

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

Saint
John's
college school



WW1 Centenary Commemorations

The School took part in several Remembrance events last November to mark the 100th anniversary of the Armistice in 1918 that signalled the end of the First World War.

Year groups across both sites created art works in response to events that happened during the First World War, culminating in an art trail at Senior House and a mural of relatives of St John's families who served in the war, as well as striking art and poetry displays at Byron House.



Above: Artwork by Electra Reeves (aged 12)

I could have saved you
I tried to stay behind to help you
But they dragged me
Away through the clumping sludge
My boots tracking the mud
All the way from your limp body
To the trenches.

I had to fight
Had to fight against your death
Because it was not fair
That any of us should die
But even more unfair
That I should live.

Unexpected ledges
In the trenches
Caught my silty feet
I suppose I have to face it
That night I wept away my
Memories
Broken man
In the mud
Yelling out and choking
On his own gargling blood

I will remember.
We will remember.

Vera Edgington

Front Cover: RYA Regional Junior Championship at Grafham Water

Back Cover: Artwork by Joseph Srouji (aged 12)

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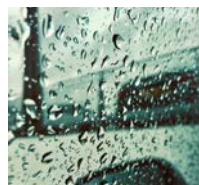
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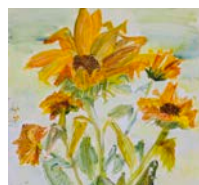
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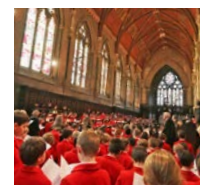
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Creativity as Practice (CAP)

Creativity is one of the most sought after skills by employers today. Children are born creative: the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking shows that 98% of children in KG are 'creative geniuses', yet by 25 only 3% remain 'creative geniuses' according to this same test. At St John's, we believe that creativity can be taught and our curriculum seeks to nurture its development.

The School's 'Creative Curriculum' development started in 2012 with the aim of developing and adapting the curriculum, and the way it is delivered, to foster the children's creativity, independent learning, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Child-initiated Learning (CHIL) was introduced whereby the children propose, debate and vote on a topic to study in one term and then have the freedom to choose what aspect they will investigate, how they will research and learn about it and how they will present their findings. Evaluations have shown that learning in this way has raised the children's motivation, engagement, breadth of learning, ownership and independence. While CHIL continues (and you can read more about this year's topics in the pages which follow), this year at Byron House we have continued to explore ways to increase the benefits the children gain. This has been underpinned by staff training delivered by the Cambridge Curiosity and Imagination partnership in 'Creativity as Practice' (CAP).

One aspect of this learning in creativity has been an exploration into how the approaches of creative arts subjects can be used to enhance learning in all areas and to nurture creativity. We have looked in particular at four key aspects: pupil choice, the creative arts, play and 'slowness'.



Feeling place value in Maths using plasticine. When doing the sums later on, one child commented that they were able to do the work because they could picture what the numbers felt like.

"In Maths we were learning about place value but we started blindfolded! It made you really think about the numbers you were creating from plasticine."

Inspired by *A Boy Called Christmas* - as the story was read the children wondered what 'Elfham' was like and created their own imagined 2D or 3D map of Elfham



'Taking a walk through Dragonia' - the children's impression of their own dragon's world following descriptive writing, leading to sensory poetry

Exploring in the Byron House Forest Garden, using clay and natural tools to create forest faces



"I liked being able to walk between our worlds, working with different people, adding extra ideas from each other, not one part 'belonged' to anyone it was all of our creations."

"It was quite free, we weren't told what we had to do, we made it up as we went along and so had to be really flexible and share ideas."

"I liked the challenge of only being able to use my hands and what I could find outside in nature."



Child-led Learning

In Byron House, the children in each year group from T2 to Form 2 have continued to choose their own topic for one term each year. This year, these covered a diverse range of subjects including Creating Structures, The Rainforest, Animals, Bees, Mexico and Spies. The children are given the freedom within the topic to further their learning in areas that interest them and planning by teachers responds to this. As in previous years, high levels of motivation, engagement and involvement have been observed. The children take ownership of their learning and can often be overheard chatting animatedly to each other about their topic outside of lessons. Child-led learning in art is also in its second year in Form 3 and each class has voted on their own topic: 'City life', 'Natural world' and 'Around the world'.

The child-led topics also provide opportunities to further embed the thinking skills, covering questioning, information skills, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision-making and memory skills. Fostering this higher level thinking and encouraging independent, active thinking and learning, equips the children with skills that will serve them for life.

"There was lots of freedom with our creating structures topic. It allowed our imaginations to run free."

Play-based Learning

Play has been called the highest form of research. Through play, children are involved in active, engaged, minds-on thinking that is fun and driven by intrinsic motivation. Play offers a risk-free environment where children can explore ideas and deepen learning through application and collaboration. Children are made to learn and to learn through play. The curriculum in Kindergarten and T1 centres around play-based learning, with children having free-flow access across both classrooms in the year group, as well as the outside area for most of the day. Play in the classroom is carefully planned for and guided. The teachers arrange resources to be accessible, introduce learning points or stimuli, offer challenges and play alongside the children to scaffold, direct, engage and lead the children on to a deeper level of understanding.

Our introduction of a play-based learning approach has been underpinned by the latest research on learning for young children which demonstrated that children learning through play show improved attainment, well-being and learning dispositions, such as creativity. For example, one study showed improved reading comprehension by age 11 in children who had been in play-based learning until age 7; other studies have shown deeper conceptual understanding and language and communication skills in children who had received play-based learning until age 7. Play-based learning stimulates healthy brain development, improved social and emotional development, improved physical development and a stronger well-being. Trials of play-based learning were also conducted in Kindergarten and the results were carefully evaluated and showed that statistically, children made better progress and, in addition their skills, had improved in areas such as problem-solving, collaboration, independence, enjoyment of learning and language development.

“The children have more ownership over their learning, both what they learn and how they learn it. It is much more meaningful to them and they are making far more links across the curriculum.”

“It appeals to their natural curiosity and desire to engage in experiences based on their own interests, strengths and developing skills and you can see them being able to make sense of the world around them.”



Problem solving in T1: building a bridge for the dinosaurs to get across the classroom without touching the floor.

Flexible Learning

Cognitive flexibility is prized at St John's as a means of enabling the children to better understand the process of learning for themselves, to recognise different learning styles and to identify what makes a 'good' learner. The use of the 'Mindsets for Learning' (M4L) throughout the school has provided the children with vocabulary with which to comprehend, discuss and develop their own meta-cognition. To help shape the children's behaviours and mindsets, teachers develop a consistent culture of high expectations and quality feedback that is centred on effort rather than outcome, on process rather than attainment. Children utilise M4L when faced with a challenge or problem and use flexible thinking to think through an issue for themselves. Flexible thinking helps children to get along with others, helps groups to be more effective and helps solve problems and try new ways of approaching tasks or situations. Teaching children to be flexible thinkers by reflecting on their learning and opening them up to the ideas of others is achieved (in part) through the 'My Mind' curriculum, Mindfulness and school Assemblies.

'My Mind'

The aim of the 'My Mind' curriculum in Forms 2-6 is to teach the children the skills to think flexibly and adapt as the circumstances around them change. 'My Mind' consists of lessons in philosophy, study skills, mindfulness (including Tai Chi), critical thinking and PSHEE (Personal, Social, Health, Emotional and Economic Education). Through different curriculum areas, the themes and objectives of each of these subjects are interwoven and include: understanding that you can change the way you think; meta-cognition, or thinking about thinking, supporting creativity; training your mind and body to help you learn better; focus and attention are key to learning and to happiness; learning skills in attention, speaking, listening and argument can help us to learn better together and think more creatively through collaboration.

Across the different strands there is a combination of theory about the mind and self with practical ideas for implementing this theoretical knowledge. Whilst the 'My Mind' curriculum does prepare children for exam success, its scope is far wider and aims to help children understand themselves, their learning and their relationships in such a way as to be better able to manage themselves in the future.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness continues to be used across the school as a way of slowing thinking down, bringing attention to the present moment and reducing stress. Practising mindfulness has been shown to help at each stage of the creative process and therefore in addition to starting lessons with a mindful moment, mindfulness activities may also be used at different points of lessons or events, such as in preparing for a drama production. We use different mindfulness exercises to help children bring attention to the present moment, including focussing mindfully on breathing (using different taught breathing exercises), the body (using a body scan), an object, a piece of music, or our thoughts themselves.

This summer the author and academic, Claire Thompson, who writes on Mindfulness and the natural world, has worked with a small group of interested Sixth Formers. Her practice seeks to emphasise and nourish the connectedness between humanity and the rest of nature. She uses Mindfulness techniques to bring the spotlight of attention to the natural world around us.

"As a parent I've seen how Mindfulness has helped my son in exams and he even practises it at home before he goes to bed to help him go to sleep. It's great how much it is helping the children."

Tai Chi

In Forms 2, 3 and 4 children continue to have a sequence of Tai Chi lessons as a way of helping to focus the mind through the use of the body in reflective and intentional movement. While practising Tai Chi, the focus of your awareness in the present moment is on the movement of the body. This nurtures the connection between body and mind. Tai Chi's low-impact, repetitive motion of the exercises relaxes the nerves into 'letting go' and this releases any physical and mental tension. The continued focus links the breath and the controlled movements. Just as physical exercise keeps a body fit, the mental concentration required for Tai Chi exercises the brain. These sessions develop the ability to help retain more information, stay focused on the task at hand, and make quicker decisions.

