is a male-dominated culture in certain fields. There aren't enough women in high-profile positions for girls to look up to and admire, despite women being essential for leading society towards a more innovative and constructive future.

To combat this, we hosted Benenden's annual Winning in the Workplace event, inviting four incredible women to speak about their careers and offer advice for success in the workplace. Girls from the Upper Fifth and above had the chance to hear from our panel gaining an

insight into a range of industries including technology, retail, law and politics. The event consisted of a panel-style Q&A and discussion, where all our questions about gender equality, self-confidence, setting goals and maintaining a healthy work-life balance were answered.

Our guests provided us with evidence of the great heights that can be achieved by breaking down walls and defying stereotypes. They helped to reinforce the essential fact that society needs women at all levels, including the top, to change the dynamic and reshape the conversation.

The evening was filled with valuable lessons and inspiring advice from all of our amazing guests. Our key takeaway is that it is vital to make sure women's voices are heard and heeded, not overlooked.

Event organisers Clara and Minna



## The Panel

**Louise Barnes** – Retail CEO and Executive Chairman

**Karen Bradley MP** – former Northern Ireland Secretary

**Natasha Christie-Miller** – CEO at Ascential, a specialist global information company

**Sinead Osobase** – Senior Lawyer, currently UK General Counsel for the Bank of Ireland

Our speakers, l-r, Karen Bradley, Sinead Osobase, Natasha Christie-Miller and Louise Barnes







The girls created strong methods for keeping the primary school audience engaged

# Enquiry Days

In January the Fourths explored the topic of migration during two days of Enquiry learning, when the year group focuses on important and exciting questions as a year group.

The girls worked in groups to produce an educational resource, aimed at Year Four students at Benenden Primary School, about one animal. The resource could be a poster, page of a textbook, story book, board game, or anything else that physically exists and will help children aged eight and nine to learn.

Over two days the Fourths benefited from a range of sessions to help them with their task, including learning about the sort of language they would use when communicating with a child of that age; how to work as a team; how to conduct advanced research; designing a successful visual product and, of course, how to make the final resource!

The following month, the girls spent the afternoon at Benenden Primary School, where they took on the role of teachers and shared with Year 4 their Enquiry Day findings, using their resources for real.



Learning the art of teamwork



Enquiry Days are a fun way to explore a particular topic!



The girls had to field plenty of questions from their inquisitive audience at the primary school





Hetty Lawrence, left, and Madeleine Goodsell learn wiring from Dave Wellman

## Professional Skills Programme: Six Two

### Life Skills

**During the Spring Term, our Six Twos were learning vital life skills as part of the Professional Skills Programme.**

This phase of the Professional Skills Programme (PSP) began with a cookery challenge, in which the girls were put into teams and provided with a set of ingredients worth approximately £10. They collected the ingredients from the Café at 3.00pm and then took them to the various Founders' Kitchens to prepare meals from them.

They were tasked with preparing a meal for six people, to include a dish suitable for a vegan and also to take into account nut allergies. The girls were asked to research buying food for the rest of the week on a budget of £30, comparing supermarket prices and devising recipes.

They were then asked to present their findings, along with their meals, to the judges from the PSP team.

In addition, the girls took on a series of Life Skills Workshops, which are aimed at teaching them practical skills that will stand them in good stead for the workplace and life. These workshops include car maintenance, basic DIY, First Aid and interview preparation.



Lauren Croucher learning about engines



Julia Nabavi, left, and Alzbeta Seippel cooking up a storm!



# Professional Skills Programme: Six One

## Enterprise Challenge

**The Spring Term for the Six Ones can mean only one thing: it's time to battle it out in the annual Enterprise Challenge!**

Each year, girls form teams to create their own businesses and compete to make the most profit – and to eventually win over our panel of judges in a Dragons' Den-style finale.

The challenge provides the girls with an eye-opening introduction to the realities of the professional world. They learn such valuable skills as marketing, pricing, profit and loss, teamwork, advertising,

customer feedback, supply and demand and public speaking, to name but a few.

With the success of last year's winning team (the Benenden Bottoms, who continued their business after the Challenge ended) firmly in their minds, this year's Six Ones knew there was a high standard to try to meet – and they certainly rose to the challenge.

An imaginative array of enterprises were created and the sales period was in full flow before the initiative was interrupted by the pandemic. It will resume in the Autumn, with the girls having had plenty of time to plan the final stage of their entrepreneurial endeavours. We look forward to seeing how the Challenge transpires in September.

## Benenden is the Business

Here, we showcase this year's enterprises.

### Benenden Water Bottles

*Leia Baig, Eve Bearfield, Olivia Byrne, Flo Durand-Deslongrais, Amelie Jat, Alexandra Kelly, Rouge Prendiville and Aressa Raja Ridzwa.*

Benenden water bottles, perfect for any hot or cold drink and are completely dishwasher safe.

£12 or £15 if you would like a name engraved on them.



### Benners Beanies

*Ella Allfrey, Charlotte Elliot, Alicia Ouvaroff, Helena Rigg Franco, Sufiyah Sajjan, Chelsea Tsang and Zara Webb.*



Selling soft, comfortable and versatile embroidered 'Benenden' beanies in a range of colours for £12 each.

Visit the Instagram page @benndenbeanies

### Bits and Bags

*Emily Beaugie, Kate Gouriet, Mallory Greenberg, Rachael Mak, Marina Santis, Izzy Selby, Zara Williams-Thomas and Weiya Xu.*

Personalised and sustainable washbags, from just £6.

Visit the Instagram page @bits.and.bags



### Bralliant Sport

*Imogen Ansell, Alexis Chan, Lexie Dykes, Fleur Forsyth, Beany Fricker, Hazel Lockey, Imogen Stowell and Imogen Trill.*

Neon Benenden personalised sports bras.

Visit the Instagram page @bralliantsport



### Moon Box

*Sophie Brokenshire, Tabitha Evenett, Olivia Gregory, Flora Kelsey, Seun Owolabi, Catherine Pearce, Roya Power and Iona Warne.*

Period care packages. Support and understanding can be key to girls as they get their periods, and Moon Box thinks that their packages (comprised of chocolates, chamomile tea and pads) is the perfect way to show this.

The boxes cost £5 and are delivered straight to the girls' dorms.





## Tips from the Experts



Retail expert Margaret McDonald-Kelly shares her top tips

Of course, the girls are not thrown into the demanding world of business on their own!

During the course of the Spring Term, the girls heard from various experts who shared top tips on a range of professional topics.

This began with an inspirational talk from Margaret McDonald-Kelly, a parent, Governor and a major figure in the retail industry, having been CEO of Victoria's Secret and played key roles in organisations including Marks and Spencer, LK Bennett and Coast.

The focus of her talk was on producing a business plan, with an emphasis on working together as a team, assigning roles and tasks, and communicating effectively with each other.

Benenden's own Director of Marketing and Communications, Ian Read, led a session focused on marketing, covering topics such as identifying the target audience, developing a marketing plan, branding, advertising, social media and tips on website design.

The Six Ones also had a lesson on how to create a profit and loss accounts sheet to track the income and expenditure of their small businesses, while young entrepreneur Freddi Fellows talked to them about developing AI software to help students applying to Oxbridge.

The girls also heard from several other entrepreneurs at the Careers Convention. Recent Benenden Seniors who spoke about their business ventures included Daisy Knatchbull about her female suit company, The Deck London, and Emma Warburton about her events management company, Evoke Events.

### Prison Pizza

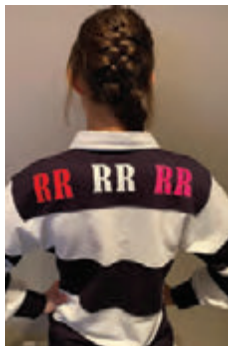
Matilda Clarke, Amelia Harris, Lily Maclean Bather, Bee McDougall, Dara Shonubi, Lily Thornton, JB van Pelt and Caroline Yu.

Pizzas for £5 and garlic bread for £3 - delivered to anywhere in School (for Six Twos).

Visit the Instagram page @prisonpizza

### Rugrats

Loulou Enright, Annabelle Grut, Poppy Heslop, Tatiana Leung, Pandora Mann, Heather Wong, Amelie Woolf and Alicia Webb.



Striped, comfortable rugby shirts.

Visit the Instagram page @wearerugrats

### Splitz

Sophia Chau, Morgan Drummond, Freya Hunter, Ali Lowther-Pinkerton, Lucy Main, Eleanor Mummery and Sofia Rigg Franco.

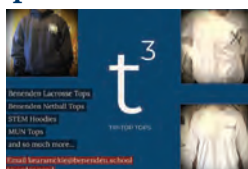


High-quality, affordable sports leggings that are personalised to Benenden. The group also wants to promote physical health and mental wellbeing to all students throughout the School. The leggings are £18 for a pair with white text and £20 for either neon green or pink.

Visit the Instagram page @splitzleggings

### Tip Top Tops

Oreoluwa Adeogun, Alia Al Sabah, Safia Dovell, Saiesha Gupta, Keara McKie and Saskia Willets.



Long sleeve shirts with whatever you want on them for £15.

Visit the Instagram page @tiptoptops

### United Jewellery

Fara Bakare, Alice Churchill, Alice Clapp, Rebecca Halsted, Pantara Kamhato, India Woolhouse and Kimberly Yap.



Beautiful multicultural jewellery that is made in both Malaysia and Nigeria.

Visit the Instagram page @tiptoptops



# Speakers



## Tim Andrews

Towards the start of the Spring Term Sunday Times bestselling author Tim Andrews visited the School as part of the Sixth Form Lecture Programme. Sophie Brokenshire, who is in the Six One, tells us more.

Mr Andrews came in to give a lecture to the English Literature, Geography and History A Level students on the way in which landscapes can be used for dramatic effect in literature.

All those in the audience were struck by his passion for his topic, with the most interesting examples of setting in literature being explained in great detail. By the end it was clear to see how much impact setting could have on a novel, with future writers being encouraged to think about how environment would affect characters in their

stories, whether that be a historical or physical environment.

This in-depth lecture certainly allowed students to gain a deep understanding of the topic and we were able to have a short introduction into the process of writing a book which may well prove invaluable to those who want to become authors themselves.

Students would also like to thank Mr Andrews for giving away copies of his two recent novels, Pirata and Invader, both of which have become Sunday Times Bestsellers.

## Dr Peter Vardy

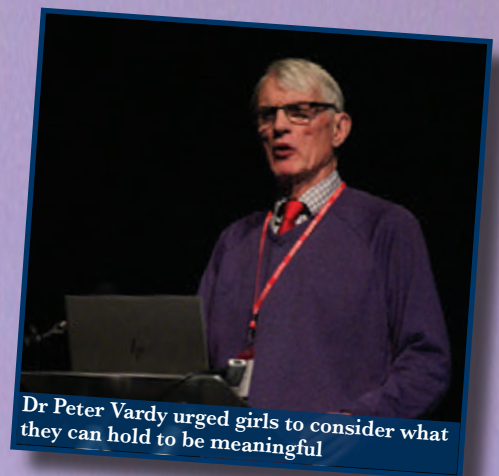
In January renowned philosopher and academic Dr Peter Vardy invited Sixth Form students to consider what they can hold to be meaningful at a time of rising relativism and the collapse of truth.

Using examples from modern art with links to post-modernism, Dr Vardy asked questions such as whether there can be such a thing as absolute truth and meaning if beauty and value was dependent on the eye of the beholder.

Dr Vardy also posed the question of whether mathematics was invented or discovered, and if discovered, perhaps there is an absolute truth that exists, and maybe relativism isn't the answer after all...

Whilst he was here Dr Vardy judged the essay competition and commented that all the entrants were good, showing intelligence and independent thought as well as clear indications of interesting and good teaching.

The Upper School winner was Iona Warne, with Izzy Gibbs in second place, and the Lower School winner was named as Sophie Moody-Stuart, with Nicole Lee in second place.



Dr Peter Vardy urged girls to consider what they can hold to be meaningful



Dr Peter Vardy with essay winners and the event organisers



## Charles Dance

We were delighted to welcome acclaimed British actor Charles Dance OBE to Benenden School in February.

A household name for more than 30 years, the renowned star of theatre, TV and cinema has enjoyed recent high-profile roles in hit series *Game of Thrones* and *The Crown*.

After enjoying dinner with the Drama Scholars, Mr Dance answered questions from the evening's host, Benenden's Director of Drama Fiona Lennon, and from pupils.

In the School Theatre packed with pupils, parents and staff, he addressed issues covering his career and inspirations and shared advice for budding actors.

Mr Dance said wannabe actors needed to be determined, saying: "It's not enough to want to do it, you have to need to do it."

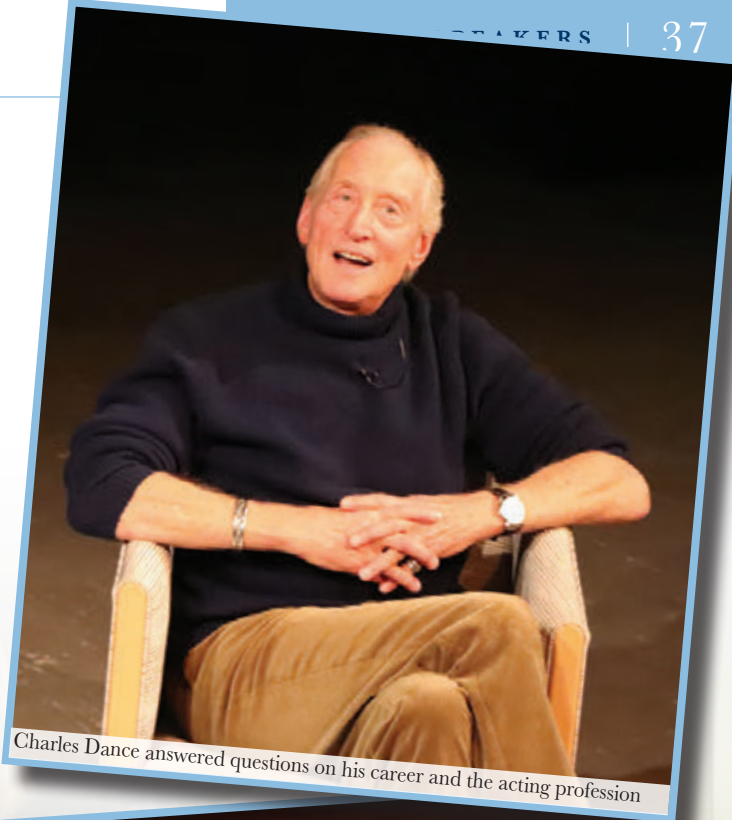
He also urged pupils to never give up in the face of the inevitable rejections that all young actors encounter. "Keep banging on the door," he said. "It's frustrating, it's depressing, but life's a funny thing

because things kind of come in from leftfield when you least expect it."

Mr Dance said that formal dramatic training was essential for success, adding: "You can have as much talent as you like but especially in the theatre, if you have no knowledge of technique to tell the audience what you are feeling and emoting, you might as well go home."

He also said that reading widely was a good way of understanding characters, saying: "I was introduced to Dickens at a very young age. It was read to me. He created the most extraordinary array of characters and painted them in such vivid colours; all of Dickens' characters are totally three-dimensional."

Asked about *Game of Thrones*, Mr Dance said Peter Dinklage, who played his on-screen son Tyrion Lannister, is "the most extraordinary actor and one of the nicest people you will ever meet".



Charles Dance answered questions on his career and the acting profession



Charles Dance was interviewed by Fiona Lennon, our Director of Drama

*"I enjoyed my 'Evening at Benenden' enormously - not least the company with whom I dined: what an impressive and delightful bunch they are! Mrs Price and her staff are, I hope, justly proud of the student body."*  
**Charles Dance**



Charles Dance meets some fans after his talk



# Science Research Projects

There are a wide range of Science research projects being undertaken at Benenden - as pupils' interest in using Science to understand and explore practical problems constantly grows. Here, we showcase some of the projects that are currently running.

## Decoding the genome of the Human whipworm

**What the project is trying to achieve:** Students are analysing over 15,000 predicted genes on a computer-based program, created by scientists at Apollo, to aid clinical research into finding out how it would be possible to create a method of combating the parasite – also known as *Trichuris Trichiura* – which harbours in the small intestine, such as developing a drug they could provide people who have been affected.

**Summary of project:** I have really enjoyed this project as not only are we learning new skills and knowledge which we wouldn't always get a chance to do outside the curriculum, but we are also helping scientists to fight a life-threatening disease which affects millions of people worldwide.

It feels really special to be able to be a part of something so important, and especially rewarding when we complete different stages of the project to see how far we have progressed. Although at first the computer program is quite difficult to master, it soon becomes really interesting to see all the data that has been sequenced and know that everything we check and confirm regarding this data will be used to try and find a cure, which would be extremely beneficial to less developed areas with poor sanitation and hygiene. This project is on the frontier to help fight Third World poverty.

**Scarlett Mansfield, Fifth**



Charlotte Lai,  
Scarlett Mansfield  
and Josie Fernau

## Ionic liquids project

**What the project is trying to achieve:**

Ionic liquids are potential electrolytes, as these liquids don't contain water, preventing the formation of hydrogen and oxygen at the electrodes. Today, many of the batteries we use contain organic solvents that decompose in landfills, releasing harmful greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and contributing to climate change. Thus, ionic liquids may help us solve this issue. I have been synthesising a basic ionic liquid of 1-methyladamazole and potassium hexafluorophosphate, which I have used in a coin cell battery which now conducts and holds charge. In the next few weeks, I plan on experimenting and finding the most efficient electrolyte, to hopefully make a more sustainable battery.

**Summary of project:** The ionic liquids project was introduced to us two years ago by Prof Robert Palgrave from UCL. Ionic liquids are liquids at room temperature that consist of ionic bonding. Typically, ionic bonding is associated with strong electrostatic forces of attraction between ions that cause compounds to have high melting and boiling points. However, the ions in ionic liquids have large atomic radii that make it hard for the ions to get close enough to crystallise, and so they are liquids at room temperature. This makes them unique, and also applicable to many modern-day problems such as batteries.

**Saisha Gupta, Six One**

## How can we use food waste to benefit our school?

**What the project is trying to achieve:** To build a biogas generator and then an energy generator that will convert the biogas into energy. The biogas will be made from the School food and oil waste. We would then see if it would be possible to power either the Eco-Classroom or the Science Centre using this renewable energy.

**Summary of project:** Thea Simpkin, Sadie Woodsell and I realised that the School was campaigning against food waste and we decided that we would try our best to support this important issue. We discussed some ideas with Mrs Franklin, the Domestic Bursar, who told us that the School was giving its food and oil waste to local energy farms. We were also told that no School food waste went to landfill, and the kitchens had been working on this issue since August last year.

We then came up with the idea that if our food and oil waste was already being used elsewhere to make energy, we could try and use it to make energy for the School. This is good for the environment as biogas is an eco-friendly, renewable energy source and it has been proven to help remove the reliance on fossil fuels and greenhouse gases.

**Alexandra Hamilton, Lower Fifth**



### James Webb Space Telescope - cosmic mining project

**What the project is trying to achieve:** We analyse data from the Spitzer Space Telescope to identify unusual and potentially interesting stellar objects for the James Webb Telescope to look at.

**Summary of project:** The James Webb Telescope will be launched in March 2021. It gathers infrared light and will sit at Lagrange point 2, which is 1.5 million km from the Earth. These Lagrange points occur due to the way the forces of gravity and orbiting bodies interact.

There are thousands of pieces of spectral data on the CASSIS (Combined Atlas of Sources with IRS Spectra) database for us to analyse. To achieve the goal of this project we fill in a classification form to record the characteristics exhibited by the stellar object; for example, the shape of the continuum, the broad features like absorption and emission and whether the spectrum of the stellar objects is cut-off or not.

Currently, we have completed our first set of data analysis and are waiting for feedback and the exciting new data.

"I personally find this process really rewarding and it makes me feel that I am involved in Science because we are analysing real data and making a contribution to the physical science research."

**Caroline Yu, Six One**



Caroline Yu is analysing data from the Spitzer Space Telescope

### Colloidal stability and gold nanoparticles for drug delivery

**What the project is trying to achieve:** A colloid is a mixture in which microscopic insoluble particles are suspended throughout another substance. In our case, gold nanoparticles are suspended throughout our Fmoc Galactosamine gelator (an amino sugar that forms a 'reversible' gel after processing; it breaks down into liquid form when shaken, but will gel again if left to stand).

Colloidal systems have been significantly investigated for drug delivery, but difficulties in controlling the behaviour of the nanoparticles, during long-term storage and once surrounded by a biological environment, have limited their clinical use. A new way of formulation and storage of these nanomaterials is needed.

In this project, we trap nanoparticles in a reversible hydrogel and study the various effects.

**Summary of project:** At the beginning of the year, I visited Mrs Harris to speak about doing a Crest Award and found myself exploring the depths of STEM like I could never have imagined. At the end of the Autumn Term, I became the Head of STEM Ambassadors at Benenden and this has been one of the most rewarding experiences. I am incredibly passionate about STEM and Professor Parker, Mrs Harris and I have been working very hard to ramp it up here at Benenden.

Personally, my research with colloidal stability has been brilliant; being able to be involved in the progression of such a pressing issue has been awe-inspiring.

**Fara Bakare, Six One**



# Flames, Fission and Fun!

Pupils embraced British Science Week with a series of exciting, inspiring and eye-opening events.

Over four days, Benenden hosted expert guest speakers, presentations from students, a panel discussion and numerous experiments. It was all part of British Science Week, an annual nationwide celebration of the STEM subjects – Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

Events kicked off on Monday with some fantastic presentations by a number of girls as part of a Benenden Research Soirée. The girls talked about genetic engineering, green batteries, green food, space research, colloidal stability and PTSD and the brain – a wonderful set of talks on the wide range of research projects going on at the School.

On Tuesday we were very lucky to be visited by Dr Emily Grossman, Cambridge Neuroscience graduate, science communicator, author, resident expert on The Alan Titchmarsh Show and panellist on the Sky One show *Duck Quacks Don't Echo*. Dr Grossman gave a fascinating and inspiring talk on how we can face up to and address climate change – it is safe to say everyone left feeling energised and very clearly informed.

