



MAKING WAVES

News from The Swanage School

AUTUMN 2: December 2020

In this issue...



THE POWER OF ART

Spreading art, not the virus

'Tis the season
Feeling FESTIVE!



A CLASS ACT

Science in the spotlight



HEAD LINES

What a term it's been! No point denying it's been hectic and peppered with worry. I doubt any Headteacher in the country would say different.

It's also been inspiring, caring and full of great moments! Students and staff have risen to the occasion, catching-up and cracking-on; there has been great teaching, brilliant student work, field trips back up and running; and all the while our pastoral team, including volunteers from Wave Youth, have been supporting students' wellbeing. I've said it before, but no harm repeating myself - this school makes me very proud indeed.

Christmas cheer has arrived! We had a fantastic response to our "Design a Christmas Card" competition (p.4), raised over £200 for Save the Children with our Xmas Jumper Day and we drew term to a close with our whole-school Christmas Dinner as usual!

With my very best wishes for Christmas and here's hoping for a calmer 2021!

Jenny Maraspin



IN THE KNOW

Further improving communication with parents is one of the key priorities of our Development Plan this year.

Sharing academic progress and more: The advent of Arbor

The “parent-portal” of our new Management Information System (Arbor) is live and new functionality will continue to be added over the coming months. Once fully up and running, this will enable parents to easily see your child’s progress, homework, attitude to learning, behaviour entries and more. Please keep your eyes peeled for emails as the system develops. The new style academic reports, containing more feedback than before, made their first appearance back in November.

To create an account, head to the [Arbor Parent Portal](#) and follow the instructions shown. You might also wish to download the Arbor App.

Sharing on SharePoint

We continue to make use of Microsoft Teams and SharePoint to share curriculum support activities (including homework) and other online learning resources. We are creating a resource library intended for access by students and parents when needed, for example when completing

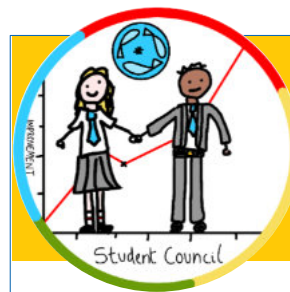
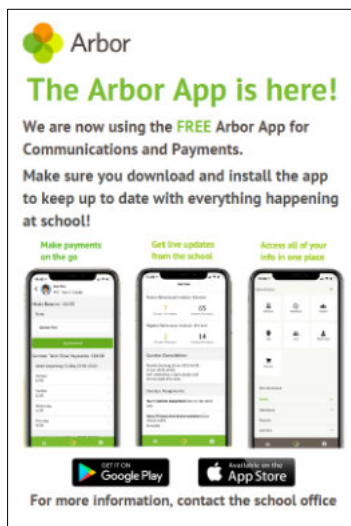
homework, revising or catching-up with missed classes. Linking to these resources will be a “curriculum map”, giving all students and parents an overview of the year’s teaching for every subject. Again, more information is coming soon so please keep an eye on your email.

School snippets

For general news, this newsletter is one way in which we are able to share more, we now have a “[news feed](#)” on our website and, as ever, we are active on Facebook so please follow us if you can.

A two-way thing

The best communication flows both ways and so please contact class teachers / tutors if you have any concerns or wish to share some good news relating to your child’s academic work or personal achievements. Likewise, please get in touch if you have concerns, questions or information about your child’s wellbeing or mental health. Our Safeguarding & Welfare Officer, or your child’s tutor, are the best first ports of call here.



STUDENT COUNCIL

NEWS

What have we done so far this year? 2020 Review

During 2020, The Student Council has formed. At the end of the last academic year we put the team together and since then we have been busy on several projects. Our main projects so far include:

- A PenPal project with Swanage’s elderly residents
- An anti-litter campaign
- Starting the eco-warriors group
- Book reviews

You can see some of our book reviews as they have already been put up on Facebook. The anti-litter campaign involves making and putting up posters around Swanage, creating a box to put empty crisp packets in to reduce plastic litter and we will eventually do a beach clean on our local Swanage beach. Our eco-warriors are a separate group within the school that will be involved with the re-wilding at the front of the school, as well as collaborating on some new projects with Greening Swanage.

