



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM
SCHOOL

UOB SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Summer Edition 2021 | Issue 04



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents, Carers, and Friends of the School,

I write with the summer term 2021 now behind us, to introduce the University School's summer newsletter.

Since February 2020 members of the School community have needed to respond to changing coronavirus-related circumstances; as indeed we have all had to in our lives more widely. At the start of January this year, the announcement of a further period of national lockdown saw learning and support revert to home and remote provision for almost nine weeks. Our children, and the School's staff, are to be commended on their determination to establish continuity of the highest possible standard – including teaching, pastoral support, and access to technology where needed.



As we now look ahead to the new School year in September, let us be optimistic of a more stable 2021/22 so that on site education can re-establish itself to the fullest and richest extent. In my end of term letter (which may be accessed also on our School website) I outlined the arrangements which leaders and staff are planning for the start of the term – including on site Covid-19 lateral flow testing – and to support learning more broadly. Please be assured that plans will continue to focus strongly on health and well-being, so that alongside our educational ambition the School community remains Covid-cautious, safe, and able to respond appropriately to any changing circumstances.

I write these opening remarks to the newsletter on the same day as the Opening Ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics. Across the coming six weeks or so, athletes from across the world will push for their personal bests across diverse sports – motivated and determined to excel. There will be without doubt very many inspirational moments typified so often by sport – of humanity and humility.



For the first time at these Olympics, surfing is one of five new sports included. Through this, I have engaged with the lived experience of Bethany Hamilton, aged 31, an American professional surfer. Bethany offers many reflections from her life – including courage – and I would suggest that she possesses and has demonstrated that in the highest order. Many of our children will be understandably anxious with the arrival of a new term in September – building back from disrupted learning across the last two years, to those joining a new School without the normal comfort that in-person induction affords. I can do no better than point them to Bethany's words stated opposite.

Our Year 11 Graduates (GCSE results day – 12th August) and Year 13 Graduates (A level results day – 10th August) will attend to collect their Teacher Assessed Grades over the summer break. We are all so impressed by the manner in which these young people have responded to learning and personal development in the context of great variability and disruption. As each pupil and student takes their next onward step, all members of the School wish them every future happiness and success.

To our parents, carers, and families, I send my appreciation of your support and partnership for the School – and to everyone, wishes for a happy summer ahead. Please enjoy our newsletter.

With kindest regards,

Colin Townsend, Principal

“

Courage doesn't mean you don't get afraid. Courage means you don't let fear stop you.

*Bethany Hamilton – American Professional Surfer.
(Born February 1990 – Hawaii, United States of America).*

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PUPIL SETS UP FUNDRAISER IN MEMORY OF LATE GRANDFATHER

Year 10 Pupil Ary has been raising awareness and funds for a charity close to his heart, Wheels to Heal, who provide mobility aids for disabled children and adults in less advantaged countries.

Wheels to Heal, a UK based charity, recycle unwanted and used mobility and disability aids, and gives them a new life. These are then gifted to those in need in countries such as Bangladesh, Iraq, Lebanon, Malawi, and Pakistan to name a few.

Ary took part in a 5 kilometre sponsored walk, with the intention of raising £10,000 for the charity. "I want to continue my grandfather's legacy and help children in various poor countries and provide equipment for their mobility and independence." Ary.

Not only did Ary reach his target, he raised more than expected! "Within just four days we reached 70% of our initial target. Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity." In July, a shipping container full of mobility equipment, left for Kurdistan to aid those in need.

We are very proud of Ary at UoB School. He has shown an abundance of kindness and compassion with this charitable act. It takes great determination and motivation to pursue such a challenge and we can't wait to hear more about his charitable updates in the near future.



Images from Ary: Container being loaded with equipment and leaving for Kurdistan.

LEADERSHIP ROLES SHAPING THE FUTURE...

The habits that children learn and practise when they are growing up follow them through into adulthood; imagine how the world would be if children developed habits of courage, justice and integrity. We believe that just as a school can be a place to teach a child to read and write, a school can be a place where a child practises responsibility, gratitude, kindness, and humility.