On Wednesday Terri Duhon, who holds numerous notable roles at investment businesses, talked to a packed audience. She is a Non-Executive Chair of Morgan Stanley Investment Management Ltd, on the board of Morgan Stanley International, a Non-Executive Director of Rathbone Brothers PLC, a FTSE 250 Wealth Manager, an Associate Fellow at The Said Business School at Oxford University, on the MIT Corporation Visiting Committee and an author. She was excited by Science and Maths at school and studied Maths at MIT originally. She was incredibly motivational and we were all uplifted and inspired by her empowering talk.

As the week progressed the girls took centre stage with our STEM Ambassadors leading a demonstration of experiments in the Science Quad. The experiments ranged across the sciences and technology, including images, dissections, explosions and levitations – everything to excite and amaze at the wonderful world of STEM.

The packed programme of events celebrating British Science Week ended in a number of esteemed guests joining a panel discussion about women in science and engineering, including a fantastic Benenden Senior. It rounded off a thoroughly enjoyable, entertaining and informative week. Well done to everyone involved, especially the STEM Ambassadors led by Six One student Fara Bakare and Sue Harris, the School's lead in STEM Outreach.

Modelling uncontrolled fission reactions



Rosie Behrens conducts a water into wine experiment, overseen by Fara Bakare and Caroline Yu



STEM Ambassadors Freya Hunter, Fara Bakare and Sophie Chau monitoring Annabel Thomas' blood pressure



JB van Pelt conducts an eye dissection



Dr Nazanin Zand, Dr Neelam Parmar and Nadia Abouayoub, three of our five discussion group panellists





Girls are wowed by the upward air pressure experiment



Mrs Harris creates foam in an experiment known as the 'elephant toothpaste'!

## My STEM Experience

Fara Bakare reveals how her experience with STEM at Benenden has been 'life-changing' and why this year's British Science Week was the best one yet.

My experience with STEM at Benenden has been life-changing, and it has even led to me to start my own non-profit organisation back at home. I went from only wanting to participate in research for university applications to being extremely passionate and driven about one thing – STEM.

At the end of the Autumn term, I became the Head of STEM Ambassadors at Benenden and honestly, that is one of the most

rewarding moments I have experienced. I am incredibly passionate about STEM; Professor Parker, Mrs Harris and I have been working very hard to ramp it up here at Benenden. And I think it is safe to say this year's British Science Week was one of our best so far. Organising and planning the whole week was a long journey but the impact was more than worth it.

On the first day we had a research soirée with girls talking about their fascinating research at Benenden. On the second day we had Dr Emily Grossman who has been heavily involved with the Extinction Rebellion and has featured on TV and radio many times lead a lecture. Then we heard from Terri Duhon, an MIT alumni, and an extremely successful woman in finance who gave us a virtual talk. On the next day, we had a series of invigorating experiments hosted on the Quad.

Finally we had a fantastic keynote event which was a panel discussion about Women in STEM from five inspiring women across all industries.

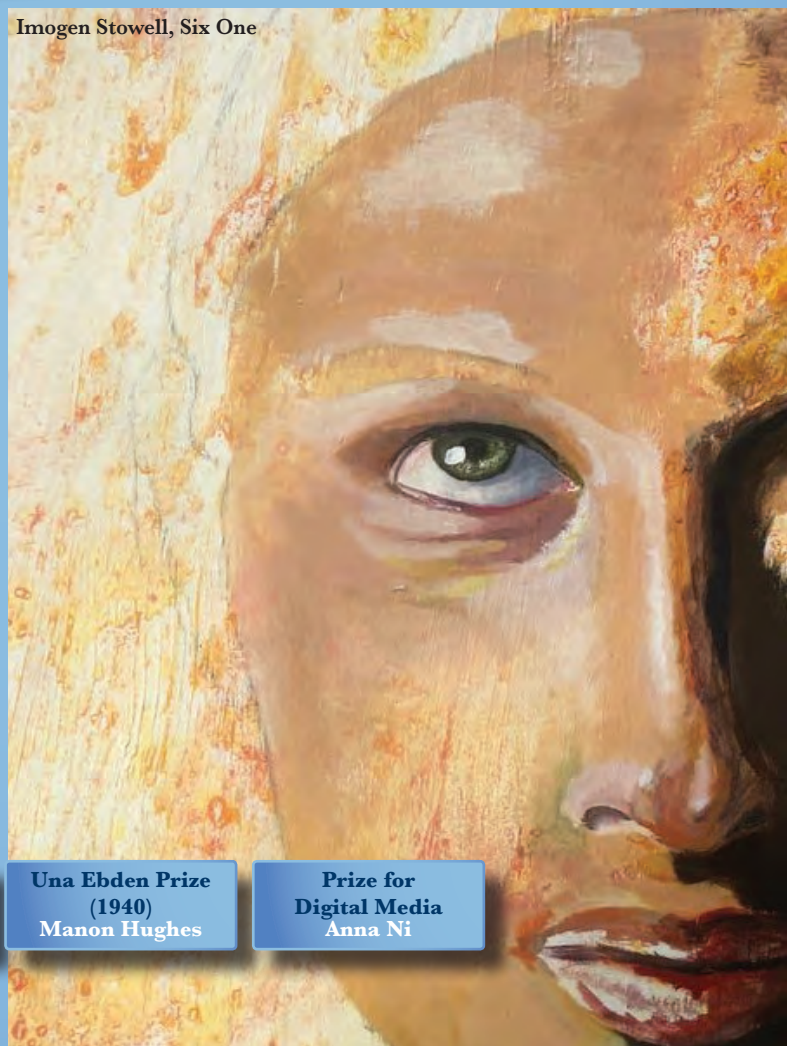
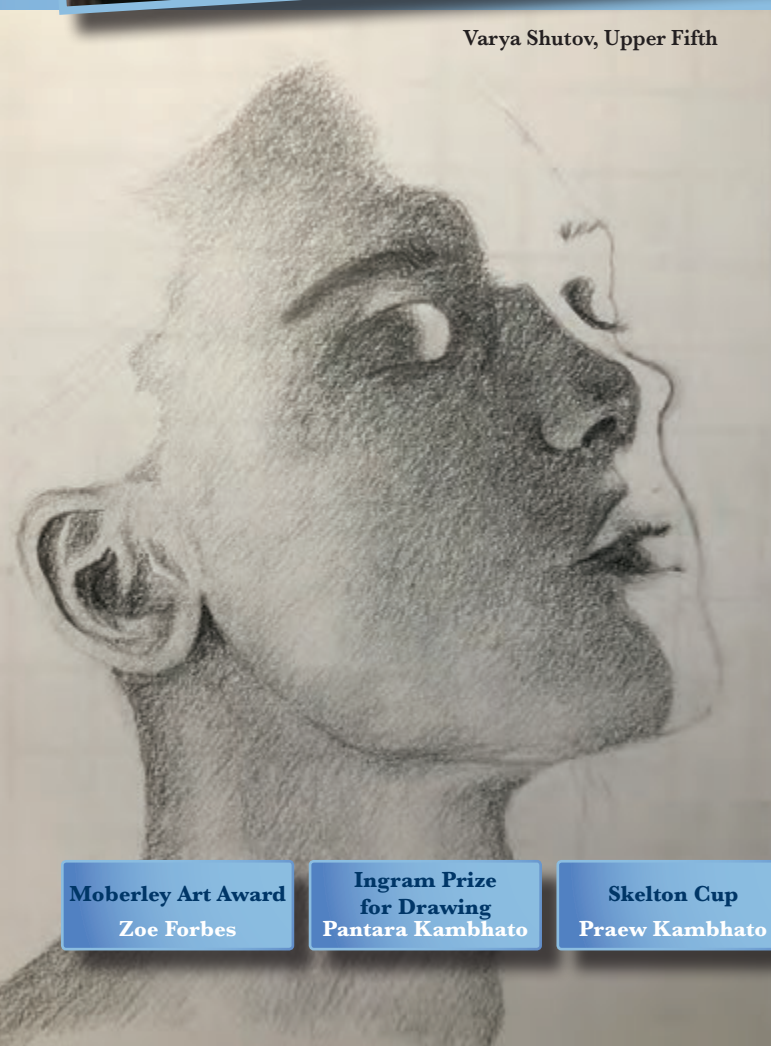
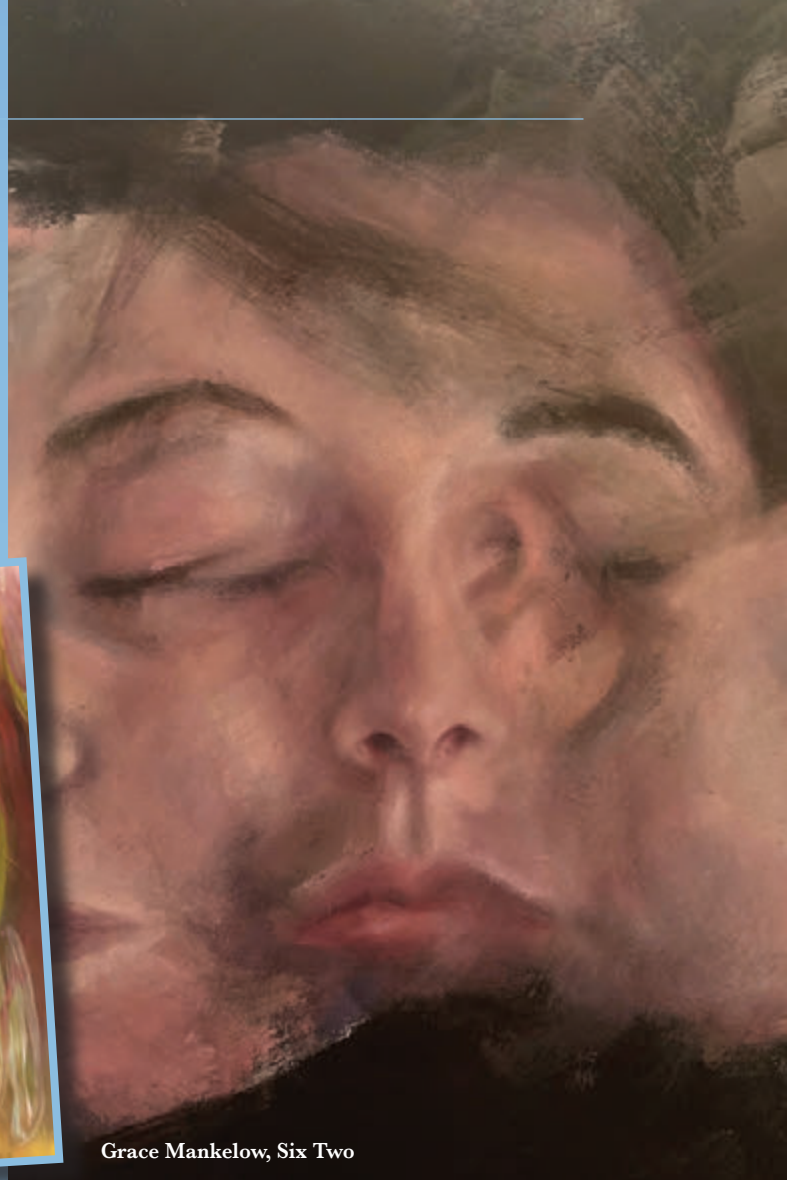
Being the Head of STEM at Benenden has allowed me to tap into my network and encourage others to come into the amazing world of STEM and I think British Science Week did that efficiently – a little trailer into the incredible world of STEM.

Now we have over 50 Benenden STEM Ambassadors and we are still growing. With the help of Mrs Harris, Professor Parker and the scientists at Benenden, STEM is expanding at a rapid rate. So, watch out because we are changing the world. Do you want to be a part of it?



# Work of Art

The girls have shown an abundance of creativity in producing some fantastic pieces of artwork. We are pleased to share some highlights.



**Moberley Art Award**  
Zoe Forbes

**Ingram Prize  
for Drawing**  
Pantara Kambhato

**Skelton Cup**  
Praew Kambhato

**Una Ebdon Prize  
(1940)**  
Manon Hughes

**Prize for  
Digital Media**  
Anna Ni





Nima Mouen-Makua, Upper Fifth



Phoebe Human, Upper Fifth



Tati Martin, Upper Fifth

#### Advertisement



## Jean-Louis Vincent Farmer

*Portraits in oil, charcoal, pastel or other media*

jeanlouisvincent68@gmail.com Tel: 07942 895426

Instagram @ jeanlouisvincentfarmerart





The Six Twos came en masse as characters from *The Princess and the Pea*

# World Book Day

If you had been on the School site on 5 March, you would have been forgiven for thinking you were seeing things as, amongst others, Little Red Riding Hood, Tintin and The Incredible Hulk could be spotted wandering around. The School's new Literature Laureate, Hazel Lockey from the Six One, tells us more about the origins of World Book Day and how it was celebrated here at Benenden.

Valencian writer Vicente Clavel Andrés had a proposal that would forever shape the international world of literature for centuries ahead.

He believed that one of his favourite writers, author Miguel de Cervantes, ought to be honoured, and this could be done through the celebration of literature. In 1923, he offered the idea of having a day dedicated to books to the Official Book Chamber of Barcelona.

Three years later, the King had approved. October 7, 1926 was the first 'Day of the Book', celebrated on Cervantes' date of birth.

Upholding this tradition of World Book Day at Benenden is no mean feat – but this year, we've seen some incredible effort amongst both staff and students. With staff banding together to dress up as characters from the renowned *Where's Wally?* saga, there has been a real sort of esprit de corps in the uniformity of the teachers.

The Six Twos, of course, in their final year at Benenden, did not hesitate to display the traditional story of *The Princess and the Pea* in all its glory, with meticulous and equally humorous wardrobe design from each and every student involved. It was definitely a success in realising the idiom 'go out with a bang'.

And the spirit of this annual event also comes through in the book sale, where voracious and amateur readers alike gathered in the SCN corridor to take advantage of the vast array of literature priced at impressive bargains.

Needless to say, the atmosphere at Benenden on World Book Day was, despite the apparently interminable onslaught of rain, energetic and excitable – an overall fruitful day which has potentially reignited the passion of literature in the hearts of many students.



B

C



# Pyjama Party in the Library



The girls' improv skills were put to the test



Girls enjoyed performing with their Layers



**The fun on World Book Day was also extended into the evening when the Fourths enjoyed a Pyjama Party in the Library. Here one of them, Maia Balogun, tells us all about it.**

On World Book Day we had a Pyjama Party in the Library – it was so much fun!

We all arrived at 7.15pm and started off with some hot chocolate, then someone had put together a book quiz. If we got a question right we won a chocolate from a box of Celebrations.

After this, we got together with our Layer to do some short skits. We all had an email about what we had to include in it; for example, my Layer had a birthday cake, a mirror and a zombie and we had to write a short play involving these items and character traits.

All of them were amazing and funny and I think it helped us all bond.

A. A band of superheroes kept the School safe. B. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is always a popular choice. C. Hello Kitty and Friends. D. Lara Croucher and Ursula Rowe as a Dictionary. E. Tintin – Nicole Vaktskjold-Palm – made an appearance. F. Isla MacDonald as Wicked Witch of the West. G. The Wicked Witch of the West and Spiderman meet a number of Where's Wallys as the staff take part. H. The English Department joined in the fun too.



# ‘It makes your head hurt slightly (in the best way)’

Dr Lisa McNally, English Teacher and group leader, reveals how the Interdisciplinary Discussion Group came to be and her students discuss the benefits of sharing ideas in a group.

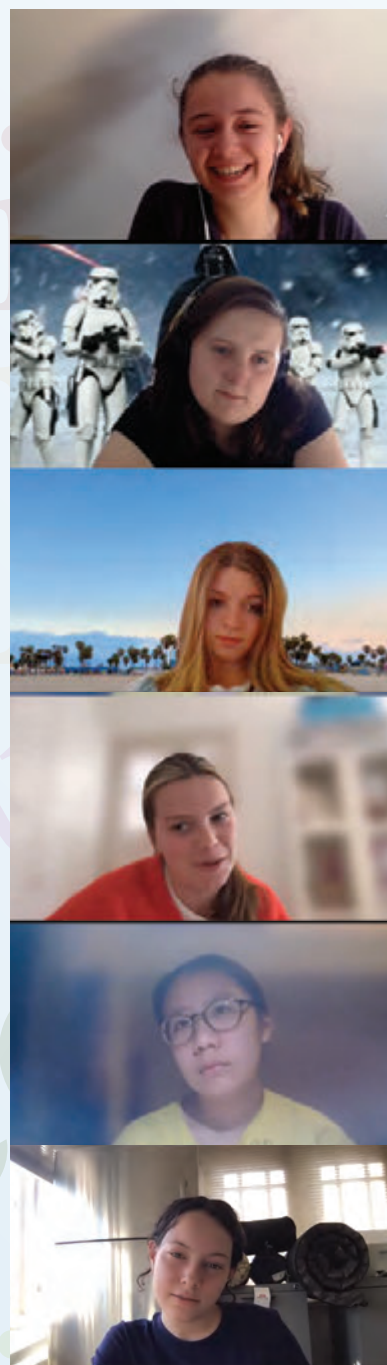
As ideas go, it seemed a bit thin. Each week, I would propose a different word, get a group of Sixth Form students together to discuss it and...that was it. I doubted anyone would come, and so I added an incentive: cake. Each week there would be a different word and a different cake; students were invited to come and discuss the word while eating the cake. Thus, four years ago, Interdisciplinary Discussion Group was born.

The idea may have seemed simple, but it wasn't without logic. As students progress through their academic careers, they become more and more specialised, narrowing their interests from ten or so GCSEs to three or four A Levels and then to a single university subject. However, the interplay between subjects can be fascinating and invaluable.

In our first ever session we discussed the word ‘culture’. A culture, in Biology, is a cell or organism grown for scientific purposes. In Geography, on the other hand, it's the way of life of a group of people. These meanings seem to be completely different, but if we compare them, might we in fact find that they have things in common? Might one help us to understand the other?

There's no plan and no agenda. We just discuss. That, too, startlingly risky (or lazy) as it may seem, is a calculated decision. In an age of targets and assessment objectives, it's fundamental that spaces still exist in which it is okay to meander, to exchange ideas, with no fixed destination. In keeping with this principle, this article is itself a discussion. I've written the first few paragraphs; I'll pass it over to my students to write the ones that follow.

Oh, and it turned out I was wrong about the cake. During this period of remote learning, with no cake at all on offer, attendance has been higher than ever – a heartening sign that Benenden students will not allow physical isolation to become a barrier to intellectual community; they know that discussion, and togetherness, is more important now than ever.



**Imogen Trill:** I still remember when I first decided to go to the discussion group; I was normally meant to be having a Music lesson but was unaware that it changed, and so while I was up at School I thought it would be worth giving it a go. I had been wary to attend in the past as I thought it required you to be reading rocket science in your free time, but when I got there I was proven wrong.

The atmosphere is so welcoming and all you are required to do is bring your own opinion. Each week a different topic is brought to the group and it leaves you genuinely wanting to learn more about the subject after. I honestly do not know what stopped me going before; it is such a friendly and casual hour of the week where you just have a normal discussion you could have with a friend, yet you leave feeling as though you have achieved something.



**Iona Warne:** One of the best things about the Interdisciplinary Discussion Group is that it allows us to put forward, analyse and change our ideas about certain topics. By exploring our ideas with each other we achieve a broader, more 'interdisciplinary' view, which allows us to build up or isolate opinions where, perhaps, we hadn't even properly thought about something before.

When we spoke about culture, we discussed the blatant disrespect and ignorance of cultural appropriation, but found it difficult to decide when and how we could distinctly prove that the line between appreciation and appropriation had been crossed. This must have been my first encounter with the dreaded topic of 'subjectivity'.

As a group, we seem to be constantly acknowledging relativism, shunning absolutism, and always, always, always remembering that 'everything is subjective'. This dependence on the subjective was challenged recently, as Dr McNally presented us with the prompt 'objective', and we were left trying to decide if there was anything we could consider an absolute. I remember saying that we couldn't even be sure that we were alive, as our discussion descended into confusion and mild panic. Suffice to say we now feel obliged to forewarn any mention of subjectivity, and as a rule are trying not to acknowledge the topic as much.

**Bee McDougall:** I've only been able to attend during lockdown, as a result of the unexpected side effect of learning from home having shifted around my timetable of extras, and it's been a really nice thing to be able to look forward to after a day of lessons. It's brilliant (and, honestly, confusing too – but the type of confusing that makes you eager to deconstruct your confusion and the ideas discussed to better understand things).

It makes your head hurt slightly (in the best way) and pushes you to think about the way different ideas interconnect, and the way in which you have been led to these connections. It's an amazing way to stretch your brain without being hindered or put off by the idea that you need to have achieved something or come to a conclusive decision.

**Anna Kane:** I'm a newer member of the group (I thought I'd give it a go during lockdown) and I cannot speak more highly of it. Each week we are given a new word to discuss and by the end of the hour we're left feeling intellectually stimulated, albeit rather frazzled! It requires no extra work outside the classroom, although it's often the case that you may end up doing research into something of your own afterwards. You simply show up and talk the living daylights out of a seemingly mundane word.

Freedom  
Instinct  
Popular  
Space  
Gender  
Privacy  
Solitude  
Nature  
Individual  
Privilege  
Sanity  
Intention

Some of the topics the girls have discussed



# Creative Writing

Hazel Lockey, in the Six One, has been selected as Benenden's first Literature Laureate, responsible for encouraging even greater participation in writing among the girls. Writing from home during the lockdown, Hazel discusses how she sees this new role and introduces us to her pick of pupils' recent creative writing.



It is hard to imagine a school that is normally so vibrant on a day-to-day basis almost deserted. To be there now, I imagine, likens itself to that of walking through the streets of Pompeii. Posters of things that never happened, faces that simply aren't there, not even the dry, wintry sunlight highlighting the absence of everyday life. And now, in the Theatre, settling dust watches the folds of the black curtains pool onto the ground, undrawn, no lingering bodies to hide behind them as they wait for their cues.

As Laureate, I expected to frequent these corridors, to sit amongst packed rows in the auditorium – to feel the pulse of the School take its form in writing. Yet we have been driven away; this heartbeat seems to have been lost. We feel detached, cordoned off from the wider world.

