



ROOKS HEATH LIFE

Newsletter of Rooks Heath School Community



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Our on-TRACK values come to life

BY MRS M. MANDERSON

As we come to the end of this academic year, it is with great pride that I can look back at the many achievements of the students. They have worked so hard and with every changing demand made on us by a new and challenging curriculum and measures. Our on TRACK values that have been on display throughout the year have particularly come to the fore as we end the term – teamwork when tackling a particularly tricky problem whether it is in class or a problem between friends; resilience in coping with changes and maintaining good attendance; appreciation and happiness for each other's achievements at sports days and celebration assemblies; it was lovely to end the year and see creativity unleashed as we opened up to the mini-musical concerts and the summer fair; kindness towards all members of the school community and all the opportunities they are given within the school – which all of which strengthen their character and their ability to make the most of every aspect of school life.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff and governors for their hard work this year. It has been a year of changes and they have embraced this with goodwill and continued to provide the best education for the students. I also wish our leavers every success as they move on to pastures new.

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I would also like to thank all parents and carers for their continued support this year. A great deal of what we do in school cannot be achieved without you and your co-operation and backing. Many thanks and we look forward to working more closely with you from September. I hope you and your children will together contribute to the 5K for £5K fundraiser over the summer being led by one of our parent Governors, Nazreen Visram.

Finally, I warmly welcome our incoming new Year 7 students and wish all our students who are leaving us at the end of this academic year all the very best. I know that they have all had a significant experience at Rooks Heath and I am confident that they will go on to achieve great things in the future.

I wish you all an enjoyable summer. Please keep an eye on our website for any updates and we look forward to seeing you all again in September.

Stephen Lawrence Foundation

BY MR P. PARKINSON

April 22nd was Stephen Lawrence Day and Year 9's recent assembly and tutor time focus was to learn more about the importance and impact of the Stephen Lawrence Foundation. As part of our whole school drive to encourage students to 'live their best lives' in promoting a society of fairness, inclusivity, justice, and respect, students shared their own visions and hopes for the values of a community they want to live in. Here is a selection of 9 Red's contributions.

"My best life would let me be myself without judgement. My sexuality, gender and skin colour shouldn't matter. I'd live on a planet that isn't dying - where people aren't murdered from things outside their control". **Oneli**

"My best life is where everyone is kind and there are no problems in the world. Where all can enjoy anything, everyone has a roof over their head and all have access to education. I would be a good or



great computer scientist or I am getting better right now. There would be no discrimination or racial abuse, LGBT injustice etc... The entire world would be joyful and there would be close to or no cruelty in the world". **Denzel**

"My ideal/best life would include happiness for my family and a world with equality, inclusivity and acceptance. A world where no one has to suffer". **Paige**

Language Games

BY MRS K. LIU

In the lesson before half term, Mrs Liu introduced 'Jianzi' to our Year 10 Chinese students. Jianzi is a traditional Chinese national sport where players aim to keep a heavily weighted shuttlecock in the air by using just their foot or bodies (no hands!). Jianzi is not only widely played in pri-



mary and secondary schools but is also a competitive sport in China.

The Year 10s enjoyed learning Jianzi and some did particularly well for their first time!



Diversity Role Models

BY MR C. RING

Diversity Role Models have partnered with Rooks Heath for a 'Born to Belong' project to help improve inclusion of the LGBT+ community. The work started with the staff training in mid-June and this was repeated on 13th July for staff who could not attend the first session.

On Thursday 1st July, 60 students took part in workshops to help develop their own ideas for ways to make schools safer places for students to be themselves. The course leaders, who shared their own stories, said they were inspired by the positive attitudes and engagement of our students. I was particularly impressed by one student who attended wearing a gigantic progress flag.



Ex-Student Success

BY MRS R. GARRETT

I received a lovely thank you email from an ex-student, Chhaya Rai, in which she mentions how brilliantly she has performed in History and Politics at Warwick University. She received a score of 94 in her most recent dissertation - the highest in her graduating class!

