

Dear Parents/Carers, Students, Governors, Old Olavians

6 November 2020

## Headteacher's Newsletter 87

We still require volunteers to help support our annual Interview Preparation Day for Year 13 students on Saturday 21 November. This is a valuable opportunity for students to experience an interview before the process of university admissions begins in December. If you are able to help out, even for a short time in the morning, please contact Mr Birtchnell ([mbirtchnell@saintolaves.net](mailto:mbirtchnell@saintolaves.net)), mentioning the subject(s) you would be able to help with.

Due to the new lockdown restrictions, the guidance for schools has now changed and the new guidance can be found by following this [link](#). After clarification with the DfE, we have been informed that we should not run some after-school or before school extra-curricular activities with immediate effect. We are still able to run detentions, boosters, clinics and music lessons before and after-school, but sadly, any clubs, teams or societies, which run outside the school hours of 8:40 am to 4:00 pm will not be able to take place. We will continue to monitor the situation and hope to be able to revert to our current arrangements after Wednesday 2 December.

As you will know from my last Newsletter, the school has been developing a brand-new website offering a multi-platform design that reflects our uniqueness, ethos and strengths as well as offering much improved navigation and functionality. The website, which is visually stunning, went live on Tuesday and if you have not had a chance to look at it, please do so by following this link: [www.saintolaves.net](http://www.saintolaves.net)



Please do let us know any comments ([publicityteam@saintolaves.net](mailto:publicityteam@saintolaves.net)) you have about the new website, either good or bad, so we can make any adjustments to improve the experience you have when you access this important gateway to school life. Thank you to Mrs Slyfield for overseeing the transition to the new website, supporting the design and her tireless work uploading the information. Thank you also to Mrs Rogers for taking many of the splendid photos.

2020 has been a very different year for DofE expeditions, more so than we could have possibly imagined. The changes have been considerable, for example, restricting student teams to a maximum of six, new catering arrangements to stop the sharing of food and a mountain of paperwork to ensure that we have taken all steps possible to minimise the risks from COVID-19. The final blow is the rule of no camping overnight, which is a huge shame as this is always the best part, in the students' eyes, of the expedition. However, the silver lining is that we can now extend the expedition season to cover the whole academic year, whereas previously we were restricted to March - October each year, i.e. British Summer Time.



After a great deal of organisation, the first expedition to run this academic year was the Silver practice, which normally takes place at the end of June, straight after GCSE's with Year 11. Instead, the students, now in Year 12, set off at the start of the October half term break. The numbers taking part this year were huge, with nearly 50 students enjoying all that the Kent countryside could offer. To make it as challenging as possible, students had to carry a full pack and were expected to pitch up at 'camp' on both evenings and cook a meal before packing everything away and returning home for the night.

Day 1 started at Sevenoaks Station car park with dry weather to lift our spirits. The teams were assigned a tracker, maps given a final perusal by staff, and each student temperature checked before they were sent off into the wilds of Sevenoaks and beyond for an 18km stroll. By the time they reached Sevenoaks Prep, the wind was blowing hard and the rain pounding down. At this point camp craft skills had to be first class to ensure that tents were pitched without being blown away and kit stowed under nylon to keep it dry. Once the teams had cooked on Trangias and answered some camp craft questions, they were dismissed for the evening.

Day 2 began at Tonbridge Station car park for another trek back to Sevenoaks Prep. The weather was marginally kinder as the wind had lessened overnight, but the rain persisted. Again, the teams endured showers and water-logged fields when pitching up and cooking, but not to the same extent as the first evening.



Day 3 saw another start at Sevenoaks Station but this time students walked back to St. Olave's. As with all practices, each team had their difficulties but that is what the practice is for: to make mistakes and to learn from them. Finally, a big thank you to our staff who gave up their half term weekend voluntarily to make our first 'COVID-style' expedition a big success.

Congratulations to the following students on their recent achievements:

- Year 10, Sean Lee, has been awarded a Distinction in his Grade 7 piano.
- Year 7, David Wade, for his performance of 'Delightful' by Mark Nightingale. His performance can be seen by following this [link](#).

The German Department is pleased to announce that Ritvick Sharma in Year 12 has entered the German Translation Competition run by the University of Sheffield. This competition is open to students in Year 12 and Year 13 studying German and requires those entering to translate an extract

from a brand new novel in German written by Julie Zeh. The text is about conflicts between residents of an apparently idyllic village in Brandenburg and explores perspectives from various characters. The winners of the competition have the chance to take part in an exclusive translation workshop, organised by the university. We will find out at the end of this month if Ritvick's entry has been successful. We wish him lots of luck.



Textiles Club has taken place this term with very small numbers due to social distancing and limited equipment. Nine students from 7B attended on Monday, and nine more are attending this Friday. Boys will be making face masks for themselves and for sale, with proceeds being invested back into the club to allow more students to take part.

Thank you to Miss Wilkie for organising the podcasts for Black History Month. Alongside this, departments introduced a variety of topics into lessons (eg black Tudors in history) but the podcasts have also provided an opportunity to introduce students to a huge range of historical and cultural topics. The podcasts are intended to educate and empower Olavian students, and I hope you will enjoy listening to some of them by following this [link](#).



We are very pleased to share the news that Old Olavian Robert Laidlow (2005-2012) has been nominated for The Ivors Composer Awards 2020, which celebrates the best new musical works for classical, jazz and sound art. Robert's music is honoured alongside that of other such outstanding composers and pioneers of British music as Sir Harrison Birtwistle CH, Rachel Portman OBE and Judith Weir CBE as a nominee for

one of these prestigious awards. His piece 'Aroha' for string quartet is one of only five shortlisted submissions from across the UK in the small chamber music category.