Pupil leadership roles help shape the character education that takes place within our school. By providing pupils with such responsibilities, we are enabling the leaders of the future, rethinking education, and helping tomorrow's citizens flourish.

The aim of our latest pupil leadership role of Transition Leader, is to enable pupils to actively support and welcome our new Year 7 pupils in September 2021. Transition Leaders will help welcome and support pupils into our school, lead and plan specific activities throughout the year, and provide support alongside our other pupil and student leadership teams. Our Transition Leaders will be a source of help for pupils, become role models for all year groups, and represent our school accordingly.

A number of our current Year 7 pupils applied for this position and were interviewed by UoB School staff. We are delighted to announce that eighteen pupils were successful and have been appointed as our new Pupil Transition Leaders. Congratulations to you all and we look forward to working with you in the new school year.



LOCAL PUPILS' BENCH DESIGN BROUGHT TO LIFE

A new bench, designed by pupils from University of Birmingham School, was unveiled on 15 June 2021.

The bench marks the completion of the Selly Oak New Road Phase 1B scheme, which consists of major highway improvements around the 'Selly Oak Triangle' on Birmingham's primary road network.

A key aim of the scheme was to improve connectivity in Selly Oak, with a major focus on upgrading facilities for people walking, cycling and using public transport.

In addition, the team wanted to give something back to the local community that could be enjoyed for years to come. Local schools were approached in January 2020 to design a bench that represented the area of Selly Oak and its history.

Year 7 pupils at University of Birmingham School took up the challenge, with the winning design brought to life and unveiled by Birmingham City Council's Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment, Councillor Waseem Zaffar.



Cllr Zaffar said: "The former Selly Oak Triangle had a range of issues from congestion to a lack of facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. These improvements have enabled better traffic management and encourage modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport – delivering a better network for everyone.

"I want to thank everyone involved in the Selly Oak New Road scheme for delivering such a fantastic project, including our contractor McPhillips who have also installed this community bench. Congratulations to the pupils from University of Birmingham School for coming up with such a brilliant design."

It was the first time the pupils, who are now in Year 8, had seen their winning design in real life. It is located on the footway of Bristol Road near its junction with Oak Tree Lane in Selly Oak, Birmingham.

Ernest Addo-Boateng, Subject Leader for Design and Technology at University of Birmingham School said: "Our pupils really enjoyed this project and had so many creative ideas. It's been fantastic for the pupils to see their design go from a piece of paper to something that the community will enjoy for years to come."

The design depicts the famous oak tree that formerly stood at the Bristol Road/Oak Tree Lane crossroads, including a witch flying in to it.

Millie, a pupil at University of Birmingham School said: "We wanted to reflect the history of the area in our design. One story is that a witch called 'Sally' was hanged from the tree and coined the name 'Sally Oak' which later turned into Selly Oak."

The design also includes Queens University Hospital, people playing football and running, and lots of trees and flowers. Evie and Hafsha were keen to ensure nature was a key part of the design and said: "We added the flowers and leaves to represent parks and nature, which is something we love about Selly Oak."

Ralph, also a pupil at University of Birmingham school added: "We also wanted the bench to reflect a healthy lifestyle."

The scheme was overseen by Birmingham City Council with construction carried out by McPhillips (Wellington) and full detailed design support from Jacobs.



Paul Handley, Contracts Manager at McPhillips said: "We have been delighted to have been involved with such an important project for the Selly Oak area and to deliver another key highway improvement project for Birmingham City Council. As with all projects of this nature it came with its challenges, of course most significantly COVID19, but McPhillips are really pleased with the final scheme. It's great to see that the aims of the project, which were to reduce traffic congestion and make significant improvements for pedestrians and cyclist, have well and truly been fulfilled.

"The bench is a great addition to the project, and it was an honour for us to be able to bring the children's fantastic artwork to life. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved but especially the local residents for being so patient with us throughout the works."