In her dissertation, she "looks at the position of Gurkha veteran migrants in Britain (my grandfather was a veteran, so this was quite a personal choice)."

Chhaya particularly mentions the Debate Mate Programme which I know a number of people were involved in supporting, and a variety of departments helped with financing, so I wanted to share this thank you with you:

"I can personally attest to the wonders those after school lessons did for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. I actually went on to teach the programme at a primary school during the first year of university, and then went to Nepal to teach on their international programme. Again, all experiences I would not have without your help, so thank you!"

Performance Returns

BY MS A. SLATER

A big congratulations to all of our instrumental students who performed in our after-school Summer Music Showcase concert series earlier this term. It was wonderful to hear our students perform live for the first time in 18 months, and for parents and friends to see the progress they have made on their instruments over the course of the year. Thank you to Mr Pitchforth, Mr Ring, Ms Logan and Mrs Todd who assisted in the smooth running of this event.



SPORTS DAYS

BY MR P. TODD

Wow! What a day!

I have witnessed in excess of 50 school Sports Days during my time at Rooks Heath and these have topped the lot. I think with what the school has been through over the past 16 months, we really needed them. I didn't realise how much until they were over but all Year Groups rose to the occasion magnificently. There were many reasons why they were so memorable. The intimacy, the support of each other regardless of Tutor Group, the sports day music playlist, all the students, the staff tug of war, the stadium-like atmosphere created by the playground venue, the volunteer helpers both staff and students alike! Thank you, thank you, thank you.

It was of course a team PE job and I couldn't have done it without the support of my colleagues within the department.

All in all, wonderful afternoons, all of them and they will live long in the memory. I am so pleased that so many staff got the chance to witness them.





5KM FOR £5K

BY MRS L. HYDE

One of our school Governors and member of the PTFA - Ms Visram - is fundraising to provide laptops for our school with a target of £5,000. She is committing to walking or running 5km every day from Monday 19th July - Monday 6th September, that's a huge total of 250km / 155 miles and would get her all the way to Wales or even Bruges in Belgium!

Students can also get involved by pulling on their walking or running shoes and clocking up some kilometers over the summer. How far around the world could we get?

To get involved, students should keep a record of the distance they walk or run each day over the summer. To measure how far they travel, they could use a smart watch or a running / walking tracking app on their phone (but check the age rating, some are for over 13's only). Or they **could count their steps, there are on average, 1312 steps in one kilometer. When students get back to school in September, they will be able to submit their total distance covered as well as screen shots from their app or a picture of their logging sheet. There will be a prize for the tutor group that travels the furthest.**

We'd love to see some photos of the students running or walking, students will be able to upload them to Teams in September.

Please share the fundraising link with friends and family and if you can, donate to the challenge, even the smallest amount will help Ms Visram reach her target to benefit our school community.

[GOFUNDME LINK](#)

Art and Design Department News

BY MS I. HARGRAVE

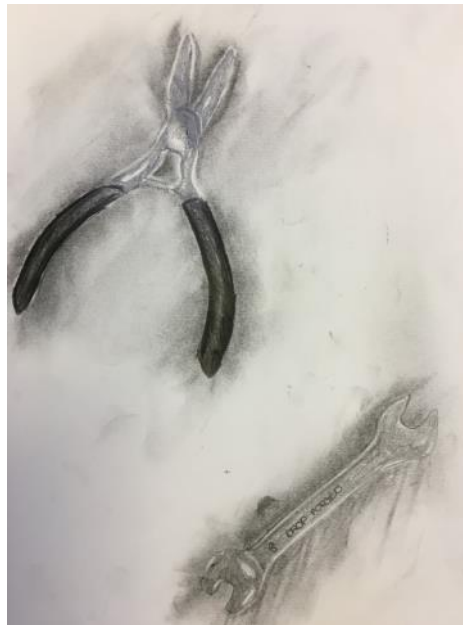
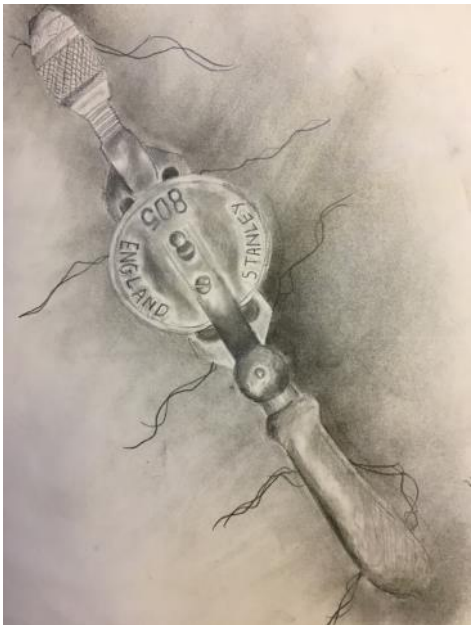
We are very glad to be back in our art rooms and to be able to use a wider range of media and materials than during lock down. The students who kept up with the on-line assignments have produced fantastic work and have even developed new skills which is a great credit to them.

