



A reporter from a local paper asked for my thoughts about the past year. I said that, as a school, we have learned a huge amount and our children have responded magnificently to the challenges caused by the pandemic. All of them have improved their skills in IT and time management which will aid their independent learning long term. That said, we are delighted that for the past three weeks we have all been back together again in school! The children have certainly acquired important life skills during online learning and they've made impressive progress too. But they have missed out on social interactions with each other and their teachers, as well as on the wider collective experiences, such as sport, music and drama, which being in school provides. We are placing great emphasis on the children's social development as well as on reintegrating them into the values and routines of our school now they've returned. I believe that our staff can look back on their performance in challenging conditions with great pride. But as primary school teachers, we don't want to sit at a desk for hours on end. We miss the children's energy and the buzz of the normal school day. Important aspects of IT and new ways of teaching and learning are now fully embedded in our practice. But though we have learned a lot, we are seriously happy that it's over! Next term will hopefully see further steps towards normality. I think it's important that we all look forward positively to the future rather than dwelling on what the pandemic has caused us to miss out on. The summer term is always enjoyable, full of sunshine and smiles. Last year, we started it online; this year we're thrilled that we'll be properly together again.

Joe Layton

WOODFORD HUB

Back in 2019, the Woodford Creative Hub set a challenge for local schoolchildren to take photos of their local community in order to complete a photo trail around the town. Due to Covid restrictions, this never happened; instead, like everything else, it can now be accessed via technology! Over the month of March, they are showcasing the photographs over Instagram and Facebook. If you took part, see if you can spot your photograph! There are also images of the children who took part in the litter picking initiative down at Woodford Broadway. It is wonderful to see our school represented here.

Here is the link for the instagram photos -

<https://www.instagram.com/wcreativehub/>

Here is the link for the Facebook page -

<https://www.facebook.com/wcreativehub>

Enjoy!

Sarah Strong



COMIC RELIEF



A host of red noses were seen bobbing around the field last week to raise awareness of Comic Relief, the charity that supports homelessness, hunger, domestic abuse and mental health stigma which have been particularly impacted by the pandemic. Every pupil in the Prep School valiantly completed at least two laps of the field last week sporting Comic Relief memorabilia. It was great to have some fun and laughter and be outside in the fresh air after the recent lockdown. Red Nose Day itself was 'dress down Friday' but, with the national theme this year being super powers, some children chose to dress as their favourite superhero. As you can see Team P.E did us proud! The fun continued during the day as children's jokes were displayed around the school in classroom windows, creating a hubbub of giggles and chuckles. We raised £657.01 for Comic Relief and we thank you for your support with this.

Sarah Strong
Head of Charities &
Community Links



WORLD BOOK DAY

On Thursday 4th March, World Book Day was celebrated virtually. We all had a Microsoft Teams call and, as a class, we discussed our favourite books together. It was an interesting and fun experience, being able to show our books up to the expectant camera and saying why and what we liked the most about our chosen book and we dressed up as a literary character. In 1SS, it seemed that the most popular character to dress up as was the spectacular 'Harry Potter' and knowledgeable 'Hermione Granger'. Someone even dressed up as a 'ghostly dementor'! However, when holding up our favourite book, it was concluded that Alex Rider was recommended quite often. Apart from these different titles and names, someone dressed up as 'Where's Wally,' and another person dressed up as the 'Grand Witch' from Roald Dahl's famous 'The Witches'. Someone even recommended the book 'Mic Drop' for us in 1SS. I really enjoyed World Book Day and it felt, even though we were not able to physically come into school in our amazing costumes, just as special.

Risha 1SS



Joshua's school all dressed up in cats. He used his headphones that he uses for his remote learning, as cat ears! What a pun-fect way to keep listening in an online lesson



Joshua, BLE appeared on *Newsround* on World Book Day in the purrrfect *Varjak Paw* inspired outfit! He used his headphones during the online lesson as cat ears and made national television!