The PenPal letters have been really lovely and we have already had some brilliant replies from the residents we wrote to.

Hopefully 2021 will bring even more projects for us. If you have any ideas for us, they would be very welcome!

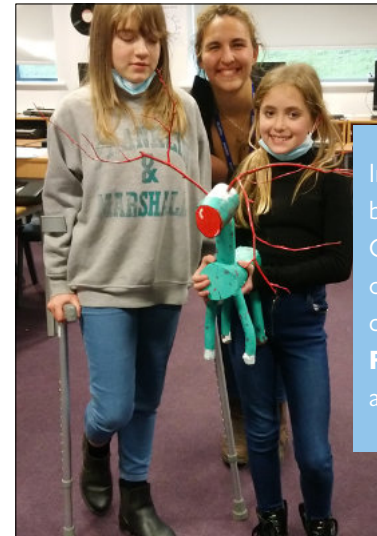
*Happy New Year!
The Student Council*

HELLO CHRISTMAS - FEELING FESTIVE

Our **design-a-Christmas-card competition** led to some fabulous submissions, in a wide range of colourful designs. Ms Maraspin's top 5 designs were created by Ben Chadderton (top left), Thomas James (top right), Emily Knapman (bottom left), Carla Cooper (bottom middle) and the **OVERALL WINNER** was by Rose Starmer (bottom right). You can see more entries on our [Facebook](#) Page.



The **Christmas Bubble Lunch** on Wednesday may have presented even more of a logistical challenge than usual this year, but it was delicious as always, with students and staff enjoying roast turkey and all the trimmings. Thanks to Miss Knapman for organising us so well!



In **Forest School**, Bethany-Heather and Siena have beautifully decorated this reindeer in the colours of the Christmas season. The Swanage School is proud to be part of the wider community and this reindeer will be gifted to a care home.

Reindeer Fact: Did you know that if a reindeer has antlers in the winter it is a girl?

Y8 Food and Nutrition students have been conquering the art of making **Yule Logs**. They've mastered a number of processes including baking and wrapping a Swiss Roll sponge, preparing a mint flavoured double cream and decorating with a dark chocolate ganache. Not only did the finished desserts look and taste delicious, but they were nutritionally balanced too.



ALL ABOUT GOVERNANCE

“YOU’RE ON MUTE” (most used phrase 2020)

We are very fortunate at The Swanage School to have hugely dedicated governors who are committed to ensuring the school’s continuing and growing success, and who have an excellent relationship with the Senior Leadership Team that is both appropriately challenging and supportive.

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

There is no doubt 2020 will go down in memory as an extraordinary year. As far as governance goes, our Board of Governors adapted quickly and well, scaling back where possible when the first pressures hit school leaders in the Spring Term but continuing to meet regularly, virtually, both as a full board and in committees. It is true to say that “you’re on mute” did indeed become a well-worn phrase, as governors became (nearly) expert in the use of Zoom.

WHAT GOVERNORS DO

Good schools continually improve and evolve - it’s a key element of success and creates an environment in which the highest possible educational standards and best possible student experience of school can be met. Good schools also look after their staff, meet their statutory requirements and manage their finite resources well. Good school leadership involves self-evaluating, monitoring, reviewing and seeking feedback, from

which priorities, aims and objectives for the short and medium term are planned.

Did you know?

School governors are one of the largest volunteer workforces in the country. There are over a **quarter of a million** school governors in England.

Governors play an important role in school monitoring and development. They do not manage the day-to-day business, that’s the job of the Senior Leadership Team, but they have oversight and hold the leadership team to account for their management of the school. Governors approve the annual plan, ensuring that it fits with the overall vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school, which they set. Governors are, in effect, a “critical friend” for school leaders.

THE 3 CORE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNANCE

1

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

2

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and ensuring its money is well spent

3

Holding school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff

PARENT GOVERNOR VACANCY

We have a vacancy for a parent governor (a parent, elected by parents) and invite you to apply. Further information will be emailed out after Christmas and is available on the [governance page](#) of our website.