We are now practising and developing technical skills, working on a range of projects. Year 7 students are working in clay producing figures based on the work of LS. Lowry, the Year 8s have drawn clowns in oil pastels and are now working on self-portraits. The Year 9s completed their Anime and Manga project over lockdown and are now working on the theme of Africa exploring shapes and patterns, making masks and prints. They are linking Africa to the transatlantic routes through the work of Yinka Shonibare to make a group installation.

Year 10 students have worked hard to produce a range of ceramics on the theme of sea life from barnacle bowls and sea-urchins to fish dishes and plates based on the work of artists Emma Dibben and Amira Gayle. Examples of all work can be seen on the departments Instagram [art_rooksheath](#).

The Art GCSE went well with students able to complete final pieces which they had started before lock down. The range of art work was amazing, considering the circumstances and I was very proud that everyone was able to complete their coursework to a really good standard. The GCSE ceramics are on display in the inner foyer of the reception area.

Mrs Azevedo, started with us in September and is a great addition to the department and she has opened a very popular comic book club. Unfortunately, some students have been unable to join the club as it is full, but we plan to put on a second club starting in September.



Top left: Celebrating Heroes Royal Mail competition entries.

Top right & middle: Year 9 still life; "Looking at Tools".

Bottom: Year 7 Lowry Project.

Careers Week

BY MRS S. SUBRA

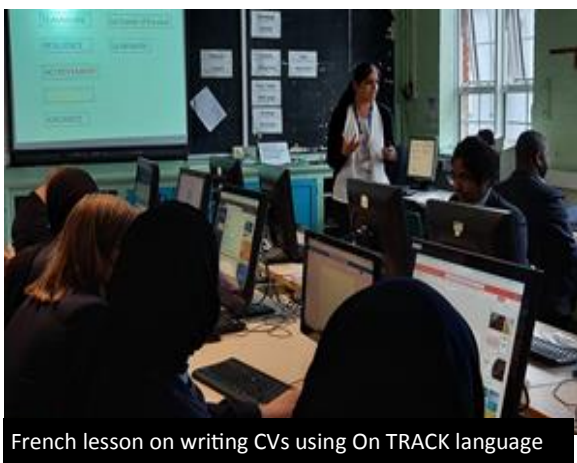
Careers week was held in the week beginning 5th July. Many different activities were arranged to take place throughout the week. This included most subjects holding careers themed lessons, linking their subjects to careers in the real world. Many subjects took the opportunity to bring their subjects to life through links to careers. Year 7 students explored the opportunities available in the music industry in their music lesson. Latin students compared women's working conditions in ancient Roman times to those in today's world, aimed at encouraging girls to take the lead in various fields. Modern Foreign Languages used the opportunity to highlight skills gained by being proficient in languages, conducting mock interviews in both French and German. The Health and Social Care lesson allowed students to explore the different jobs available in the NHS and in Business Studies students worked on improving their CV writing skills, with Economics skilfully linking this subject to sports; one such example is Emma Raducanu who has studied Maths and Economics, which helped her choose tennis, despite being skilled in many different sports, as this could be the most lucrative sport for her. In Science Mrs Rahman's class explored the field of Forensic Science and Criminology through an experiment on collecting fingerprints from objects and Mrs. Ul-Haq's class discussed whether the given set of jobs were real or fake. Mathematics teachers explored the use of statistics in many areas, especially by scientists in trying to fight the pandemic, as well as how carpenters use mathematical skills in running a business profitably. PRE students also had the opportunity to learn about the diverse careers philosophy and theology studies can lead to.