But when we return, and we will return, writing will be crucial. Whatever we describe of the situation now will manifest itself in the Benenden archives. What happens now cannot remain undocumented, but the only way in which it will survive is through writing. If there is one way in which I can give something, as Laureate, it will be to celebrate the return of our ordinary days, which will seem to us extraordinary because we will have missed them. In its extraordinary ordinary things – its plays, talks, fairs and concerts – we will see the School bounce back. Like life, Benenden will find a way, and carry on.

## The Airport Nightshift – Iona Warne, Six One

The airport nightshift doesn't exist.

I work the 22:00 to 08:00, local time, in the MGS beyond customs, where people wait with named paper plaques, bags under their arms and under their eyes. The bright lights, white lights, the hum of the open fridge system – my first sense of purgatory – where time is just the number on a digital wristwatch.

I sometimes imagine it before its time, empty halls, a quiet open-plan shopping centre. Then the lights flicker on and swarms of migrants, tourists, businessmen and passengers diffuse across the tiled floors. The airport can never sleep, never be silent, never be dark.

I share the shift with Jessie, who tidies the shelves whilst I stand guard over the self-service tills, and who protects the tills whilst I rearrange the shelves. She's been here longer than I have, she said she eloped with a pilot to get a free trip to Florida. A handsome pilot with a clean uniform, who let her see a corner of America, before running into his wife's arms as they emerged from customs.

Rules don't apply here, taxes, time, the witching hour. It's five o'clock somewhere, I attempt to crack the joke at a returning hen-do, a young couple, a lonely businessman, buying the red wine we have permanently on offer. Good customer service to those who'd rather be anywhere but here, an MGS at 03:00 local time. The numbers on my watch blink persistently, families begin to increase in number, and I look at each child held in a grip on their forearm and wonder if their tired silence is indicative of something bad, unwilling, dangerous. My shift will end at 08:00 local time.

If it is late enough in the year, then as I leave the airport at 08:15, local time, I can taste the residual darkness before I board the bus home, shards of light cutting across my eyes. Out there, above the planes that my job is contingent on, is true night, the dark, the stars, silence, space. The airport nightshift doesn't exist.



## English Countryside - Roya Power, Six One

In the morning, the cold around the hill is silent, covering everything, entering every home or hole, chilling every living thing to the soul.

A sparrow flutters harshly across the terrace and lands on the picketed fence behind it, perhaps observing the view, perhaps just pausing, or perhaps using the elevated position on the hill to search for prime food in the early morning. Miles away, the sun makes its lazy way up and over the hills, casting its flat, monotonous light across the landscape before it. Long shadows spill out from the hills and flood the valleys, soon to dry up as the sun heightens. The sparrow shivers, ruffles up his feathers and then lifts itself into the brightening sky. Water drips from dull leaves in the branches surrounding the terrace and onto the moist soil below. A cloud lingers above the hills ahead, threatening rainfall. However, it passes on, revealing the sun once again, now fully above the hills, gazing down at the silver ponds and the dirty gold wheat fields that are scattered like coins across the valleys.

The pond at the bottom of this certain hill shows little life other than the common reeds that surround most muddied and disused ponds. A breeze ripples its water, shaking the reflected image of the sun and its surrounding clouds, leaking the blue into the white and grey, the empty yellow light into the green of the reeds clinging onto the overhanging banks. Now, the sun absorbs the shadows it had cast earlier in the morning, a butterfly follows the path of the sparrow from hours before. It, with surprisingly little grace, flies in circles around the terrace, before settling gently onto one of the large blossoming flowers. It stays still for a moment, having found its balance, opens its wings and presses its back against the blunt sunlight, before continuing across the hill.

The terrace darkens as a large cloud passes over the mid-afternoon sun, the shadows fusing together to create a general shade. From over the hills, other clouds slide past each other, shielding the sky and forming a huge quilt of grey and white over the landscape. Now, the wind brings drops of rain, sharp and pointed, leaving black marks on the slates of stone. The drops become larger, and heavier, each one searching for a dry space to soak.

On the slates, a child's red chalk drawings are deformed, each star melting into the trees, and the tents and the frogs and the fish tangling into unidentifiable creatures. The pastel water trickles through the ravines between the stone, and then gushes into the grass, painting it in blood for an instant, before the rain dissolves it into nothingness and not a trace of the drawings are left.

The rain passes, and the sky lightens. The wind stops, and the water from the pond at the base of the hill seem to rest.

A deep silence follows, although there is not a soul present to hear it, it exists, only to be disturbed by an unconcerned creature, oblivious of its interruption of the stillness.



Tori Cadogan attracted a large audience of girls interested in magazine journalism



## Careers

As we all await the reveal of this year's A Level results, we round up the activity of the Careers and Higher Education Department in supporting the girls' career aspirations.

It has been a successful year for university applications and the girls have received 447 offers through UCAS which is an 80% success rate.

The most popular universities applied to this year are Edinburgh, Exeter, Durham and Nottingham and the most popular courses are English, History and Psychology. We have had four girls apply to US universities and have girls holding offers from the University of Southern California and Trinity College, as well as at the prestigious joint degree at Columbia/Trinity College Dublin.

Three pupils have gained places (one with scholarship) at the University of Toronto in Canada and we have supported our first student to obtain a place at Sophia University in Japan. Three girls have received offers to study Medicine and there has been more interest than ever in apprenticeship schemes – with applications to a range of financial, media and legal-based programmes. One pupil has received a prestigious Higher Apprenticeship with financial services company Grant Thornton.

In March the School hosted the Universities of Exeter and Durham, who talked to Six One girls about their Flexible Combined Honours and Liberal Arts degree programmes. During lockdown and online learning, the Careers and Higher Education Department have been busy hosting visitors via Teams including Newcastle University, which delivered a workshop to Six One pupils on preparing a UCAS personal statement.

Tori Cadogan, the Education Editor of Tatler magazine, gave a Careers Club lunchtime talk in January to an enthusiastic audience of pupils from Fifth to Six Two.

She talked about her career journey, working on The Big Breakfast and for the BBC before moving into magazine journalism.

A really good Q&A session followed where Tori answered questions about work experience, getting in to journalism and gave her top tips for anyone interested in a similar career.

The School also virtually hosted Fabienne Rollandin and Chris Astill-Smith, who gave a masterclass to pupils in Upper Fifth, Six One and Six Two on Entrepreneurship, Digital Media and Luxury Branding and highlighted the degree opportunities at Les Roches and Glion.

The Careers Department has also hosted Teams sessions on studying abroad, student finance and accommodation, how to prepare for psychometric testing, conquering video interviews, making the most of work experience and internships and careers of the future.

We also explored career pathways using a survey with the Fourth and Upper Fourth pupils as part of their PPD.

In conjunction with professional course providers, we delivered the final preparation session for Six One girls applying to US colleges and a course preparing medics for their UCAT testing. With the help of parents and Seniors, the Career Journeys project was also launched, this involved building a repository of short videos highlighting the amazing array of fascinating career journeys within the Benenden community.

**The Careers and Higher Education Department has now launched the new UCAS cycle and the Six One are underway with their applications for next year!**





Pupils were all smiles after visiting the University of York's stall



Senior Daisy Knatchbull represented her clothing design company, The Deck

# Careers, Higher Education and Futures Convention

**After intense planning and preparation, the 2020 Careers, Higher Education and Futures Convention was a roaring success.**

Benenden welcomed delegates from top UK and international universities, gap year organisations, blue chip companies and career representatives to talk to current students, parents, staff and visiting schools about life in higher education, application processes, apprenticeship schemes and career pathways – not to mention the opportunity to travel to far-flung places and participate in volunteer projects during gap years.

Many students benefited from the range of enlightening and instructive workshops covering topics such as a gap year using languages, studying in Canada, making an application to a selective UK university through to nutrition, finance and medicine.

Amongst the attendees were universities including St Andrews,

Durham, Exeter, Imperial, Sheffield, Oxford Brookes, UEA, Nottingham, Cardiff, SOAS, University of the Arts and many others.

Parents and students alike were fascinated by the range of careers ably represented by companies, parents and Seniors, including from the Army, National Trust, engineering, cookery, events management, construction, politics, fashion/design, film/media, financial services and banking, publishing, law, marketing and communications, PR, nursing, dentistry and medicine.

The whole of SCN was a buzzing throng of activity from 10.30am to 2.00pm and we were particularly pleased to welcome over 100 pupils and parents from eight other local schools.



Pupils visit Leiths School of Food and Wine



Girls learned about the degree apprenticeships on offer from the Environment Agency



Girls spoke to Giovanna Latimer, Benenden parent and publishing MD



# Nepal Trip

During the Christmas holidays a group of 17 students and four staff departed for a trekking expedition in Nepal. Head of Outdoor Education, Barry Imms, tells us all about it.

The trip started with lots of travelling but after two hours by minibus, 11 hours by plane and 11 hours by local bus, we eventually got to the start of the Annapurna Sanctuary Trail.

Now started a nine-day trek that took the group from 900m above sea level to 4,130m above sea level; the route is undulating which adds to the challenge and there are quite a lot of steps along the way.

The first day's trekking is always difficult as you have spent the best part of two days sitting down inactive and now your body is being asked to power itself up a few tough inclines.

The group settled down into smaller walking groups as the various paces emerged before we settled on a pace for all. The first day's walk ended with the challenging Ulleri steps which definitely required soul-searching from some!

Day two saw the group move to Ghorepani at the base of Poon Hill. Having made good time we were planning to summit

Poon Hill for a sunset panorama but heavy fog put paid to the plan.

Because of the fog on the previous day it meant that day three started with an early morning walk to catch the sunrise at Poon Hill. After a steady ascent we were rewarded with a spectacular sunrise and a hot chocolate.

Day four took in a steady climb to Chhomrong, which is known for its amazing steps, challenging those of Ulleri, which we were heading down before climbing the other side of the valley to Sinuwa.



Landed and still smiling



A fun day at Bloom Nepal, spent meeting students and staff



The expedition team crossing one of the largest (and scariest) suspension bridges in the world





Early morning walk to the summit of Poon Hill



The girls at a lake in Pokhara

Day five started with a gentle walk up, before we reached more downhill steps to Bamboo.

The highest point so far on the trail meant that the students had to wait six hours to acclimatise before going to bed. House staff would have been amazed at the protestations of waiting until 10.00pm for sleep!

Day six was planned to be a gentle walk for two hours up to Machhapuchhre Base Camp (MBC). We woke to gentle snowfall and felt the walk would look much prettier. After just over two hours of walking through the snow, which was now about 30cm deep, we reached our destination. Making the most of the daylight, we descended shortly afterwards which was an interesting journey filled with some reminders of how much fun snow can be.

Day seven was another early start to get us moving out of the fresh snow and down to Bamboo. The route down was almost unrecognisable from the route up the day before.

Day eight was a short day but one that included plenty of uphill steps as we tackled the Bamboo steps and the Chhomrong steps in quick succession.

Day nine was a short walk but one that started with a 280m Burma rope bridge, an amazing piece of engineering which was not for the faint hearted. After the bridge the trek winds its way down the Modi Khola before we ended the trek and headed back to Pokhara.

Following the trekking we visited the Gurkha Welfare Trust as part of our charity work and the Gurkha Museum as part of our cultural awareness.

There was another day on the bus before we reached Kathmandu via Swayambuntha, the Monkey Temple, for a bit more culture and charity engagement.

The final day allowed us to visit Kathmandu Durbar Square to see the Kumari and have an excellent tour guide who provided a good flavour of the history and life in the capital.



En route to Machhapuchhre Base Camp





# Music

Here we share the musical highlights of the past two terms.

## Winter Concert

**January's Winter Concert was a hit with all in attendance.**

When planning for musical events in this interim period where we are without an official Hall, we were slightly apprehensive about using SPLASH for music. However, the Maridor commemoration in November showed that though the detail is a little lost in the cavernous acoustics, it inevitably feels somewhat empty and is not the most beautiful setting, some instrumental music sounds rather good in there!

The Winter Concert took place in late January and was very well received by the parents, staff and younger girls in attendance. The Percussion Ensemble beckoned the audience to a Hall usually associated with sport and parents' mornings with great aplomb, before the Chamber Orchestra began the concert with accomplished renditions of two elegant dance movements by Grieg and Dvorak.

The Symphony Orchestra then showed great maturity and musicianship in their accounts of pieces by the likes of Shostakovich, Ravel and Elgar. The challenging levels of reverb from the hard surfaces means that the players need to listen especially carefully to one another (and to watch the conductor if they feel he is offering them anything helpful!), and it is to the girls' great credit that the ensemble remained so tight in the quicker pieces by Schubert and Saint-Saëns.

It is so pleasing that the Orchestra is now so strong across all the instrumental sections, and though we sadly lost the opportunity to showcase some new repertoire in our Spring Concert in April, we hope it won't be too long until we are able to rehearse and perform together again.



## Chapel Choir's Tenterden Concert

**Six One pupil Catherine Pearce recounts the Chapel Choir's Tenterden Concert.**

On Friday 17 January the Chapel Choir performed at Saint Mildred's Church in Tenterden. Conducted by Mr Whiting, we began with A Ceremony of Carols by Benjamin Britten, which featured 12 movements including an ethereal harp interlude played by Ms Morley. This was then followed by Bach's Allemande played by Ms McNaught on the cello.

We went on to sing The Snow by Edward Elgar, an old favourite of ours, accompanied by the brilliant Rachael Mak and Pandora Mann on the violin. We then sang Sweet Was The Song by David Bednall, a piece from our previously recorded Stabat Mater, followed by The Three Kings by Bob Chilcott and The Lamb by John Tavener.

Finally, we sang all five movements of Sarah Quartel's Snow Angel for the first time since we released our newest CD Make We Merry, on which Snow Angel is featured.

Overall, the concert was a very enjoyable experience for all of us as we got to sing some of our all-time favourite pieces in front of a packed church who seemed to really appreciate our efforts – we're extremely grateful to everyone who came to



listen to us sing. We are also thankful to the extremely talented accompanists, particularly Ms Ramsay who played the piano throughout the whole concert.

**Music Bronze  
(for piano)  
Pandora Mann**

**Duguid Quaich  
for singing  
Caitlin Chiu**

**Barbara Gough  
Prize for woodwind  
Jess Johnson**

**Stella Ebdon Prize  
(1939) (for strings)  
Josie Lomax**

**Rosemary Nash  
Memorial Prize  
Freya Wiggins**

**Shamsi Flintoff  
Songwriting Prize  
Amelie Jat**

**Beer Prize for Brass  
Subomi Ajibola**

**Guitar/Harp Award  
Missy Chapman**

**Alison Steven Prize  
for Percussion  
Lily Thornton**



## Evensong with Eton College

**Poppy Worlidge, in the Six Two, reveals all as she discusses one of her last outings with the choir to Eton College.**

Now speaking as a Benenden Senior, I can definitely say that when I look back on my time at school, choir was one of the highlights. On what turned out to be one of my last outings with the Chapel Choir, I had the opportunity to perform Evensong with Eton College. We set off from Benenden and a long coach ride later we arrived to find a beautiful sight (the school, not the boys).

The amazing architecture of the chapel is renowned but I was also amazed by the wooden-panelled room filled with paintings of important looking men hanging on the walls. Prior to this welcome, we dropped our robes off and went to the Choirbook exhibition at Verey Gallery in the corner of School Yard.

My grandfather was lucky enough to attend Eton all those years ago (don't worry grandpa, they'd never guess your age!) and he has been our equivalent of a very dedicated

'Senior' there. He got in touch about the exhibition and organised for it to be opened especially for our choir to visit, which was very special!

It was wonderful to see the original choirbook and a replica of the old organ, amongst other things. What struck me most was that the choirbook was a very large size, since they did not have enough money for the book to be reprinted for everyone (as it was all written out by hand), so the whole choir used to crowd around the one book of music!

After such a wonderful welcome and exhibition, we rehearsed once with the Etonians and then performed our piece half an hour later (no dilly-dallying allowed!). I loved having a wider range of voices by having a mixed choir and to bring it all together in an eight-part piece was fantastic. We then made a swift return to the glorious Kent countryside but we left with a memory that will always stay with us.



## Shamsi Flintoff Songwriting Competition

**Now in its third year, the 2020 Shamsi Flintoff Songwriting Competition went virtual.**

The Shamsi Flintoff Songwriting Competition began in 2018 at the suggestion of Paul Flintoff, father of Freddie, a pupil at the time. Impressed by a Live Lounge he attended, where our guitarists and singers come together in the Café at the end of term and during Arts Festivals, he provided a trophy in his mother's name to recognise and encourage the writing of original songs at School.

The first two years saw very successful events enjoyed by live audiences, but being confined to lockdown hasn't stopped the creative process in the slightest – with seven original songs being produced by five girls. This year's competition entries were submitted by Josie Lomax, Amelie Jat, Amelia Shen, Aressa Raja Ridzwa and Caitlin Chiu and all of them were very impressive!

The eventual winner was Amelie Jat – congratulations Amelie!



Aressa Raja Ridzwa



# Wickenden Hall

This year's Junior School Play was a resounding success.



The story is loosely based on Enid Blyton's Malory Towers



For many girls, it was their first time performing on stage







Clemmy Rogers, Philippa Kearsey and Alice Campbell Lambert



A total of 52 girls in the Fourth and Upper Fourth were on stage

The Wickenden Hall production premiered at the beginning of February and was a hit with all in attendance.

The play was performed and produced by Fourths and Upper Fourths and was loosely based on the stories of Malory Towers, the novels written by children's author Enid Blyton. The stories were based in part on Benenden School after Blyton's daughter attended the School in the 1940s.

The play focused on the nostalgic world of a girls' boarding school (long before Hogwarts!) where the girls endure midnight feasts, cliff rescues, pranks and everlasting friendships. The stories were brought to life by the fantastic performances on display and we very much look forward to next year's Junior School Play.



Tami Bankole, Astrid Hall and Annabel Behrens



Victoire Mons

## A Pupil's View

**Fourth pupil Olivia Ching** revealed her experience of performing in Wickenden Hall:

"I played the role of Maisy Sue who is a shy character who always gets picked on by Gwendoline.

Maisy Sue wins the attention of the audience during the cliff rescue scene.

"I really enjoyed being part of the Junior School production, it was fun getting to know other girls in my year group and some of the Upper Fourth.

"My toughest challenge was definitely learning my lines as I have never really had a big part in a play before. The final production was a huge hit; the audience seemed to really enjoy the show and it was great hearing them laugh. I really hope to be in the next production."



Alice Sismey, Olivia Ching and Celia Royde

**The Dancing  
Bronze  
Martha Dutton**

**Ansdell Cup  
for Ballet  
Eleanor Roberts**

**The Chandler  
Modern Dance Prize  
Lara Forbes**



# MUN

Most Model United Nations conferences were cancelled but in January, 12 MUNers headed off to Wycombe Abbey for a US-style conference.

We had representation in all four areas of the conference: Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC, Security Council, US Senate and also a new venture, for us, the Arctic Council.

In a very competitive conference we held our own, having an impact in all the simulations. Our main two assigned countries were Russian Federation and China – which can make things challenging when trying to reach a consensus with other countries!

Equally though, our additional delegates of Norway and Greenpeace in ECOSOC had to work hard to be recognised in a large forum, when not all topics seemed particularly relevant. In the US Senate simulation we had two US senators, one Democrat and one Republican. They had to vie with a large number of older and more experienced delegates, as well as enduring a near one-hour filibuster on Saturday.

We missed out on a couple of awards, but the Highly Commended Delegation award in ECOSOC went to China – well done Fara Bakare and Jamie Barbour.

Inexplicably, Russian Federation in Arctic Council (Bee McDougall and Keara McKie) failed to pick up an award and in Security Council, even though our China delegates (Marianne Balogun and Sophie Moody-Stuart) wrote 90 per cent of the resolution which was passed, they too were overlooked.

A huge well done to everyone who took part. A very successful conference since we were using a less familiar MUN format. Everyone rose to the challenge and gained much from the experience.



12 girls went to Wycombe Abbey MUN



Fara Bakare was part of the duo that won a Highly Commended Delegation award



Marianne Balogun and Sophie Moody-Stuart in Security Council



Jamie Barbour and Fara Bakare as China (centre) in ECOSOC with Carlotta Wright and Scarlett Dryden representing Greenpeace (bottom right)



Bee McDougall, as Russian Federation, performed strongly in Arctic Council



# House Shout

As ever, the Spring Term got off to a hugely enthusiastic start in the form of the annual House Shout.

Always a favourite with the girls, the event felt particularly energetic and polished this year, and enormous credit must go to the Fifths who led their Houses.

The judges – Professor Parker and Mr Schagen – were left with very hard decisions to make in awarding the famous 1923 Singing Shield and the newer, but still highly coveted, Production Trophy.

In the end they concluded that Marshall's Voulez Vous had to be recognised for the strength and vitality of the singing, complete with well-handled harmonies.

In terms of production, each House offered incredible drama and creativity through the use of dance, props and costumes, but the prize went to Echyngham's version of the Taylor Swift song You Belong With Me which felt like a mini musical over four minutes.

A huge well done to all involved.

Marshall raised the bar with their performance

House Shout is always a team effort

Norris performed It's A Hard Knock Life from Annie

All aboard Guldeford Air!

Medway performed Pompeii by Bastille

Echyngham's award-winning routine

Marshall took home the 1923 Singing Shield

Echyngham won the coveted Production Trophy

"I loved House Shout as it was very fun, and I got to interact with the older years.

It was an amazing experience. I was very surprised when Houses cheered other Houses and every House did exceptionally well. You could tell everyone was having a lot of fun and I did too.

Although the process was hard, it was interesting and I was given an amazing experience that was memorable and exciting."

Rosalyn Chiu, Fourth





Pet therapy was certainly a new experience for Upper Fifth!

# Weekend Programme

The Weekend Programme at Benenden sees the girls partake in a range of exciting activities and days out. The beginning of this year saw the girls enjoy many fun-packed weekends with activities including jewellery making, laser tag, a film workshop, pet therapy, scrunchie making, a sushi workshop, paintballing, an escape room, film nights, cake decorating, cinema trips and much more!



Benenden welcomed some unusual visitors for Pet Therapy



Scrunchie making and photo booth fun for the Fourth



Fourth girls enjoying the photobooth!







Lower Fifth enjoying their burgers at GBK



Girls in the Fifth are ready for some paintballing action!



Our 2020 Inter-House cake decoration competition winners!



Fifth showing their cooking skills!



