

# Biddenham E-Newsletter



Welcome to our first E-Newsletter. We hope that you enjoy it. Please don't forget to visit our website and social media pages for more news and information during this time.

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## A message from our Chair of Governors Carole Bell

The Governing body has continued to be involved in the arrangements which the school has made during the lockdown.



We have had a governing body meeting to discuss all the teaching and learning activities as well as safeguarding issues.

Several Governors have children at school, so they gave some good feedback on how the timetable was working. We will 'meet' again at the end of May to discuss the examination grades which the school will have developed for years 11 and 13. I am pleased to report that there is a robust system which is being used to ensure that these grades are being calculated in a fair and sound way.

I am pleased to note two key policies which have set the school in good stead during the lockdown. The move to Chrome books several years ago has meant that all students and staff have had the ability to set, do and mark work, and are well versed in the systems. Secondly, because we have our own catering, we sent out vouchers for those who normally have free school meals from the first week of the lockdown, and so haven't had the difficulties which other schools and families have faced (leading to us now using Edenred successfully).

I want to pay tribute to the hard work of staff during this period, to students carrying on with their studies in these difficult times, and to parents for their additional role of teaching subjects which they may not have considered for a long time! The school is still functioning very much as a community, and Governors will ensure that planning for the return to normal school life will happen safely and effectively.

## A message from Head of School Eleanor Grylls

Just over 3 weeks ago, I was welcoming you to our first ever remote newsletter. Now I'm welcoming you to our first ever distance newsletter. Indeed, it has already been an interesting year for 'first ever' in this, my 'first ever' year as Head of School.



Little did any of us know what was in store when we started the new academic year, way, way back in September!

I'm sure that all of you will have experienced the highs and lows of the 'Coronacoaster', as it has been dubbed in the media. There are the 'up' days when we've got it all in hand; working from home, home schooling, baking banana bread, family exercise sessions, shopping trips for others in self isolation, limiting the arguments to just one about who has got the chrome-book charger and managing to see the positives in the strange and unique circumstances in which we now find ourselves.

Then there are the other days when it all just seems a bit too much; worrying about everything, not getting enough sleep, no wifi - so everyone is arguing, we miss our family and friends and to top it all off it starts raining! It's in these times that we have to remember that we are part of something bigger and that we are still connected to our Biddenham family. This newsletter is our way of celebrating the very best of our school community, the positives, the 'up' days and the 'first ever's'.



## A message from our Principal David Bailey

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and all the positivity within it - recognising the positive has never been so important in these difficult times; They may be different positives from family to family, but they will be there. For me, spending more time with my wife and two sons has been a real bonus...especially as my eldest son is due to leave home for good at the end of the summer to work in London.

So somewhat selfishly we've been enjoying having him home and all to ourselves. Similarly, whilst personal contact with the wider family has diminished, virtual contact has increased exponentially - whether through Whatsapp, Zoom, Houseparty or with my elderly parents - old-school, telephoning; I'd never heard of some of these before this all started! So, although these things only go some way to replacing personal contact they are facilitating much needed communication with loved ones. It does all bring home the importance of families and the need not to neglect them - as we inevitably do during 'normal' times due to the busyness of life.

Biddenham has always been a family school; A school at the heart of its community with a strong welfarist ethos looking after our students emotionally and academically. I hope this is evident in this newsletter and that it has come through over the past two months - where we have looked to stay connected, albeit virtually, We have attempted to continue to support all our young people - educationally, physically and spiritually - through these difficult times: That's what families do...

I look forward to seeing you all as soon as is safely possible as we build the future for our young people again. Stay safe, stay optimistic and much love to you all from all the Biddenham staff team.

# A LETTER TO OUR YEAR 13S

Dear All,

Today would have been your last day at Biddenham and it is really sad to think that you have had that taken away from you. I think that about now we would have all been bouncing away on the bouncy castles enjoying just one more doughnut!! I truly hope that at some point in the near future we will be able to have a celebration of your time at school but we will let you know about that in due course.

It is very difficult putting into words the emotion of saying farewell. The last day is always a great time for reflection of your time at Biddenham. Over the last 5/6 years you will all have so many memories that will stand out, you will have made friends for life and I am sure in that time you will have laughed together and cried together, hopefully more laughing. There are so many of you that have made such incredible contributions to the school and have undoubtedly left in in a better place. The commitment you have shown to the school during your time here has been outstanding, the sporting fixtures, musicals, dance performances, STEM fairs to name but a few.

I hope that all of you are able to go on and be incredibly successful in your chosen career pathways but above all of that I hope you all stay healthy and happy. There is no doubt that within this current group there are many entrepreneurs and leaders of industry and, I am sure that after this experience that you will all have a slightly different outlook on life and how we judge success.

It is also a time for me to thank your senior prefect team, they have been an excellent group and have represented the sixth form incredibly well at every opportunity, so thank you so much for your contribution.

One of the most important things for you all to remember is that, although we have only been part of your journey, our doors will always be open to you and whenever you need us we will be there for you. Keep in touch and let us know how you get on with everything that you do.

Thank you all for the memories, the smiles, laughter and all the incredible memories you will leave us with, your contribution to the school will not be forgotten and you truly are part of history. We are all so incredibly proud of the way that you have coped with the current situation, it just goes to show there really is nothing that can phase a Biddenham student.