Students in Year 7 making "Strive to be your best" bags



Students in Years 7 to 10 completed career activities in tutor times as well, which included gaining an understanding of what a CV is and how to write one. This enables them to understand how every skill learnt through various subjects in schools can be highlighted to help them succeed in college and university applications, as well as job applications.

The PSHE department conducted an enterprising project where students learnt the details of the business world from deciding upon a product, meeting customer's specifications to launching the product. They designed and produced cloth bags with the school motto, "Strive To Be Your Best", and sold them at the recent summer school fair.



French lesson on writing CVs using On TRACK language

In addition to this, guest speakers were invited to speak in the assemblies of Years 7 and 9. These included Mrs. Remi Ogbe from Google and Mrs. Nazreen Visram from Barclays, respectively. Both speakers highlighted the importance of hard work, resilience, creativity, teamwork and kindness to achieve success, which links closely to the school's On TRACK values. They also spoke of the multitude of jobs available in their organisations and how students can make the most of their time in school to accumulate these skills to achieve success in the real world.

Both students and staff have commented on how much they have enjoyed the week and seen their subjects from a new perspective and understand the relevance of these subjects in the real world. Students used the opportunity to start thinking about careers they may choose in the future and building up skills towards achieving success in that.

SCIENCE FUN!

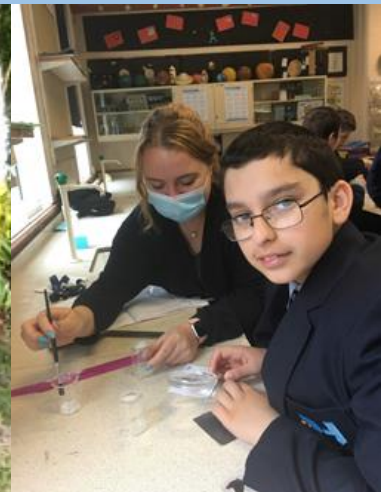
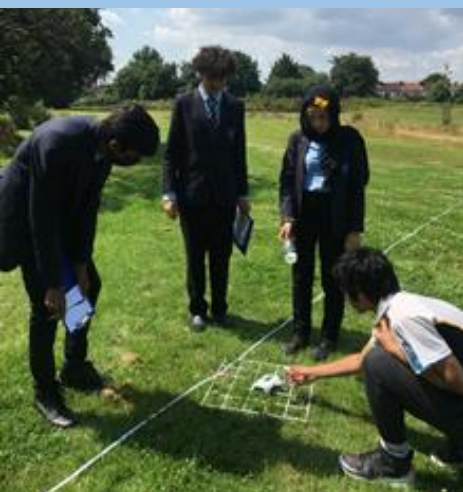
BY MRS S. RAHMEN

We have been taking our Science learning outside. Mr Gilbert got his Year 7 class to model the solar system out on the school field! Students were chosen to represent different planets in our Solar System. Keeping to scale, they then had to calculate where to position themselves from the Sun. The student acting a Mercury was closest to the Sun at only 80cm away but the student furthest from the Sun, Neptune, was a whopping 60 meters away. If we had asked a student to be the next star they would have had to walk a further 500,000 meters! So we decided against that!



Mr Miranda and Mr Mall conducted a sampling experiment with Year 10 Separate Biology looking at how the distribution of plants varied from under a weeping willow tree out onto the field. They also used data loggers to measure abiotic factors.