"Tai Chi has hugely helped me improve my balance, strength, flexibility and coordination."



Top: A Tai Chi lesson
Bottom: Mindsets for Learning in Action

Emotions for Learning (E4L)

Emotions for Learning (E4L) is a curriculum and an approach to learning and relating at school that has been developed uniquely at St John's. We have created an entire social and emotional curriculum for our youngest children based on research and evidence about how children's minds and brains develop. It is designed to encourage children to express their opinions and feelings and give them the knowledge, skills and understanding they will need to be able to think creatively and problem solve effectively in all areas of their lives.

In addition to annual E4L training for parents, this year the School has offered a peer-to-peer massage course and carried out training at Linton Primary School.

"E4L is a fantastic model for nurturing emotionally strong and secure children."

Mindset for Learning (M4L)

We continue to use our Mindsets for Learning (M4L) to help foster effective learning dispositions in the children, encouraging them to think about how they learn as much as what they are learning. Having identified twelve characteristics that were felt to underpin such effective learning (focus, collaboration, curiosity, risk-taking, flexibility, reflection, linking, perseverance, compassion, imagination, rigour and enjoyment), these were introduced across the whole school and are now part of the language of every classroom and are incorporated into all areas of teaching and learning.

These dispositions help support the development of a 'growth mindset': the belief that, with effort, a person can develop their abilities, become a more successful learner and therefore achieve more. Children are encouraged to identify those dispositions which they feel are a strength and those they feel need to work on and, together with their teachers, look for ways to develop and improve these.

KG 'action story' massage, our peer to peer massage which follows the 'Massage in Schools' programme



"So many sports we take part in at St John's involve teamwork, collaboration and developing your positive communication skills. These are the main mindsets I think about when playing team games and matches."

"I need to get better at being collaborative. I need to make sure I get involved and give my say in what we do."

Philosophy

Philosophy for some years has been an important part of the St John's curriculum for children aged eight onwards. We aim to teach the children to think philosophically by practising learning to build logical arguments and counter-arguments, linking ideas, questioning, flexible thinking from different points of view, explaining your own viewpoint and discussing extending logical thought by imagining hypothetical situations. These skills are taught and practised in the context of a range of both topical and classical philosophical contexts from all the different branches of philosophy including aesthetics, logic, ethics, utilitarianism, metaphysics and epistemology. Different stimuli are used to provoke discussion, such as films, newspaper articles, classical texts and paintings.

Children transfer skills learnt in philosophy lessons into critical and analytic writing in Religious Studies, History, Geography and English, learning how to support arguments with evidence and to consider opinions before reaching a conclusion. Some of the topics covered in Form 5 and 6 this year are listed on the right.



An outdoor lesson in Form 4's Philosophy of Art; the study of the nature of art, including concepts such as interpretation and how to define it.

Do you always have to have a reason to know something?

What does it mean to be truly altruistic?

Can something change and still remain the same?

Can we distinguish between objective and subjective truth?

What role does religious belief play in the question of survival?

Can we expect the sun to rise tomorrow?

Jason Buckley, 'The Philosophy Man', visited St John's with his brand of Philosophical enquiry, first to deliver an Assembly and then a small workshop with Form 2. In Assembly the children were encouraged to think about and discuss the question of fault around a scenario about a football and a broken window. The consideration of this idea and the subsequent lines of thought initiated by the children led to some very interesting discussions.

"We talked about the idea of 'fault' when someone breaks a window with a football. I said it was the original house builder's fault as they had not provided strong enough glass!"

Sustainability

At St John's we aim to foster the aptitudes and nurture the growth of each child so that they can become their best selves. To be one's best self involves being compassionate and aware of the world so that one has the skills, ability and courage to re-envision the world and take action to right what is wrong. We want to encourage our children to find their 'voice' and to understand that they can make a difference. This is the aim of our sustainability development, which is a long-term development over the next five years and beyond. 'Sustainability' is used in its 'integralist' sense to include environmental issues as well as humanitarian concerns (social awareness) – care for the world and for each other.

Compassionate Outreach

Following its successful launch last year, pupils in Form 6 have continued our 'Compassionate Action' outreach programme. The very definition of compassion, understood as the wish to relieve others' suffering, led naturally to the development of a plan for Form 6 children to take part in some action to improve an aspect of their local area. As one child said, "I feel that I have gained a lot from this outreach- it has certainly improved my communication skills and has also made me realise how difficult it is to lead a group". Another child said, "It's important to help people because you are giving back to the community which have given so much to you. It also makes you feel good and has made me a more rounded person".

"I have found the sports outreach a great learning task for me as the 'teacher' and it has also strengthened my teamwork with others in my group."

Over the last year, in addition to our ongoing support for the work the Humanitas charity does in Ghana and our international outreach in China, the outreach element of our sustainability programme has continued and expanded including pupil-led activities such as Compassionate Action in the local community, sharing our Emotions for Learning and Mindfulness programmes with local schools, 'Dancing with Dementia', music and drama outreach, and Action against Climate Change. You can read more about these in the pages which follow.

After some initial planning sessions and discussions around what Compassionate Action might look like, five groups of children formed. Two groups visited local care homes where, amongst other things, they played music, recited poems, played bingo and sang. One group undertook sports teaching at a local primary school and another taught mindfulness. Another group taught 'well-being' at a junior school, running sessions which included yoga, mindfulness and origami. The fifth group taught debating skills to children at a local school, which is outlined in more detailed on page 11.

"We had nice conversations with some of the people in the care home. We gave them baked goods, did a little bit of magic, performed music and played bingo with them. They looked like they enjoyed it! I find it important to do these projects to give other people happiness and entertain them and it is also good experience for us and it might teach us a few life lessons."

‘Dancing with Dementia’ Outreach

Form 2 took part in a ‘Dancing with Dementia Patients’ project as part of their Responsibilities Development and as an extension of the school’s Outreach Development. The aim was twofold: to provide outreach opportunities for the children to increase their understanding, compassion and self-awareness whilst also developing their sense of responsibility towards others in the local community. We believe that by doing this, children will be given opportunities to embody and develop the values of trust, compassion, love and understanding.

The children worked with dance artist and teacher, Filipa Pereira-Stubbs, and the Horizons Community Centre, a day care centre for people with Learning Difficulties which also has a supported living area for people with Dementia. Filipa ran workshops with the children including dance tuition and a discussion on dementia; what it looks like, how it presents in adults and what the children might expect to see. The children talked about their own experiences of dementia. The children then visited the Horizons Community Centre and sat interspersed with the adults and talked confidently and thoughtfully to the people near to them. Filipa led a seated warm up and then children, carers, volunteers and the elderly people with dementia introduced themselves to the whole group. Following this, children were invited to move with the elderly people and a beautiful, chaotic, but gentle dance ensued.



Drama Outreach

Our Drama Outreach activities have continued this year through sharing our expertise to give children in other schools the opportunity to participate in the Shakespeare Schools Festival with their own production.

Head of Drama, Mr Clarke, worked with Year 6 children at Gislingham Primary School in Suffolk, for the second year culminating in a 30 minute abridged version of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

"Each child began to learn more about themselves; to find their talent, bravery, resilience, and their ability to take risks and conquer their fears, as well as the importance of commitment and hard work."



Debating Outreach

This year, one of the Compassionate Outreach activities (profiled on page 10) involved a group of Form 6 holding a series of debates with Year 6 children at Coton Primary School. The children spent time discussing how the Government and the Opposition are configured and the jobs of the three children on each side. They were taught how to present an argument using the point, evidence and example structure. The Coton children had no previous debating experience but by the end of the final session, they were presenting strong arguments, had grown in confidence and were able to stand up with assurance in front of their peers. Some of the motions included: "This House would have a tuck shop at Coton Primary" and "This House would learn at home via the internet and not come to school".



"We would like to say a big thank you to St John's for so generously sharing the wonderful facilities with us. It was great to see the children enjoying being in such a beautiful and peaceful environment and play on such an amazing instrument."

"The room where the children performed was a perfect setting. It felt very calm and peaceful, and not too overbearing for the children, especially as it was my son's first concert performance. We felt we were in a special place."

Music Outreach

Thanks to a bequest, this year we have been fortunate to purchase a new Steinway concert grand piano, not only as a resource for our own pupils, but also to support outreach activities with the local community. These have begun with a series of piano recitals, with pupils aged 5-16 from local state schools performing a range of repertoire from pre-grade 1 through to diploma level.

The concerts have been tremendously successful and much positive feedback has been received. We hope to be able to extend the number and variety of these opportunities for the local community to continue to benefit from this and other resources in the future.

Stringmoves

The Stringmoves music outreach project continues its mission to provide children from other local schools, who may not have access to music teaching and/or facilities, with a good grounding in basic musical skills, a firm technical introduction to string playing, and above all, a fun and positive experience of music-making. It combines Dalcroze Eurhythmics and the opportunity to learn a stringed instrument within a whole musical experience.