Lower Fifts made it out of their escape room with minutes to spare



The Fourth meant business on their laser tag day out



A quick lunch break during Upper Fourths' film workshop



Fourths celebrate a birthday in style at GBK!



# Constructing a Microlight

A group of girls are taking part in a project where they are spending one evening each week building a microlight.

This engineering project – a joint project with students from The John Wallis Church of England Academy – is being run with the British Microlight Aircraft Association (BMAA) as part of the organisation's New Horizons scheme. The BMAA funds the project and the two schools are responsible for building the aircraft.

The BMAA owns the microlight and will sell it when the project is finished, with proceeds going back into the New Horizons scheme. However, before this the students will get a chance to fly in it themselves!

The BMAA New Horizons project is available to all schools and colleges, independent or state. Benenden took part in a similar project that was completed in 2018.

The girls have been keeping a blog of their progress and we have included some excerpts from it below so you can see how they have been getting on:

## 3 December 2019

We focused on fixing together the engine support which will be at the very front of our microlight aircraft.

It involves the construction of the upper engine mount and the upper and lower triangulation tubes which help to hold the engine mount in place, while the other groups were working on the construction of the fuselage frame, the installation of the floor and cutting a space on the floor to fit the battery box.

We roughly fitted parts of the mounting bracket and the engine mount plates, and they will eventually link the upper and lower triangulation tubes and the fuselage frame together.

In the beginning, our group found reading the manual quite challenging but we are gradually getting better at understanding how the part of the aircraft roughly looks and the order of the components that should be used.

## 9 January 2020

We spent the majority of our time double checking our progress so far. We checked all the nuts and bolts were in the correct place and had been tightened enough. We sealed some of them with a fixative and marked these with a pink paint to show they were finished.

We also carpeted the floor of the cabin using a spray glue to attach the fabric to the base. We later drilled holes in this so that we could attach it to the frame.

## 16 January

Each wheel was bolted to the plane by three separate groups. The nose wheel was the hardest wheel to attach because we had to balance the frame of the plane using a toolbox in order to fix it correctly. We used allen keys to fix the wheel to the plane.



Oreoluwa Adeogun and Zara Webb referring to the instruction manual





### 23 January

Many tasks covering a large proportion of the microlight were performed.

Firstly, a team of students with the aid of a pop-rivet gun attached components of the rudder together. This was done with precision to ensure that each of the marked and drilled holes were aligned, creating a sturdy structure which would not be affected by harsh weather conditions.

In addition to this, components of the steering rod were assembled in accordance with several diagrams in the microlight manual.

This was a tedious process as we quickly realised the great importance of paying close attention to ensure that the correct parts were fitted in the intended order.

### 30 January

In our ninth week, one group put together the structure for the seats of the aircraft while another changed many of the wingnuts for the bolts, used Locktite glue on the bolts and painted them pink to show that they are finalised.

The handle which is used to control the rudders was made and the handle for the brake was installed onto the bar which had been made the previous week, using soap as a lubricant to ease the foam handle onto the bar.

### 27 February

This week one group set both wheel hubs up properly with bolts tightened to 20 newton metres (a newton metre is a unit of torque). They then put some pink paint on it, which is tamper-proof marker paint.

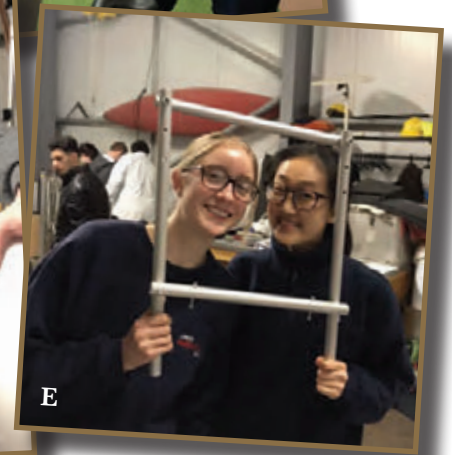
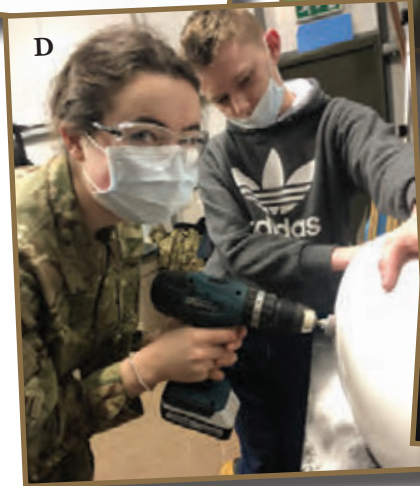
Another group set the rudder up as well as the rudder cables and we used the stick control for the elevators and the rudder. This back part of the plane is called the empennage. The last group was in charge of doing a lot of bolt tightening and setting up cable runs.

### 5 March

Finally we could sit inside the frame of the microlight! The chairs were finally finished and we pinned them into place for the first time. If we were careful, we could climb up into them, making sure we didn't step on the unsupported areas of the carpet.

From here we could test moving parts of the plane, watch the tail move and the pedals work. It was so rewarding, especially after all the effort it took to get the seats into a position where the pins would not collide with the bars, not to mention how difficult it was to connect the fuel tanks together!

- A. Safia Dovell uses a spray glue to attach the carpet to the base of the microlight.
- B. Caroline Yu and Angus Buchanan, a staff volunteer and parent of two Benenden Seniors, use a rivet gun to attach parts of the rudder together.
- C. Heather Wong and Helena Rigg Franco.
- D. Zara Webb attaches piping to the fuel tank.
- E. Annabelle Grut and Caroline Yu.



### 12 March

This week, we worked on two key aspects of the plane:

We attached the piping to the fuel tank which is necessary to ensure that there are no leakages of fuel.

To do this, we tightened the pipes to the tanks themselves, aided by the use of a 'hairdryer' - or a very hot heat gun (with temperatures upwards of 245 degrees C!). This enabled us to soften the pipe and put it on the tank easily. Then we attached the filter to both tubes, cable-tying them together to the plane.

Then we filed down the teardrop spats to ensure they would conform to the size and shape of the wheels.

To do this, we used a drill with a file on the end, protecting ourselves with masks and goggles. We had to keep checking to make sure that we didn't overdo it and were within the lines drawn on the spat.



**Precision is the name of the game when building a microlight**



# CCF Goes From Strength to Strength

Six Two pupil Manon Hughes reveals how the Benenden School and John Wallis Academy Combined Cadet Force (CCF) has grown.



The Cadets on their field day in February

The Benenden School and John Wallis CCF has grown and developed as a contingent, not only reaching over 100 cadets but also seeing the first ever promotion to the rank Sergeant Major. This year also saw the first ever use of a banner party in the annual Remembrance Day parade. It was an honour to be able to show off our new banner but also the plaque to commemorate Capitaine Jean Maridor, Free French RAF.

A highlight last term for all the cadets was the TIBUA exercise and a 25-metre Full Bore shoot, an element of the Ex Benenden Strikes, which involved a platoon attack on

an abandoned three-storey building, and a 25-metre practice shoot on the cadet general purpose rifle.

This was the first fieldcraft exercise that we as a contingent have participated in, in a built-up urban area. This exercise allowed the cadets to put into practice their weapon handling skills, which they had learnt at the beginning of the term, and their knowledge on fieldcraft attacks – another skill they had learnt during their first term as cadets. This exercise also gave our older cadets, in Kitchenier and Gundulf sections, the chance to show their leadership and teaching skills completely outside of the

classroom, which they have been honing in on during the Cadet Forces Instructional Techniques (CFIT) lessons.

All these elements that the cadets practised on the field day will help them in their work towards achieving a 'full red star' – which recognises the completion of the cadets' basic training and is a great achievement.

This year, although a short one, has seen the contingent grow from strength to strength, with the Cadet Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) taking more control and ownership of their troops.

## Duke of Edinburgh's Award Success

Barry Imms, our departing DofE manager, commends the girls for continuing to achieve their DofE Awards during such turbulent times.

During a challenging time it has been impressive that so many students have successfully achieved their Award. There has been a lot of lateral thought which has allowed students to progress with their Awards which is recognised in this published list.

For those students who have not managed to undertake their expedition this year there will be an opportunity to complete that section once we return to School. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award have recognised the exceptional situation and the limitations that the participants face, which is why they have introduced a Certificate of Achievement for candidates who have completed all sections less the expedition (and residential at Gold), this will be automatically generated and sent out and does not replace their full Award.

I would like to personally thank everyone who has supported or delivered the DofE Award at Benenden School over the last five years; without your efforts 183 students would not have achieved their Award, (126 Bronze Awards and 57 Gold Awards).

### DofE in Numbers, April 2019 - March 2020

1,469  
£6,930  
1,222  
1,287

hours of voluntary service to the local community

The social value of these hours

hours of physical activity completed in addition to the hours of voluntary service

hours spent working towards a skill in addition to the hours of voluntary service

### Current pupils who have achieved their Award since Mark Reading in December

#### Bronze Award

Zoe Cohen  
Marina Cwashay  
Momoko Eliot  
Jemima Ferrey  
Rosie Fletcher  
Megan Harman  
Manon Hughes  
Pantara Kambhato  
Tatiana Leung  
Keara McKie  
Ailis Osobase  
Mirela Smolenska  
Olivia Townsend

#### Gold Award

Ella Cohen  
Charlotte Goodall  
Lucy Hargrave  
Martha Hoare  
Annabel Little  
Minty Loxton-Barnard  
Katie Perry  
Ophelia Sheppard



# Charity

This year the Benenden community has worked harder than ever to raise as much money as possible for a number of well-deserving charities.

## New Charity Committee

**Izzy Selby, in the Six One, announces the launch of the Charity Committee.**

The School has now launched a Charity Committee. This is something which Fara Bakare and I hope will allow the School to continue to raise phenomenal funds for different charities, allowing students to get involved as much as possible.

It is open to all year groups who may want to host their own charity events or have suggestions about future events which the school can support.



One of the charities which the committee has chosen to support is the APIE foundation – A Partner In Education. The charity works with both international and Rwandan partners to meet the sustainable development goals of inclusive and quality education.

## A Year of Successful Fundraising

- As a result of fundraising for The Weald Family Hub, £3,000 was raised for the mental health charity.
- Over £1,530 has been raised for the Sam West Foundation through various fundraisers including a sponsored walk and the sale of t-shirts.
- Six One pupils Sufiyah Sajan and Amelia Harris raised £120 through a bake sale which went to Sanitary Aid Nigeria.
- The trip to Nepal raised £1,682 for the Ghurkha Welfare Trust.
- Six One pupil Saskia Willetts had ten inches of her hair cut off for the Little Princess Trust. She raised a total of £985 and donated her hair to make a wig.



The kayaking team undertook some intense training

## Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Marathon

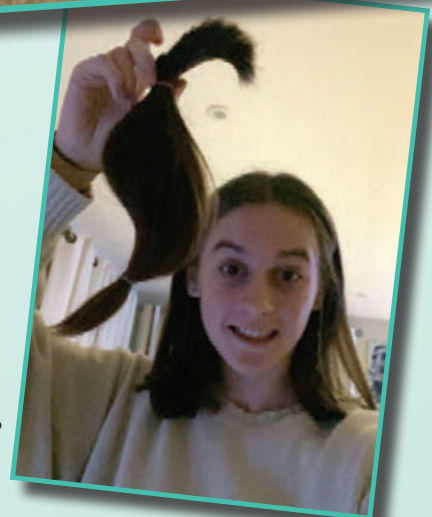
**Izzy also updates us on the Kayak Marathon fundraising mission.**

Over the Easter weekend Zara Webb, Mr Commander, Mr George and I were due to be taking part in the DW International Canoe Marathon – a 125-mile canoe race from Devizes in Wiltshire to Westminster Bridge. Sadly, it was cancelled due to Covid-19. However, both teams have managed to raise over £3,325 for the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

We have also learnt to Kayak after some intense but fun training. We are hoping to complete this challenge, covering the same distance on the water, in the coming months once restrictions are lifted. Thank you to everyone who has donated so far, the money we have raised will allow them to continue critical studies investigating the impact of the pandemic on cancer treatment and care.



Above: The Nepal Expedition Team



Saskia donated her hair to the Little Princess Trust



# John Wallis Mentoring

In January more than 150 students from Benenden and The John Wallis Church of England Academy met for the second session of this year's mentoring, this time hosted at Benenden.

Building on the great success of the last meeting in November, and continuing a near decade-long tradition, Benenden Six One students worked alongside John Wallis students from Year 11 as they approach the run-up to their GCSEs. Six One Sophie Brokenshire tells us more about the evening.

Everyone really enjoyed the first mentoring session so all were excited to welcome the John Wallis students to Benenden for the second session.

We greeted our partners in the Science Atrium (where Kit-Kats were consumed by all participants!) before we gave the John Wallis students a tour of the Benenden site.

Then came the first of the two mentoring sessions that evening where Benenden students gave advice to the John Wallis Year 11s on how to manage time in their final few months in the run-up to the exams period, ensuring they got the right balance between work and play.

Supper followed where we had the opportunity to get to know each other in a more informal environment.

This was then followed by the second mentoring session where more specific skills were covered with students either going through a Maths paper or teaching the Year 11s how to approach an unseen poem for the English Literature GCSE.

This session was probably the most rewarding session of the evening as Benenden students were able to feel as though they were having a direct influence on the John Wallis students' academic career.

When the time to say goodbye came our visitors were each given two of our famous Benenden Brownies!

We hope that the relationships between the Benenden and John Wallis students continue to strengthen.



Revision tips and Maths and English guidance were covered in the sessions



Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening



Students also enjoyed supper together

The mentoring session was a chance to renew friendships formed in November



Over 150 students met for the second mentoring evening





# Reducing Our Impact on the Environment

In recent months the School has been taking a number of steps to become more eco-friendly. Here the School Eco-Committee tells us about what has been happening.

Following the success of Meatless Monday, the School has decided to look to further initiatives in order to reduce its impact on the environment.

The Food Waste Initiative is a campaign encouraging students to eat what they put on their plates; posters and signs with a count of the number of meals wasted have all helped in reducing the School's level of food waste.

As well as this, since the beginning of this year, Benenden has sent unused trays of food to a nearby homeless shelter in an effort to avoid throwing these away and to support the local community.

We have also seen new bins introduced in the main School areas; these are dedicated to mixed recycling and are sent to CountryStyle Recycling Depot to be sorted.

Recycled paper produces 73 per cent less air pollution than paper from raw materials does, so we feel proud to play a part in reducing waste and being more sustainable.



The School's Food Waste Initiative encourages everyone to 'Take What You Want, Eat What You Take'



Posters keep track of how many meals are thrown out each day



Raising awareness of the global impact of food wastage



Izzy Selby and Iona Warne with the new recycling bins in the Dining Hall



# Celebrating International Cultures Week

**International Cultures Week is an annual event at Benenden, entirely organised by the girls to appreciate all the cultures at the School. Held in the last week of January, it was an informative and enjoyable mix of colourful costumes, tasty food, native music and much more. Six Two Farida Tinubu, who was one of the chief organisers of the week, explains more.**

This year we wanted to engage as much as possible with the whole School and try to have everyone learn at least one new thing about their own culture or another.

With the help of the International Cultures Week and Equality and Diversity committee, we put together a week full of exciting activities.

Throughout the week emails were sent out under the heading 'Cultures Week Recommended'. They contained recommendations and ratings of foreign films and music, fact files on art and culture from around the world and suggestions of restaurants in London.

There were also Mystical Tales – folk story telling nights run by Loulou Enright and Aressa Raja Ridzwa, held at a different location every night. Folk tales or ghost stories from different cultures were performed by students, allowing everyone

to learn a bit more about the literary history of different cultures.

To interact with the student body we created an Instagram account – @bculturesweek managed by Alzbeta Seippel and Fikemi Olayinka – with daily updates and interviews from students about their culture.

Additionally, the Bubble podcast organised a series in honour of the celebrations where students spoke about their cultures in their native language. During the week there was also an exhibition in the Science Atrium of artwork and photography representing the meaning of culture and different cultures around the world.

The week started off with a cooking class organised by Dara Shonubi in the Founders Kitchen with ingredients kindly provided by catering staff.



Eva Nagle De Las Cuevas, Bea De Groot, Olivia Boyce and Ella Gouriet at the INTERSOC fair



Ireoluwa Morakinyo



Mallory Greenberg and Imogen Seippel

We made a variety of tasty dishes from all around the world including authentic Nigerian jollof rice, peppered chicken, American chocolate chip cookies, Indian chicken tikka skewers, smores and Chinese style fried rice.

Tuesday afternoon saw another cooking class where we made tikka skewers, smores and Chinese-style fried rice. The evening ended with a viewing of *Somos Campeones* as part of the Noche de Cine, a Spanish film night organised by the Modern Languages Department.

On Wednesday evening there was a Cultural Live Lounge where students performed songs in their native language or music from a different culture. Staff and students were treated to a night of lovely music in English, Korean, Yoruba and Spanish.



A range of outfits were on show on Cultural Dress Day





Pantara Kambhato, Praew Kambhato and Lauren Syn perform in the Live Lounge



Lily Thornton, Alicia Webb and Ella Allfrey



Alexis Chan, Heather Wong and Sophia Chau



Lily Phillips



Varya Shutov

Thursday was the highly anticipated INTERSOC showcase organised by Fara Bakare and her team in the Theatre. Girls in all year groups presented dances, songs, poetry and sketches all related to their cultural identity and heritage. These ranged from an energetic dance of a popular Nigerian song Tesumole to a traditional Spanish salsa dance.

Friday was the Cultural Dress Day: students either wore their National Dress, the cultural dress of a country they felt connected to or dressed up as someone from popular culture in their country.

This year we saw everything from Iro and Buba – an outfit traditionally worn by the Yoroba women of Nigeria – traditional

Chinese Cheongsam, a Boris Johnson impersonation and Irish leprechaun costumes.

After school was the INTERSOC fair in the Science Atrium with stalls representing different countries including Russia, Hong Kong, Australia and Kenya. There were snacks from across the globe, from Hong Kong-style sweet buns to Russian crêpes and Thai seaweed chips. I think it's safe to say that everyone left very full!

Lily Phillips and I would like to say a huge thank you to all the staff and students involved in the planning and execution of the week, and to everyone in the school community for participating so enthusiastically. It certainly was a success!





# In the News

A girl in the Fifth has set about helping her fellow pupils to better understand news and current affairs.

Sunniva Kelly has started producing a weekly bulletin in which she highlights some of the main news stories that she feels are relevant to girls at Benenden.

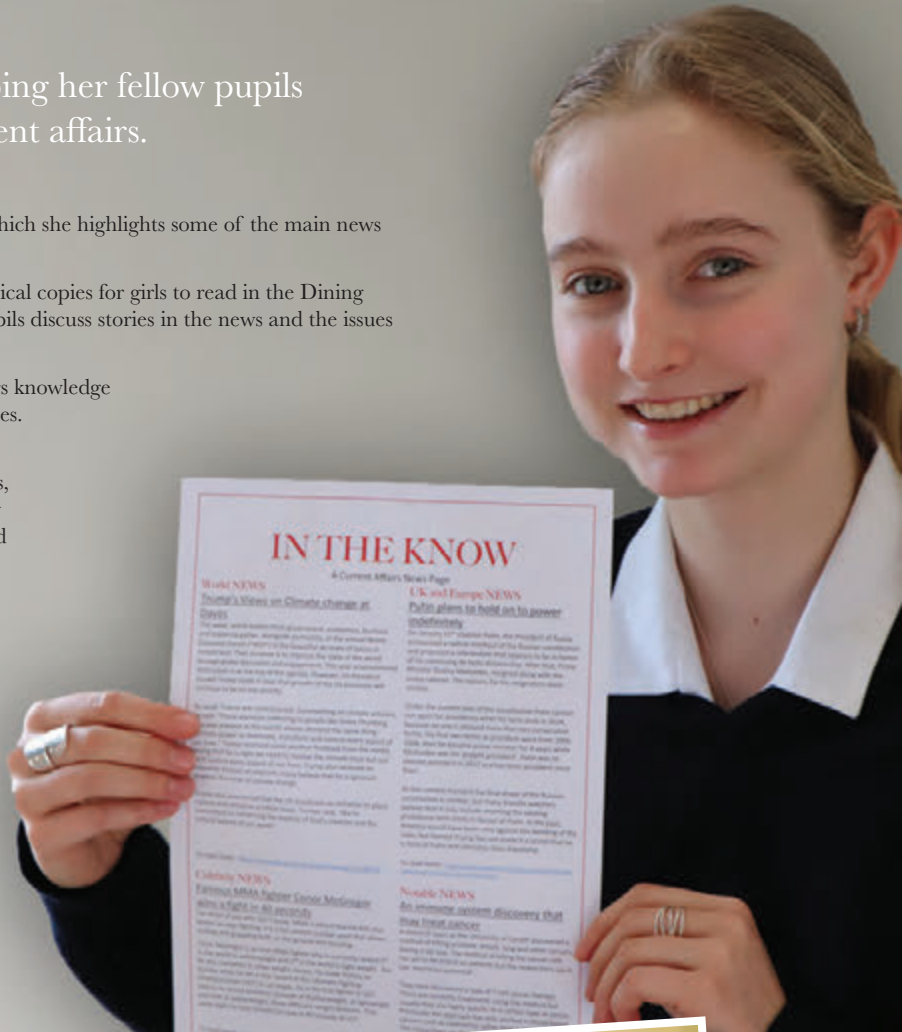
She emails the bulletin to all students and prints a few physical copies for girls to read in the Dining Hall. In addition, she has set up a weekly club in which pupils discuss stories in the news and the issues that arise from them.

Sunniva said: "I felt there was a slight lack of current affairs knowledge around the School because everyone has such busy schedules. Checking the news isn't one of our top priorities.

"The news is important because it's going to affect our lives, especially if something big happens. It's important to know what's going on in our surroundings and not just be focused on yourself. There are people who are really interested in the news but maybe they don't get the time to look at it."

Since producing her bulletin, Sunniva has been receiving strong feedback.

She said: "Some girls have come up to me and said, 'it's really helpful, I really like it'. Some of the older girls said they like it because they didn't have to go and find out what they wanted to know. It also challenges me to understand more about what these issues are all about."



## Southern Schools Book Awards

At the end of February the girls representing Benenden at The Southern Schools Book Awards attended the Awards Ceremony in Burgess Hill.