Well done to you all we will miss you and I wish you all the very best for your futures...the CLASS OF 2020!!!

# THANK YOU FROM 2020 LEAVERS' SQUAD

Hi All

Of course you know today would be the last day for Year 13, filled with fun, laughter, tears, joy and farewells. An opportunity to say goodbye and thank you. An opportunity to have one final fun time. And we would have the leavers' assembly and a thank you card etc. Of course we can't anymore, but I organised and contacted people to ask if they wanted to say thank you with their own personal note and of course people were more than happy, (through social media!!) It isn't as fun and isn't the same as it would be in person, but we have all tried and below is a list of comments to you all about our school and our thanks; at least you don't have to deal with anyone crying on you - haha! I've kept them anonymous as people just wanted to keep names quiet, but they were more than happy to say their thanks! Thank you for being amazing people and making the leavers' group of 2020 the best it could be. A small thank you from us all:

"Thanks Biddenham for making people who they want to be."

"I am happy that you made my journey as smooth as possible."

"I appreciate all of you; you work so hard - working and caring - thank you for teaching me all these past years."

"Thank you for everything you have done for us. Our year was different, but you guys made it the best Sixth Form ever. Thank you for the experience- I will do my school proud"

"At first life in Sixth Form was pretty difficult; I was shy and wouldn't want to talk to anyone. Over time I realised the true meaning behind Biddenham and how much of a family it really is. This couldn't have been done without the continuous support and love you guys have shown the last couple years. I couldn't ask for any better teachers to spend the last 2 years at Biddenham with. I wish you guys all the best for the future!"

"I have been through a lot these last few years and can gladly say Biddenham helped me through it all. Thank you."

"The support you guys always show is beyond us all and we can never thank you enough."

"When people ask me the definition of family. I say Biddenham."

"Thank you for showing me love. I never knew what that meant until I stepped through the doors of Biddenham."

"Thank you for all the efforts shown and always believing in me."

"To have people like you to listen, love, care is something I will always treasure as a person in life. If I aspire to be anyone in life it's people like you."

"Fun. laughter and joy"

"I thrived at biddenham through the kindness and patience you all showed me."

"If Biddenham taught me one thing, it's to never, ever give up."

"When people ask me why I chose to stay at Biddenham I couldn't give them an explanation; I just said you would have to live it to understand."

"Thank you for allowing me to call something like school... a place I will always call home."

"Thank you for all the hard work. time and effort you all put in making the Sixth Form a great place - stay safe and eat cake!"

"Thank you so much for all the hard work you put into the Sixth Form; You guys are truly amazing and so unforgettable; An informal goodbye, but I wish next year is less stressful for you all."

"Thank you for allowing me to be crazy and have so much fun; Biddenham was a true experience."

"Stay safe, stay classy and stay sassy!"

"You are all amazing people and will not go forgotten."

"Thank you for giving me the true definition of what it means to live."

"The thing that stands you guys out from the rest of Bedford schools; you never stop believing in us."

"They say that life's a journey and you never quite knew what was going to happen; That's the same with Biddenham- but the one thing that remained the same was all your smiles."

"Thank you, Mr Brown for your daily 'good mornings' and smiles."

These all are just a small few of the huge amount of love and kindness and thankfulness we have for all of you and we honestly can't begin to thank you enough. Thank you for being such amazing, amazing people and even in these unprecedented times, people like you make it a whole bunch better.

We love you guys..

lots of love and appreciation from the amazing leavers of 2020.

**A message from President Obama to all the school leavers of 2020.**

**Well worth a watch!**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8Ego3\\_43IQ&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=I-wAR12-s-KapTZQHWPpFN8zgBfo34ZxaNoU\\_yywTTsAuXN4vG\\_g2Kp-pQh38zA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8Ego3_43IQ&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=I-wAR12-s-KapTZQHWPpFN8zgBfo34ZxaNoU_yywTTsAuXN4vG_g2Kp-pQh38zA)

## Technology teaches all of us at Biddenham that change happens slowly, then all at once...

Biddenham's decision five years ago to support and extend teaching and learning may now appear visionary. We couldn't have foreseen the chaos Covid-19 would bring to our school community but our online approach and the considerable concerted efforts of our students, parents and staff have allowed us to move into remote teaching and learning with self-assurance, calm and relative ease. Our development of this area of teaching and learning has been firmly grounded on evidence and informed over time by the shared practice of our staff along with visits to other schools in the UK and beyond. For us, technology has never been a substitute for quality teaching; its purpose has always been to augment learning rather than distract from it. Although we never anticipated fully remote teaching and learning, our Google Classroom and online textbooks, such as Kerboodle, have thankfully allowed us to overcome many of the physical limitations of school closure. We all look forward to the time when Biddenham can welcome its students back into our classrooms. However, in the meantime, we can continue to learn, separated only by distance.

At the core of successful teaching lie key principles of instruction that remain whether you are in the same room as your students or isolated at home. As a staff, we have been continuing to develop our teaching skills from home, working through an online training programme which challenges how we can apply these principles remotely. This has helped when considering how best to plan for online learning. For students, this is now a time to review and build on prior knowledge; to make the most of opportunities for both guided and independent practice; and to reflect on the individual feedback being given by staff, necessary for making steady progress.