Dalcroze Eurhythmics is a fun and exploratory way to learn musicianship and to discover the expressive power of music. The method uses body movement to explore musical concepts and make music come alive. The children develop a natural sense of musicality through a range of musical activities including rhythmic training, listening, singing and coordination and by the time instrumental lessons begin, the children already have a good knowledge of pulse, rhythm and phrasing.

International Outreach, Ayensuako School, Ghana

St John's has continued its collaboration with Humanitas and the school that was built in Ayensuako, Ghana, funded with money raised through our charity initiatives, including the 'Grow a Pound' campaign. The school buildings at Ayensuako have now been painted and a library is being established which will be used by the entire village. Old textbooks were taken from St John's to Ayensuako for the children to use. The £490 raised at Form 4's Victorian Fayre went towards Humanitas' Christmas campaign which aimed to provide each child with a brand new school pack for 2019, which included a school bag, a complete stationery set and notebooks. In March, a few members of staff ran the Cambridge Half Marathon in order to help raise further funds for this important project.

"I learnt that children in some countries like Ghana do not have any toys and make them from recycled materials. I feel happy that we can raise money to support these children as we are incredibly fortunate to have all that we do."

"It is possible to make a difference. If everyone took the time to do something, however small, it would amount to something great."



International Outreach, St John's College School, Nanjing

The first St John's College School in China, a nursery school for children as young as two years old who will move on to a Chinese primary school when they are six, was officially opened in November 2018 with a soft launch of a class of approximately twenty children. This continues the School's international outreach programme which aims to share the St John's philosophy with others. The income generated will go towards financing bursary support for children in the UK and will also help to fund the extension of the School's outreach programme in this country. The school will now gradually increase the number of pupils year on year until it reaches a capacity of approximately 200.

This exciting project has come to fruition thanks to the hard work and commitment of the team in China who have fully adopted the St John's ethos and are determined to give young Chinese children the educationally positive start in life of which our School in Cambridge is so passionate. Several of the Chinese teachers have been welcomed at Byron House for training and St John's staff have also visited Nanjing to ensure the St John's ethos and Emotions for Learning curriculum are fully embedded. The architect designed building and landscaping has been created very much with the St John's ethos in mind, linking in the indoor and outdoor spaces, creating a vegetable growing area and a forest garden for the children to learn and explore their outside environment.

In May 2019, the Headmaster conducted the first of a schedule of regular site visits. He met with staff, children and their parents and heard from so many about how the St John's education the children are receiving is having a positive impact. One parent remarked that her 4 year old daughter, thanks to the E4L programme, was now offering proactive advice to her grandmother about how to deal with strong emotions: "take a deep breath and, when you are ready, talk about it".



Action against Climate Change

Whilst environmental awareness and education on climate change are an established part of the curriculum at St John's, this year has seen a number of initiatives from the children themselves, in response to the inaction they observe from the older generations. Although varying in magnitude, each has been the living embodiment of the 'think globally, act locally' mantra, prompting the whole of the school community, including parents and staff, to think carefully about what actions we can all take and most importantly, to take any action, however small. A few of these initiatives are outlined below.

Form 6 Action Group

After Form 6 children presented their thoughts on sustainability last year to the school's Governors, the school has since introduced meat-free Mondays and has stopped using disposable plastic cups. Other proposals which the children put forward are still in continued discussion: the introduction of a 'living wall' on the exterior of the Hinsley Hall to capture CO₂, the installation of solar panels to meet the school's electricity needs, promoting public transport options and introducing further school bus routes to reduce pollution and energy consumption.

Climate March

Demonstrations and rallies have taken place in more than 64 locations across the UK, including London, Bristol, Cornwall and the Scottish Highlands calling for action on climate change. A group of environmentally-conscious Form 6 children joined other secondary school children in a march, calling for climate change to be declared an emergency. Since the march, these Form 6 children have given insightful Senior House Assemblies and contacted the whole school community via website bulletins, detailing what each family might do to reduce their carbon footprint, such as going vegetarian for a week, cycling to school or reducing the use of single-use plastics. To encourage small one-off trials to become permanent changes, they followed up their suggestions with an online survey drawing attention to what choices we can all make to form good habits to protect the environment.



"This was part of our commitment as a school to making a difference to our future. We have become aware of the increasing problems and we decided to do something to make a change. We are planning to do five climate change weeks spread out over this term and next. The first focuses on urging children and their families to reduce their CO₂."



Green Fingers

Kitchen Garden Club continues to thrive, teaching both the skills needed to grow-your-own but also to instil a love of working with nature, with the seasons, outdoors, to produce food to eat in a way which supports a balanced ecosystem of plant and insect life and healthy soil. The children have planted, tended, weeded, fed and watered a wide variety of herbs and plants, including sugarsnap peas, carrots, garlic, tomatoes, sweetcorn, lettuce, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and broad beans.

The Power of Music

Conscious of the power of music to draw attention to world problems and engender change, over half of the Form 5 pupil compositions this year were connected to sustainability and environmental awareness, including species extinction, deforestation, world hunger, and air and plastic pollution and had titles such as: 'A Plastic World', 'Plastic Planet', 'Ocean Blues', 'Pollution', 'Forest Falls' and 'Save the Animals'.

"Our generation is the generation which could tip the scales either way, and it is vital that we understand the problem and act upon it. The recent Assemblies with a focus on climate change have definitely had an influence on my attitude towards the problem, and have posed solutions and actions that we can take even if we feel that we cannot do anything, such as becoming vegetarian for the day. It is our generation's problem to sort out, and it is up to us to do something, therefore I am very supportive of the changes that are being made to our habits as a school."

Form 2 Pupil Responsibilities

This year we have introduced a set of pupil responsibilities for our Form 2 children. The aim is to help them develop a strong sense of ownership and pride in their school and environment, leading the rest of Byron House in modelling care and kindness to each other and the environment.

Following detailed discussion with the children, together we created three strands, outlined below, which the children participate in on a rota, taking on a differing set of responsibilities each term. The buddy system was also revamped to include buddy lunches and regular book sharing and writing time with children in KG as well as T1. The children have spoken positively about the nature of their roles and responsibilities, showing that they feel they are meaningful and that they are helping to make a difference in their environment.

‘Helping Hands’ assist during lunch times by pouring water for other children, circulating around the dining hall to offer fruit on trays and offering any help to the younger children as the need arises.



‘Playground Pals’ welcome children arriving at school in the morning, alongside the designated adults, and hold the doors open for the younger children. In the playground, they have offered support and kindness to the younger children and have been encouraged to talk to others and develop caring relationships with them.

The ‘Teaching Team’ have written and typed stories with younger year groups and have spent time sharing books and helping with maths.

Pupil Forum

Listening to children and looking at the world through their eyes is at the heart of the St John's ethos. The Pupil Forum has been developed as a vehicle for both listening to children as well as developing leadership skills and a sense of agency in their school. Representatives from each year group meet every week to discuss and plan ways of improving the school.

At Byron House, changes brought about by the Pupil Forum have included adding a new netball post, improved goals for playtime sports and a mixed offering of different sports on different days. The children are currently trialling a 'buddy bench' where children can go if they would like some company at break time and children in Form 2 'Helping Hands' now serve water and a range of fruit at lunchtimes to help to create a smoother flow and quieter atmosphere.

At Senior House, the Pupil Forum was instrumental in organising and launching an inaugural 'St John's Got Talent' show which a dedicated sub-committee of forum members planned and delivered. Other areas for development proposed and debated by the children have included: improved tree duty supervision, break time play equipment and games in the Piazza, the creation of a Boarders' Google Classroom, an improved Anti-bullying leaflet, the introduction of football goals on the Multi-sports court, a child-led card club and improved after school snacks. Some of the other areas discussed have included the introduction of a school Latin motto and alternative House competitions.

"Pupil Forum is an amazing committee to be on. It is also a great way to express different skills that you may have not known you had already. Encompassing leadership skills to find a creative and satisfactory answer to the pupils of SJCS is very worthwhile."



UNESCO Rights of the Child

A delegation of four pupils were invited to The Palace of Westminster by UNESCO and 'Voices of Future Generations' to discuss key worldwide issues such as Sustainability and the Rights of the Child with children from schools around the country, focusing particularly on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The aim is to empower children to have a voice about the future they wish to see. "Children, and their children, will inherit the earth. We aim to give a voice to all children worldwide to express their insightful and creative visions about how they would like this future to be." ('Voices of Future Generations').

The discussions took place in a committee room in the House of Lords, in similar style to a UN debate, with chairs in a circle and microphones for the children to speak into. The children offered opinions and suggestions of how to combat key issues such as, "How can we better take into account the interests of, and be better voices for, future generations?" and were joined in discussion by their peers and adult leaders of various sustainability and children's rights organisations, including Baroness Smith of Newnham.

"This was our chance to get children's voices and opinions heard."

Digitally Enhanced Learning

Children are continuing to explore a range of digital technologies to enhance their learning at St John's. The wide range of tools at their disposal allows them to develop appropriate mindsets for studying Computing, work collaboratively, apply research and critical thinking skills and to present their ideas in exciting new ways. Applications such as Quizlet, School Shape, Mathletics and Brainpop have also helped children to consolidate their learning, gamifying the content and increasing engagement across the wider curriculum. The children's G Suite for education accounts have also continued to support 'Challenge by Choice' where children are free to choose the level which they feel is most appropriate for them, and has made peer feedback more effective.