Schools across Kent and Sussex came together to celebrate the books they had read and voted for and found out this year's winner.

Authors read excerpts from their books, answered questions from the audience, and spoke about what inspired them to write their books.

They all mentioned how important an award judged by teenagers is, and how much more it means to them.

Chris Riddell illustrated the event with an array of drawings highlighting key sayings from the authors. Each student met the authors during the book signing. The winning title was *The Island* by M A Bennett.

Benenden girls involved in the scheme were Yosola Femi-Osinubi, Alexandra Hamilton, Jinn Ong, Amelia Roberts, Annabel Sismey and Darcey Stapleton.



Benenden's Southern Schools Book Award students



The girls meet Chris Riddell who illustrated the event



# New Pupils

## The girls who joined us in 2019/20

### Fourth

Fathia Abbas  
Sara Abualsaud  
Maia Balogun  
Tami Bankole  
Audrey Bao  
Eleanor Barnes  
Annabel Behrens  
Flora Bishop  
Soracha Boyle  
Camilla Cassidy  
Alexandra Cauter  
Olivia Ching  
Roselyn Chiu  
Eden David-Etuk  
Iris Deng  
Eliza Denning  
Tilly Elliott  
Ayotola Fowora  
Emma Griffiths  
Astrid Hall  
Phoebe Kinnings  
Esme Leasor  
Saphy Lees  
Georgina Millett  
Charlotte Murray  
Liana Olaseinde-Rhodes  
Annabel Peterkin  
Clemmy Rogers  
Ruby Ross-Bason  
Celia Royde  
Cara Sargaison  
Alice Sismey  
Hanna Spencer  
Skye Stapleton  
Salma Tinubu  
Elsie Wang  
Arielle Wolfsteiner

### Upper Fourth

Ava Charlton  
Natalie Cheng  
Iona Keyes  
Cherry Lam  
Ruth Okubajo  
Charlotte Wainford

### Lower Fifth

Juliet Alam  
Samira Amin  
Aleana Ariez  
Emma Beart  
Issey Blades  
Olivia Bourne  
Olivia Boyce  
Aurelia Branson  
Ava Chan

Chloe Chan  
Summer Chan

Scarlett Chow  
Emma Chua  
Octavia Dawson  
Sophia Djanogly  
Tilly Dymock  
Poppy Falcon  
Artemis Grant  
Santa Heaton  
Emily Hollands  
Amelia Human  
Charlotte James  
Imogen Kidd  
Sabella King  
Audrey Lee

Jade Lee  
Perdita Leighton  
Charlotte Lesslar  
Louisa Lesslar  
Germaine Luk  
Molly Martin-Jenkins  
Meg McKay  
Hailey McNally  
Alexandra Petkova  
Bella Rennie  
Horatia Tadman  
Mary Tian  
Nicole Vaktiskjold-Palm  
Maddy Warnes  
Claire Wong  
Magdalene Wong  
Nicole Wong  
Sadie Woodsell

### Fifth

Jade Chiu  
Kara Dimond  
Georgia Halsted  
Amelia Shen  
Kelly Wong

### Six One

Sophie Brokenshire  
Rebecca Halsted  
Seun Owolabi  
Aressa Raja Ridzwa  
Freya Ridgwell  
Chelsea Tsang  
Alicia Webb  
Weiya Xu  
Kimberly Yap  
Caroline Yu

## Scholarships Awarded in 2020

We are delighted to announce the award and acceptance of the following Scholarships.

### Academic

#### 11+

Alice Del Mar (West London Free School) The Gillian Du Charmé Academic Scholarship

Isabella Fletcher (Orchard House) The Catherine Nunneley Academic Scholarship

#### 13+

Namsai Chainuvati (Shrewsbury International) The Sir Hugh Collum Academic Scholarship

Isabel Deane (Cumnor House) The Sanger Academic Scholarship

Tatiana Gable (Orwell Park) The Ellen Winsor Academic Scholarship

Evie Hoffman (Thomas' Clapham) The Sir Hugh Collum Academic Scholarship

Amy Zhou (Highfield) The Robin Dalton Holmes Academic Scholarship

#### Sixth Form

Katarina Shing (St Paul's Convent, Hong Kong)

Jill Zhang (Streatham & Clapham High)

### Drama

Freya Barry (Cumnor House) The Sheldon Drama Scholarship

Claudia Collins (Newton Prep) The Hindle Drama Scholarship

Alice Campbell-Lambert (Benenden) The Hindle Drama Scholarship

Avril O'Leary (Benenden) The Hindle Drama Scholarship

Philippa Kearsey (Benenden) The Hindle Drama Scholarship

### Music

#### 11+

Kitty Cox (Felsted Prep) The Cynthia Gee Music Scholarship

#### 12+

Elsie Wang (Benenden) The Nash Music Scholarship

#### 13+

Nicole Lam (St Paul's Co-Ed Primary) The Barbara Findlay Trust Music Scholarship

Imogen Pearce (Walthamstow Hall) The Barbara Findlay Trust Music Scholarship

#### Sixth Form

Amelie Jat (Benenden) Benenden School Music Scholarship

### Art

Isabel Deane (Cumnor House) The Bird Art & Design Scholarship

Margot Femau (Vinehall) The Bird Art & Design Scholarship

Mary Witheridge (Ashdown House) The Bird Art & Design Scholarship

### Design and Technology

Lara Croucher (Benenden) Candy Chanyavongse Design & Technology Scholarship

### Sports

#### 11+

Lauralee Flagg (Esher CofE School) The Benenden Diploma Sports Scholarship

Marina Hindmarch (Thomas' Fulham) The Benenden Diploma Sports Scholarship

Florence Williams (Hurlingham School) The Benenden Diploma Sports Scholarship

#### 13+

Mimi Boyce (Bronwood Hall) The Rachel Close-Smith Sports Scholarship

Lara Gibbs (Benenden) The Rachel Close-Smith Sports Scholarship

Evie Hoffman (Thomas' Clapham) The Rachel Close-Smith Sports Scholarship

Atifah Pampam (Benenden) The Rachel Close-Smith Sports Scholarship

Elizabeth Smith (Benenden) The Rachel Close-Smith Sports Scholarship

Grace Taylor (Roedean) The Rachel Close-Smith Sports Scholarship

Charlotte Wainford (Benenden) Trampoline Award



# Farewell!

The 92 Six Two students we said goodbye to on Speech Day. We wish them all well in their chosen careers and welcome them as our newest Benenden Seniors.



Sasha Ariff



Ella Bachrach



Epernay Balcomb-Hellier



Michaela Balogun



Teniola Adesanya



Eliza Antelme



Emily Bradley



Emily Brown



Catalina Burguera



Anna Chan



Claudia Chan



Megan Chan



Yasmine Chiu



Ella Cohen



Santa Collins



Cordelia Cook



Sophie Cook



Lauren Croucher



Momoko Eliot



Lucy Elliot



Helena Emery



Elizabeth Fairweather



Jemima Ferrey



Izzy Gibbs



Charlotte Goodall



Madeleine Goodsell



Emma Gough-Cooper



Jessica Hainsworth



Lucy Hargrave



Hermione Harrison



Manon Hughes



Ayanda Hundah



Jess Johnson



Praew Kambhato



Yun Kim



Natalie Lam



Hetty Lawrence



Jade Lee



Annabel Little



Minty Loxton-Barnard



June Lu



Grace Mankelow





Livvy Mason



Mariola McElroy



Minna Moody-Stuart



Ireoluwa Morakinyo



Julia Nabavi



Anna Ni



Emily Norton



Georgie Nunn



Fikemi Olayinka



Ailis Osobase



Katie Perry



Lily Phillips



Millie Platts



Eleanor Rhodes



Charlotte Roberts



Holly Robertson



Izzy Salzedo



Hitomi Sato



Isabella Scott Wells



Alzbeta Seippel



Flora Shen



Ophelia Sheppard



Jacinta Smart



Clara Smith



Philippa Smith



Sophie Southall



Milly Street



Lauren Syn



Rosie Taggart



Summy Tai



Beatrice Tam



Mariena Teo



Stephanie Thain



Georgie Thompson



Kitty Thomson



Farida Tinubu



Tami Tinubu



Chloe Tung



Skye Turnbull



Amber Twyman



Laragh Vaughan



Antonia Webb



Connie Williams-Thomas



Issy Wilson



Emily Wong



Amy Woodthorpe



Poppy Worlidge



Dua Zaidi



# New Staff

Fifth pupil Kate Mellor interviewed our new Co-Chaplains, Revd Tracey Bateson and Revd Jack Bateson, to learn about their visions and goals for the School.



## Do you think religion plays a big part at Benenden?

**Tracey:** When we first heard of the opportunity to serve at Benenden School, we were impressed how Mind and Spirit is part of Benenden's Complete Education. We have been greatly encouraged by the way chaplaincy seems to be very much part of the School. This ranges from being part of Prayers each week, to offering weekly services on a Sunday evening – either whole School services or voluntary ones.

**Jack:** It is wonderful to see how many girls want to be confirmed. It has also been wonderful to see how popular Religious Studies is, both at GCSE and A Level, so there seems to be a real thirst to understand religion. We also hope to support anyone from other world faiths.

## How do you plan to make girls more engaged in the School service?

**Tracey:** Hopefully we will make the overall service inclusive to those with a strong faith, to these with none or indeed a different faith. We hope to work well with our House and Senior Sacristans to listen to them and any ideas which are forthcoming. Myself and Jack are different in how we seek to provide worship, so hopefully this variety will lend itself well to the girls.

**Jack:** We are aware of the challenge of trying to get girls from different backgrounds and ages to be engaged in services and we hope that we are approachable enough to receive any comments on this. We have a new comments box in the Chapel to facilitate this. We also look forward to being within our new hall which will lend itself to being able to provide different styles of services.

## Do you want to encourage more charitable work in the School, and if so how?

**Tracey:** Absolutely. We would really like to raise the profile of charitable work and to support girls who are involved with different charities. We have already been working with Six One pupils Izzy Selby and Fara Bakare and have formed a charity committee which will meet twice a term, everyone is welcome.

## What is your greatest personal achievement to date?

**Tracey:** Being a mummy to a wonderful boy who is now eight, or perhaps writing and publishing a book, *Forever Wrestling* by T J Bateson. As part of being a job share with Jack, I hope to have some time to write a second one.

**Jack:** Like Tracey, being a father is such a

privilege but also joining the Royal Navy as a reserve Chaplain has been quite a journey. During the Summer holidays I am going through my basic training.

## What's your favourite dish at Benenden?

**Jack:** Sadly having started during lockdown, I am yet to eat at Benenden. I have heard the brownies are divine!

**Tracey:** As a vegetarian, Meatless Mondays are amazing, but then I have to choose what to eat. My cooking at home as improved as I keep being inspired!



Our new Co-Chaplains experience their first Benenden Speech Day

## Selected other starters:

Piotr Adamczak  
Exercise and Fitness Trainer

Joanne Adams  
Resident Matron, Hemsted

Jenny Alston  
Teacher of Psychology

Lauren Barnett  
Multi-Media Coordinator

Daisy Burr  
Chef de Partie

James Graham  
Interim Bursar

Bethany Green  
Assistant Accountant

Rose Jones  
Purchase and Accounts Administrator

Amy Killick  
Exercise and Fitness Trainer

Jelena Kolos  
Teacher Placement - Spanish

Sarah Leighton  
Professional Skills Programme and  
Enterprise Co-ordinator

Sheela Mahadevan  
Visiting Teacher of German

Bella-Marie McPherson-Daniel  
Resident Matron

George Nicholls  
Chef de Partie

Jennifer Shaw  
Duty Nurse

Bella Winkley  
Graduate Intern

Ed Wright  
Teacher placement - Technologies

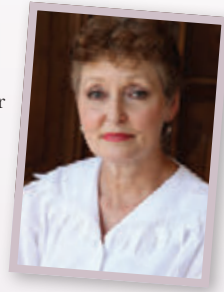


# Staff Farewells

## Jill Dowdell (25 years)

### *School Receptionist*

Jill has been a calm, reassuring presence in the School Office since 1995. For many staff and parents she will have been one of the first people they met when joining the School, and would have always been able to put them at their ease.



I know that she will be deeply missed by all her colleagues, but particularly by the School Office team. She has certainly earned a long, restful retirement after so many years as a loyal supporter of the School.

**By Steve Miller**

## Zena Mulholland (15 years)

### *Saturday House Assistant, Student Escort and Relief Matron*

Another chapter has come to an end: Zena Mulholland is retiring after many years at Benenden. In the beginning she was an important member of the Catering Department as a Chef, cooking and feeding the girls, sharing her passion and talent, creating many tasty meals. Zena decided to transfer to Front of House in the Dining Room, where she was a fantastic team player, always great fun to work with and had great empathy with the students and staff. The Catering team was sad to see her transfer over to the boarding houses but were glad she was still at the School.



She then climbed those much-loved red stairs and became a valuable member of the Hemsted team.

Every Saturday afternoon the girls took comfort in the fact that Zena was there in the Matron's office, always with a smile, a kind word and ready for a chat. We will all miss your colourful style, printed scarves and especially the glitter trainers!

Zena's quiet, gentle and comforting manner and support to the Hemsted family has been hugely appreciated. She is also a wonderful supportive mother and a devoted grandmother and so now her children and grandchildren, near and far, will enjoy more of her time. We wish Zena many wonderful adventures and happy moments with the ones she loves.

We send Zena our best wishes, a BIG Hemsted thank you and much luck for a fulfilling retirement.

**By Anne Wakefield**

## Stephanie Northridge (19 years)

### *Head of Economics*

Stephanie's stability and longevity in the post has certainly outstripped that of every Chancellor of the Exchequer – indeed it was Gordon Brown who was in post when Stephanie came to Benenden!

She cares deeply that every student understands the basics of how money works and of economic theory, and she is constantly deepening and refreshing her subject knowledge. She reads avidly and encourages the girls to do so too, and has steered many students towards their chosen university courses as well-read and enquiring financiers and economists.

She has tutored many teams in the national competitions, with many successes owing a debt to her teaching and enrichment. Her rigorous – some would say harsh! – marking, her high expectations and her insistence on accuracy and precision help her classes get to grips with the strict discipline of economics, and she also encourages fluency, range of references and conceptual understanding. She works hard to supply memorable examples and mnemonics for what could otherwise be dry, complex concepts.

Alongside her passion for economics and finance, Stephanie has been Riding Team Manager since 2011, leading the girls to a huge range of successes; indeed when others are on Exeat weekends, Stephanie is often driving girls and horses to dressage or show-jumping events.

We are very grateful that we have been able to retain her services at Benenden, where she will continue to teach part-time in the department alongside the new Head of Economics. However, her family and of course the horses will now receive a little more of Stephanie's time.

**By Lesley Tyler**



## Sue Lamberton (18 years)

### *Teacher of Music*

Sue Lamberton is probably the most dedicated and selfless teacher you could wish to meet, and in her long career at Benenden, countless students have benefitted from her skill, wisdom and patience. They, together with her colleagues, have relied heavily on a lightly worn technical expertise, particularly when it involved recording or composition. Moving into a shared office last year only increased the volume of IT questions sent in her direction, and I dread the day when Sue is not on hand to rescue us!

Sue has always shown immense creativity in the classroom, bringing music to life through practical and analytical work, and always bringing a memorable and quirky approach to a topic. Titles such as 'Are mashups a 21st Century Invention?' and 'Would Elizabeth I have danced the Macarena?' made for memorable projects. Beyond Key Stage 3, Sue's meticulous approach to teaching ensured that her GCSE classes were always very well prepared for their exams, and she has also taken enormous pride in her role as our theory guru, guiding numerous Benenden girls through this testing exam which is required for access to the upper ABRSM grades.

Sue's manifold interests away from Benenden, which include DIY, needlework, re-enactments and (we learned recently) blowing up garden gnomes, reassure me that there is little chance of boredom in retirement. Benenden's loss is the Faversham community's gain, and we wish Sue and Dave every happiness in the years to come.

**By Edward Whiting**





## Jeannie Mills (13 years)

### *Teacher of Mathematics*

After graduating in Mathematics and Statistics, Jeannie started her career in market research. While her daughters were growing up she worked as a lab technician in a school in Rye and she enjoyed this so much that she qualified as a teacher and taught locally (in Cranbrook and Bedgebury) before moving to Benenden.



She began here as a Mathematics tutor and very quickly became a permanent member of staff. She has made a huge contribution to the department, helping to establish the content still largely taught in Fourth and Upper Fourth and to raise the standard of Mathematics in these year groups so as to compare favourably with those entering Lower Fifth from prep schools. She has produced many very useful and effective resources which she has shared generously with colleagues and she has helped many students to achieve excellent results in her 13 years at Benenden.

At one stage Jeannie and her husband were keen sailors and she has always loved to travel. She is looking forward to having more time for her grandchildren, for further travel and for gardening. A loyal, dedicated and greatly respected teacher, Jeannie will be missed by girls and colleagues alike.

We wish her every happiness in her retirement.

**By Sue Gough**

## Ros Judd (8 years)

### *Subject Leader of German*

It is quite evident that Ros Judd is held in very high esteem by everyone who knows her. Joining Benenden in 2010 in an administrative role, she quickly established a reputation for possessing 'amazing knowledge' to the point of being a 'walking encyclopaedia' and having a huge capacity for creative and insightful thought.



Yet, it is as a brilliant German linguist and teacher that Ros has made her reputation at Benenden. Teaching across the entire academic spectrum, she has brought a high native competence in German consolidated by the seven years she spent in Germany fine-tuning her skills. Her natural warmth and good humour pervade her teaching approach, rendering her lessons highly interesting and always too short. Like all great teachers, Ros is very caring; this is a feature her students recognise and connect with giving the entire learning experience an almost family sentiment. For this reason alone, she will be sorely missed by her students. In addition, Ros' complete responsibility for the School's highly successful participation in the annual Language Olympiads should also be highlighted and congratulated.

I share with Ros a love of Australian beaches where she spent an envious ten years. As a result, she is an awesome swimmer and qualified scuba diving instructor. Moreover, this exposure to wonderful colour undoubtedly impacted her creativity and flair for design. She is an accomplished seamstress capable of designing and producing stunning apparel – a skill which many of her students have appreciably learned.

From everyone at Benenden, Ros, enjoy your retirement and please keep in touch.

**By Suzanne Burton**

## Rebecca Wambeek (10 years)

### *Relief Matron*

Rebecca has been at Benenden since 2010 and we are so very grateful for all the support she has given to the School, particularly in the boarding houses.

We will very much miss her calm and composed approach along with her warm sense of humour. We wish Rebecca all the very best for the future.

**By Anne Wakefield**



## Jo Coombe Jones (9 years)

### *Junior Science Technician*

Jo joined Benenden in November 2011 and quickly became a valued member of the technicians team, working across both Junior Science and Chemistry.

Jo's first few years at Benenden were spent working in the old Leelands science block where she and I had to work very closely together, as the prep room that we shared was only about two metres wide and three metres long!

Jo was a great team player and we developed a strong working relationship, as well as becoming good friends outside of the working environment.

Jo is someone that enjoys helping others and there have been many instances during my time at Benenden where Jo has gone above and beyond her role, to provide the best possible learning experience for students. She has played an integral part in making many of our STEM events and conferences happen, supporting not only the practical side of things, but acting as an administrative assistant, personal guide and even in some instances, taxi driver!

Jo's can-do attitude has been a great help to teaching staff and her intimate knowledge of the workings of the photocopier machine will be sadly missed by a number of people (Mr Heron in particular) but joking apart, Jo has been the nicest, warmest, most accommodating and hard-working person I have ever had the pleasure to work with and the whole department will miss her immensely.

We wish her luck in whatever she chooses to do next and ask her to please keep in touch with us all.

**By Sue Harris**

## Yifu Zhao (7 years)

### *Teacher of Mandarin*

It was a sunny afternoon seven years ago when Yifu - then working in Vietnam and sporting a tropical blouse, student glasses and a long ponytail - impressed everyone via Skype with her passionate voice, energetic body language and jingly giggles.

We had already interviewed a strong Chinese teaching candidate beforehand but with Yifu, who had just completed her PGCE and was yet to do her NQT, we felt we could nurture her into someone special.

Seven years on and Yifu is a fully qualified and experienced Mandarin teacher, a key member of a successful team, who has married her first love and who now has a beautiful baby boy. It has certainly been a fruitful seven years for Yifu and all the people working with her.

Yifu once said to me that she didn't want to grow up and life must be filled with joy. I know she is ready now to sail away with her family on an adventure into the future, with all the joys and challenges that await her. Bon voyage, Yifu and we all wish you much happiness and success!

**By Alice Webb**





## Neville Crouch (7 years)

### *Director of STEM*

I would like to reflect on two aspects of Neville Crouch. First of all, on his absolute dedication as a Design and Technology subject leader and then more recently as leader of STEM. He is one of those teachers who is completely passionate about his subject and instilling this passion in his students and helping them recognise that successful outcomes come from hard work and learning from mistakes. As Head of Design Technology, Neville transformed the curriculum to have more of an engineering focus and he naturally took tremendous pride in the designs and finished products achieved by the girls. The annual end of year Design and Technology exhibition was testament to this.

Secondly, and on a more personal level, I would also like to pay tribute to Neville for the fact that he hasn't been very well at all for the last two years but he has been incredibly brave during his illness and, again, has been a great example to all of us of showing real positivity, even through these very challenging personal times. I, for one, admire him tremendously for that, as well of course for being a very fine teacher indeed.

We thank Neville enormously for all that he has done for Benenden and wish him and his family our love and best wishes for the future.

by **Samantha Price**



## Rachel Johns (6 years)

### *Guldeford Housemistress and Teacher of Psychology*

Rachel Johns joined Benenden as Housemistress in Guldeford in September 2014 and quickly established herself as a warm, kind caring Housemistress with a firm but fair approach.

The girls speak very fondly of Rachel and how she supports and encourages them whilst also ensuring they have opportunities to develop confidence and responsibility. She is exceptionally well organised with an eye for precision.

She will be greatly missed by us all and we wish her every success in her new role at Gordonstoun and on the imminent arrival of Rachel's and Barry's baby. Exciting times ahead! Thank you for all you have done.

By **Anne Wakefield**



## Ann Befroy (5 years)

### *Beeches Housemistress and Teacher of Spanish*

Ann Befroy joined Benenden in September 2015 as Head of Modern Languages. Ann then moved to Beeches as Deputy Housemistress in September 2018, stepping up to Housemistress in September 2019.