Great teaching is more than the imparting of knowledge and the delivery of content. What we miss the most right now is the human element - the development of personal relationships which is an essential ingredient for all of us at Biddenham. As a mother of two Biddenham students, I see how much it means when teachers recognise the fluctuating emotions and efforts of our students right now. Encouragement, support and kind firmness is evident in the type of feedback being provided for our students, who in turn respond so warmly to the support and communication from their teachers and other members of our staff team. Our use of technology is not the most advanced approach, but a solidly researched and pedagogically effective one. Work set varies from teacher to teacher and from subject to subject, as it would in a normal school day, with opportunities for pupils to work independently, as our students would do in a classroom-based lesson.

Will remote teaching and learning transform how we work in the future? At Biddenham we pride ourselves in an approach that has allowed us over the years to build technology neatly into the processes involved in good teaching and learning, linking innovation with tradition happily. As a result, we feel we are well placed to manage the here and now while ensuring continuity of learning for our students, whatever the future holds.

Ms C Piotrowski  
Assistant Headteacher - Professional Learning

## Here's how our some of our teaching staff are finding remote teaching...

**Shannon Hussain**

*Remote teaching definitely was not how I expected to be completing my NQT year. My confidence with using google classroom has been confirmed and have enjoyed creating a range of different resources/learning tasks for my classes and department. I really miss being able to interact with my team, classes and everyone, the job just doesn't quite feel the same. Although, it's lovely to know my students enjoy the work and really miss us all.*

**Suzanne Squair**

*However much I enjoy marking Biology essays from enthusiastic year 11s on my laptop, in my garden, it's just not the same as putting pen to paper and writing feedback in my own hand, putting a shiny sticker on the bottom, handing it back to them and seeing them smile! I have really missed this type of teacher-student interaction, but at least with our Google Classrooms we can get something close to this!*

**Emily Roberts**

*I have learnt some new things this week including how to make a google form into a google quiz and using the rubric function on Classroom. There are some good youtube videos on how to do this and have allowed me to change a few things in my teaching. I have enjoyed coming up with the Year 11-12 transition tasks with some creative ideas that I would like to use in lessons. I love some of the work that the students are doing, and would love 100% of my classes to do it..*

**Ree Ann Vaughan**

*It's a challenge to adapt planned work, to differentiate differently too. Overwhelmed, the first week back I made a schedule. I am using the Pomodoro method I encourage the students to use for revision. I had a lesson on rubrics from Nic Fountain and that has helped me mark more efficiently. I am also enjoying the better view, than the space between R and H block, now I get trees, my dog, and family too.*

### Chloe Drake

*Students have really taken it upon themselves to engage with the online lessons and send work for feedback. It is especially nice to see this of the students that have previously shown a disinterest in science and/or school.*

*Although Google classroom is a great platform and easy to use, I am concerned about adequately checking the understanding of all students.*

### Ali Neely Hayes

*Originally I thought remote teaching would be easy! Set some work, mark it - done. But it's so much harder than that. Firstly, and selfishly juggling life, while working remotely is difficult.*

*Daily trips to hospital to see our newborn take up half the day, then entertaining a toddler, whilst he constantly needs stimulation and food and trying to reply to the million google classroom emails is difficult!*

*I worry about whether my students understand what I set & if they are actually learning. To improve this, I have now set aside time in each day to check through if students have asked any questions so that I can respond as soon as possible. Having more structure is much more beneficial to me! Which, of course, isn't a surprise! I have posted some videos on my GCSE & tutor group classrooms which seem to have gone down well!*

*Of nothing particular, but just so they don't miss my face, and now my lockdown hair! I much prefer the interaction I have with the students, and I miss the camaraderie & the face to face teaching experience that I love.*

*I am going to attempt a science video in the coming weeks!*

### Shanise Ghera

*Teaching remotely has been an incredible journey so far! During the past few weeks, I have become more connected with my students and fellow employees. It has been a strange process to adapt to however the dedication from our students and staff body has kept me going. I have enjoyed the change, creating lessons and resources for my classes and department and feeling a sense of normality going into school to spend time with our amazing key worker's children.*

### Isabelle Lilley Moncrieff

*I think with remote teaching the biggest challenge has been finding the right balance. I want to plan and upload enough work to keep the students busy, but not too much for those who will struggle. Equally, giving the 'right' type of feedback in comparison to their other staff - most of the time I'm pleased they've accessed & opened the document, even if their work isn't the best. I've tried to express gratitude for their efforts and a strategy they could implement next time, rather than always giving a critical EBI on each page of each piece of work!*

### Chipo Mawokomatanda

*Teaching remotely has been an interesting experience. It is nice to see all the students that are engaging with the work and emailing for more information, but it has been difficult to not be able to help those that are struggling in person. I feel like I am getting more used to using google classroom and the rubrics make online marking so much easier!*

### Philippa Copley

*I have found because we use google so much already it was easy to set work and monitor every day. However the bits I don't like are the lack of knowing how your students are getting on, if they have an issue in their lives that means they can't do it and the face to face teaching that remote teaching just can't replace. I've learnt that simple is easiest and the best for the students...or so it seems. I started to try and do all singing and dancing lessons but the best and the ones that are accessed more often are the simple ones...watching a program and answering questions on it, completing a google form as a quiz, producing posters on revision work, flash cards etc. Our Y12's have excelled in remote teaching and seem to be doing better than when we were in! I think this experience for those y12's will have helped them to become more independent learners. Most importantly I miss the face to face teaching, supporting students in front of a class and of course the fun of it!*

