

THE ACADEMY

Student Newspaper, Volume 1



Welcome to the first edition of 'The Academy' Student newspaper, which contains articles from a few of SRPA's English Subject Champions. Herein you will find articles on SRPA's *After School Clubs* and stories about *Life as a Female Footballer*. You will read prize-winning poetry, a *Diary of a Christmas Concert*, and receive news of *International Men's Day*, and life in RP6th. The English Subject Champions have spent a lot of time on this inaugural newspaper, so reading it would really support them and their effort! Thank You – Alfie Adams (Year 7) and Dr Kissane, editors.

A Christmas Concert Diary

By Emily Cottam (Year 10)

Dear Diary,

Today in rehearsals we got our song books for the Christmas concert and the line up looks so good! We're opening with 'Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree' and closing with 'Merry Christmas Everyone,' so the audience will be able to sing along to them. It's not *just* singing. There will also be dancing from the Dance Troupe, Christmas readings and lots more!

I'm so excited to begin.

Emily



Dear Diary,

After such a long time, we've finally finished learning 'Seasons of Love' from the musical *Rent* and oh. My. Goodness. It sounds amazing!! There are a ton of different harmonies for different sections of the choir, which took the longest to learn because it's really easy to join in a harmony that isn't yours! But the hard work has really paid off. As well as this, Ginny and Sofia - two sixth formers – have a shared solo in the middle of it that's finished off

with a really high note that I have no idea how they do.

I can't wait to perform it for real now!

Emily



Dear Diary,

We've just about finished 'That's Christmas to Me' by Pentatonix. Pentatonix are an American *a cappella* band, which means they don't use music in the background of their songs; they use their voices instead. I've always admired groups like Pentatonix, so I couldn't wait to learn this song when I saw it in my song book. 'That's Christmas to Me' didn't take as long as 'Seasons of Love' to nail but it still has harmonies in it. This song is a very pretty – sort of floaty – song to both sing and listen to.

It's going to be so good.

Emily



Dear Diary,

We rehearsed in the hall today and the songs sound so much better because we were in a bigger space. Today the readings got given out and I've got 'Twas the Night Before Christmas'! There are about five different readings, and five to six students will read them out, giving as many students as possible a chance to perform, if they want to. Don't worry! You don't just recite the readings because that would be boring. Nope, the people who are reading them will act as they read, if that makes sense. For example, one of Miss France's possible ideas was to turn one of the readings into a gossip session between a group of old ladies, which would be hilarious!

Sorry, I gotta go and practise my reading piece.

Emily



Dear Diary,

We ran through the Christmas Concert today and Miss France was really pleased with it. Also, Miss told us the running order for the show and the show only has one act, meaning there's no interval. We staged the group numbers and practised the transitions between each performance. The songs, the dances, and the readings look and sound great! My favourite parts were watching the dances, listening to the KS3 Choir's song ('Power of Love'), as well as 'White Christmas' sung by boys from Year 11 and Sixth Form. There's also a ukelele rendition of 'Last Christmas' performed by a handful of students from KS3, an orchestra piece from Sixth Form students, and a piano piece from a student in Y8.

I still can't believe there's only two weeks to go before we perform it!

Emily



After school activities for the students

By Max Perry and Oscar Tittley (Year 8)

At SRPA we offer loads of extracurricular activities to further extend the students' enjoyment and fun in the academy. They range from sports to languages to maths to science. Let's have a look at some of them...

Sports

Football Club: you can play football with people from your year and potentially get into the team and play exciting games against other schools, if you make the cut! Year 8-11 girls football and year 7-11 boys football is on Tuesdays, all year round.

Rugby Club: you play and learn how to become an awesome rugby player. Year 8 and 9 rugby is on a Monday. Come along!

Badminton Club: you learn to play badminton and have exciting house competitions. On a Monday for all years. It's a great place to make new friends.

This is just a taster – there is much, much more. And as always our players are expected to try as hard as they can and – most importantly of all – have lots of fun!

Language clubs

MFL Homework Club: you can go to make sure your homework is in tip top order. The teachers are very helpful!

Latin Club: you can be taught the very interesting language of Latin (*which is more useful than you might realise: from the editors*). Interestingly our school motto is actually in Latin and reads 'Sapientia et Doctrina,' which means 'Wisdom and Learning.'

MFL TV Club: here you can watch tv in a different language to help you develop your linguistic skills!

Italian Club: where you go to learn Italian and help your language skills excel.

STEM/science club

STEM Club is an exciting and interesting club led by Mr Evans. In this club you are able to undertake thrilling experiments, build amazing machines and sometimes even earn the chance to go on awesome trips. Some of the experiments include: writing with fire and putting acids over Bunsen burners! Don't try this at home, folks!

Christmas Poem Competition Winner

Oh Christmas (Lullaby)
by Riley-Jay Collyer (Year 12)

Good night, white sun, set peacefully,
Make way for the moon, its merry
Glow. Let him fly with stars and loved ones,
Let them run, with the magic of love.