She has been a tremendous support and role model to the girls in her care, with the ability to encourage and help them make balanced decisions and prepare them for life beyond Benenden.

Ann and her family will be greatly missed by us all at Benenden, but we wish her every success for her future as she returns home to America. Thank you for all you have done.

By **Anne Wakefield**



## John McParland (10 years)

### *Principal, The John Wallis Church of England Academy*

Although not a member of Benenden staff, John is someone we've worked very closely with over many years and he retires at the end of this very strange term.

John has been Principal of The John Wallis Academy for ten years and he has absolutely transformed that school community; he's had a tremendous impact with his kindness, his absolute commitment to every single pupil who goes through his school. He's also been a fervent supporter of everyone at Benenden and the wonderful partnership that we have between our two schools.

John - everybody at Benenden is going to miss you tremendously; we wish you every happiness in your future retirement and all the very best of luck.

By **Samantha Price**



## Thank you to our Weekend Programme Team!



Emma Wright



Holly Clarke



Milly Jones

## Selected Other Leavers

**William Carpenter (5 years)**  
**Chef de Partie**

**Barry Imms (5 years)**  
**Teacher of Mathematics and Head of Outdoor Education and DofE Award**

**Caroline Belt (4 years)**  
**Payroll Administrator**

**Sally Bennie (4 years)**  
**Associate Support Staff**

**Fran Clent (4 years)**  
**School Office Manager**

**Fred Davies (4 years)**  
**Director of Estates**

**Steve Mandaluff (4 years)**  
**Multi-Media Coordinator**

**Karen Williams (4 years)**  
**Resident Matron**

**Aisha Dudhia (3 years)**  
**Teacher of Economics**

**Gabriella Swart (3 years)**  
**Exercise and Fitness Teacher**

**Sophie Hewitt (2 years)**  
**Teacher of Sport**

**Jonathan Pennick (2 years)**  
**Head of IT**

**Owen Smith (2 years)**  
**Exercise and Fitness Trainer**

**Craig Hayward (1 year)**  
**Chef de Partie**

**Lucy Maunsell (1 year)**  
**HR Administrator (Maternity Cover)**

**Sarah Reader (1 year)**  
**Purchase and Accounts Administrator**





# School Officials

Head Girl ..... Issy Wilson  
 Captains of School . . . . . Teniola Adesanya and Charlotte Roberts  
 Academic Mentors .... Minna Moody-Stuart and Clara Smith  
 Arts ..... Ella Cohen  
 Equality and Diversity..... Lily Phillips and Farida Tinubu  
 Guiding ..... Skye Turnbull  
 Outreach and Academy Liaison..... Cordella Cook  
 Pupil Support ..... Eliza Antelme, Kitty Thomson  
 ..... and Poppy Worlidge  
 Sports..... Minty Loxton-Barnard

## Heads of House

Echyngnam Head ..... Chloe Tung  
 Echyngnam Deputy ..... Amy Woodthorpe  
 Guldeford Head ..... Hermione Barnes  
 Guldeford Deputy ..... Connie Williams-Thomas  
 Hemsted Head..... Charlotte Goodall  
 Hemsted Deputy..... Ophelia Sheppard  
 Marshall Head..... Izzy Gibbs  
 Marshall Deputy..... Sophie Southall  
 Medway Head..... Grace Mankelow  
 Medway Deputy..... Katie Perry  
 Norris Head ..... Lauren Syn  
 Norris Deputy..... Jessica Hainsworth

## School Sacristans

Echyngnam ..... Marianne Balogun  
 Guldeford..... Tilly Robertson and Tati Martin  
 Hemsted ..... Poppy Goslett and Lily Locke  
 Marshall..... Annabel Thomas and Amelie Moffatt  
 Medway..... Susannah Southall and Temi Owolabi  
 Norris..... Tiffany Ayankogbe and Clemmie Simpkin

School Librarians ..... Anna Kane and Keara McKie

## Other leavers

In addition to the Six Twos who left us on Speech Day, here we say farewell to the Upper Fifts who are leaving us at the end of this term

Kitty Bedford  
 Tatty Berrill  
 Niamh Hughes  
 Tati Martin

Maddie McDonald  
 Tilly Robertson  
 Parc Ki Tse  
 Mary Zhang





# Speech Day 2020

Over the next six pages, we celebrate perhaps the most memorable final day in Benenden's history.



# Speech Day Broadcast Live

Parents, pupils, staff and members of the Benenden community enjoyed a unique Speech Day event, as the ceremony was produced virtually for the first time.

Hundreds of families from across the world logged on to enjoy the day online as many of the traditional Speech Day elements were reproduced on Microsoft Teams.

Groups of Six Two girls held special Speech Day viewing parties, creating a thoroughly enjoyable and emotional day to remember.

As ever, the occasion began for our departing Six Two with their traditional Leavers' Service. Broadcast live from the Chapel, it was an inspiring and energetic service featuring readings, hymns, an archive performance from our 90th anniversary celebrations and even aerobics led by Revd Tracey. Girls were also pleasantly surprised by a guest experience from our previous Chaplain, Father Huxley-Jones.

The main event, the ceremony for the entire School, replicated the traditional marquee – albeit on a smaller scale. The ceremony was broadcast live from a tent inside the Science Atrium.

Accompanied by a miniature version of the floral arch, Mrs Price's opening words set the tone for the event when she declared: "Today is an exciting day: it's the 4th of July – Independence Day! Today means that I can go and get my hair cut, go to the pub, go to the cinema, go and visit friends and...move closer than two metres to the Chairman!"

Mrs Anna Birkett, the Chairman of Governing Council, then gave a memorable speech in which she considered the changes that we have all adjusted to in the past few months (see over the page for more details).

Mrs Price then commended the girls and staff on how well they have adapted in the current circumstances, and on the determination they have shown to continue to strive for success. She said she is always learning from colleagues and the girls, citing particular examples of the eco-committee and the Black Lives Matter movement.

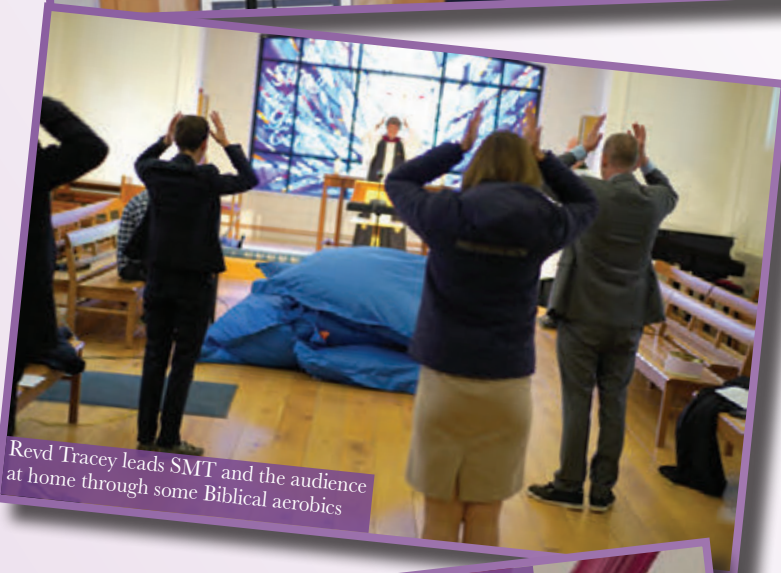
Parents and families then enjoyed a range of different video messages from pupils and staff. This included a special video celebrating the year in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), the traditional picture montage covering the highlights from the past academic year and a unique rendition of the School's hymn, with a video montage of girls singing from around the world (which we had to have two attempts at broadcasting when computer gremlins on the first occasion proved to the audience that we were indeed live!).

Several members of the Senior Management Team took to the lectern to announce the winners of academic and School prizes.

After the Head Girl's speech, Mrs Price introduced one final tradition – the floral arch. The audience enjoyed a special video of the Six Twos waving goodbye through a virtual floral arch, before they walk through the floral arch for real when they return for a special leavers' day on 9 December. In a touching moment, this tradition was recreated by Six Twos in gardens and hotel rooms across the globe at their Speech Day parties.

Mrs Price bid a fond farewell to both the Six Two girls and retiring members of staff, before the event concluded with a thoroughly entertaining video collated by the Head Girl, Issy Wilson, showcasing staff and pupils' experience of lockdown. (See also pages 17-19).

Mrs Price introduces the special miniature floral arch



Revd Tracey leads SMT and the audience at home through some Biblical aerobics

Ella Cohen, Poppy Worlidge, Momoko Eliot and Lucy Hargrave celebrate the Class of 2020



The magnificent cake at the Hong Kong Speech Day party



Hetty Lawrence and Lily Phillips





## An Historic Headmistress' Speech

**Extracts from the speech given by Mrs Price.**

### A Year of Firsts

"As we come to the end of this academic year, it has been nothing other than a year of firsts: for some their first year, for us all the first time that we have experienced a lockdown, the first time we have operated our school completely online, the first time GCSE and A Levels have been cancelled, the first time our Six Two have left with a leaving gift of loo roll and their Head dressed up as a pea to wave them off and the first time of course that Speech Day has been delivered with no girls or parents on site."



Mrs Price meets this year's floral arch!

### Binds us Together

"No academic year can close without this occasion where we mark the events of the year, we celebrate individual and collective successes, we say our thank yous and our farewells and above all we reflect on what this community – the Benenden community – means to all of us: not just a physical place but as an entity that binds us together, supports and nurtures us, whether we are returning next term or moving on."

### Resilience

"Whilst you may not have felt this in the past few months as your lives as you know them have been on hold during lockdown, you have in fact managed, navigated, and adapted more in this past year than you would perhaps imagine you could."

### Inspire Others

"And so this year, we have learnt to grapple, to be more agile, to be more resilient, empathetic and understanding – all of which have and will continue to make us more adaptable, stronger and ultimately more confident, without of course losing our humbition!"

"To the Six Twos – my first full year group through as Head – you are a wonderful group of girls who have given so much to Benenden over the years and shown yourselves this year to be true leaders of the School. I am so sorry that we aren't celebrating with you all this week but I look forward to welcoming you back in December."

"Now take your many talents and all that you have learned here and go out and make it your responsibility to make the communities in which you live and work in the future, better places – you certainly have the characters to be able to do this."



Philippa Smith, Issy Wilson and Cordelia Cook enjoy their own floral arch

Eliza Antelme and Katie Perry recreate the Founders' Bar for their viewing of the event



Hermione Barnes and Georgie Nunn



Emily Brown, Laragh Vaughan, Izzy Gibbs and Milly Street



# Head Girl's Speech

## Issy Wilson on roofs, rollercoasters and remembering.

After finishing seven years of boarding at Benenden, I know that I have made friends for life. It is something that is said every year, but I didn't truly understand it until my last few years at school. We have all had many bumps in the road throughout our time but the way in which Benenden supports us through these times, I believe, is unique. The camaraderie that holds us all together and enables us to stand strong for each other and for ourselves is something that I will always remember.

I started Benenden as a Hemsted Fourth, in a layer of six. We did all the usual things that crazy Fourths do including dormie raiding, building dens in the Rose Garden and driving our House staff into early retirement. Not sure what it was exactly but by the time us six left Hemsted, and two Hms later, there wasn't a single member of original staff remaining.

Safe to say we didn't get that much more mature as we got older and as the toll of GCSEs hit, we relished in the newfound freedom of 'Toptop' – the corridor at the top of Hemsted ruled by the Upper Fifts.

Just to make sure that we were following the tradition of many generations before us in Hemsted, and every other boarding school, we thought it would be a great idea to all go on the roof together on the last night of term. This resulted in 16 of us trooping out onto the roof, trying not to make any noise but as you can guess, was somewhat inevitable. Next day was Speech Day, so we were quite relieved that we didn't have to hang around for too long to find out our punishment, but it was waiting for us when we got back, a great start to Sixth Form.

After making many mistakes throughout Benenden, and improving upon them, I have continued to learn more and more about myself and those around me. This year, I have absolutely loved working with the Grey Jumpers and the whole of the Senior Management Team.

One of the Grey Jumper goals for the year was to increase public speaking in the younger years and even though we couldn't fulfil our plans to resume Benenden ACE Talks, we have established Junior ACE which will hopefully continue as well as the Benenden podcast, The Bubble. Sadly, many more projects and events were also cancelled or fell short due to the lost time at school, but we will be handing down the plans to the next round of Grey Jumpers to finish off.

I would particularly like to say a big thank you to Mrs Price. She wholly stands behind the students and would do anything in her power to enrich the lives of those in her care. Mrs Price has the most hectic schedule I have ever seen and cares immensely for the pupils.



Seven years really has flown by, so don't take your time at Benenden for granted. Benenden has created an extraordinary group of young women who are ready to face the real world. We have had lots of ups and lots of downs but hand in hand we have made it through. Even though we never actually sat any A Levels, I'm confident that we are equipped with all of the other skills that we need to face life's challenges.

We are quite a feisty and determined bunch who know how to get things done. The photos of us in Fourths and Lower Fifts that are resurfacing on various platforms at the moment remind us all of how far we've come.

We've changed for the better and recognise how precious each moment is. Whether it's making pancakes on the weekend, learning how to fix a plug, jumping out of a plane, or starting a business, Benenden has given me a huge amount to be thankful for and proud of. A secure environment to test the boundaries, but also to grow and develop ourselves, as women to face the future.

I don't think that anyone is going to forget the year of 2020. We're definitely not going to forget the rollercoaster ride we've been on and will cherish our friendships forever. I could not have asked for a better year group and I want to thank each and every one of you. From the bottom of my heart I am going to miss you all hugely and know that in whichever walk of life that we take, between us, we will achieve outstanding things. We will always be Benenden Girls. Thank you.

Issy's speech was a true highlight of the virtual Speech Day





# The Chairman of Governing Council

An edited version of Anna Birkett's speech.

Speech Day is always an occasion for celebration and some farewells. But importantly, it is a chance to reflect on the year just ending. And it has been quite a year! It feels as though 'Change' has been the order of the day but it is worth remembering that over half of the Benenden year was spent in normal – 'old normal' – times before Covid entered all our lives.

But alongside all this change there is also much continuity; Benenden lessons have continued, albeit in a very different way, and so have many other aspects of school life. Today the school buildings and grounds look just as they would on a normal Speech Day – but we are missing you and the noise and buzz you create. And finally, the Benenden Brownie is alive and well! In short, although we have been physically separated from each other, the Benenden community remains just that and the friendships and rituals which bind us together as "a great Company" continue to do so.

As always change and continuity have been central to our work on Governing Council this year. Ensuring that Benenden

remains an enduringly relevant and successful community is one of our core responsibilities as, together with Mrs Price and the SMT, we chart the School's course. Sometimes change is needed to enable the School to evolve to meet the needs of a constantly changing world but in doing so we know it must remain true to its founding principles. The ongoing redevelopment of the Hall and Music School and the recent announcement that day boarding places are to be offered from next year are examples of changes which are rooted in our commitment to keep Benenden relevant while making sure that the Benenden of the future still feels like the school we all know today and which previous generations have known for nearly 100 years.

My final thought is for those of you who are, metaphorically rather than literally this year, about to walk under the floral arch; part of the rite of passage that is leaving School. Your last few days as pupils have not been able to be filled with the usual leaving gatherings and rituals. We

Anna Birkett, Chairman of Governing Council



would all have wished it to be different but as I prepared for today I realised that I actually don't remember my last few days at Benenden at all, although I have many very clear memories of my days here as a whole. I have certainly never forgotten the School or felt that it has forgotten me. So what matters most, and what will remain with you in the future as much as you decide it should, is that you have been and will continue to be part of the Benenden community. I wish you every happiness and success.

## Advertisement



**Providing Marquees and Event Services for Weddings, Parties, Schools, Corporate and Sporting Events, Storage and Film Production since 1999.**

[www.2intents.co.uk](http://www.2intents.co.uk)

[sales@2intents.co.uk](mailto:sales@2intents.co.uk)

0800 6446551



# Prizewinners, As Announced on Speech Day

## Academic Prizes

### Fourth

Audrey Bao (Latin, Spanish)  
Eleanor Barnes (French)  
Annabel Behrens (English, Philosophy and Religion)  
Soracha Boyle (DT)  
Phoebe Kinnings (Art)  
Georgina Millett (Drama, History)  
Charlotte Murray (Science)  
Clemmy Rogers (Geography)  
Ruby Ross-Bason (Computing, Mandarin)  
Elsie Wang (Mathematics, Music)

### Upper Fourth

Lara Croucher (DT)  
Martha Dutton (Geography)  
Olivia Hall (Mandarin)  
Izzy Hasson (Science)  
Philippa Kearsey (Music)  
Iona Keyes (French)  
Amelia Lyle (History, Latin)  
Victoire Mons (Computing)  
Alice Pearce (Spanish)  
Dina Power (English, Mathematics)  
Amelia Simpson (Art)  
Clemmie Thomas (Drama, Philosophy and Religion)

### Lower Fifth

Ava Chan (Chemistry, History)  
Octavia Dawson (French, Music)  
Artemis Grant (Latin)  
Freya Hollaway (Art)  
Audrey Lee (Biology, Computing)  
Jade Lee (Mathematics, Philosophy and Religion)

Charlotte Lesslar (Mandarin)  
Louisa Lesslar (DT)  
Lauren Nathanson (Drama)  
Jessica Penny (Geography)  
Milly Smith (Spanish)  
Darcey Stapleton (Greek)  
Sarah Witheridge (Physics)  
Claire Wong (English, German)

### Fifth

Katie Bradley (Biology)  
Sophia Cauter (Latin)  
Katie Chapman (Greek)  
Alicia Cheng (Physics)  
Caitlin Chiu (Chemistry, Philosophy and Religion)  
Lara Forbes (Art)  
Georgia Halsted (English, Mathematics and the Vanessa Lloyd-Davies Science Award)  
Sunniva Kelly (Spanish)  
Eloise King (Music)  
Charlotte Lai (Geography)  
Amelia Lowis (Mandarin)  
Scarlett Mansfield (Classical Civilisation, French)  
Annabel Thomas (DT)  
Zara Warne (Computing, History)  
Alice Wormington (Drama)

### Upper Fifth

Marianne Balogun (French)  
Imogen Cleary (Music)  
Honor Gibbs (English, Philosophy and Religion)  
Esme Heath (Drama)  
Milly Hollaway (Art)  
Issy Horner (Biology)  
Lily Locke (History, Spanish)  
Lila May (German)  
Sophie Moody-Stuart (DT, Greek)  
Rebecca Smith (PE)  
Eliza Stevenson-Hamilton (Computing, Geography)  
Parc Ki Tse (Chemistry, Physics)  
Lavinia Webb (Latin, Mathematics)

### Six One

Alia Al Sabah (Italian)  
Sophie Apthorp (Theatre Studies)  
Sophia Chau (Chemistry)  
Lexie Dykes (History of Art)  
Loulou Enright (Art)  
Annabelle Grut (Latin)  
Saiesha Gupta (Further Mathematics, Physics)  
Rebecca Halsted (Economics)  
Poppy Heslop (History)  
Freya Hunter (PE)  
Amelie Jat (Greek, Music)  
Abigail Levack (Psychology)  
Daisy Lillingston-Paterson (Philosophy and Religion)  
Hazel Lockey (French)  
Bee McDougall (English Literature)  
Jessica Platts (Politics, Spanish)

Freya Ridgwell (DT)  
Imogen Trill (English Language/Literature)  
Zara Webb (Geography)  
Amelie Woolf (Biology)  
Caroline Yu (Mathematics)

### Six Two

Teniola Adesanya (German)  
Sasha Ariff (Mandarin)  
Kemi Bower (Physics)  
Anna Chan (Politics)  
Ella Cohen (English Literature)  
Momoko Eliot (History of Art)  
Helena Emery (Spanish)  
Izzy Gibbs (Psychology)  
Jess Johnson (English Language/Literature)  
Annabel Little (PE)  
Minna Moody-Stuart (Economics)  
Lily Phillips (Chemistry)  
Millie Platts (Geography)  
Rosie Taggart (Biology)  
Kitty Thomson (French)  
Skye Turnbull (Philosophy and Religion)  
Antonia Webb (Latin)  
Emily Wong (Mathematics)

## School Prizes

The Micklethwaite Art Prize	Grace Mankelow
The Arabella McDonald Figurine for Character Acting	Daisy Lillingston-Paterson
The Mavis Leapman Cup for Drama	Anna Stuttaford
The Design and Technology Cup	Charlotte Roberts
The Jessamy James Essay Prize	Sophie Cook
The Elizabeth Hilliard Award	Teniola Adesanya
The Cameron Prize for Mathematics	Minna Moody-Stuart
The Jowitt Prize for Languages	Teniola Adesanya
The Rena Rodopoulous Prize	Antonia Webb
The Southern Shelley History Prize	Anna Chan
The Chandler Humanities Prize	Izzy Salzedo
The Montgomery Award for Junior Music	Caitlin Chiu
The Smith Cup for Senior Music	Ella Cohen
The Baker Prize for Music	Sophie Southall
The Dr Peter Lewis Science Prize	Phoebe Kinnings
The Grootenhuis Science Award	Summy Tai
The Lloyd-Davies Science Prize	Emily Wong
The Lower School Sport Cup	Ena Clarke
The Middle School Sport Cup	Katie Chapman
The Laura Maurice Victrix Ludorum Cup	Minty Loxton-Barnard
The Pearson Cup	Freya Hollaway
Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award	Ella Cohen
	Charlotte Goodall
	Lucy Hargrave
	Annabel Little
	Minty Loxton-Barnard
	Katie Perry
	Ophelia Sheppard
	Manon Hughes
The Major Vanessa Lloyd-Davies Sword of Honour	

The Driver Cup	Freya Hollaway
The Prakash Shield	Scarlett Mansfield
The Pippa Nevard Cup	Ursula Rowe
The Greenfield Community Cup	Eliza Antelme
	Kitty Thomson
The Devereux Prizes	
The Lily Devereux Prize	Alice Halblander-Smyth
The Wong Wong Lo Fong Prize	Emily Campbell Lambert
The Kitching Babalakin Prize	Elizabeth Fairweather
The Cherry Environmental Prize	Roya Power
The Goolden Prize	Marianne Balogun
The Bateman Performance Arts Award	Sophie Southall
The Harry Salmon Cup for Enterprise – Prison Pizza Team	
	Matilda Clarke
	Dara Shonubi
	Amelia Harris
	Lily Thornton
	Lily Maclean Bather
	JB van Pelt
	Bee McDougall
	Caroline Yu

### The Fuller Prize



Teniola Adesanya

### The Sacha and Susannah Stephen Award



Issy Wilson



# Behind the Scenes of Speech Day

**The broadcast itself may have looked (relatively) slick, but there was a great deal of activity going on behind the scenes at both the leavers' service and the ceremony itself.**

The Speech Day tent – masquerading as a marquee on Guldeford Green, if the opening drone footage was to be believed – was actually located in the Science Atrium, with a smattering of socially distanced chairs alongside for the presenters and technical support staff.