**Abi Speight**

*I am really glad that we had google classrooms already set up and established, the first few weeks felt quite easy setting work and checking what was coming in. I was adapting my lesson plans to make them more accessible but not much else to start off with.*

*As time went on I felt students needed a little bit more...from the phonecalls I was making to year 10 I realised lots were missing the teacher input and that they were missing school.*

*So I started to do video assemblies... filming them on my phone and uploading to google. Like the other Heads of Year I have also done a year 10 check in questionnaire that 35 students filled out.*

*Today I sent in my first google meet video lesson for H&SC. This took 5 attempts! Not because of vanity but because I kept forgetting to share my screen as I videoed my lesson! It was pretty easy to use and will continue to now I have got the hang of it.*

*What's difficult is the lack of feedback from the students, it's similar to doing a facebook or instagram post and getting no 'likes' or 'comments'. We don't know who has watched the video or read the post you have put on the Google classroom. It would be great to have a 'seen by' or 'like' button just so you know who has or hasn't seen what you are sharing, especially for my year 10 year group classroom as I am not asking for work to be submitted.*

*So I shall continue with the video teaching even though my grey hairs are beginning to show! I actually quite enjoyed it.*

**Gemma Buckingham**

*I am relieved we had an already embedded system that staff, students and parents were familiar with. This has made the transition to remote learning much easier. The benefits of google classroom in commenting, sending messages and marking online has enabled us to provide valid and meaningful feedback, praise and support to our students whilst giving staff the opportunity to explore new approaches such as Google Meet to produce videos for classes, allowing us to be more visible to our students.*

# BIDDENHAM 2.6 CHALLENGE

Over a week staff and students have been taking part in the 2.6 challenge. An initiative to help raise funds for charities that are struggling during this pandemic. With over 40 people staff and students taking part Biddenham raised over £950 for NHS Charities Together and Finnley's Warriors Children with Cancer UK. Well done to the following students who completed various challenges to help raise this money.

Here are the challenges are students completed:

Natasha, Lily Aitchison and family ran 2.6Km

Richard Brummitt ran 2.6 Km

Esther Fisher wrote 26 positive quotes and delivered to people

Amna Ahmad ran 2.6 and did a 26 minute zumba session

Ineida Zludaite - cycled 26km

Ewa Cyrankowska - choreographed a 26 second dance, 26 activities associated with each letter of the alphabet, found 26 items from nature, Megan Cox - played the piano for 26 seconds, choreographed a 26 second dance, made the number 26 out of coins, made 26 cinnamon buns

Carlos Pinto Da Costa - listened to 26 songs

Domenico Marsala - cycled 26km

George Bissett - cycled 26km

Elisa Southerden - 26 cartwheels one after the other and 26 mins of sports across a day everyday of the week!

Ben Pearson and Dan Pearson - trampolining 26 different moves

Pearson family - 26 toilet roll keepy uppy challenge and a 2.6 mile walk

Lilliana Mirza - 26 seconds hula hooping, 2 mins 6 secs sleeping lions, 26 seconds dizzy shuttle runs, 26 laps around a room.

Lilly McKay - 26 seconds hula hooping, 2 mins 6 secs sleeping lions, 26 seconds dizzy shuttle runs

Vanessa Pienkowska - 26 seconds hula hooping, 2 mins 6 secs sleeping lions, 26 seconds dizzy shuttle runs

Eshan T - 26 seconds hula hooping, 2 mins 6 secs sleeping lions, 26 seconds dizzy shuttle runs

James Kostuch - 26 seconds hula hooping, 2 mins 6 secs sleeping lions, 26 seconds dizzy shuttle runs

Melissa Khumalo - 26 seconds juggling, 26 dances

Darius Tatu - 2hrs 6 skipping

Tatenda Gonera - 2.6 mins meditating, 2.6 mins dance, 26 mins of comedy, 26 facts about celebrities and 26 mins bike ride!

# YEAR 7

Over the last few weeks the Year 7 pastoral team and myself have been calling home to do welfare checks on your children. It has been really pleasing to find out how your children are doing at this very difficult time. I can't emphasise enough the need to take regular exercise, even if it is just a walk, to help support everyone's wellbeing. Likewise, it is important to eat well at these times. I have shared a lot of information for the student to look at with regards to keeping them safe. Being at home means they are likely to be online a great deal more. Therefore this comes with its own concerns which it is important to highlight to students regularly, but also to help support them should they see or experience anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or worried. Two of the best sites to support these concerns are the NSPCC and Child-line.

I would also like to remind you about an organisation who are able to support with emotional and mental health needs during this difficult time. Kooth are able to provide online counselling to students and they are fully qualified, experienced and professional with their help. They can be found at [www.Kooth.com](http://www.Kooth.com).

Finally, while I know that you are concerned about when the student will return and the impact this gap is having on your child's education, rest assured that the teachers at Biddenham are doing all they can to support them academically to ensure they achieve their best and I am delighted to keep receiving the positive emails for them about the high quality of work the students are producing.

Mr Evans - Head of Year 7

## SEE BACK PAGES FOR LINKS TO EXAMPLES OF WORK

### Maths

Year 7 and 8 revised on many topics as algebra and statistics, excellent job!