"Projects like the completion of this phase of the Selly Oak New Road will strategically drive inclusive economic growth through supporting nearby developments like the Birmingham Health Innovation Campus where the GBSLEP has allocated £10.8 million from the Government's Getting Building Fund for the Precision Heath Technologies Accelerator (PHTA). It will also support our communities through unlocking development land, creating jobs and easing congestion that will benefit the local businesses."

Source: Birmingham City Council.

ITE CELEBRATION EVENT

A special thank you breakfast was hosted at UoB School for our trainee teachers and their subject mentors, as they come to the end of their training this year. Thank you to Mrs Stemp (ITE Senior Mentor) for arranging. Well done to you all and best wishes for the future!



EMPATHY DAY

UoB School marked Empathy Day this year by focusing on understanding each other better and sparking a new national conversation about empathy. The theme was 'walking in someone else's shoes' – rather than thinking about how you feel, you gain an insight into how other people feel to help you understand them better.

WHAT IS IT IMPORTANT?

Empathy gives us:

- The ability to feel and understand other people's emotions and perspectives.
- Develop a core life skill which is vital for successful relationships, collaboration and learning.
- A force for social change as empathy is put into action.



WALKING IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES...

Stories are a great way to help us understand more about the world and by getting to know characters, empathise more with people in real life. Our Year 7 pupils read a selection of books in English and then analysed certain characters to see if they could 'walk in their shoes' and empathise with their situation.

"Stories offer us a window into other people's lives and I'm so proud of the way our Year 7 pupils have engaged with the idea of 'reading for empathy'. They have thought about the lives and experiences of characters whose lives are different from their own and have been inspired by a wide range of books. Mx Bloomfield has been able to create the most incredible displays in the library with all the artwork created!" Ms Middleton, UoB School Librarian.



MUSICAL TALENT

Year 7 pupil Chloe Beh's musical talents have been captured to be included as our new school phone system hold music. Chloe recently sat her grade 5 piano exam. When you call in next time, you may hear the piece 'Changing Times.'

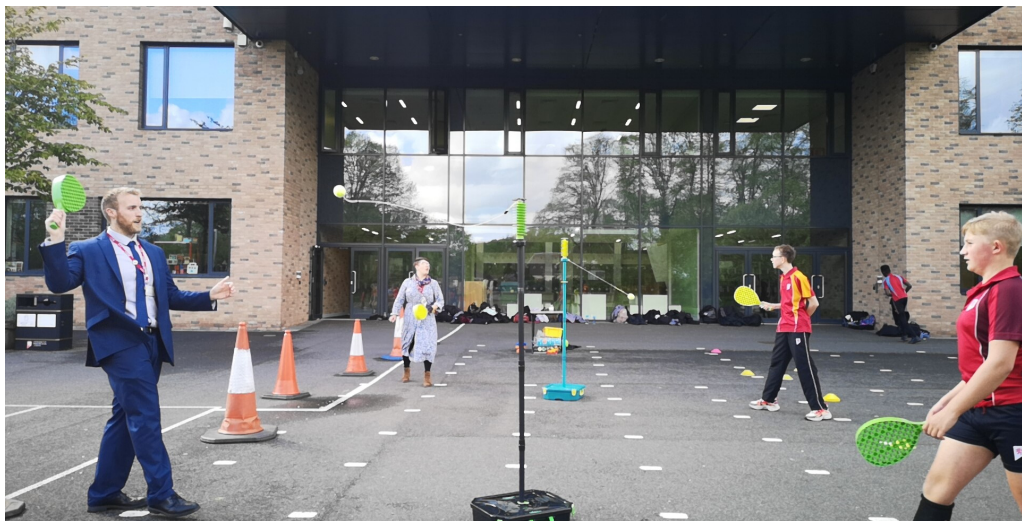
SPORTS SANCTUARY

As human beings we all need or seek some form of sanctuary. The Oxford Dictionary defines 'sanctuary' as 'a safe space'. When we overlay this with the outcomes that sport provides – reducing stress and anxiety, improving cognitive function, enhancing mood, creativity and social interactions – we can start to see how these spaces of sanctuary, or indeed using sport as our sanctuary, can increase our overall health and wellbeing.