To the audience at home, the tent may have projected an aura of serenity but Mrs Price and her senior colleagues were presenting live while surrounded by cables, cameras, microphones, lights and a bank of screens, which were manned by two members of the IT team.

The complexity of jumping between live presenting, different camera angles, pre-recorded videos and displaying slides alongside the speakers, was enormous – not to mention trying to ensure all those waiting for their turn at the lectern remained silent throughout the 90-minute broadcast!

In addition, the sheer workload of creating so many videos to show during the two events was incredible. Dozens, if not hundreds, of hours of staff and pupils' time went into producing these videos, which we hope made the events feel as interactive – and as fun – as possible.



The final touches before going on air!



The equipment took three days to install



The leavers' service in full flow - note the giant cushions to absorb sound



The audience was tiny compared to our usual event in the marquee



Mrs Price opens the live proceedings



Every moment was planned to the last detail



Mrs Price and Mrs Birkett show off our special 2020 arch



The presenters relax before facing the cameras

## Virtual Speech Day by numbers

- 3 separate cameras
- 19 inches – height of the floral arch
- 13 hours spent creating the arch
- 173 separate clips submitted by staff and girls for the lockdown video
- 426 individual logons to the ceremony (with multiple viewers at each screen)
- 72 individual steps in the technical running order
- 4 people in the tent at any one time (the usual marquee seats 1,700!)

- 1 rehearsal for the presenters the day before
- 5 computers powering the Speech Day ceremony
- 0 heels allowed on the day, to ensure silence!
- 12 different pre-recorded videos created
- 1 technical glitch, when the sound refused to play on the hymn the first time round (despite having happily worked during the leavers' service earlier!)
- 1 live guest presenter (Father Huxley-Jones)
- 13 different Biblical aerobics moves learnt during the service



4 June: The new buildings will be a wonderful addition to Benenden's site

# The New School Hall and Music School

Exciting progress has been made on the School's new facilities.

Despite the challenges we have all faced recently, providing a Complete Education – both now and in the future – for every pupil has remained the main objective for the School. And looking to the future, the School remains focused on the realisation of the Heart of Benenden project and bringing to life the fantastic designs of what will be the new School Hall and Music School.

Since the last project update, where we began to see the new School Hall and Music School really start to take shape, further significant progress has been made on the building despite the coronavirus pandemic. As you can see in the latest

pictures here, great strides have been made in bringing this wonderful vision to life.

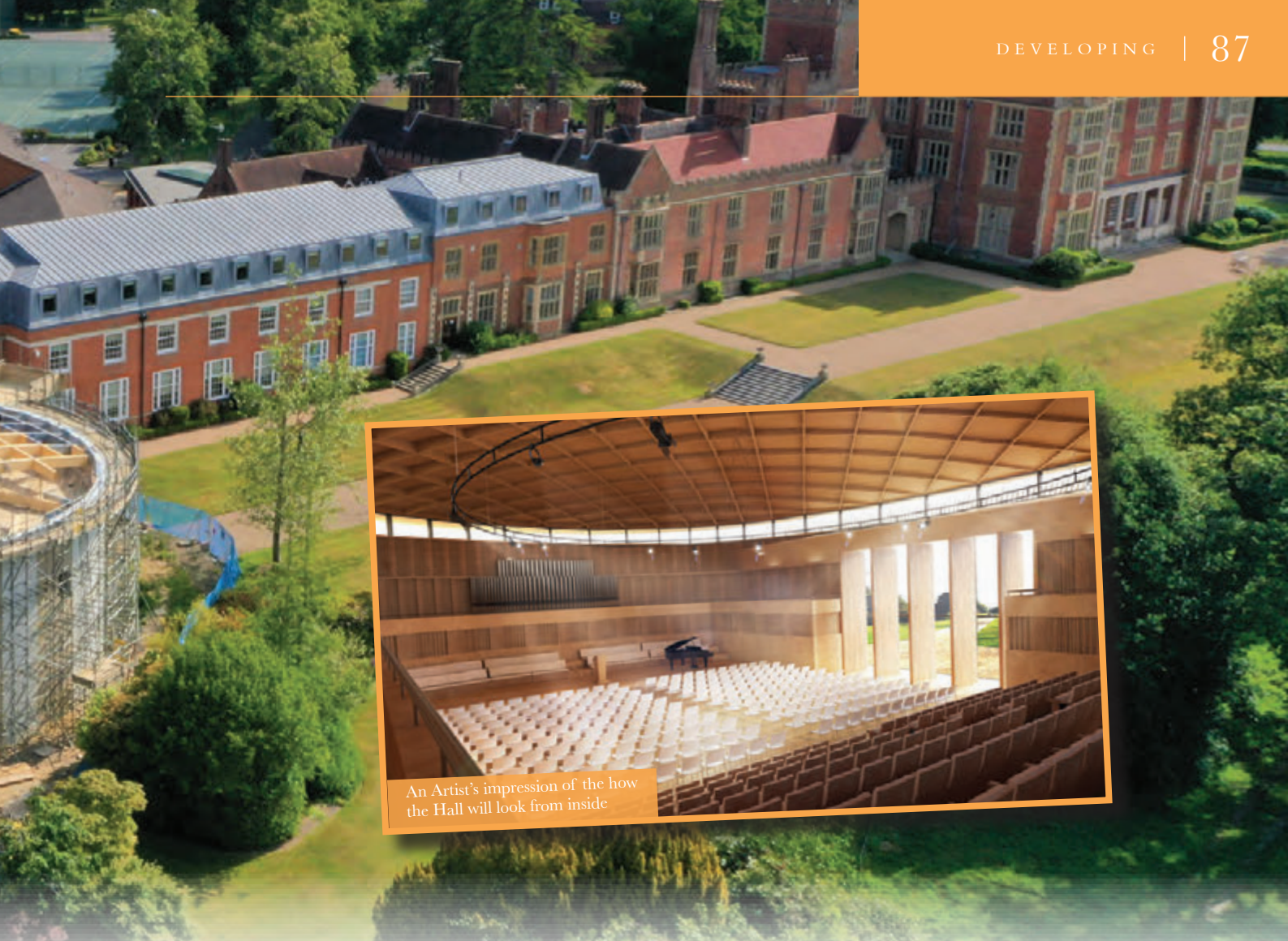
The walls of the Hall now stand tall and the building is starting to become a reality. The next key milestone is ensuring the structure is watertight and the significant stage of installing the roof is underway.

The completion of this project will be a momentous occasion for the School for many reasons. As well as providing a place where all staff and pupils will be able to convene every day for Prayers, the new Hall will be home to many important rites of passage for the girls, from that very first service on their first day here at Benenden,

to their last Mark Reading in Six Two before they embark on their future. The new School Hall is sure to secure a place in the girls' hearts and memories forever.

The School is tremendously grateful for the generosity that has been shown in support of the Heart of Benenden project. Without the extraordinary generosity of members of our community this exciting new chapter in the history of the School would not have been possible. We very much look forward to sharing the next update with you all in due course, as we witness the creation of the new Heart of Benenden.





An Artist's impression of the how the Hall will look from inside



4 May: The walkway between the two buildings is taking shape



20 April: Preparing for the roof installation



22 June: The Music School cladding is now being fitted



9 June: The installation of the diagrid roof is underway





The 1st team were delighted to finish as runners-up

*"The Lacrosse Nationals taught us that if everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself. The adrenaline, tears and enjoyment made Lacrosse Nationals 2020 an unforgettable experience."*

**Fara Bakare, Six One**

## Lacrosse

With a strong history in the National Schools Lacrosse Championships, we went into the competition with high expectations and the girls didn't disappoint.

**Sarah Bayne Cup  
for Lacrosse**  
**Saskia Willetts**

With Saturday's play cancelled due to the weather, the initial two-day National Schools Lacrosse Championships tournament was rescheduled to take place on one day at Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre.

Our **1st Team** put in a fantastic effort and came just short of claiming the highest honour in schools Lacrosse, reaching the Final and ending as runners-up after losing to a strong Wycombe Abbey team.

After making their way through their group, the 1st Team were involved in some nail-biting encounters in the knockout stages, winning each of their last 16, quarter-final and semi-final matches by just a single goal, including an excellent victory in the semi-final against Berkhamsted School – last year's champions.

The Final proved to be a step too far with Wycombe Abbey securing a 4-0 win, but the girls can feel very proud to be runners-up in the most prestigious schools Lacrosse tournament in the country.

Our **U15A team** also performed excellently – convincingly emerging from the group stages and progressing through the knockout

stages before being narrowly beaten in the semi-finals by Guildford High School.

Our **U15C team** can also be proud of their efforts – showing great character to compete in the U15A section.

Our **U14A team** also made it to the National Championship last 16 after progressing from their group, before losing an exciting game against Caterham School 5-4.

The **2nd and 3rd Lacrosse squads** had also been preparing well for their tournament and were coming into excellent form at the end of February. Sadly, both tournaments were postponed due to the weather. The re-arranged day proved tricky for Benenden as it fell on our Exeat at late notice. Nevertheless, we managed to get two squads to the one-day event held at St Swithun's School.

The 2nd team did really well with no substitutes. They showed great character to win matches in their pool, and were eventually knocked out by St Catherine's, who went on to win the tournament. The 3rd team also contended with a small squad, but battled valiantly to

progress to the semi-final stage of the competition. They got stronger as the day went on, and proved they were one of the top 3rd teams in the country this year.

We had some individual successes with 1st Team Goal Keeper Lily Thornton nominated as one of four players in the tournament for a Spirit of Lacrosse Award and Honor Gibbs winning the award for the best defender in the whole 1st Team tournament – quite impressive for an Upper Fifth who still has two years of Senior Team Lacrosse ahead of her.

Director of Sport, Katy Hudson, was full of praise for all of these teams, saying: "Resilience and a positive attitude were key qualities shown by these teams in their approach to the various tournaments and it was a great privilege to coach them both on these day and throughout the year.

"Sportsmanship was exemplary at all times. We really felt for the U15B team and U13A team; these tournaments were victims of the weather and we would have loved to have seen these girls compete as well. Thank you as well to everyone who came along and offered some excellent support on the sidelines!"

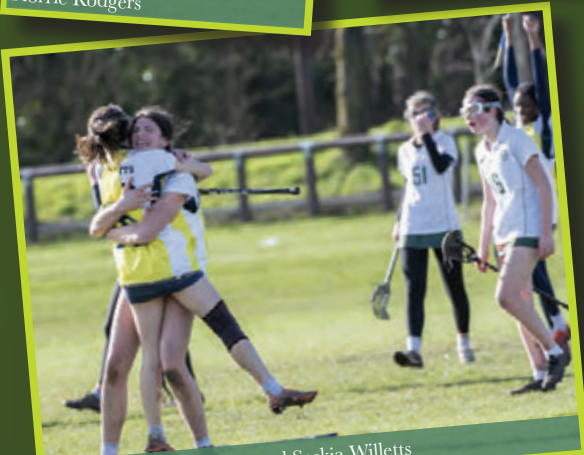




Florrie Rodgers



Catalina Burguera and Saskia Willetts



Flo Durand-Deslongrais and Saskia Willetts



Honor Gibbs



Minty Loxton-Barnard



Zara Williams-Thomas



Pandora Mann



Lucy Main



Lucy Main, Fara Bakare and Lauren Baker

The girls had much to celebrate



## A Pupil's View

"After the first day of matches having been cancelled due to rain, the second day of the tournament was surprisingly amazing weather. All of our matches seemed to go really well and then all of a sudden, we were playing in the semi-finals against Berkhamsted, who we lost to last year in the quarter finals."

"We scored the first few goals and then managed to slow the game down until the buzzer went. The team spirit and the shock that we had actually beaten them was the best feeling. Although we lost out in the final to Wycombe Abbey, the semi-final game felt like such a huge achievement to us, having had quite a slow start to the season in the Autumn Term. All in all, an amazing weekend!"

**Pandora Mann, Six One**

## Lacrosse Colours

### Junior

Maggie Cassidy  
Lara Gibbs  
Atifah Pampam  
Elizabeth Smith  
Allegra Tucker

### Intermediate

Isabelle Cunniff  
Alexa Dick  
Amelia Drayson  
Lara Forbes  
Clara Gough-Cooper  
Yuri Henwood  
Kate Mellor  
Isabelle Murray  
Belles Orgill  
Gabriella Price  
Molly Stapleton  
Zara Warne

### Senior 2nd Team

Charlotte Goodall  
Poppy Heslop  
Grace Mankelow  
Sophie Moody-Stuart  
Florrie Rodgers  
Ophelia Sheppard  
Philippa Smith  
Rebecca Smith  
Skye Turnbull  
Issy Wilson

### Senior 1st Team

Phoebe Bennie  
Flo Durand-Deslongrais  
Honor Gibbs  
Lucy Main

### Senior 3rd Team

Emily Brown  
Santa Collins  
Annabel Little  
Georgie Nunn



# Lacrosse Highlights

As well as our usual programme of Inter-House Lacrosse, there have been a number of other Lacrosse highlights so far this year.

## U13 County Tournament

We were delighted to host the U13 Kent County Lacrosse tournament. Our U13s played really well, finishing as runners-up to worthy winners Dulwich Prep.

A special mention should go to Atifah Pampam who was voted Benenden's Player of the Tournament and a big thank you to parents for their encouraging support from the side-lines.



Ellie Montagu taking the draw



## Lacrosse v Putney High School

We played a block of 12 fixtures against Putney High School. It was a very competitive and exciting day of matches to kick off the Spring Term.

With 12 matches played, the honours were split almost evenly, with Benenden winning six matches and drawing one game. The senior squads really proved their strength in depth on the day, scoring 25 goals and conceding nine.



Benenden huddle before the match

## Lacrosse v Cambridge

We were delighted to host Cambridge University when they took on our Lacrosse 1st Team on the All-Weather Pitch. With Cambridge preparing for their Varsity Match, and with the School team building up to the Lacrosse Nationals, it was a fiercely competitive encounter.

The 1st Team produced their best Lacrosse of the season, although it wasn't quite enough to overcome Cambridge, who finished 12-9 winners. However, the performance was certainly a fitting way to finish the last home match for our Six Two players. The team was captained by Minty Loxton-Barnard with Catalina Burguera the Vice-Captain.



Team captain Minty Loxton-Barnard on the attack



# Hockey

We were delighted to organise and host our first Weald Hockey Tournament in the Spring Term.

During the very first Weald Hockey Tournament we welcomed teams from the local area, aiming to give girls who haven't had lots of Hockey tournament play more experience in this format. With our great All-Weather Pitch divided in half, our U12 and U13 teams commenced their pool play.

As the afternoon went on, both teams started to link well on the pitch, showing increasingly confident stick skills and finishing. The girls in both teams worked hard to scramble back in defence and there were numerous goal-saving tackles as well as some brave goal keeping. Having progressed to the semi-finals, both teams defeated Radnor House and the stage was set for the grand finals.

Spirits were boosted as the Fifth Hockey players, as well as our Hockey Captain Manon and Sports Captain Minty, came out to support the girls. Sadly, it was not to be in the final; a last minute goal in the U13s and penalty flicks in the U12s resulted in narrow losses. Both teams came away with a deserved second place.

We were, however, delighted to present the trophies to champions Highworth Grammar School and Kent College. Thank you to Mrs Hewitt for organising the event, which we hope to repeat next year.

**The Chris Smith Plate for  
Commitment to Hockey**  
Artemis Grant



Ena Clarke  
contesting the ball



Dina Power makes a pass



Girls preparing to defend a short corner



Atifah Pampam attempts a tackle



Philippa Kearsey and Iona Keyes battling hard

## Hockey Colours

Intermediate  
Tilly Dymock



# Netball

We round up an exciting two terms of Netball at Benenden

## Eboni Masterclass

We were very lucky to be joined by England Netball player Eboni Usoro-Brown in February.

Eboni led a staff coaching course in the morning and then a number of prep schools and Benenden girls had the benefit of her experience in the afternoon as she led a Netball masterclass and game play in the afternoon. In the evening she gave a lecture to the Sports Scholars.



Eboni won Commonwealth Gold with Great Britain in 2018

Eboni puts staff through their paces



Ruby Ross-Bason



Maia Balogun



Eboni with sport staff from Benenden and visiting prep schools



## King's Rochester Netball Tournament

In March the girls enjoyed a lovely afternoon of Netball when they took part in the King's Rochester Under 16 Netball Tournament.

The girls played well and we could really see the improvement in their game play. Nine schools took part in total, with the Benenden A Team coming 1st and the Benenden B Team coming 3rd.



Our U16 teams enjoying themselves at Rochester



## Kent Finals

The U14, U16 and 1st Netball teams participated in the Kent Netball Finals, where Benenden were one of only two schools to have teams qualify in all three age groups.

The day proved not to be disappointed with an excellent standard of Netball on display and matches were fiercely contested. The tournament concluded with Benenden 1st and U14 teams 4th and 3rd respectively.

With the U16 team achieving 2nd place, they progressed to represent Kent as one of eight schools to attend the London and South East Tournament in January, which was a marvellous achievement.

## InterNET

Our InterNET festival once again proved a great success.

In February we held our annual InterNET Festival. Across two days, we welcomed dozens of teams from a variety of schools for the two tournaments: one for U12 and U13 and the second for U14 and U15.

Fourteen teams represented Benenden in the tournaments, with particular congratulations to the U15C team who finished as runners-up in their competition.



Beatrice Hickman leaps for the ball in a closely-fought U14s match

## Netball Colours

### Junior

Lara Gibbs  
Georgina Millett  
Charlotte Murray  
Atifah Pampam  
Dina Power  
Skye Stapleton

### Intermediate

Olivia Boyce  
Tilly Dymock  
Felicity Harrison  
Yuri Henwood  
Sophie Main  
Olivia Woolhouse

### Senior

Flo Durand-Deslongrais  
Honor Gibbs  
Grace Mankelow  
Jessica Platts

**Sarah Ainslie Netball Improvement Cup**  
Alice Sismey





Scarlett Dryden and Katie MacLeod



Eloise King

## Independent Schools Ski Championships

On the last day of the Autumn Term the Benenden Ski Team set off for Les Deux Alpes, where they were crowned Slalom champions.

Despite heavy winds preventing training on the first day, the girls performed exceptionally well, with Aurelia Branson in the Lower Fifth being awarded two individual medals for her performance in the Giant Slalom and Slalom races. But it was a great team effort, as **Captain Sunniva Kelly** tells us.

After a long day of travel, we finally arrived in the snowy town of Les Deux Alpes. During the first couple of days we got our ski legs back and did some technical training.

On the third day we set out for the Giant Slalom races. There was some very tough competition but everyone did extremely well considering the little training we had prior to the trip.

Each night we went to fun activities such as ice skating, bowling and doughnut jumping (our favourite)!

On the final day of the trip we competed in both the Slalom and Parallel Slalom races.

In the Parallel Slalom, which is a race where two schools compete simultaneously against

each other, we nominated our top six racers to compete. Our first race was against St Paul's Boys School. We were winning, but unfortunately our team had a fall and we got disqualified.

The highlight of our trip was our team's overall success in the Slalom race: five out of 12 of us finished in the top 20 out of 108 racers! Fortunately, this amazing result meant that, as a School, we became the Independent Schools' Senior Girls Slalom Champions.

The Benenden Team in Les Deux Alpes





# Sport Scholarship Programme Review

## The new Sport Scholarship Programme has had a successful first year.

This year we were very excited to relaunch the Sport Scholarship Programme. Redesigned from the ground up, the programme focusses on three key areas to support the girls' performance – sports skills, the physical athlete and the mental athlete.

We started the year with dinner and a discussion to clarify expectations. This included what the athletes can expect from the School, as well as the commitment required from the girls. Each girl has a mentor who has supported them to get the most out of all the opportunities, alongside finding new ways to take a leading role in driving sport forward at Benenden.

Over the three terms, we have invited a number of experts to work with these athletes in the three key areas of this programme. Highlights of the year have included:

- A dinner and lecture with Clare Balding.
- Practical session and workshop with Eboni Usoro-Brown, England Netballer.
- 'Thinking outside the box' challenges with England Rugby Coach Russell Earnshaw.
- A bespoke athletic development programme with James Wild, Head of Performance at England Women's Lacrosse and Harlequin's Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach.
- A Sports Psychology Session with Tom Hodgins who works with international sports people exploring the techniques elite performers use to thrive under pressure.
- An online seminar looking at supporting mental wellbeing with Tom Somerby of Oodles training.
- A session exploring the behaviours of successful and inspiring leaders with Tim Hudson, personal development specialist and the next Housemaster of Guldeford.

We hope that the Scholars have been exposed to some different ways of thinking, both in terms of their own development and supporting others in the School. As we approach the end of the first year we are looking forward to building on the progress of 2019-20 and aiming even higher in 2021.

*"One thing which I have found beneficial has been the meetings I have had twice a term with my mentor Miss Ellston and the two other scholars in my year, Soracha and Maia. These meetings are a way of reflecting on each of us, our progress, and we are given lots of support and advice. Also, I have had the chance to meet some inspirational sports professionals such as Russell Earnshaw (Rugby Union coach), and we had an evening with Clare Balding, who I think is a great role model. These workshops and talks have helped me to gain confidence in the way I approach my training and prepare for matches."*

Georgina Millett



Alicia Cheng in a strength and conditioning session



James Wild leads Amelia Drayson and Issey Blades



Russell Earnshaw with Soracha Boyle, Georgina Millett and Maia Balogun

## Additional Awards

### Equestrian Colours

**Intermediate**  
Belles Orgill

**Senior**  
Epernay Balcomb-Hellier  
Tallulah Haycock

### Cross Country Colours

**Junior**  
Eliza Denning  
Charlotte Wainford

**Senior**  
Susannah Southall

**Tennis**  
**Improvement Cup**  
Phoebe Kinnings

**Karate**  
**Student of the Year**  
Jessica Hainsworth

**Fencing Bowl**  
Lucinda Broom





Our team in Gillingham – l-r, Andrea Arnesen, Bea Lees, Molly Martin-Jenkins, Temi Owolabi, Sophie Blake and Maggie Cassidy – where we were able to compete because Sara Wiberg (far right) agreed to officiate.