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### English

Year 7 have started our work this term by exploring the Commonwealth, some of the countries within it and Nelson Mandela.

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### Science

Year 10 have started revising all of their core practicals, and year 9 are completing KS3 revision toolkits!

We've had some lovely work sent through from year 11's starting their A-level transition work, I have linked a 2 really nice Biology examples.

### Geography

The students have started the journey into looking at what the Commonwealth is, what it means to us here in the UK and around the world. The students are working their way through a workbook with tasks to complete each week.

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### History

The students started to explore the impact of the reformation on the government and people's everyday lives. Each week has a prerecorded lesson which goes through the resources and tasks set. We are working towards The English Civil War in our continued topic relating to the Commonwealth. Examples of excellent work below:

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### Languages

Our students have been revising vocabulary whilst building on their cultural understanding. We have encouraged independent learning skills in listening, reading and writing and creativity through imaginative projects which have produced excellent work. We hope they are practising some speaking at home too! Examples of work below.

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### Oracy

Throughout this term we have been exploring our oracy skills further so far we have looked at or presentation skills in particular our ability to

- Self regulate
- Use appropriate vocabulary
- What the importance of structure is when presenting a script or speech
- Develop our understanding of rhetorical devices through presenting our work

Students have been completing planning documents and uploading videos to support their understanding. Examples below.

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### Project Based Learning

Started the distance learning journey by carrying out a section of choices to make a difference to their local community during these uncertain times

After the Easter break they have started to explore their new topic across a range of different subjects but fusing that information together by developing skills in planning, research and developing ideas to explore the commonwealth theme but also enhance skills that will support learning across all subject areas at GCSE level and beyond. Below are links the full stories and other work.

Distance Learning projects - links on back page

# YEAR 8

## **Performing Arts /Drama**

*The Bare Necessities*

*Look for the bare necessities*

*The simple bare necessities*

*Forget about your worries and your strife...*

Year 7 have been enjoying their Commonwealth drama project on The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling. They are developing their knowledge of context and characters reading through a scripted adaptation of the book by Gregs Banks. They have also been busy answering questions and sketching their favourites!

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## **Music**

We have been exploring one gigantic story of musical history, listening to and learning about 400 years of music. We started in the 1700's with Bach, through to Mozart and Tchaikovsky leading us into the 20th Century. Here we learnt about and listened to music from films such as Star Wars and video game music. This week we have started to look at 20th Century Pop music: an amazing playlist of Louis Armstrong, Elvis Presely, The Beatles, The Four Tops, The Bee Gees, ABBA, The Smiths and the start of Hip Hop. Next week brings us to 90's Brit Pop before we zoom into the 21st Century with Rhianna, Lady Ga Ga and link up with English Literature as we wonder at the poetry within Grime music.

On the back page is a link to Saif's great use of adjectives to describe the emotion in music.

Students have been shared a weekly google form to fill in to let me know what they have been up to, and if they need any help or support. They have also been given information on how to access the local library online, telephone counselling if they are struggling and information on audiobooks. On the glasswork stream they can also access additional maths work and some basic first aid training.

Mrs Stephenson - Head of Year 8

## **SEE BACK PAGES FOR LINKS TO EXAMPLES OF WORK**

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## **English**

Year 8 have started reading 'The Hunger Games.' They have each been assigned a district and have been working to collect points for their district team by answering questions, completing tasks and designing a shield for their district.

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## **Geography**

This term the students have been invited to take part in a challenge. Each week they are set a series of tasks of which they choose what they want to do. Each task is worth a number of points. They are competing in their classes as well as across the whole year. These are themed each week with:

Week 1 - Year 7 memory

Week 2 - TV and Media

Week 3 - Climate change

Week 1 Winners

8MAB: Tahira Ali and Tarandip Singh

8CMM: Rose Davison

8MNA: Vinnie Barbrook

8ALW: Fatima Begum

8ARW: Harmony, Selina, Emileo, Keira

8DAB: Lily Aitchinson

8LCK: Bilal, Nalima

8SA: Fizza Khan

Winner of year group: Tahira Ali, Tarandip Singh and Rose Davison!

## **Languages**

Our pupils have been revising previous content and have also been busy showing their independent skills and creativity through wonderful work and projects.

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## **Project Based Learning**

This term we have been developing our skills in creating detailed and evidence based projects based on the topic Tomorrow's world. We have been developing our skills in effective note taking, researching using a wide range of sources, and planning our project against the project criteria. Students are now at the stage where they are developing their ideas and we would welcome you when we return to school to come and observe the global goals stun exhibition.

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## **Khady Niang Sketch**



## **Information Technology & Computing**

Year 8 students have been taking a look at cybercrime and e-safety as this is even more relevant during the current times. Ms Guess has also been running a competition weekly for all Year 8s to see which class have completed the most online iDEA badges.