The Physical Education department have been pleased to have been able to offer sports sanctuaries to all pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 this term as a space to connect with peers, a space to let off steam and gain a sense of relief from pressures experienced during the school day or in general day to day life.

Pupils suggested sporting activities of interest. The more typical sports of Football, Netball and Basketball were constant contenders, alongside less traditional offers of 'Capture the Flag, Tug-o-war, Ultimate Frisbee, Tchukball and swing ball'.

With music playing in the background, our sports sanctuary became a place of solace not just for pupils, but UoB School staff alike. Thank you to all members of our community who contributed to this space so positively.



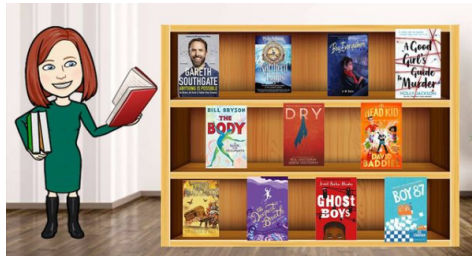
YOUTH SPORTS TRUST

A group of Year 9 pupils have taken their initial steps to become sports activators. The program aims to encourage young people to understand and articulate the skills and qualities of leaders, appreciate motivators and barriers their peers face in light of participation in physical activity, and confidently reflecting and acting in way that gives all pupils in our school access to regular, high quality physical activity.

The pupils have planned a series of sessions for the start of next academic year, aligned with a group coaching philosophy. Their aim is to raise both opportunity and enjoyment around remaining active on a daily basis. We look forward to sharing this invite in September and we look forward to learning something from this inspirational group of activators.

THE BOOK NOOK

Updates from our School Library...



LIBRARY ASSISTANTS

Recruitment for a hard-working and reliable team of library assistants has begun. The assistants will help Ms Middleton with the running of the library next year – shelving books, helping other pupils to use the library, promoting the books, creating displays and running events.

Library assistants need to be friendly, good at working as part of a team, enjoy reading and like helping people. Pupils should be able to work without supervision and have good listening and communication skills.

Being a library assistant gives pupils the opportunity to learn new skills, take on responsibilities, contribute to the school community and be part of a team that shares a love of reading.

We have been overwhelmed with the high standard of applications so far. It is wonderful to see such passion and enthusiasm. Interviews will take place in September 2021.

SUMMER READING

There are over 1500 different e-books and audiobooks available on Sora that you can read at home on your phone, tablet or laptop. Just drop Ms Middleton a message on Class Charts if you aren't sure of your login details or need some help getting started.

Birmingham Libraries are open and lending out books once again. Visit <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraries> for details about which is closest to you and opening times.

Top borrowers this academic year:

1. Asma Chihani Year 9
2. Asantewaa Richards Year 8
3. Yeshin Kim Year 8
4. Arman Ali Year 7
5. Manyojeet Singh Year 7



Reading Champions this academic year:

7A with 914 books borrowed!

Most borrowed books:

1. Dog man – Dav Pilkey
2. Spectacular School Trip (Really.) – Liz Pichon
3. The Recruit – Robert Muchamore
4. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone – JK Rowling
5. The Hate U Give – Angie Thomas

11, 345 BOOKS

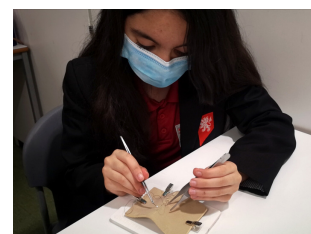
were borrowed from the library this year by pupils, students and staff!



THE RETURN OF ENRICHMENT!