Charlotte Wainford and Sara Wiberg at the Southern Zonal Schools Championships



# Trampolining

Benenden has had an exciting two terms of Trampolining.

Having qualified from the South East Championships, Sara Wiberg and Charlotte Wainford took part in the Southern Zonal Schools Trampoline Championships.

Both were competing in the Elite categories which saw them up against some very tough competition.

In the U19 girls category, Sara performed a great first routine to place her high in the group but unfortunately made a mistake in her second routine which dropped her to a still very respectable 11th in this highly prestigious event.

In the U14 girls competition, Charlotte performed two beautiful routines, achieving very high scores to come in 3rd place. This meant she qualified through to the National School Finals – a fantastic achievement.

Having had to take time off for an injury, Charlotte worked very hard to prepare for the Finals with the little time she had. She performed well and finished an impressive 8th place.

In March, the team took part in the Kent Grade H Competition, where we were U15 girls runners-up and Andrea Arnesen won the U19 girls category by five marks.

## Trampoline Colours

### Junior

Sophie Blake  
Charlotte Wainford

### Intermediate

Emily Campbell Lambert

### Senior

Bea Lees

**Heywood Cup  
for Trampoline**  
Sara Wiberg

# Squash

Benenden's Squash team have learned a great deal this year from their experience in the National Schools Squash competition.

Benenden competed in the National Schools Squash Stage Two competition in February at Beaconsfield Squash Club. The team was Minty Loxton-Barnard, Lucy Main, Amelia Drayson, Katie Chapman and Amolikaa Shrivastava.

The first match was against Wycombe High School. After a long journey the girls were slow out of the blocks and only Katie won her match 2-0. Minty, Lucy, Amelia and Amolikaa were beaten 0-2.

Next up was Bradfield College and the team played much better. Amolikaa had a hard-fought 2-1 win. Katie won 2-0 with both games going to tie-breaks. Lucy played



Our Finals team

well, winning comfortably 2-0. Minty, after a close tie-break win in the first game, took control and won the second convincingly. Amelia had two close games that went against her.

The last match against the favourites Millfield ended in a 5-0 win to Millfield (their Number 1 string being the top ranked player in the country at U15 level). Minty worked hard and had many good rallies but was outplayed. The rest of the team suffered in the same way.

We were really proud of the girls' performances and they learned a great deal from the experience.



# Swimming

Benenden's Swimming team has put in a fantastic performance this year.

Four members of our swimming squad travelled to Sevenoaks School to compete in the 10th Annual Weald and Downland Trophy Tournament which is an invitational gala.



Tami Bankole from the Fourth, Nicola Tsang and Victoria Tsang from the Lower Fifth and Kara Dimond from the Fifth swam exceptionally well considering they were competing in the U16 competition.

First up was Nicola who dominated the first 75m in her 100m Freestyle with extremely rapid tumble turns and push offs but was just pipped to the post by a strong sprint finish from Walthamstow Hall.

Kara then walked up to the diving block with a positive attitude and came first in the 50m breaststroke. Next was the 4x50m Medley Relay bringing in Victoria and Tami who had, as yet, not swum their individual stroke and were slightly apprehensive. With this in mind all four didn't want to let the team down

and individually put in an aggressive performance and came out as winners.

After the four competed in the 50m Freestyle Relay, they had enough points to come an extremely respectable 2nd place with 41 points, beaten by Walthamstow Hall with 44 points. It is also worth mentioning that 3rd and 4th place had points in the 20s and 5th finished with 8 points. With such high scores coming from our four competitors we were in 4th place overall in the Girls Trophy.

The Most Valuable Swimmer award went to Kara Dimond, not only for her dynamic swimming but the lovely way in which she pulled the team together. A fantastic performance was put in by all girls.

## Benenden Swim Festival

**It was great fun to host Roedean School, Invicta Grammar School and Highworth Grammar School for the 2020 Benenden Swim Festival.**

The standard of swimming at this year's festival was excellent, with the vast majority of races tightly contested between athletes who had clearly been very committed to training throughout the year.

We were delighted to field a large squad. All of our swimmers deserve praise for competing at this level; whilst wins were hard to come by, Nicola Tsang, Victoria Tsang, Kara Dimond and JB van Pelt must be congratulated for securing significant points for our overall totals.

**Swimming Trophy**  
JB van Pelt

## Swimming Colours

**Junior**  
Tami Bankole

**Intermediate**  
Kara Dimond  
Nicola Tsang  
Victoria Tsang



# Rugby

The Benenden Rugby team travelled to Dartford Grammar School for the annual Kent 7s Rugby Competition.

Rugby is a minor sport at Benenden so it was our first competition and game of the season; the team was excited but apprehensive to play. They had put a phenomenal amount of time and effort into their training and now was their chance to put everything together.

The first game was against Tonbridge Grammar School who have an established Rugby programme and a player with Harlequins RUFC. We started fast – Eddie Jones would have been proud – and scored our first try which helped to settle any nerves. The team was fantastic and suddenly sprung into life and scored two more tries using a mixture of footwork, power and speed.

With a few tactical changes, we conceded our first try but the team responded and scored two more to put the game out of reach. TGS did score a late consolation try which left the score 35 – 10.

Our second pool game came against Langley Park School who fielded a team of Sixth Form students. The Benenden team started quickly and didn't take the pressure off once.

At the final whistle we were the victors, with the score of 35 – 5. The try of the game had to go to Seun Owolabi who fielded the kick-off and then ran straight through the team.

At half time in the final we were 17 – 5 down and looking like it was heading for a cricket score, but a quick chat and refocus saw the team come out firing. Slick hands and resolute defence saw us finish as runners-up 24 – 20. To lose in the Final to a more experienced team by two conversions, but score the same number of tries, is not a bad result.

The team should be proud of their efforts and we received plenty of praise from the other coaches who were impressed with our defence and style of attack.

**BENENDEN  
SWIM  
SQUAD**



## Parents' Events

Fiona Bruce-Smythe, Chair of the Parents' Events Committee (PEC), updates us on 2020 so far.

I normally provide an update of all PEC events to date; however, apart from a superb Fifth Parents' Lunch in London towards the end of February and our annual Burns Night Reeling, our activities this year came to an abrupt halt. Please do rest assured that as soon as we have the green light to re-start events, we will resume normal service as soon as possible. Events that we had to cancel have been moved to next year, including the parents' Porto Holiday and the Gravetye Flower Workshop.

For those of you who are unaware of who and what we are, we are a group of parents, generally two or three representing each year group, who meet prior to most fixed exeat weekends to discuss how we can organise events for our wonderful parents. For every year group we will organise at least one parent lunch each academic year, together with cross year group events ie London walking tours, wreath making sessions, dog walks and much more. Please do look out for our events which you will find listed in the weekly Bulletin and reply as soon as you can as places are limited and some go like hot cakes! Please also do bear in mind when emailing the PEC that we are all volunteers, parents and most work full-time so responses may not be immediate!

We are always looking for new parents to join our little committee so I would be delighted to hear from anyone who feels they could make a contribution, however little, to please get in touch on [fionabrucesmythe@btinternet.com](mailto:fionabrucesmythe@btinternet.com)



The reeling in full flow



The Famous Grouse band



Piper Andrew Birl leads proceedings

## BSPA Roundup

Michelle Kearsy, Chair of the Benenden School Parents' Association (BSPA), summarises the group's activities.

The beginning of the BSPA year started with a fantastic parents' lecture by Deana Puccio from the Rap Project. The project raises awareness about personal safety and prevention of sexual assault. A key element of this work is to show how pornography and social media influence attitudes and expectations in society. The presentation from Deana highlighted how life has dramatically changed since many of us were teenagers. The speed of change means it is difficult to keep abreast of the possible dangers that our girls may come across. Deana spoke to the older girls during the afternoon and parents in the evening. The girls quickly warmed to her approach and took on board what she taught them.

The BSPA had their meeting in February, which was attended by all the Senior Management Team and House reps. This forum provides us with the opportunity to discuss items brought to us by the parent community. Over recent meetings we have covered a wide range of subjects including the Benenden curriculum, girls' welfare, catering, co-curricular activities and of course most recently Covid-19. Minutes from these meetings can be accessed via the Portal.

By the time you read this we will have held our virtual summer meeting and been involved welcoming remotely our new parents and girls starting in September 2020.



Deana Puccio from the Rap Project

Please remember that if you have any feedback for the School please let your reps or me know, not just about concerns but positive comments are welcomed too.



The Class of 1995  
reunited at Benenden

# Seniors' 25th Reunion

At the end of February, 37 Seniors from 1995 attended their 25th Reunion at School. They enjoyed a delicious lunch, a tour of the School and, of course, reminiscing about their time at Benenden.



Aliana Kamelmacher H/Oaks 95, Belinda (Cole) Ellis H/Oaks 95 and Abigail (Banfield) Elliott G/Beeches 95



Sally (Clarke) Marsh N95, Virginia (Simkins) Hills Ma95 and Vanessa (Kirke-Smith) Cowie E95



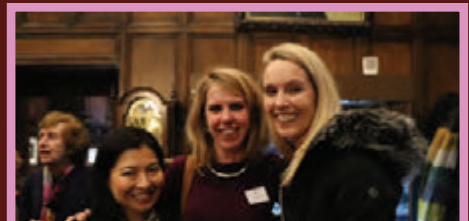
Seniors' events offer a unique opportunity for friends to reconnect



Amy (Wickham) Holdsworth E95, Gemma (Prall) Grierson-Rickford G/Oaks 95 and Harriet Tarnoy M95



Joanna Monkhouse H/Oaks 05, Sheelagh (Houlden) Hargreave G95 and Harriet (Butterfield) Burrows H95



Barbara (Leung) Choy G95, Susie Gault N/Oaks 95 and Antonia (Loudon) Bristowe N95



# Farewell and Thank You to our BSSA Chair

Sally Everist N85 looks back on her time as Chairman of the Benenden School Seniors' Association (BSSA).

My four-year tenure is at an end. When I took over in 2016, I sent the committee a long questionnaire to gauge their perspective on the BSSA's role and achievements, followed by a workshop to plan taking the Seniors into Benenden's centenary year.

We determined our focus to be 'remembering the past whilst supporting the future'. We wanted to value Seniors equally and increase engagement by holding vertical (everyone) as well as horizontal (year group) events including garden and art gallery tours, coffee mornings and drinks parties. Sector-specific networking events and mentoring have increased opportunities for younger Seniors and our societies continue to flourish. We refreshed communications with the monthly e-newsletter and social media.

As a committee we looked to fun-raise, not fund-raise: our key role is engagement. We encouraged new committee members of all ages by embracing virtual platforms for meetings, so that geographical location need not be a hindrance. Committee members had specific areas of responsibility, and The Senior was again produced by Seniors together with the Seniors' Office.

We continue to support Seniors' daughters and granddaughters with bursaries contributing to extras, not school fees. We have developed the XXX Awards, providing grants for Seniors to eXtend, eXcel, eXplore; develop new skills or launch projects.

On the regulatory side, we updated the BSSA Terms of Reference and Constitution. We have achieved a lot. It's been great fun. I have loved meeting so many of you, and I thank you all.

**Sally (Allison) Everist N85**  
BSSA Chairman



Sally Everist, departing BSSA Chairman

## Meet the New Chairs

It is an honour to take over from Sally (Allison) Everist N85, as BSSA Chairman. I look forward to engaging with as many of you as possible, and relish hearing about the interesting and varied lives of our Benenden Seniors. Having spent the last few months in the Cotswolds, I now return to London hoping frequent overseas travel will not be a thing of the past. My experiences of living in New York, Paris, Florence and Rome have made a rich tapestry, although there are a few adventures I'm happy not to repeat!

As a nature lover and keen gardener, I have enjoyed the opportunity over the past few months to take stock and observe. How strong we have been through these challenging times – like the natural world around us, we steel ourselves and calmly get on with things, though I am looking forward to seeing my friends again, specifically those from School, some of whom remain my dearest friends.



Ali Chiu, new BSSA Chairman

We are developing our shared vision for the BSSA for the next five years and welcome your input, news and views. Please get in touch with ideas, or to talk about taking on a more active role in our Association.

**Ali Chiu H/Beeches 96**  
New BSSA Chairman



Ron Babalakin, Junior BSSA Chairman

'We look ahead and we get on with it.' A Senior used this phrase to describe the fortitude of Benenden girls and since walking through the floral arch in July 2009, it has inspired me in times of difficulty.

I'm proud to belong to a strong-willed tribe of Seniors, quietly persisting in our daily lives through this global pandemic, as mothers, teachers, caregivers, students, CEOs, journalists, lawyers etc. I'm also proud to be the first Junior Chairman of the BSSA. My goal is to bring about a meaningful increase in engagement and activities specifically amongst Seniors who left in the past 20 years.

**Ron Babalakin M/Beeches 09**  
Junior BSSA Chairman





THE PIONEERS GET THE HALL INTO SHAPE

## The Pioneers Return from Newquay

After leaving Benenden behind for five years, since the announcement of the Second World War, the School was ready to return. Rosie Behrens, in the Fifth, picks up the story of what happened next.

During the course of the war Benenden School had been turned into a hospital for injured soldiers, despite being under the flight path the bomber planes took. Once the war ended, those still recovering from injuries at Benenden School were discharged to proper hospitals or allowed to return home. As a result, the staff and students of Benenden School could now move back in.

However, having a large body of students and staff, combined with the current state of the School buildings and Houses, meant that it would be a very big effort to return the whole School in September 1945. So, the senior staff at Benenden came up with two plans to handle this situation.

Plan 1 was that the whole School was to return in January 1946, with two members of staff as well as Miss Hindle to re-organise and tidy up the School. This was a beneficial plan because the staff back at Benenden wouldn't have to worry about students and keeping their education going. It would also mean that there would be no alterations to the schoolwork, and everyone could continue as before.

Plan 2 was to take about 30 girls in September, who would then continue their learning as well as help the staff appointed to return the School back to how it looked in 1940.

The advantages of this plan were that the School could be re-established, as many others at the time, and it would mean the School couldn't be used for demobilisation purposes – somewhere the returning soldiers could stay overnight, before going home. If the School was established properly, it would make the move back in January easier and smoother. It would also mean those doing science could use the science laboratories back at Benenden.

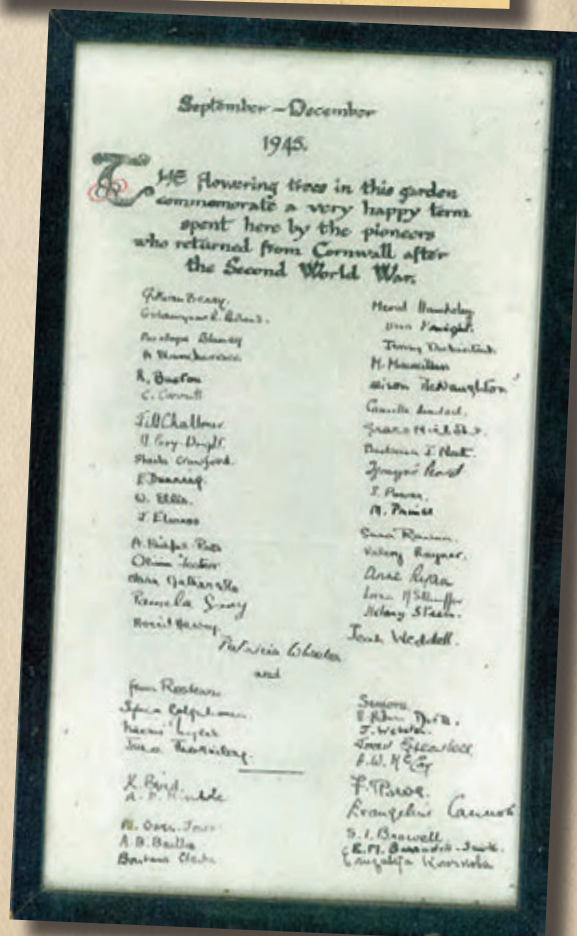
It was determined that the 35 doing advanced French, German and Science would return to Benenden in September 1945 as the Pioneers. They were only to use Medway and Marshall Houses for living circumstances, allowing the rest of the School to be redone.

One of the Pioneers from Marshall reflected on her return: "We arrived here, all feeling exactly like new girls – none of us knowing where anything was or knowing what the mysterious numbers on doors and cubies meant. However, by bed time most of us managed to find our beds successfully."

The information that I have collated here was as a result of my Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award. I was helping out in the library and archives, and, upon discovering much about the Pioneers, I concluded it as a suitable topic to write about for the Term.

bombers of Marshall is the Benenden Party.  
A. Harvey,  
U. Knight,  
T. Chatter,  
G. Barry,  
V. Rayner,  
K. Day, Wright,  
House Chronicles: T. Chatter, U. Knight, A. Harvey.

Sept 24. We arrived here, all feeling exactly like new girls, none of us knowing what the mysterious numbers on doors and cubies meant. However, by bed time most of us managed to find our beds successfully. Directly after we arrived, Miss Brad told us to explore the grounds and buildings while it was still day-light. None of us got much further than the school buildings: we were very struck by the state of them, in fact most of us wondered how they will be ready in time for next year. The whole building smells terrible! Our supper was a pleasant surprise. Instead of the usual





# BENENDEN SCHOOL



## From the Archives

Below are extracts from previous editions of the Benenden Magazine pertinent to the Spring and Summer Terms of those years.

### 5 Years Ago – 2014

#### Falconry at Benenden - Maggie the Vulture

Maggie was a shock to all when we first saw her, bald face burning red, dark brown feathers gleaming in the sunlight. She waddled, penguin-like amongst the crowd, occasionally pecking at cookies and sweets scattered on the grass. In the wild, vultures would spend days soaring in the clear blue skies, using thermal currents to lift them up. But here Maggie mainly walked as she was a clumsy flyer, and she had found a meal of one girl's break.

We were admiring the feathers of Arthur when the man said, "Would you all like to stroke him?" We were so excited and of course, as you can imagine, screamed yes. We violently fought to line up and touch his small, frail feathers. They were as smooth as silk, oily as olive oil. We were lost for words.

### 15 Years Ago – 1995

#### VE Day in Hyde Park

On 6 May 1995, the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War was celebrated. My great-grandfather was Sir Winston Churchill and my grandmother, Mary Soames, is his youngest daughter. Because of this, the Royal British Legion, who were in charge of organising the official VE Day celebrations, invited me to be the person to hand to Her Majesty the Queen the torch with which she would light the Beacon of Peace.... On the night itself, I stood for three-quarters of an hour holding an unlit torch and this time there were 230,000 people in the stands watching. Then I walked to the Queen's chair where I lit my torch and handed it to Her Majesty. I did not curtsy as I was told not to while holding a lit torch. As I handed it to her, the Queen asked me what she should do with it! I watched the rest of the ceremony through binoculars from the stands.

### 20 Years Ago – 2000

#### Challenging Drama or the House Drama Challenge

For the first time, for some time, a major amendment was made to early Autumn Term drama. Junior Dram had produced some outstanding dramatic work but was all-consuming almost until half-term. The Drama Challenge was a radical departure, requiring the preparation and performance, by each House, of a short play in the first weekend of term for performance on the Sunday evening. It was based on the theme, The Last Time and be judged by a panel of staff and the Head of School rather than an outside adjudicator. No one knew if the experiment would work. Could anything worthwhile be achieved in such a short time with basic materials and the need to organise the resources and personnel of an entire House? It worked far better than anyone could have predicted, every House's production being wonderfully ingenious, memorable and dramatic in its own way.

### 50 Years Ago – 1970

#### School News and Reviews

This has been a momentous year for the School in a number of ways but the greatest milestone has been the recent passing of Miss Sheldon, and though we hope to edit a publication later, worthy of its subject, there will be some preliminary recollections of Miss Sheldon accompanying this Magazine. But in this issue itself I feel I must claim the privilege of Editor, however Honorary, to pay my special tribute to one who did so much to give this School its unique flavour, who had a genius for friendship with all ages and kinds of people and for whom I had a deep personal admiration and affection.

### 70 Years Ago – 1950

#### A Present for Prince Charles

It was the School's great wish to send a present to Prince Charles. Miss Anwyl made the excellent suggestion of an Alphabet Book with letters and pictures applied on the chintz covered cardboard pages. She and the handwork specialists worked at a high level of concentration and the finished book, a very ingenious and attractive present, was sent a day or two later. A very charming letter of thanks was sent from Clarence House.



# We Look Forward to Seeing you Back at Benenden in September



“When you face challenges in the future, which you all will, remember the words of the author Michael Rosen – who is recovering from Covid-19 – in the wonderful children’s story he wrote, We’re Going on a Bear Hunt. When you face a challenge: You can’t go over it; you can’t go under it...but together you can get through it.”

**Mrs Price on Speech Day  
Saturday 4 July 2020**





**Benenden School, Benenden, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 4AA, UK**

**T 01580 240592 E [schooloffice@benenden.school](mailto:schooloffice@benenden.school) W [www.benenden.school](http://www.benenden.school)**

**Follow us on Twitter: [@benendenschool](https://twitter.com/benendenschool) Facebook: [/benendenschool](https://www.facebook.com/benendenschool)**

**Editors: Ian Read, Steve Mandaluff and Lauren Barnett Design: Scott Thorneycroft**

**With thanks to the following pupils in Term Club:**

**Fathia Abbas, Fara Bakare, Tami Bankole, Sophie Brokenshire, Anna Chan, Olivia Ching, Rosalyn Chiu, Eden David-Etuk, Momoko Eliot, Yosola Femi-Osinubi, Anna Kane, Scarlett Mansfield, Georgina Millett, Tolu Owolabi, Maddie Porter, Ursula Rowe, Isabella Scott Wells and Darcey Stapleton**