Winners of Ivor Novello Awards at The Ivors Composer Awards will be announced on Tuesday 1 December from 7.30 pm on BBC Radio 3 during an exclusive live broadcast hosted by Kate Molleson and Tom Service. We hope that the Olavian community will join us in congratulating Robert on his impressive achievement to reach this stage and would like to send our best wishes to Robert as we await the outcomes.

To learn more about Robert's work as a musician, visit his website at [www.robertlaidlow.co.uk](http://www.robertlaidlow.co.uk). More information about the awards can be found at <https://ivorsacademy.com/news/the-ivors-composer-awards-2020-nominations-announced>

Now that we are into something of a new regular rhythm of school life since the start of this academic year, I wanted to highlight the value of musical tuition. We have seen many people return to music during the country's first lockdown, seizing the opportunity to recapture their love of an activity they began earlier in their lives. Music has provided personal fulfilment and refuge for a large proportion of the population during these challenging times and will hopefully continue to offer wellbeing benefits as the pandemic rumbles on.

Here at St. Olave's, a full programme of one-to-one instrumental and vocal tuition has returned safely and successfully. Although ensemble activities are currently suspended, there are still many opportunities available for students to pursue individual goals by developing their skills as musicians. This could be the perfect moment for students to take up a new challenge or resume where they left off before, helping them have a sense of pride in their own achievements as well as pursuing an enriching experience for pleasure.



We have tutors for all brass, woodwind and stringed instruments, drum kit, piano (including jazz piano), organ, voice, electric, classical and bass guitars. For additional information, please see the Music section of the school website: <https://www.saintolaves.net/133/co-curricular-music-lessons> or contact Mr Price, Mrs Attwood or Mr Blew with any questions.



The Sixth Form Open Evening for **external students** took place virtually last night for students wanting to come to St. Olave's from other schools. This is an important evening on which to find out all about our outstanding Sixth Form, details of the courses, expectations, co-curricular opportunities, and the application process. If you missed the

main talks, want to know more about the courses available, or have a virtual tour of the school led by the Senior Prefect Team, please visit the website by following this link: <http://www.saintolaves.net/867/virtual-event-6th-form>

This year's Anti-Bullying Week runs from 16 - 20 November, and we will be supporting this worthwhile event within school. There are many safeguarding and online-safety resources that can be found online and by following this link: <https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/resource-centre?s=16>

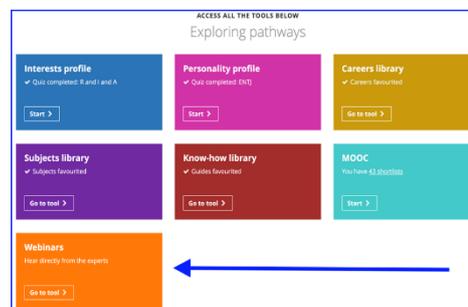
Students interested in a career in aviation, whether as an airline or helicopter pilot or in other roles in the industry, are invited to attend the Pilot Careers Live virtual event this weekend (6 - 7 November). For free registration visit [www.pilotcareerslive.com](http://www.pilotcareerslive.com). Industry experts will deliver seminars explaining the career options available, approved training, entry requirements and any fees.



When thinking about career choices there is useful information available for the public via the platform LMI (Labour Market Information) at <https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/> This is funded by the Department for Education and the portal uses data collected by the Government's Office for National Statistics to provide detail about the job market, salaries and local labour market conditions.

There are also some useful interactive tools on the site for anyone requiring more detail about specific professions. This is provided via their widgets: Careerometer and Skillsometer. The website also contains plenty of information referring users to other organisations that provide information on career and progression routes.

A new service from Unifrog is being launched from 23 November to provide students with access to a range of webinars covering aspects of progression and careers. Students now have a new tile to use to access the webinars. Here they can browse those coming up throughout the year and they will also be able to search for previous webinars. The first one will be presented by university academics with the aim of assisting students to discover more about the most popular subjects studied at university. The presenters will give advice on potential career pathways and the ways to boost students' chances of making a successful application.



More information for students on all the latest careers, work experience, apprenticeship and post school opportunities is available on the school's intranet, Moodle.

I have been asked by Graduates, our uniform supplier, to make you aware that their store will be closing until Wednesday 2 December. Their online shop will remain open with the option of standard delivery or click and collect.

It was with sadness we heard about the passing of Old Olavian, Brian Cantle (1961-68). Brian was a stalwart of the Old Olavian Cricket Club and we send our thoughts and prayers to his family.

Finally, thank you to all students for maintaining high levels of attendance during the last half term despite all the challenges with self-isolating. Thank you also to all parents/carers for dealing so well with the changes in the timings to the school day and the increased difficulties dropping your child off at school rather than them using public transport. Your support, as always, is appreciated.

Wishing you and your families a successful half term during these challenging times.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Rees  
Headteacher

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The [St. Olave's website](#) and Twitter page - [@saintolaves](#) has many more stories of student endeavour and success. Please do keep sending me news items and student successes either via colleagues or email. The email address is [publicityteam@saintolaves.net](mailto:publicityteam@saintolaves.net). Do not forget to include all the details along with a high-resolution photo you are willing to share and have published on the school website.

If you would like to donate into the Voluntary Fund to support the development of our school and enhance learning, and you are not already doing so, please follow this [link](#) to the Virgin Money Giving webpage.

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