**Taiba Kaseer**

**Mark Pearson**

**Laiba Kaseer**

**Rose Davison**

**Mariya Rahman**

**Michael Hulme**

**Pola Prusaczyk - Presentation is exceptional**

**Fatima Tejala**

**Irina Gherghelas**

**Afsan Choudry**

**Usman Hussain**

**Tyler Raisi**

**Fakhir Ali Hussain**

**Megan Cox**

**Harry Hollinshead**

**Cory Page**

**Adrian Jasiewicz - completed some badges on iDEA**

**Inti, Nathan Cox - completed the Bronze Award**

## Year 7 and 8 Short story competition



Don't miss your chance to be a published author! Win the chance to be published in a short story anthology. Herts for Learning are running a short story competition. They would like you to create your own dystopian world. Here are some of the typical features of dystopian fiction to give you some ideas-

Society is ruled by a powerful leader/government  
People in society (citizens) are oppressed  
Citizens don't have freedom of speech  
Citizens are under constant surveillance  
The ruling class/leader is rich and citizens are poor  
There is a background of war or rebellion  
The main character questions the ruling power  
Typically events take place in the future  
The society has similarities to the world we live in

Entries should be no more than 500 words and need to be submitted to Mrs Burton at [caroline.burton@mybiddenham.com](mailto:caroline.burton@mybiddenham.com) by Friday 29th May. Prizes include: 1st prize - £20 Waterstones' voucher, 2nd and 3rd prizes – £10 Waterstones' voucher, and of course your story will be published!

## Year 8 History

Each year we tell the pupils they can enter the Historical Association's 'Write Your Own Historical Story Competition' and this year a girl in 8SA - Mahek Yousaf - has written a story and entered the competition. Read her story over the next pages...well done, Mahek!

## The Black Death

Thursday May 12th 1353

Dear Diary,

It's me again Katherine Pierce, it's my birthday, not that I care, but I am now 26 and I have gotten the worst birthday present and just a really bad birthday overall. The bubonic plague is spreading swiftly leaving many dead and infected. I have lost many loved ones to this lethal pandemic; now do you know why I really don't care about my birthday? I am scared. I don't know how to navigate myself in this stressful time, I put up a strong front for my siblings but deep down I am broken and I don't think I can be fixed, now there is only me and my 3 younger siblings; Elena, Caroline and Jeremy. Elena is 18, Caroline and Jeremy are 15, they are both twins. The plague had originated in China and from there it has been spreading like bad news. As I wake up in the morning, I can smell the burning of the dead bodies and the screams of the people who have fallen prey to this deadly disease. It has killed at least 24 million people just in Europe, it's merciless and I think it intends to wipe out the whole world's population at this rate. I severely doubt me and my siblings will survive this. The day passes killing more and more people by the hour. I am hesitant but I need to send Elena to go buy some groceries so we can eat. Jeremy and Caroline are in their rooms and I feel sorry that they have to experience the loss of so many loved ones all at once but I am also sorry they are having to experience a pandemic of this such as they are only 15. Elena is back so I need to go and make some food.

Until tomorrow!

Friday May 13th 1353

Dear Diary,

Elena is not feeling well, she is experiencing tummy pains and diarrhoea, I realised her condition and the symptoms she is showing are all signs of the plague. I quickly rushed her to the hospital and the nurses said to go home and burn all of her belongings and things she has touched in the past 24 hours. I left her and my address so that they can update me on Elena's health, whilst I went to go and burn her belongings. I was in a panic feeling flushed with an intense sense of fear engulfing my mind whether if I will ever see my beautiful baby sister again. I manage to pluck up the bits of courage I have and pick all what I recall her touching or using in the last 24 hours, with a heavy heart I put them all in a large pile and set them ablaze. After a few hours the bell rings I feel my heart sinking in to my stomach I answer the door, it's the nurse "Elena's skin has started turning black," she says, I am speechless, I am scared and I feel I could have prevented this from happening I shouldn't have sent her to buy the groceries. Why, why did I send her to buy groceries? Elena was my support in this hard time. I don't know what I would do without her. I know I don't have long left with her in this world. At this point I cannot take losing another sibling, I have lost 2 siblings, 2 of my nephews and one of my niece's. My eldest brother Alaric died first then his wife Josette, his daughter Bonnie as well, a few hours later Bonnie's brother Elijah started showing symptoms, 24 hours later he had passed.

A week later, my sister Victoria passed, 3 days after that her child Henry died. My parents died a long time ago (my father died due to a heart attack). My mother could not take the pain of losing him and ended up killing herself. I was only 12 and now I am 26, so it's been 14 years however the pain is still there and will always be there, I just think of it that they are in a better place now. Losing my siblings one by one to this pandemic is just heart-breaking. I am mad because I wish it would've taken me so I wouldn't have to endure the pain and loss of my family, I know it's selfish but I can't keep losing my siblings and then pretend to stay strong I don't know how many more losses I can mentally take. An hour later, I got a letter giving me the news she has passed and that they are going to burn her soon I am trying so hard to not break down. I cannot bring myself to give the news to Caroline and Jeremy but nevertheless they deserve to know our beloved sister is no longer in this world as I compose myself to give the news, with each step I take I feel a piece of me breaking away. I enter their room and luckily they are in the same room so I don't have to repeat this painful and traumatic news again, they both turn to look at me and I sob, I quickly hold myself together and tell them "Our angel has passed," saying it aloud hurts and before I know it I am on the floor mourning and begging for her to come back, Caroline and Jeremy are also mourning so I pick myself up and try to comfort them but how do I comfort them when I am so hurt? a few minutes of us all crying together, I take myself out of their room to mourn in my own way somewhere else. Elena was only 18, she had her whole life ahead of her, to be taken so early on in life is torture. There will never be a day that goes by when I don't think of her I just hope she is in a better place and is at peace. "I love you Elena"

Until tomorrow!