Form 5 and Form 6 children are particularly confident and adept at using these tools and enjoy using a range of digital devices to enhance their learning, including using iPads in Physical Education lessons in order to reflect upon their performance. Digital tools have also enabled a number of child-led learning tasks to be completed. In Geography the children have used mapping software MapZone and Digimap to enhance their understanding of for example, distance, scale and compass bearings. In Maths children have used Geogebra, dynamic graphing and geometry software, to develop understanding of spatial and graphical relationships. In Science Form 6 created their own radios to send messages using the BBC micro:bit computer, demonstrating the wireless transfer of energy.

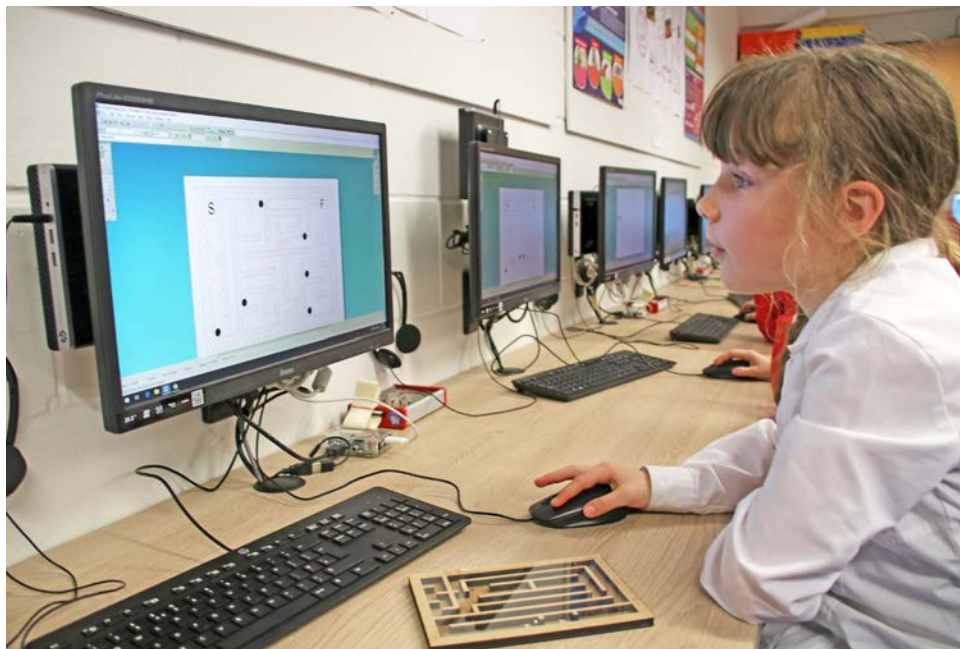


Form 3 using Chromebooks to photograph their electricity circuits

"We get so excited when we use Quizlet to work in teams in Science! It makes learning and revising what we have learnt so much fun and you want to think about the answers or you might let your team down."

"In Maths we take pictures and use Pic Collage on the iPads to show all of the different methods we've been using to solve a problem."

Form 3 using CAD/CAM to design and make a game where a ball-bearing is moved through a maze



Computing

In the Pre-Prep the computing curriculum focuses on coding, logical thinking and sequencing skills. This is supported by using various 'unplugged' and 'plugged-in' activities which enable to children to move from the concrete to abstract successfully. Children work on the understanding of algorithms and how they are implemented as programs on digital devices. iPads, Chromebooks and laptops are used to further develop the use of information technology, to purposefully create, organise, store, manipulate and retrieve digital content. The children have created animated stories using Zu3D, made creative digital stories with PicCollage, used a Lightbot to learn software programming concepts and used the floor robot Bee-Bot to develop directional language and programming skills.

Form 1 and 2 computing lessons are hands-on and the children learn how to sequence, select and use repetition in programs, working with variables and various forms of input and output. To ensure they understand how computers are used to control things, all of the Form 1 children have carried out some physical computing, learning how to program a set of traffic lights. Computing continues in Forms 3 and 4, building on the skills learned at Byron House to investigate for example, digital images, video and audio editing, 'Logo' and 'Scratch' programming, control systems, databases, social networking and online safety.

"For computing unplugged we went outside and I put a blindfold on while my partner directed me around. It was a fun method to understand that algorithms are a way of providing computers with a sequence of instructions or a set of rules."

"We learnt how games and apps are programmed and we also got to make our own."

"Computing is important to learn because it is crucial for our futures. I like using Bee-Bots because it's exciting watching them move like you've programmed them to."



Earth Sciences Trip to Iceland

During the Easter break, a group of Senior House Geographers and Scientists set out to explore Iceland, one of the most geographically fascinating countries in the world with an abundance of raw physical geological features. The children investigated the wonders of this fascinating country. They explored the effects of volcanic activity, lava fields, hot springs, erupting geysers, cascading waterfalls, dark, mysterious beaches and got to experience breath-taking glaciers and geothermal features.

“One of many highlights was visiting ‘Leif the Lucky Bridge’ that divides the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates and extends across the fissure called the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.”

STEM

STEM lessons (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) have continued for children in Form 2 this year, giving them the opportunity to take ownership of the curriculum and make connections across different disciplines with projects that often culminate in designing, building and testing a physical model. Topics have included: flight; orienteering and measuring; bridges and tallest tower; lighthouses; seeds; programming with 'Scratch'; plants; minibeasts.

"I liked testing for starch in STEM because it was fun watching where the iodine would turn blue and this shows where starch can be found."

"STEM is always action-packed and you have the chance to solve real-life problems in a fun and varied way. Teamwork is essential."



National Science Quiz

305 teams took part in this year's 11th Quiz Club National Inter-Schools Science Quiz Championships and one of our two St John's teams reached the Finals at Oxford University Museum of Natural History. As always, the questions were above and beyond the knowledge of the National Curriculum but the children took the challenge in their stride and battled it out to finish in second place. Each quiz comprises 40 multiple choice science questions covering subjects such as human biology, astronomy, great inventors and inventions, physics, zoology, ecology, earth science, oceanography, geology, meteorology, botany and chemistry.

The annual National Years 5 and 6 (Forms 3 and 4) Science Championship is an exciting and challenging way for children to broaden their scientific knowledge as well as for young scientists to showcase their abilities as part of a team representing the school. From the solar system to the smallest creatures on earth, from inventions that transform the world to science on everyday lives, the Quiz encourages participants to explore science in a fascinating, engrossing and educational way. With more than 400,000 Key stage 2 children taking part each year, the Quiz Club National Championships are the largest inter-school competitions in the country.

National Maths Challenges

The Primary Maths Challenge is a national competition designed for pupils in Forms 3 and 4. It provides a wide range of interesting problems. Pupils enjoy preparing in teams or small groups and use diagrams, number lines, pictures and charts to help solve a variety of interesting questions, which encourage the use of higher order thinking skills and think creatively in order to find solutions.

Top scorers who were awarded gold certificates in Form 3 were: Amelie Brown, George Ducker, Pedro Fernandez Bruna, Lorenzo Granado, Emmett Kirkpatrick Tintin Lamb, Zac Navarro, Milton Saibrosa, Vincent Sprik and Daniel Wicks.

Top scorers who were awarded gold certificates in Form 4 were: Cassien Cameron, Isabelle Egerton, David Edgington, Felix Forsberg, Amelia Hughes, Hugo McGurk, Alexander Parkinson, Sutao Qiao, Oscar Robson, and Oli Tayabali.

Sutao Qiao performed exceptionally well in the first round and was our top scorer; he was then invited to attend the bonus round for the best candidates where he continued his strong performance and was awarded a bronze certificate.

"I find maths helpful in areas such as art, and the subject broadens my knowledge and perspective of why we need these skills in life. A particular highlight was one prep where we had to create a piece of artwork linked to circle theorems - it helped to combine my maths knowledge and creativity."



Form 5 Tessellation investigation: 'Why do these shapes fit together without leaving any gaps?'



Geodesic Domes

2V studied geodesic domes as part of their child-led topic and introduced complex mathematical elements to their learning. They looked at the properties, types and structures of triangles and built them with wooden dowels and measured the internal angles. They also explored polyhedrons and planned a geodesic dome in 2D, exploring the triangles and calculating acute and obtuse angles. The children discovered that they needed two different lengths of rods to create various polyhedrons- the longer pieces form pentagons whilst the shorter rods make the triangles inside the pentagons. As triangles are extremely stable, the geodesic dome can be used to withstand heavy loads. The rigid support structure is made up of interlocking triangles, a Vertex point at which the edges of a solid figure intersect. They found out that tension and the stress, resulted in a pulling force, causing a rigid structure.

"My team found out that a geodesic dome's strength is due to the fact that triangles are very stable shapes. The geodesic dome's design shares loads over all of the different triangles that make the whole shape."

Latin Play Competition

A group of St John's Form 6 pupils once again participated in the 42nd annual 'ludi scaenici' competition, held at The Perse School, where they performed a short play entirely in Latin, entitled 'The Cursed Ring'.

'Ludi scaenici' is a regional Latin Drama Competition for those in the early stages of learning Latin and each school was required to enter a cast to perform an original Latin play of around five minutes in length. The plays must be written in the vocabulary and using the grammar introduced in the first book of the Cambridge Latin Course (CLC).