Turn back, roll over (roll over),
Flutter back to sleep, to the dreams of last summer –
Happy memories, with the gift of another,
Placed under tree, under tinsel and clover.

With a blink, you're awake on a new day
Filled with the joy and love of a new way.
Jump in the snow, let it reign with happiness
Whilst he brings all the bows with his presents.

"Kids to the table, dinner's ready.
Help with my cracker son, and pull it steady.
Help yourself to food, the hugs of the family –
I'm glad you all are here with me!"

The words of truth from their father,
Who had trimmed his white beard a little further.
He lets out a "Ho, Ho, Ho!" with laughter,
"Merry Christmas everyone and the New Year
after!"



RP6th News

By Evie Wilkins (Year 13)

In November, the whole school took part in a fun run in an attempt to raise money for the local St Barnabas Hospice charity, which strives to provide comfort and care to adults with terminal or life-limiting illnesses. Each year group took part in an hour-long fun run to show their support in aid of this and managed to raise an amazing £1,152. Well done to all who took part and thank you for your donations!

As part of our Personal Development Day, our Year 12s took a trip to Loughborough University where they began to look at where higher education could take them post-18. They had talks discussing useful advice on how to choose the right course and the process of applying to university. They also participated in a tour of the campus, giving them an insight into university life and the kinds of opportunities available for them, and were able to hear from students with first-hand experience on what university is like which opened their eyes to the possibilities it can provide. All in all, they had an informative, exciting trip with some hoping to apply there in the near future!

A common theme amongst the lives of Year 13 is next steps and where life will take them after they finish RP6th. In aid of this, for Personal Development Day they completed a range of activities including interviews and cooking. Each student participated in a mock interview with members of staff and were asked a range of questions thereby preparing them for future interviews, whether that be for university, an apprenticeship, or even a job. Students also benefitted from a cooking session, making a staple dish in the world of university: tomato pasta (which included making their own sauce and assessing the necessary ingredients). Finally, in the afternoon, year 13

also spent their time taking part in a stress buster activity at Carousel in town to help relieve some of the pressure regarding their external and mock examinations coming up in January.

Regarding university applications, offers have been flying in for the cohort from establishments such as University of York, University of Manchester, University of Liverpool and many more. Four of our students submitted applications to Oxbridge in October, with interviews taking place in the past few weeks, and are now waiting to hear back, hopefully with positive news. In light of this, I spoke with two of our Year 13 students, Eleanor Rowntree and Livia Briggs, to discuss their experiences when applying to university.

Eleanor, a Year 13 peer mentor, is hoping to study History at either The University of Manchester, The University of York, Queen's University Belfast, University College London or Cambridge University. Whilst the application process has been lengthy and tiring at times, it has been very rewarding; she has received 3/5 offers as it stands, and is waiting to hear back from UCL and Cambridge in early January. Her main reason for wanting to continue her study of History was due to what her A-Levels and wider reading have taught her about the ways in which history is written and how this continues to change. When she considered applying, she looked at league tables for history and assessed which universities were best placed to equip her with resources. One of the main things she considered before applying was to look at some universities with entry grades lower than her targets to have a variety of choice available to her to ensure that she would achieve a place somewhere, even if she didn't meet her targets (she will though!). Even though Eleanor urges future Year 13 students to take time when applying to university, she also thinks you should always make sure you are comfortable with your choices, as there is no guarantee that you will achieve your top choice.

After applying to Cambridge, Eleanor was required to send two pieces of written work that, alongside her personal statement, would determine whether or not she got an interview. When discussing these submissions, Eleanor remarked that it was important that you pick work that showcases your abilities and passion for the subject to ensure the institution is given the full picture in terms of your academic ability. Eleanor also drew on the support and guidance of the history department for the interview stage, which ensured she was well-prepared and able to express her ideas.

In the first of two interviews, Eleanor discussed her knowledge of history and why she wanted to study it at a higher level. Her second interview centred around an unseen extract and her personal statement; her guidance here is to "ensure you have chosen a subject you enjoy studying and are interested in... it is better to do this than take a course just to reach an end goal."

Throughout my conversation with Eleanor, she continually expressed how excited she was to pursue her studies in history and how taking this next step will aid her in reaching a place where she feels content and secure with her life, wherever this takes her. She also expressed that the key element when applying to university is to trust yourself, know what you want and don't lack confidence: this is something she found challenging but also something she was able to overcome!

Social Media Lead, Livia Briggs, is hoping to study Child Nursing at either University of Nottingham, University of Leeds, University of Lincoln, University of Birmingham or De Montfort University in Leicester. Her experience in working with children as a part of her rugby club's programme, Rugbytots, alongside her care and appreciation for others, led her to realise that caring for and uplifting those in need is an aspiration to follow. There are many routes into nursing, with university being just one, and Livia chose this path as she believes it will provide her with many opportunities after she finishes her studies and can enhance her experiences in child nursing to the highest level.