This summer we saw the return of enrichment with UoB School Challenge Days (not quite a challenge week)! Enrichment has always played a purposeful part in our School curriculum, and over the past year or so, we've been unable to establish a timetable for the entire School due to the pandemic. We were absolutely thrilled to have so many activities to take part in and visitors join us on the two days.



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An amazing university aspiring, Duke of Edinburgh expeditioning, biscuit making, language celebrating, honey-bear holding, career inspiring, commonwealth learning, bee hunting couple of days. Enrichment, we've missed you!

Mrs Tighe
Director of University Training School & Character Education

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IN OTHER NEWS...



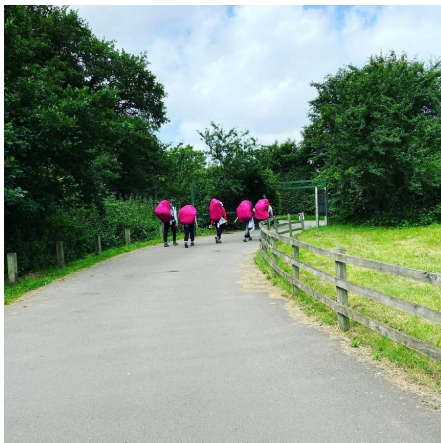
A level Politics students met virtually with Lord Jim Knight this term for a live Q&A to support their studies on UK Parliament.

Year 12 Politics students also took part in a mock G7 Summit. This year's theme was Ocean Action. Students were assigned different countries and then proposed ideas on how to protect the future of the world's oceans.

After some negotiation they reached an agreement on three actions to take forward collectively.

DofE Expedition

Pupils completed their Silver Practice Expedition in Cannock Chase this summer, as they look ahead to completing their Silver Qualifying Expedition in Shropshire.



Well done!

Pupil with the most green stamps this term:

Jhanavi Pavan Kumar in Year 7 with 293 stamps

Form Group with the most green stamps this term:

7N with 5321 stamps

Pupils with most green stamps in each year group:

Year 7 Jhanavi Pavan Kumar with 293 stamps

Year 8 Heph Adedoyin-Olowe with 221 stamps

Year 9 Hannah Washbourne with 183 stamps

Year 10 Kalkidan Abreham with 153 stamps

Year 11 Pierce O'Connor with 22 stamps

TERM DATES

Autumn Term 2021

*Staff Professional Development Day: Thursday 02 September 2021

*Staff Professional Development Day: Friday 03 September 2021

Monday 06 September 2021:

Year 7 & 12 ONLY arrive at 08.50

Tuesday 07 September 2021:

Year 11 & 13 ONLY arrive at 08.50

Year 7 & 12 ONLY arrive at 11.00

Year 8, 9, & 10 not in School on this day

Wednesday 08 September 2021:

Year 8, 9, & 10 arrive at 08.50

Year 7, 11, 12, & 13 arrive at 11.00

Thursday 09 September 2021:

Whole School start at 08.50

*Staff Professional Development Day: Wednesday 13 October 2021

Half Term: Monday 25 October to Friday 29 October 2021

*Staff Research Day: Thursday 02 December 2021

School closed: Friday 03 December 2021

Term ends: Friday 17 December 2021

*no pupils or students to attend/non-teaching day.

Spring Term 2022

*Staff Professional Development Day: Tuesday 04 January 2022

Term Starts: Wednesday 05 January 2022

*Staff Research Day: Friday 18 February 2022

Half Term: Monday 21 February to Friday 25 February 2022

*Professional Development Day: Monday 21 March 2022

Term ends: Friday 08 April 2022

*no pupils or students to attend/non-teaching day.

Summer Term 2022

Term Starts: Monday 25 April 2022

BANK HOLIDAY: Monday 02 May 2022

Half Term: Monday 30 May to Friday 03 June 2022

*Staff Professional Development Day: Thursday 30 June 2022

*Staff Research Day: Friday 01 July 2022

Term ends: Friday 22 July 2022

*no pupils or students to attend/non-teaching day.



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