MUSIC NEWS

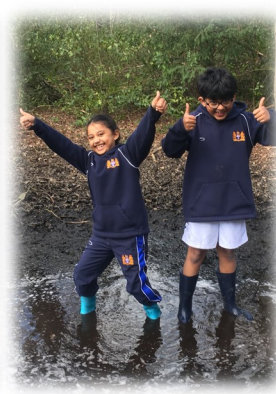
This has been a half term of consolidation. Music lessons continue both remotely and live, and lessons will all be live after the Easter holidays. All of our ensembles have now restarted, still in 'bubble' mode, and we expect that this may be the way through to the end of the academic year. Music exams have continued at a pace with 22 Prep students sitting a grade exam on 20th March. We excitedly await all of their results. These exams take place with a 'live' examiner, whilst other students have sat exams remotely with the power of recording to assist them and no scales! This has proved quite popular. Miss Akroyd continues to enhance the musical life of the school and we hope to start a saxonette group in the summer term for Alpha children. The Prep 2 play process has begun and I am delighted to include six familiar WW2 songs that the ensemble will perform. Let us hope the *Sunlit Uplands* of the summer term brighten our lives a little. Music can do this!

Adam Baum

FOREST ADVENTURES

Forest Adventures is an exciting club because the forest is always changing and there is always lots to see. I enjoy making dens and going for long walks and jumping in mud; it is great fun! We meet in the Prep playground wearing our wellies and head out in to the forest. I like going out during the spring term because it is warm and the sky is often blue. In autumn, the leaves are really colourful. In the dens we build, we add a roof, a fire pit and logs to sit on, so I would recommend signing up for Forest Adventures. We are so lucky to have the forest on the doorstep of our school. Thank you to Mrs Jones, Miss Sylvester and Mrs Hitching for organising the club.

Elodie BBR



VIRTUAL POETRY WORKSHOP

During lockdown, the Betas delved into the wonderful world of poetry, focusing on the work of poet Kate Wakeling. We spent a few weeks analysing her poems and identifying different techniques used before experimenting with writing our own poems. To celebrate their hard work, we invited Kate in for a 'virtual visit', joining us in our English channel on Teams for an hour of discussion and writing. She was very open with the children, giving them plenty of time for questions and sharing her trade secrets with them.

"The experience was amazing as we were able to ask an author about their work. It was really great to hear Kate perform poems and then to write our own ones with her." Sebastian, BBR

"The workshop made me like poetry even more. I now write poems regularly. Doing this was really fun as we got to use our imaginations." Trishana, BBR



It was lovely to see the Betas working so maturely, turning their weird and wacky ideas into funny snippets of poems. The children were a delightful audience and Kate appeared to enjoy the workshop as much as they did!

Bino Rathod

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Have you ever wondered who puts out the 800 seats for assemblies in the Great Hall or who locks the hundreds of doors and windows of our school when everyone goes home? Do you ever think about who loads the mini buses when we deliver our many food boxes for the homeless and monitors the old buildings of Bancroft's School to see what needs fixing and installing? Well, it is Dave Bish, our Head of Maintenance and his team. He has, in fact, been an employee of Bancroft's School for over 32 years and I even have fond memories of Dave, from being a pupil here myself in the late eighties. He was originally appointed as a live-in caretaker and coach driver and member of the Maintenance Department. In his early years, he used to drive the school's 53 seater coach to West Grove and to away fixtures. Some other names you may be familiar with, who were school children on the coach many years ago, were Mr Pollard, Mr Hitching, Mr Pollock, Miss Wainwright, Miss Phelps and Miss Stewart to name but a few. He fondly remembers some of the pranks U6th Leavers have got up to over the years, for which he normally has to resolve in the aftermath! His favourite was watching the PE Department wrestle 12 live chickens, which were left to roam freely round the Quad for the morning! Dave would say there is no typical day at Bancroft's in his area of work, as no matter what plans one makes "you just get on with what needs to be done at any time", although his role has changed a great deal during the pandemic. Whereas setting up for huge school functions was a significant part of his job, Dave has found, with no events going on this year, it has enabled him and his team to get on with decorating and renovating areas of the school. Dave loves the variety of work and being part of the Bancroft's community, who he describes as extremely supportive. He admits the skills needed for his role are good organisation and communication. Living on site means that Dave is often on call at weekends, but when he does have free time, he enjoys gardening and weekends away with his family. Everyone knows and loves Mr Bish. He is such a valued member of our school!