In terms of her experience, when applying to university, all of her courses required interviews. So far, she has taken part in online interviews at Lincoln, De Montfort and, most recently, Leeds. Every interview is different despite being for the same course; for example, one of Livia's interviews was a group interview, where she had to have discussions with other applicants surrounding an article based on nursing. When discussing preparation for interviews, Livia said: "If I could give any advice on interviews, it would be to make sure you have examples of good skills that allow you to fully show off your abilities. In courses as competitive as nursing, it is sometimes difficult to express your individuality and explain why you are most suited to the course. If you are passionate about what you will be studying and know lots about the university or course you are applying to, you should be fine."

In order to appear well-read and eager about the course, Livia also explained that you have to be willing to put in the work to show your dedication, undertaking work experience and wider reading, to build up your experience in the field. This led her to volunteer in the *Gynaecology and Early Pregnancy Ward* at Kingsmill Hospital in Mansfield, which provided her with a clear idea about the types of things she would study at university and the reality of working in a hospital. One thing she wishes she had known before she began applying was to ensure that her A-Level subjects aligned with the course she was applying for, especially because it was medical based. She says, "If you are taking or are planning on taking BTEC courses, fully research universities before applying and checking their policies on BTECS as some universities prefer full A-Levels." This ensures that you don't end up disappointed with the options available to you and get the best out of your application process.



International Men's Day

By Rosie Wilkins (Year 11)

On the 19th November this term, the academy participated in celebrating International Men's Day. This was a global awareness day that focused on the issues men face in everyday life and one that emphasised the positive values that men bring to the world. The 'International Men's Day' website is sponsored by the Dad4Kids Fatherhood Foundation in Australia, which aims to help improve the well-being of children by increasing the proportion of children growing up with involved, responsible, committed and loving fathers. One of the most surprising things about this is that International Men's Day was only introduced in 1999 though interest in it is increasing rapidly with countries such as Singapore, India, the United Kingdom, Jamaica and many more, taking part.

There are many objectives of International Men's Day including focusing on men's and boy's health; improving gender relations; and highlighting positive male role models. However, the main theme of this year was 'Zero Male Suicide.' This theme emphasised the urgent need to address the alarming rates of suicide in men of all ages and stressed that that by informing people we can curb the impact of mental health challenges for men. Previous themes have been 'Giving Boys the Best Possible Start in Life' (2011), 'Keeping Men and Boys Safe (2014), and 'Positive Male Role Models' (2018).

In the academy, male staff and sixth formers marked the day by wearing International Men's Day badges that showed how they care for their mental health. This helped promote positive discussions with students about the importance of sharing concerns with others, the value of exercise or hobbies, and recognition that it is OK to ask for help from friends and family. Also, students were given the opportunity to write a note to a teacher of their choice which explained how that teacher has helped them. Either that or simply a thank you for teaching them.

To sum this up, International Men's Day is an annual event that spreads awareness about male mental health, focuses on educating the world on the struggles men face and stresses the importance of positive conversations about men, manhood and masculinity.

Life as a Female Footballer

By Ava Dickens (Year 8)

Being a female footballer, we do the same things as the boys. We train for one hour every week after school, and we do all the things you would normally do in training. We work on our shooting, defending as well and tackling and controlling.

Again, just like the boys we have matches against other schools, which take place after school and just like a real game, we have subs and positions as well as team tactics.

In training everyone is invited so we may get new players every week. However, to get into the team we have tough trials which take place over a three-week period. So, if you want to join the team come along and try out at the trials! Everyone is welcome!

SRPA English Subject Champions

Whilst not all English Subject Champions took part in the writing of this newspaper, they have nevertheless attended meetings and contributed to the ongoing promotion of reading and writing across the academy by designing and organising events. So, from our very grateful editors, a huge thank you! They are:

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Alfie Adams | Y7 |
| Emily Woodin | Y7 |
| Evie Garner | Y7 |
| Evie Whincup | Y7 |
| Heather Wooley | Y7 |
| Lilly Goodman | Y7 |
| Lucy Thompson | Y7 |
| Ivy Golding | Y8 |
| Samantha Rowe | Y8 |
| Victoria Bradford | Y8 |
| Amber Wilkinson | Y8 |
| Amelia Redfearn | Y8 |
| Ava Dickens | Y8 |
| Max Perry | Y8 |
| Oscar Tittley | Y8 |
| Emily Cottam | Y11 |
| Rosie Wilkins | Y11 |
| Evie Wilkins | Y13 |

We will be publishing a new student newspaper every term (at Easter and before the Summer), so if you want to get involved or contribute to the organisation and writing of articles, come and see Dr Kissane in C103 whenever you have a spare moment. We would like nothing more than to get as many people involved as possible!

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Competition: Identity Project

The Identity Project is a competition to design a family tree, with all entries being displayed in the Great Hall in the New Year. Closing date is 12 January 2024.

- Can you include photos of family members?
- Details about their identity, origins, or jobs?
- Can you include a sentence about what they mean to you?

REMEMBER: There is no right way to do this – it can be in whatever format you choose.

Look out for the short email with ideas and prompts that has been sent to each student to help you create and plan your own design.

The overall winner for the most innovative family tree will win a gift voucher!