Saturday May 14th 1353

Dear diary,

It's been 24 hours since they burned Elena's body, It is the twins birthday today, but they don't seem to care they are still asleep, I don't want to wake them because they are breaking down and seeing them break down makes me want to give up and I need to stay strong for their sake. I only cried when they were asleep or not around me, it's not the same without her. I woke up and ended up going into her room and not seeing her or her belongings broke my heart, after sitting there and crying for an hour I then decided to go and wake the twins up. I need to go buy something for me, Caroline and Jeremy to eat. It's very risky to be going out but it has to be done and I would rather me go out than the twins so I will write in a few hours as long as I don't fall ill, Bye for now. Hello again, Caroline and Jeremy they are still crying and trying to succumb to the loss of our precious sister. I don't think me and the twins are ever going to be able to recover from her absence, it is 4'o o'clock and the day feels longer than usual and it's making us all suffer. I tried to recite some of Shakespeare's sonnets so I can try to cope but even the sonnets are not helping and I reading and reciting them as they take me out of reality and into a whole other world and to lose interest so easily just proves, I will never be the same without her.

Before all of this I was happy in life and after this I don't think I will ever know of happiness again, I guess not all stories have a happy ending, unless some sort of prince charming decides to come along and help me out of the darkness but I know better. I have always enjoyed reading about true love and how love conquers everything but as I grew older, I stopped believing true love even exists you just have to compromise to live a happy life. Right now, I think I will be isolated and lonely for the rest of my life.

Until tomorrow!

Wednesday May 18th 1353

Dear diary,  
I have not been writing for 4 days, as I feel lost and I don't know who to turn to at this point Caroline and Jeremy are slowly, slowly composing themselves but I am just not the same anymore, although I have taken up an interest in Shakespeare again. I don't love it yet but I think I am recovering in my own way. Coincidentally, I saw one of my friends, Damon in the market square 2 days ago he was my best-friend's brother and he has changed quite a lot, at first I didn't recognise him but he recognised me, considering I last saw him 10 years ago, I was bound to forget about him I said "we should catch up at some point", bearing in mind the circumstances of us meeting again are very slim. I doubt I will ever see him again. Seeing him after all this time is weird as I completely forgot about him and didn't expect to see him again but I guess everything happens for a reason, right? Speaking of I haven't spoken to Lexi in a long time she really helped me after my parents died and I think only she will be able to help me after the loss of Elena. Lexi really liked Elena and Elena liked her as well, Lexi was my only friend Elena actually liked. I am going to write Lexi a letter, goodbye.  
Ok, so I'm back it's been an hour or 2 and Lexi replied back quite quickly she really helped me just like I thought it would. She was also heartbroken when I gave her the news of Elena's death. Nevertheless, during that hour I felt happy and wanted to feel like that forever. We promised to stay in touch and exchanged goodbyes.

Until Tomorrow!

Thursday May 19th 1353

Dear Diary,  
I had woken up with a sickening feeling and stomach pains, I didn't know what to do so I ran to the sink and what came out of my system was some sort of green liquid with lumps and bumps I felt I had needles stuck onto my throat and that I was choking. I had woken Caroline and Jeremy by the retching of my gagging, when Caroline tried to come near me, I pushed her away just in case this is what I think it is...

So, after 2-3 hours of vomiting, I got back into bed and after an hour I decided to make my way to the hospital I had to burn my things and everything I had touched in the past 24 hours. I kept thinking to myself "what is going to happen to Caroline and Jeremy after I have passed" Before I left, I saw Caroline peeking through my door so I called her back into the room but told her to stay by the door, after just looking at her for a few minutes she asked me "Are you going to leave us like everybody else has" my heart dropped, all I wanted to do was take her in my arms and hug her one last time but I couldn't be so selfish so I said that "I am going to be going to a place where only happiness exists" I also mentioned that I will see Elena and all of our siblings including Mother and Father again, I didn't know myself if what I was saying was true but I really wanted to believe that, what I was saying was what is going to happen. I also asked her if there was a message, she would like me to pass on and she simply said "Tell everyone that me and Jeremy love and miss them very much". My condition is deteriorating, I feel myself growing weaker and weaker by the minute I can't feel the upper half of my body anymore. So, I quickly set my things ablaze and rush to the hospital I don't know what to say to the twins so I tell them "I love you and will miss them you much".