Nineteen pupils created the storyline and wrote the script themselves from language and situations that they encountered while studying the course book. It was a tightly structured, energised performance about a cursed ring, flung to earth by an angry Juno and discovered by Metella, which then transformed the well-loved book characters and led ultimately to their destruction by Mount Vesuvius.

Head of Classics, Mrs Hobson, explained, "The children told the story brilliantly and were praised by the judges for the ingenuity of their staging, the energy of their performances and the quality of their Latin. The afternoon was, as always, enormous fun and a wonderful celebration of Latin drama from schools throughout the region."

French 'Vocab Express' Challenge

The 'Vocab Express' is an online vocabulary learning platform, using text, images and audio to help pupils develop the knowledge of French. The site holds an annual competition which is open to schools around the world. This year St John's came 4th out of 46 schools in the category *Medio* which is open to schools with up to 500 pupils. The School scored 109,925 points in total and the top scorer was Myles O'Reilly, with Nicholas Whitehouse and Marennah Prempeh in second and third places respectively.

Arts Award

St John's has had several successful years of entering candidates for the Bronze Arts Award, which invites children in Forms 5 and 6 to submit a portfolio of work for accreditation in this nationally recognised qualification.

Arts Award inspires young people to grow their arts and leadership talents and is particularly suitable for children who are self-motivated to pursue artistic endeavours in their spare time. In much the same way as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award places a strong emphasis upon young people's ability to take the initiative as part of a team and individually, the Arts Award aims to inspire candidates to devise their own programmes of activities and self-manage their workload. This early taste of independent responsibility is the perfect preparation for managing the demands of life at senior school and beyond.

This year's participants have entered with the following subjects: Art, Creative Writing, Dance, Drama, DT, Music, Photography, Singing and Structures.



Portrait by Audrey Galbraith (aged 12)



"My arts award was inspired by sculptor Anthony Gormley. While his sculptures are based on the human form, he builds them using boxes and other geometrical shapes, using life-size measurements and proportions."

"I decided to concentrate on mixed media collage which was quite messy but really fun. I also did movement sketches which was hard. I really enjoyed the process and I think I displayed many of the learning dispositions in the process."

"I visited 'The Photographers' Gallery' to see first hand the styles photographers used from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. I also studied the work of Roman Vishniac who worked around the time of the world wars. The visit really inspired me in my own photography."

John Betjeman Poetry Prize

Two current St John's pupils (Elizabeth Simpson and Jaylen Cheng) and two past pupils (Johnnie Rudd and Johnny Umdasch) had their poems short-listed for the 2018 John Betjeman Poetry Prize in the Michaelmas term. Their poems were published in the annual anthology, together with the other 50 short-listed poems. The annual John Betjeman Poetry Prize is a National Competition open to 10-13 year olds. The theme is always 'Place' as Sir John Betjeman's poems speak so clearly and beautifully of the places he loved. The aim is to write to any length and in any style and the theme serves to inspire participants to write about anywhere that is important to them – from their bedroom to a bigger landscape, or even an imagined place.

Sixth Form Poetry Evening

This year's Sixth Form Poetry Evening featured poems written by the children in response to a wide variety of different sources, including telling the story of Jesus' birth from a different point of view, poems inspired by *Odes* and by WW1 poets such as Wilfred Owen. In addition to performing their own poetry, the children performed ensemble pieces. The Roald Dahl poem, *Little Red Riding Hood*, was directed by the children as an extension project. It was also performed and discussed with Forms 1 and 2 as part of a poetry collaboration which has covered both the writing and performing of poetry. All the poems were performed from memory.

St Mary's Creative Writing

The competition was open to boys and girls from Year 5 to Year 8 across Cambridgeshire and the entrants were invited to write creatively, inspired by the subject of 'The Future'. Their efforts were judged in two categories Years 5 & 6 (Forms 3 & 4) and Years 7 & 8 (Forms 5 & 6), each of which came down to short-lists of the 6 best pieces. Alexander Parkinson was Highly Commended in the Year 5 and 6 category. Susanna Millhouse was Highly Commended in the Year 7 and 8 category and Innes Lapraik was the winner in this category.

Brea Hill

In a nervous inlet of land
The retired soldier stands mighty and strong
A landmark that overlooks the timid bay
And protects its
Territory
The long snaking paths hug the small mountain
Wild flowers dancing to the old hill's lullaby

The hill is always quiet and peaceful
Dominating its landscape
It sighs at the incoming tide
Knowing that the spraying waters will
Soon grow stronger

It has always fought against the blinding wind
And the lashing sea
It is tired and old like a wilting flower
One day it will fall
But old soldiers never die
They simply fade away.

Elizabeth Simpson (aged 12)

Wings

After WB Yeats

I walked around and
Felt the evening's
Breeze and the full
Pleasure of
Being alone. It is the
Song from the linnet's
beak that brings me imaginary wings.

Jaylen Cheng (aged 11)



Book Week

Book Week is a celebration of authors, illustrators, books and of reading. Author Tracey Corderoy engaged the children with her tales of 'Shifty McGifty' and 'Slippery Sam' and author Jennifer Bell described how the stories her grandparents told her helped built the world of 'Lundinor'.

'Book at Bedtime' was again a resounding success, as was the 'Extreme Reading Competition'. The week closed with 'Dress as a Book Character Day' in aid of the charity Humanitas.

Literary Festival

The Senior House Literary Festival welcomed four authors (Chris Priestley, Peter Bunzl, Jennifer Bell and Inbali Iserles) as well as the Heffers Book Fair. There was great excitement as the winners of the School's 500 word short story competition were announced.

This year a new and very popular 'Shelfie' competition was introduced with teachers photographing their bookshelves and the children guessing the owner from the books on display.

The older children took part in a 'Read for Good' sponsorship. The money raised will help to provide a regular supply of brand new books and a resident storyteller to every major children's hospital in the UK.



Charities

Money has been raised this year for a variety of good causes.

Nearly £2,000 has been raised by the 'Grow Your Money' project. The money raised will go to the Humanitas charity to continue supporting a school in Ghana.

£275 was raised for Macmillan Coffee Morning.

The retiring collection at the Services in Preparation for Christmas raised £1,608 for Eddie's and Jimmy's Night Shelter.

The Byron House Easter Fair and Summer Fair raised £207 and £830 respectively, shared equally between Humanitas and Bridges to Belarus.

The Victorian Fayre raised £490 for Humanitas.

£378 was raised for Comic Relief on Red Nose Day.

Christmas Jumper Day raised £415 for Save the Children.

The Form 5 Drama production of *Pirates of Penzance* £907 for Kettle's Yard charity.

The Form 2 Enterprise Project raised £449 shared between Humanitas and Bridges to Belarus.

Form 5 Sponsored Swim raised £319 for Action Aid, supporting children in Kenya.

The Byron House Harvest Collection raised £265 for Cambridge City Food Bank.

The 'Read for Good' sponsored readathon raised £924.

‘Grow Your Money’

The ‘Grow Your Money’ initiative, now in its seventh year, is designed to encourage each child to discover and develop their entrepreneurial skills, by converting the £1 they are each given into more money for charity. This year £2,000 has been raised, so far, for Humanitas through the initiative.

“I spent the money on a sponge and soap and washed as many cars as I could and grew my pound. I felt good knowing the money is going to a good cause.”

“I decided to play my violin in Cambridge city centre and so many people stopped, listened and donated!”



Above left: Providing a dog walking service and above right: Making and selling Easter cakes, both to raise money for ‘Grow Your Money’



Pensioners’ Parties

The Charities and Community Links Committee hosted its annual Christmas and Summer Garden parties for elderly people living in the Cambridge area. Committee members from both Byron House and Senior House Choirs provided musical entertainment for their guests.

“Looking after and getting to know the Senior Citizens is one of my highlights of the whole year. It brings everyone joy and happiness all round.”

“You get the chance to listen to stories and ask the guests questions. It makes you feel warm inside.”

Parents' Association

The Parents' Association have had a busy and fun-filled year with a range of well supported events from Fireworks Night, Choral Evensong, the Great Gatsby Ball to the popular Fun Day. So far they have raised: £8,075 for Winter Comfort, £938 for Macmillan Cancer Support, £190 for the Karen Morris Memorial Trust and £190 for the Women's Institute.



This page, clockwise from top left: Macmillan Coffee Morning, Fireworks Night and Great Gatsby Lent Event
Opposite page: Charity Fun Day (photos courtesy of Lucie Milton)



Extra Curricular Clubs

Over 90% of children in T1 to Form 6 have again benefited from a wide range of extra-curricular activities each term, with nearly all pupils participating in at least one club across the year and approximately 45% participating in three or more clubs each term, in addition to after school play rehearsals and music ensembles. Over 70 different extra-curricular activities are on offer throughout the year, covering the areas shown below.

The addition of new clubs for our Pre Prep children has proved popular with the introduction of Boys' and Girls' Cricket / Football / Rugby Multi-Sports and Saturday Morning Sports Coaching (run by First Choice Coaching). This has enabled Pre Prep children to have a wide range of sporting clubs to chose from after school until 4pm. 70 out of around 80 children in T1 and T2 have taken up a club throughout the year.