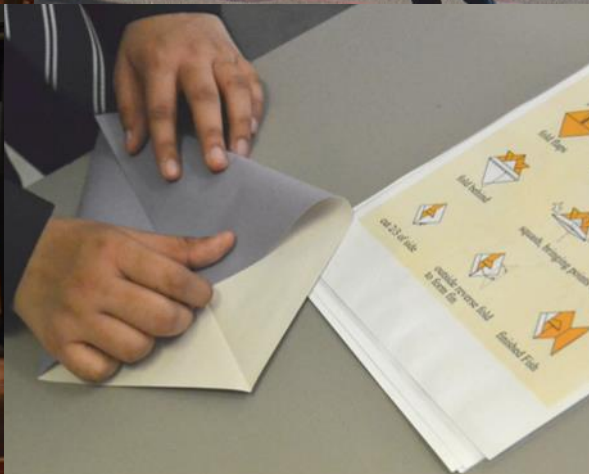
Back in the classroom, as part of Careers Week, Mrs Rahman taught Year 8 about forensics and how to lift a finger print. Students then had to identify patterns in their prints. Did you know that even identical twins have different fingerprints!



SUMMER FAIR

BY MS A. SLATER

On Tuesday 20th July Rooks Heath held its inaugural Summer Community Fair, welcoming in members of the school community to participate in a range of activities and enjoy performances from our highly talented students. Despite the heat, the Hall and E block playground buzzed with energy and excitement as people enjoyed the many different activities and events on offer. Audience members were highly entertained by music, dance and drama performances given in the Hall and were treated to a performance of Dennis Kelly's DNA in the theatre. After such a challenging year it was the perfect way to celebrate the end of the school year as a community.



Year 11 Prom



Year 11 Leavers

BY MS H. GROVER

To say that the last 18 months or so have been 'unusual', would be an under-statement! Year 11s, along with thousands of students across the world, have demonstrated their resilience in managing the upheaval to their education, along with the prospect of gaining formal qualifications. School closure, self-isolation, delayed mocks, extended periods of lockdown and the cancelling of externally awarded GCSE exams, all made 2020-2021 an exceptional year. Nevertheless, we wanted to give this wonderful cohort a Covid-compliant send-off, allowing them to experience some, if not all, of the school's end of Year 11 traditions. Friday 25th June was their 'Formal Day', when many students returned to school in their finest outfits. After a complimentary breakfast, they spent some time in their Tutor Groups, and then joined together for their Leaver's Assembly. Memories of their time at Rooks Heath, a presentation about the history of the school and some fun awards (e.g. 'Most likely to host a game show', 'Most likely to become Prime Minister') made for an enjoyable morning. The Prom took place on the evening of the 21st July, and was a wonderful evening, with the Year 11s looking glamorous and partying as hard as the heat would allow!

Many students will be joining the Rooks Heath 6th Form in September, and we look forward to continuing to support them with their journey, as part of the Rooks Heath family. We wish all the Year 11s the very best as they move to the next stage of their lives.



DATES START OF TERM

- **1st September 2021**
Staff Professional Day. School closed to students.
- **2nd September 2021**
Year 7 induction.
- **3rd September 2021**
Staff Professional day. School closed to all students
- **6th September 2021**
School open to Year 7. Year 12 induction.
- **7th September**
All students in school
- **14th September 2021**
Prospective Parents Evening
- **15th September 2021**
Late start

PTFA

MS H. GROVER

What a great year it has been for the Rooks Heath PTFA (Parents, Teachers & Friends Association)! Our meetings in 2020 – 2021 have taken place on Microsoft Teams, enabling many more of our parents/carers to attend. As always, their contributions have been insightful, as well as very valuable. Discussions on topics such as exams, extra-curricular activities and e-Safety have taken place, and have allowed Mrs Manderson and me to listen and respond.

We look forward to more parents/carers joining us for the first meeting of the new school year in September. Please keep an eye on the website for the date of this and of future meetings.