Apply by
20th
January
2021

This year, the school’s governing body has reviewed and approved the:

- School Development Plan
- budget
- financial statement & accounts

They have also:

- scrutinised data and action plans in relation to GCSE results, mock exams and year group progress
- received presentations from Curriculum Area Leaders, Heads of House, the SENDCo and the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer
- received regular reports on premises, IT, health & safety and data protection
- reviewed the Risk Register
- reviewed staff & parent survey results
- reviewed and re-approved policies
- scrutinised the Covid-mitigation risk assessment and plans
- reviewed their own practices
- overseen the retirement of Mr Hobson and the subsequent appointment of a new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. More recently, governors have appointed a new Business Manager

“Still on mute”

SCHOOL SNIPPETS

bp ULTIMATE STEM CHALLENGE

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Mr Peake has been delighted to take delivery of new sound and lighting equipment for the Performing Arts Department. Funded in part by a generous donation from a parent, the equipment was purchased from Harrow House following their closure earlier this year. We are delighted to be able to give it another good home here in Swanage and can't wait to try it out at our next performance!



Follow us on Facebook

BACK OUT AND ABOUT

All being well, Year 7 Project Based Learning students can look forward to trips to the local churches, Old Harry Rocks and Corfe Castle in the new year.

WAITING ON A REPLY

Class 7.3 have been writing to Prime Minister Boris Johnson in their Project Based Learning lessons! They've been studying plastic pollution in the UK and have written to suggest solutions for addressing it. We'll keep you posted if a reply is received...watch this space!

A fitting tribute: Earlier this term, student Harry Spurling was joined by his parents to place a tribute to his younger brother Tommy, who sadly died last year. The memorial plaque, which was planted under one of our new cherry trees at the front of the school, was designed and made with Harry's input by our Art Technician Miss Lardner and DT Teacher Mr Duke. The central design reflects Tommy's love of playing Fortnite, Captain America and VW campervan travels with his family, and is surrounded by Harry's beautiful words.

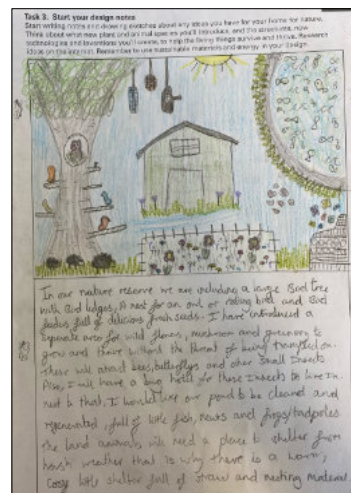


Shared with kind consent of Ruth and Pete Spurling.

A HOME FOR NATURE

Students have been designing amazing wild areas, that include natural and technical solutions for improving biodiversity in school grounds, at home or in the community to help tackle the decline of native wildlife.

It's all part of the bp Ultimate STEM Challenge, an annual competition designed to encourage and inspire each generation, helping them gain an understanding of the importance of STEM subjects - science, technology, engineering and maths - to solving the world's problems. You can find out more on bp's website: [a home for nature](#)



PURE CLASS

This edition: SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

In this edition, we focus on the wonderful world of science teaching at The Swanage School where dedicated subject specialists inspire students with a wealth of practical experiments to explore, embed and extend their theoretical knowledge.

OUR SCIENTISTS

Miss Kerwood: Biology
Mr Ringrow: Biology
Miss Morris: Chemistry
Mr Warriner: Chemistry
Mr Hines: Physics

SUPER SCIENCE fires the brain and fosters inquiring minds. In learning science, students not only gain an understanding of how the natural world works and what its components are, but also develop key life and educational skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and applying logic, as well as the importance of using evidence to make informed decisions, testing hypotheses, report writing and so much

more. Here at The Swanage School, we are passionate about inspiring and engaging students in a love of scientific exploration that will set them on course for further study and a choice of exciting careers.

CHAIN REACTIONS Year 11 **chemists** have been studying chemical reactions and global warming this term. Meanwhile, Year 7 have delved into the world of acids and alkalis.

OUT OF THIS WORLD The topics Year 8 **physicists** have been studying this term include the Solar System and refraction of light.