FRENCH POETRY

This half-term, the Alphas and Betas took part in Poesiae 2021. This is a French Poetry Competition where children recite a poem by heart. The performances were judged according to five criteria:

- Physical presence
- Voice and articulation
- Comprehension
- Interpretation
- General impression

The standard was extremely high but Helena ASB, Gaia ASB, Shanaya AAK, Angeliki BLE, Ryan BCB and Riya BLE are through to the national final. Everyone received a certificate and a French themed prize for taking part.

I was encouraged by the enthusiasm of the entrants and the fluency of their accents. Congratulations to all!
Sarah Strong
French Co-ordinator



#CHOOSETOCHALLENGE



This year's theme for International Women's Day was #choosetochallenge. It provided us with the opportunity to consider gender bias and inequality in society and celebrate the achievements of women across the world. We held a virtual assembly highlighting the inequality of pay between men and women, the stereotypical jobs men are seen to do over women, and some of our Beta girls discussed what it is like to be a girl at the Prep School. The Prep 1s and 2s watched a virtual Careers Fair, hosted by the Senior School. They listened to nine amazingly successful women from the fields of Business, Engineering and Technology, including a trainee astronaut! Throughout the week the children discussed women who have been successful in many fields: sport, the arts and politics to name but a few areas. The week culminated in the children accessorising their uniform with purple and green to raise awareness of the justice women deserve, and to signify the hope of a more positive and equal future.

Sarah Strong

CYCLE CHALLENGE

Always one for a challenge, Red Nose Day saw our resident superhero, Mr Hall, cycling 300km to match the efforts of the children. Over the course of a week, during their Get Active sessions, the children ran laps of the school field in the knowledge that Mr Hall had undertaken to match their distance on his bike. Early on Friday morning, Mr Hall took to his saddle to begin his epic ride, pedalling his way through tens of kilometres whilst the rest of us were still eating our breakfast. Throughout the day, each year group took it in turns to cheer him on – and on he went, on and on and ON! Bolstered on by the children's enthusiastic support, various energy gels, isotonic drinks and Mrs Allen's provision of calorific snacks, he was still going strong by the afternoon. As we all headed home for the weekend, Mr Hall powered on through to reach the 300km mark, looking good right to the end - if a little sweaty! We never doubted that he would rise to the challenge and what an amazing challenge it was. Far from limping in to school on Monday morning, he tells me he enjoyed it and was even back out on his bike on Sunday. Superman has nothing on Mr Hall. If you would like to make a donation to Sarcoidosis UK, a charity close to his heart, a Just Giving page has been set up here:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/sarah-strong6>

The generosity of Prep School parents and pupils has already seen the initial target beaten; it would be an incredible testimony to him to reach the next milestone! Laura Dalton



FLASH MOB!

Since returning to school the Alpha and Beta pupils have been busy preparing their first ever 'Flash Mob' dance as part of their P.E lessons. In the final week of the Spring Term, during break time, the surprise finally came to fruition when the entire Alpha year group performed a dance to *Uptown Funk* by Bruno Mars in unison on the Prep field. Later in the week, it was the turn of our Betas who performed a dance to *Firework* by Katy Perry with

each class performing their solo parts and eventually coming together in unison for the main chorus. It was a spectacular moment which attracted a lot of attention and put of smiles on everyone's faces. It was wonderful to see the proud reaction of the rest of the school, who clapped and cheered them all at the end. Well done to all of our amazing Alpha and Beta pupils for the tremendous amount of effort.

Kelly McNelis



GIVING BACK

Our Charity Ambassador, Ian 2AA, has continued to show his benevolent nature outside school by visiting Whipps Cross Hospital and donating 5000 bottles of water to the nurses. Representing our school, by wearing his uniform, he proudly donated this gift to thank the staff for all they have done during the current pandemic. A huge thank you to Ian and his family for their generosity. It is wonderful to see our school value of kindness working to help those who need it most. I am sure Ian really enjoyed 'giving back' to his community.

Sarah Strong

LycHealth the health provider that is a part of the Lycamobile Group has donated 5000 bottles of water for the nurses and staff at the Whipps Cross Hospital in North London.



Prema Subaskaran Chair of LycHealth said: "LycHealth and the rest of the country is indebted to the work of our NHS heroes we hope with this donation that has been made on behalf of LycHealth and my family will be of use to the thousands of nurses doctors and frontline workers who work for NHS at Whipps Cross Hospital. We can never thank them enough for what they have done".