Reading
Debating
German
Greek
Mathletics
Maths Clinic
Spanish

Coding
Game Maker Programming
ICT
Physical Computing
Programming
Raspberry Pi



3rd and 4th Form Choir
Chamber Choir
Junior Choir
Music Composition
Grade 5 Music Theory
Pop Choir
Potential Music Scholars

Athletics
Gymnastics
Running
Boys' and Girls' Cricket
Football
Golf
Boys' and Girls' Hockey
Multi-Sports / Saturday Sports
Netball
Rowing
Boys' Rugby
Softball
Squash and Fives
Swimming
Tennis

Art
Byron House Cookery
Drawing Club
Design Technology
Gardening Club
Kitchen Garden
Inventions Club
Jewellery Making
Textiles

Choreography Club
Musical Theatre Club
Drama
Shakespeare Schools Festival

Board Games
Chess
Lego Challenge
Warhammer

Mindfulness
Kung Fu
Pupil Forum

Enrichment Afternoons

Thursday afternoons for children in Forms 3 to 6 offer 'off-timetable' time during the school day to cater for a wide range of enrichment activities. In addition to the regular schedule of lessons in the 'My Mind' programme (incorporating Philosophy, Tai Chi, Mindfulness, Critical Thinking, Study Skills and Online Safety) , each term we are able to offer a wide range of talks, trips, workshops and activities to enrich the children's learning; a sample of some of these events and activities is shown here.

Lent Term

Geography field trip to Epping Forest
Trip to the Cambridge Buddhist Centre
Sustainability of Water project
Geography field trip to Epping Forest
History trip to Stibbington
Talk from the Managing Director of Goldophin
Internet Safety Day
RS trips to the Cambridge Gurdwara, St Giles' Church & Cambridge Synagogue
Literary Festival with visiting authors
Introduction to German
Design Technology Air Boat Building and Race
Dalcroze Music sessions
Hockey and Netball House matches

Summer Term

Sixth Form Poetry Evening Rehearsals
'Dragon Patchers' visit from Cambs County Council
House Debating Finals
RSPB talk about protecting vultures
Art and Compassionate Outreach
Latin Play competition
Talk by Dr Bruna from Cancer Research UK
Trip to the Museum of Technology
Talk from lawyer Ms Kuuya, on Sustainability
Cricket House matches

Michaelmas Term

Mindset for Learning team building
Art Trip to Imperial War Museum at Duxford
Global Goals- Sustainability in the water and fashion industries
'The Big Draw' - the world's largest drawing festival
World War One centenary commemorations
Rugby and Hockey House matches
Humanitas Charity workshop



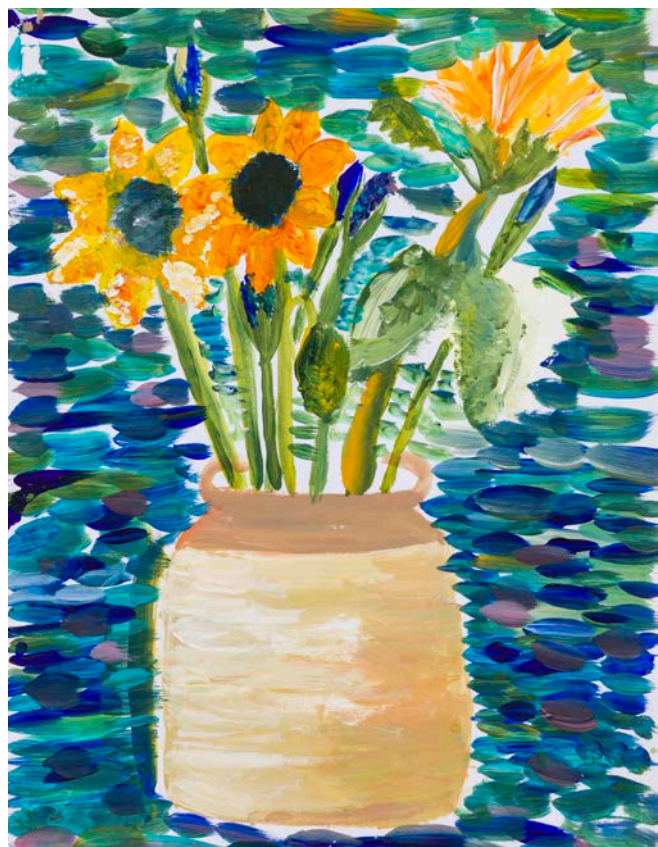
The Big Draw

Art

Form 5 visited Kettle's Yard in Cambridge to gain inspiration from the works of Cornish artist, Alfred Wallis. Wallis influenced painters who came to St Ives from London; they were struck by his naïve style and subsequently changed their work to be simpler and more direct because of this. The children were encouraged to paint using memories of their own seaside holidays and how they too could use recycled materials as Wallis had, such as leftover wood and paint from boat building. The set for the Form 5, *The Pirates of Penzance* drama production, took inspiration from the Cornish artist's work.



2D paintings on driftwood and 3D dioramas inspired by the artist, Alfred Wallis.
Clockwise from top left: Jasper Macdonald, Unnamed, Jesse Rainey and Angus Macdonald (all aged 11)



Children in Senior House took part in a one week 'pop-up' project painting sunflowers (and irises) fresh from Cambridge market.
Clockwise from top left: Henrietta Allpress, Oscar Parsonson and Caitlin Blakesley (all aged 10) and Vera Edgington (aged 12)

Design Technology

Design Technology has continued to thrive with a wide range of exciting projects across all year groups; a sample of these is shown here.

"You need to have a flexible mind in DT as you need to think laterally in order to solve any problems. You learn to measure accurately and use computer control, as well as learn about design too."



Clockwise from top left: Form 6 Acrylic Pen Ties; Form 3 Electronic Circuit Quiz Game; Form 5 Polystyrene 3D Animals; T2 Wind-up Stories



"The highlight for me was the printing. The lady in the Print Room had etched some amazing patterns onto lino and then we got to print them onto a bit of paper. There was a dragon, a seahorse and an elephant. I chose the seahorse. What was really amazing in the Print Room was that the letters ranged from absolutely tiny to quite big. There was even printing in Chinese!"

'STEAM' Technology Museum Trip

Form 4 visited the Technology Museum at the Pumping Station as a cross-curricular STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths) trip to gain an insight into one of the city's most well-known landmarks, looking at the original machinery of the pumping station and printing room which is now part of this heritage site.

The children learnt about levers, pulleys and gears when they experimented with machines to move objects with as little effort as possible. In the printing room, they used the historic machines to print and typeset text to make a card. They printed designs onto paper and fabric with printing blocks and used their knowledge of repeating patterns to create wrapping paper. The art element included a sustained observational study of the old machines.





The Service in Preparation for Christmas in St John's College Chapel

Music

Music in the school continues to develop apace and, through its many curricular and extra-curricular strands, remains at the heart of the daily life of our community. Over 70% of children in T2 and above are learning at least one instrument in school, and a good number of the remaining pupils learn outside school. An all-time high of over 400 instrumental and vocal lessons is now being taught every week. Nearly 50% of children in T2 and above are involved in optional weekly choral activities and just under 40% of the same year groups are involved in optional weekly instrumental ensembles.

Concerts

We have staged approximately 60 concerts this year, including various evening concerts, fund-raising performances and an informal lunchtime concert series which continues to thrive. Amongst these, the two Form 5 Song Composition Concerts were highlights, bringing together both seasoned and less experienced performers to the stage within the context of creativity and collaboration, all of which is so valuable in our children's personal development. We have enjoyed several lunchtime recitals given by individual pupils this year and it is remarkable to have had so many children in the school who have been able to put together a programme of some 20-30 minutes of music and to perform it to such a high level.

225 children from Form 1 to Form 6 took part in the annual Summer Concert at the West Road Concert Hall, an event that richly reflects the school's commitment to achieving enjoyment, inclusivity and excellence in musical activity. Highlights included a performance of the first movement of Mozart's *Concerto for Three Pianos* and performances from all children in Forms 1 & 2.

Jazz

Amongst various performances this year, Rednotes Jazz Ensemble were thrilled to be invited to take part in the Cambridge International Jazz Festival in November and did so with great energy and skill; we very much hope to participate in the festival again in future.

Choirs

Our school choirs have collaborated with local orchestras in two concerts this year. In January, the combined Byron House and Senior House Chamber Choirs took part in a performance of Humperdinck's *Evening Prayer* from *Hansel and Gretel* with the Sinfonia of Cambridge under the baton of Howard Williams at the West Road Concert Hall. The children performed brilliantly to a full house. The Senior House Chamber Choir took part in a performance of Mahler's monumental 3rd Symphony at West Road in May, joining forces with the City of Cambridge Symphony Orchestra and the St Catharine's College Girls' Choir under the direction of Robert Hodge, who is well known to many of our young musicians.

Organ Recitals

Our young organists were privileged to be invited to perform again in the organ recital series at St Lawrence Jewry in the City of London. Jaylen Cheng (Form 6) and Thomas Watkin (Form 5) gave an outstanding concert in a series which is otherwise offered by the leading senior public and specialist music schools.

Compositions

Harry L'Estrange (Form 3) was awarded joint First Prize in the Choir Schools' Association's Chorister Composition Competition with his highly effective setting of 'The souls of the righteous'. The piece was performed by the College Choir at a Sunday morning Eucharist service in the Lent term.