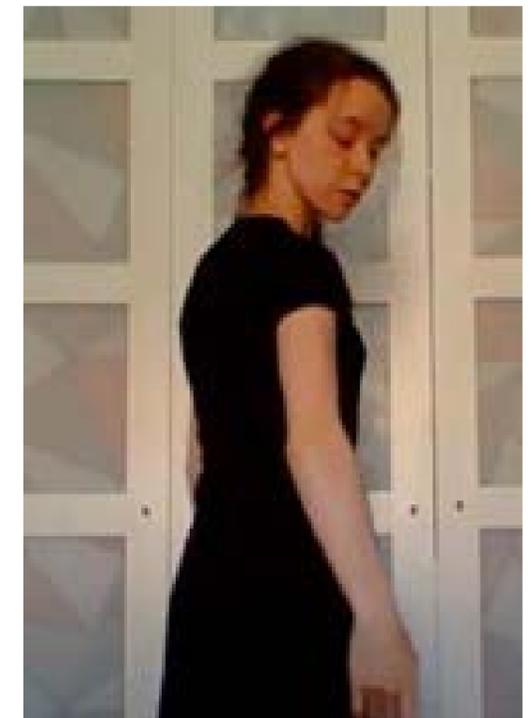
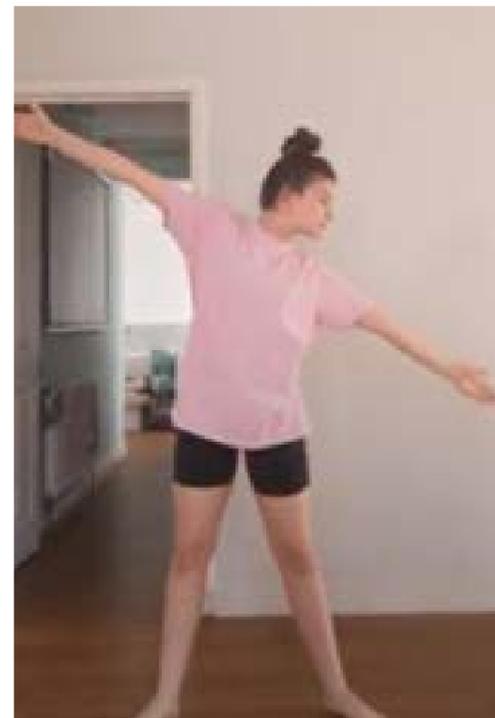
Before I fall, this is the last time I say "Until Tomorrow"

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## Year 9 Dance

Year 9's have begun to explore the five types of stimuli used in Dance this term. The work has involved both practical and theory elements. Several great videos have been submitted by students to show how they're improvising using the information learnt in class to make some lovely dance material, whilst adapting to their space at home!

Mia Russell (left) and Holly Fraser (right) have been chosen as our star pupils this term. They have both submitted some fantastic work and taken part in weekly challenges that have been testing their performance skills.



## Year 10 Dance

Year 10s have been focusing on a new dance anthology that they will need for their final dance exam next year. Through a range of activities pupils have produced some great exam answers about various characteristics of the dance work. Weekly challenges have also been set for the year to continue to improve their performance skills.

Two students have been chosen for our stars of the term.  
Atiyyah Ditta's Challenges and Despina Marinova's write up on the dance work Shadows.

### Exercises for Flexibility:

- Shoulder rolls
- Extended angle side bend
- Lower back mobiliser
- Standing hamstring stretch
- Side and reach stretch
- Neck and shoulder release

### At home to improve my flexibility I did:

- 5 neck and shoulder releases
- 10 shoulder rolls
- 5 extended angle side bends
- Held a standing hamstring stretch for 8-10 seconds



Atiyyah Ditta's Challenges

### Background information

- Christopher Bruce's works are often 'politically aware' in reference to past or current political events happening around the world, exploring their effect on human life.
- In Shadows, Bruce invites the audience into the world of a small family, possibly set in Eastern Europe, who are coming to terms with the deprivation, poverty and the realities of what lies outside their intimate home.
- From Leeds, Phoenix Dance Theatre is one of the UK's leading contemporary dance companies. Under the current director, Phoenix has re-introduced diverse mixed programmes of work by both established and up and coming choreographers, including classic pieces from the company's repertoire Well done for this Despina!

### Structure

- Opening/ Intro
- Daughter's solo
- Mother, father, daughter trio
- Father/ mother duet
- Mother solo
- Son solo
- Father/ son duet
- Quartet
- Final section

- Premiered 26th November 2014 4 dancers (2 male / 2 female)
- 12 minutes Structure: Semi-narrative Solo, duet, trio, quartet.
- The form of the piece allows each member of the family to speak. They all have their moment and they all have their different characters

Despina Marinova's write up on the dance work Shadows.

I hope you're all safe and well, just in case you're all on the edge of your seats waiting for the 2.6 challenge video - here it is. So many people have taken part the video is now 20 minutes long! Amazing! and thank you to all those who donated and their friends and families we are currently on We have raised a massive £1048 for our two charities. Brilliant!

I can't thank people enough for their support with this and generosity.  
You are all amazing!

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OceUdZpXmulcyvBTMbJOGtvXh0OgtELo/view?usp=sharing>

## LINKS TO EXAMPLES OF WORK BY YEARS 7 AND 8

### Year 7 Music

[https://youtu.be/\\_B2jIUPxQIQ](https://youtu.be/_B2jIUPxQIQ)  
<https://youtu.be/wwlx34kHefU>

### Year 7 Oracy

<https://youtu.be/selupto5Q4s>  
<https://youtu.be/idO8ei3KVE8>  
<https://youtu.be/ufV-kmjfQHM>  
<https://youtu.be/rmPNSLeoK8E>  
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<https://youtu.be/yRDKAtp9IjU>

### Year 7 Science

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### Year 7 English

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### Year 7 Dance

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### Year 7 DT

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### Year 7 Drama

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### Year 7 Geography

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### Year 7 History

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### Year 7 Language

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### Year 7 PBL

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### Year 7 Textiles

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### Year 8 Dance

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### Year 8 English

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### Year 8 Geography

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## Year 8 Language

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## Year 8 PBL

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## Year 8 Textiles

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