Examinations

In addition to the ABRSM exams which we have hosted for many years, we have also introduced Trinity College London exams to broaden our offering this year. 75% of music exam results for these two exam boards in the last twelve months were in the merit and distinction categories. In the last twelve months, 25 children have successfully taken instrumental exams in grades 5-8 and 10 children have passed grade 5 theory. Three children have achieved grade 8: Jaylen Cheng (violin, distinction); Charlie Cobb (viola, merit); Harry L'Estrange (violin, distinction). Five other pupils sat grade 8 exams. Adekoya Okusaga achieved 146 in his grade 4 singing exam and Thomas Watkin was awarded the Sheila Mossman Memorial Prize for the highest grade 6 piano result (144) in the UK in the autumn 2018 session.

Opportunities Outside School

Ella Davidson (Form 5), Flora Harrison (Form 4), Amelie Kirk (Form 2), Eliza Robson Brown (Form 3), Anna Tomkinson (Form 3) and Sophia Wickham (Form 1) are members of the St Catharine's College Girls' Choir. Amelie Grace Nair-Grepinet (Form 5) is a member of the Pembroke College Girls' Choir, which launched in September 2018. Hugh Chippington (Form 6), Matthew Chippington (Form 4), David Low (Form 5), Adekoya Okusaga (Form 4) and Max Wickham (Form 1) are members of the Jesus College Chapel Choir.

Hugh Chippington (Form 6), David Edgington (Form 4), Vera Edgington (Form 6) and Adekoya Okusaga (Form 4) are members of the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain and Vera continues her studies with the highly prestigious Aldeburgh Young Musicians programme. Hugh Chippington was also selected as the one representative from the Jesus College Choir to sing with the Friends of Cathedral Music Choristers' Diamond Choir at Liverpool Cathedral in June.

SignHealth – ‘sign2sing’

This year we have developed a new link with the deaf health charity SignHealth. The charity works to ensure that deaf people have the same access to healthcare and health information. The theme for this year’s Form 1 and 2 massed choir at the Summer Concert at West Road was inspired by SignHealth’s annual fundraising event called sign2sing, which helps to raise awareness and to bring in much needed funds for the charity.

Moona, a representative from the charity came in to school to talk about the charity and to hold workshops for all of the children in Forms 1 and 2. Moona had a signer to help the children to communicate with her. She helped the pupils with the signing of their songs and how to fingerspell using British Sign Language. Our children have discovered a new language and are becoming competent in their signing.



St John's College Choir Tours to The Netherlands and Sweden

At the end of the Michaelmas Term the St John's College Choir performed Christmas favourites at one of the world's finest concert halls, The Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, as part of their tour to the Netherlands. They were accompanied by Herbert Howells Organ Scholar, Glen Dempsey, and two other Johnian musicians: cellist Laura van der Heijden and baritone Gareth John (a former choral scholar). The Choir also performed at TivoliVredenburg in Utrecht, Kathedraal St Bavo in Haarlem (along with the St Bavo Choir), Maria van Jesse Kerk in Delft and St Stevenskerk in Nijmegen.

At the end of the Lent Term the Choir undertook a five day tour to Sweden, performing concerts in Örebro, Stockholm and Västerås. The official title of the Choir's concerts was *Give Unto the Lord*, after the Elgar work of the same name, exploring the English language in a variety of styles, from Byrd's *Mass in Four Parts* to 20th century fare from Jonathan Harvey and Herbert Howells. The Choir received a standing ovation for its performance, after which the encore was Bruckner's *Locus Iste* (the Choir's new recording goes by the same name).

"We performed concerts in Örebro, Stockholm and Västerås and some to standing ovations. We got to perform in Stockholm's Cathedral and had the chance to explore the city too!"

"The tour to the Netherlands was the most memorable experience since joining the Choir. It was so fun going to all the different concert halls and, aside from the singing, we did loads of exciting activities and got to explore other places."



St John's College Choir Release 'Locus Iste' CD

St John's College Choir's latest album featuring the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams - including the *Mass in G Minor* - was released to critical acclaim on the award-winning 'St John's Cambridge' label. In the first week of its release, the disc reached number 2 in the UK Classical Specialist Charts.

The disc has received favourable reviews in *Record Review* and *MusicWeb International* and 5 stars from *Choir & Organ* and *Planet Hugill*. It has been included on Spotify's 'Classical New Releases' playlist and Gramophone's 'The Listening Room' playlist.

Drama

Form 5 brought all the fun and laughter to their production of the Gilbert and Sullivan classic, *The Pirates of Penzance*. They tackled this challenging project with focus, energy and a brilliant sense of humour, resulting in a series of incredibly intricate, entertaining and light-hearted performances. The entire cast captivated the meaning of a 'comic opera' by delivering the songs, dances and spoken words with seamless ease and maximum hilarity.

"There was a lot of singing involved and I never knew I had a good singing voice until this experience started; one which will stay with me forever."



Both pages: Form 5 - *The Pirates of Penzance*





Kindergarten - *Not Such A Silent Night*



Transition 1 - *Christmas with the Aliens*



Transition 2 - *The Faraway Tree*



Form 1 - *An Afternoon of Nonsense Poetry*



Form 2 - *This Play is Top Secret*









Shakespeare Schools Festival

A group of Form 6 pupils took part in the national Shakespeare Schools Festival for the sixth year running, performing *The Tempest* at Anglia Ruskin's Mumford Theatre. Pupils involved had the opportunity to prepare and present their own approach to Shakespeare's theatre as well as to watch and learn from productions offered by other schools.

"It was like we all went on a journey together from the first rehearsal to the final, polished performance. It was real team effort and that's what drama is all about."

"I learnt the importance of working in an ensemble and the focus that is required to perform a part that is constantly changing."





St John's Has Got Talent!

This year saw the launch of the first ever talent show, organised and produced by a subcommittee of the Pupil Forum. The children decided on the framework for the competition and managed the logistics and detailed planning. They met frequently and set up a 'Talent Show' Google Classroom (aka SJGT) to stay in touch and share ideas.

Registrations opened early in the Michaelmas Term with two categories: groups and individuals. The committee then held weekly auditions, judged by a panel of four staff volunteers, from which two acts were selected to go through to the Grand Final. There was a real mix of talent on display: magicians, dancers, singers, comedians, musicians and even IT experts!

The Grand Final took place at the end of the Michaelmas Term. The committee acted as compères and took a key role in making sure the show went with a bang. Every contestant from every round was awarded a certificate. There were then year group winners, Best Individual, Best Group and then Best Overall Act (and Winner of SJGT 2019) but the biggest prize was the sense of fun and community which the children experienced, celebrating all participants.





Sports

It has been another busy and successful year of sporting endeavour. The older children were involved in a wide range of tournaments and festivals in all major team sports. There have been some strong performances both collectively and individually this year. Junior (Forms 3 and 4) and Senior (Forms 5 and 6) House competitions in team sports are, as ever, a highlight of the year, full of competitiveness, talent and sportsmanship.

In keeping with the school's aim of instilling a love of learning in our children, we want every sporting session, whether it be training, a match or simply a fun activity, to be a positive learning experience. We want sport to be inclusive and our hope is that physical activity is something each child will enjoy and will want to carry on in their next school and into adulthood. As with any learning experience, the best way of learning is in an environment where it is acceptable to make mistakes. We are a school that wants the children to celebrate and enjoy participating in sport and improve their skills, not simply focus on winners and losers. We also want to give a breadth of choice and many of the successes come from individuals pursuing a wide variety of physical activities outside of the main team sports.

Girls' Hockey

The girls teams had a good hockey term playing against some strong teams. The U13 IAPS team got into the Quarter Finals of the Cup, just losing 1-0 to Feltonfleet with a Golden Goal. The U11 girls played some promising games during the season but could not find the back of the net at IAPS. There is lots of potential in this age group and we are looking forward to next season.

Both the U10 and U9 girls put in some strong performances showing much improvement and development with their hockey skills over the season. A number of girls play for clubs outside of school which builds on the skills they learn in school and boosts their game awareness.

Boys' Hockey

It was a successful hockey term with lots of Senior boys wanting to play hockey and sometimes putting out 6 teams on a Wednesday. There has been noticeable improvement seen in all teams, with a focus on team play and passing. The season culminated in successful final matches where all teams put into place what they had been learning across the season. The U13A team played in both the County and IAPS tournaments and gained lots of experience about the importance of being calm and clinical, and persevering with the tactics to score goals in such time-pressured situations.

The Colts hockey team had a successful season. There was depth throughout the year group, which was highlighted by the D team going unbeaten until their final game of the season.

There was a clear progression of skills seen throughout the term and this was clear in the IAPS tournament, where the team showed great resilience to come through a tough set of matches to eventually come third in the Plate Competition, having played skilful and competitive hockey. All the boys made progress in their hockey over the course of the term and can be pleased with their efforts and results.

Oliver Sawtell and Kit Denison-Smith were part of the Cambridge City U12 team who won all their games from County, Regionals and National Finals where they won the In2Hockey Cup National Finals. The team did not concede any goals either at the Finals and also won the Indoor Hockey National Grand Slam.

Rugby

The senior boys' rugby team only lost one competitive match during the term which was their first match away at Witham Hall. At the County Tournament, they beat St Faith's convincingly but lost to The Perse in the final round. They also competed in a Sevens Rugby Tournament in the Lent Term at Royal Hospital School. They finished 3rd out of 9 schools on the day. The team was captained by Edward MacLean, who along with some other boys, has gone on to train with the Northampton Saints and Saracens Academy this year. The Colts made steady progress made throughout the term.

Netball

The U13 Girls came third in their group at IAPS which resulted in them progressing into the Plate Completion. They just missed out on progressing further by losing 6-8 to King's Ely in an exciting game. The U12 team were particularly strong this year, only losing 3 games all season and only by a handful of goals. Both the U11 / U10 and U9 teams played some flowing netball with lots of improvement being shown throughout the term. In netball at IAPS the U11 girls finished 3rd in the group, which meant they went through to the plate but unfortunately lost in the quarter finals to Culford.

Ellie Newitt and Tess Warder have been training this term with the Year 6 Netball Performance Academy and have both been invited to the next stage. Six Form 5 and Form 6 girls have also been put forward for the Cambridgeshire Netball Academies screening trials.



Cricket

This year has seen the highest number of Senior boys and girls choosing to play cricket; a testament to the learning, participation and enjoyment happening lower down the school. Form 2 had their first taste of competitive games against other schools. All of Form 3 participated in fixtures and some children progressed onto using a hard ball in training and matches. Wednesday fixtures for Forms 4, 5 and 6 have been successful and as many boys and girls as possible have represented the school.

Lessons have focused on many different areas of the game, including batting and bowling in the nets, fielding practices on the outfield and match situations on the square. The children have worked hard improving their skills and have made encouraging progress throughout the term. The girls narrowly lost out to The Perse Upper in the County match and were in the 3rd/4th place play-offs against King's College School, down to the last bowl of the game. The U13B team came a strong second to The Perse Upper in their tournament.

Tennis

Our tennis programme enjoys good levels of participation from both boys and girls in the Summer term. We coach our teams predominantly in doubles match play. Pupils playing tennis enjoy the opportunity to play matches against other schools. Tennis clubs for children in Forms 1 to 6 continue to be a popular extra-curricular option. T1s and T2s enjoyed a series of sessions in the summer term on the astro with the Cambridge Lawn Tennis Club. These sessions involve a lot of ABCs (agility, balance, co-ordination), speed and racket-skill work, leading to playing the game.

Fives & Squash

Children in Forms 4 to 6 have the opportunity to choose to play Fives and Squash at the University of Cambridge Sport Centre as an option for their weekly Games lessons. With Fives, the basic pattern of play is quite like rackets or squash, but there is no singles version of the game, and you hit the ball with your hands (protected by gloves) rather than a racket. With both Fives and Squash, the children engage in active sports session which increase agility, hand-eye coordination, flexibility, concentration and fitness levels. Fives is an intuitive sport and it is the only racket sport that enables children to use both sides of their bodies.

Athletics

Athletics is the main focus in PE lessons for all children during the Summer term with development in track and field events, depending on the age of the children, involving aspects of jumping, running and throwing. Our athletes have worked hard with determination and perseverance to improve and develop in each of the events. It has been wonderful to see their progress across the disciplines; a result of their hard work and application.

In the competitions this term our pupils have performed to a very high standard. The conditions were perfect for the athletics meet at Stowe School in May. The selected pupils performed extremely well against 7 other schools. The children's attitude and approach was excellent, leading to many very good individual performances and results across all 3 teams, on the track and in the field. The Form 3 girls finished second along with the Form 4 and Form 5 girls' and boys' teams.

A strong selection of pupils entered for the Senior EAPS Athletics at Bedford and Hugh Aubrey and Tess Warder both came 2nd in javelin and have qualified for the National Finals. Marennah Prempeh and William MacLean also qualified for the National Finals in the 200m and 800m respectively. Hugh Aubrey was selected to represent Cambridge District at this year's County Schools' Track and Field Championship in June and won the javelin.

Swimming

A team of Form 3 and Form 4 swimmers competed in The Leys Swimming Gala. For many this was their first time competing and it was a great opportunity to race in a 25m pool and to have a go at using the starting block. The Boys' U10 and U11 teams competed against St Faith's and the Girls' U10 and U11 teams against St Faith's and St Mary's. There were some outstanding performances, with particular mention to the U10 Girls' team. Bel Vandermeer was a stand-out performer demonstrating excellent technique on her butterfly. The end result was 1st place for the girls overall in a very close competition with the boys finishing in 2nd place.

Senior House children enjoyed positive House swimming galas with a high level of competition across all four year groups and there was a good turnout for the Stroke Championships held in the mornings. Swimming Clubs have been very well attended this year and we have had the introduction of Byron House Swimming Club. A strong St John's team competed for the Regional IAPS Competition at Culford School. Priyanna Morrill finished 10th in the country after the regional rounds of the IAPS and qualified to swim in the IAPS National Final in the U12 25m Butterfly where she came 10th in the Final. Other notable mentions are George Travis who finished 21st in the 25m Butterfly and Jamo Morrill who finished 27th in the 50m Breaststroke from the regional rounds. Leo Moore competed at the National Arena League B Final for the City of Cambridge.

Cross Country

Forms 4 to 6 all took part in the annual House cross country in the Lent term, around the St John's playing fields. There were some great races with the children displaying excellent stamina and perseverance and some very close finishes leading up to the finishing posts. Each House was well-represented, with Cosmo Benyan winning the Form 5 and 6 boys' and Nella Porritt winning the Form 5 and 6 girls'. In the Form 4 cross country the girls' race was won by Ellie Newitt and the boys' race by Will MacLean. Cosmo Benyan came 3rd in the County Schools cross country and qualified easily for the Anglian Schools cross country last round in Northamptonshire where he came 6th and won Team Gold for Cambridgeshire Schools with 3 other teammates.



Sailing

Ten St John's U11 and U13 children took to the water at Hunts Sailing Club in St Ives in April as part of a friendly regatta designed to develop their sailing and racing skills in readiness for the IAPS sailing event in May at Weymouth. They sailed RS Fevas and Picos and took it in turns to helm and crew. After the training, the young sailors had a race briefing and practised their starts against pupils from St Faith's.

At the RYA Regional Junior Championship at Grafham Water, Archie McEwan competed in the Regatta class for Toppers. He won this event with some very consistent results which included one win and seven top 5 results. Casper Emmerson also came a creditable seventh place in the fleet.

At the IAPS sailing competition in Weymouth, Hugo Rudd and Poppy McEwan came 8th out of 16 boats in the RS Feva, posting a third place in the last race. Matthew Chippington and Emmett Kirkpatrick who, between them had really not raced before, put in a solid first race but then managed to post two mid fleet results in the last two races (14th/15th) to bring them up to 19th out of 27 boats in the RS Zest class.

In the U13 category, Electra Reeves and Lucy Pettifer came 9th out of 22 boats in the RS Feva; Alexander Parkinson and Caspar Emerson came 10th out of 34 and Archie McEwan and Hugh Chippington came 11th out of 34 in the RS Zest class.

Rowing

Rowing on the River Cam is an option for Forms 5 and 6 children and it offers the chance to hone their skills both on and off the water. In the Michaelmas Term the rowers entered an Ergo Rowing Regatta against King's College School and St Faith's School. The superb levels of sportsmanship and technical skill were only surpassed by the volume of support from all those involved. The children took part in team relays and individual 200m sprints. All the children have had an opportunity to row in singles and a quad as well as coaching each other in a training boat. In the Summer Term they met St Faith's again on the water and racing in quads.

Leavers' Destinations & Awards

62 Form 6 boys and girls are leaving for Senior Schools. They are proceeding as follows:

14 to The Leys, 9 to The Perse Upper, 6 each to Oundle and Uppingham, 4 to Rugby, 3 each to Bedford, King's Ely and St Mary's, Cambridge, The Stephen Perse Foundation, 2 each to Gresham's and St Christopher and 1 each to Birkdale School, Chesterton Community College, Eton, Oakham, Swavesey Village College and Winchester.

At the time of going to press, the following 21 awards were achieved as follows: -

Hugh Aubrey	Sport Scholarship	The Leys
Cordelia Bargh	Music Scholarship	The Perse Upper
Oliver Brown	Sport Scholarship	Rugby
Jaylen Cheng	Music Scholarship	Eton College
Hugh Chippington	Music Scholarship	King's Ely
Lewis Cobb	Music Scholarship	Uppingham
Fergal Cochrane	Art Scholarship	King's Ely
Harry Doggett	Drama Scholarship	The Leys
Alexandra Dunton	Academic Scholarship	The Perse Upper
Innes Lapraik	General Scholarship	Oundle
Toby L'Estrange	Academic Scholarship and Music Scholarship	Bedford
Edward MacLean	Sport Scholarship	Rugby
Suzanna Millhouse	Academic Scholarship	The Perse Upper
Henrietta Newble	Design Technology Scholarship	Oundle
Lucy Pettifer	Drama Exhibition	The Leys
Fenella Porritt	Sport Scholarship	The Leys
Isobel Salmon	Drama and Creative Writing Scholarship	St Mary's, Cambridge
Edward Sutcliffe	Design Technology Exhibition	Oakham
Philip Tomkinson	Music Scholarship	Oundle

Where a child has gained an award in the same discipline for more than one school, only the award for the destination school is recorded.



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