Parents, find out more about the topics your child is studying by looking at the **Curriculum Maps** on the subject SharePoint site. (See p. 2 for more info).



THE HEART OF THE MATTER Year 7 **biologists** performed their first dissection as part of their studies on 'The Amazing Human Body'. Students who didn't want to perform the dissection researched heart disease and presented their findings to the class.

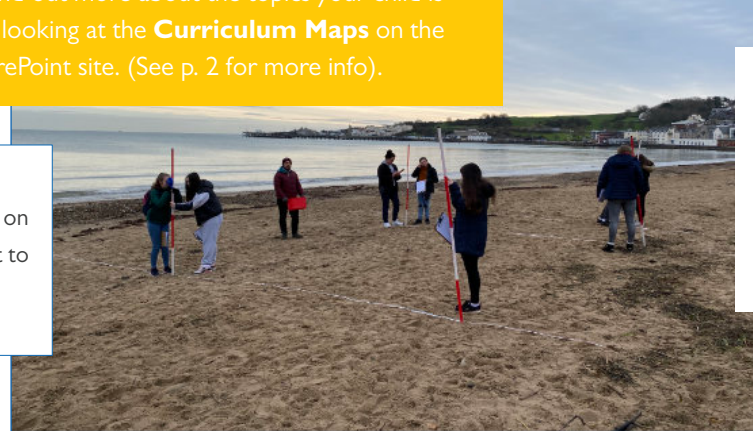


OUT AND ABOUT

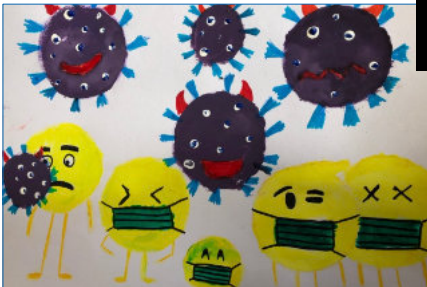
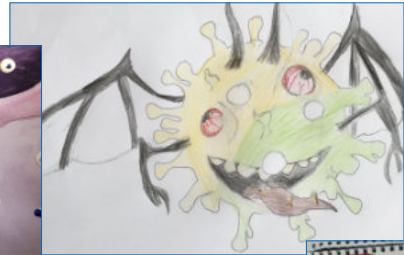
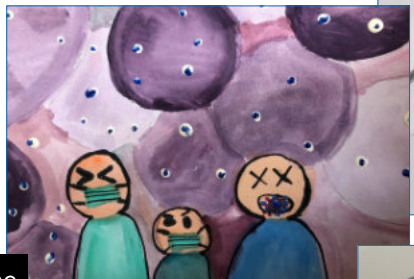
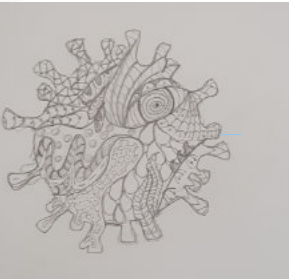
Year 10 Geography students have been out on their physical fieldwork, a compulsory element of their GCSE



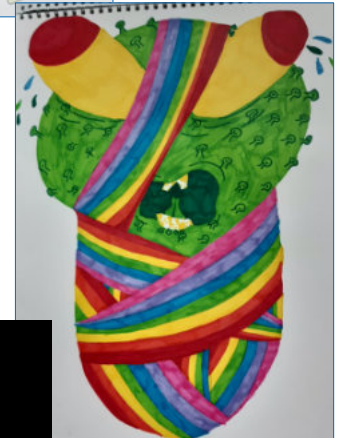
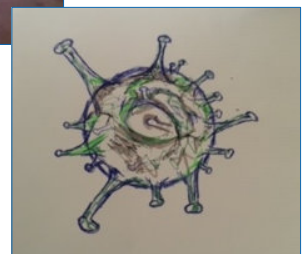
Students completed beach profiles and groyne profiles to investigate their enquiry question 'how effective are the coastal management strategies in Swanage Bay?'



“SPREAD THE ART NOT THE VIRUS”



Students produced some excellent artwork to represent the virus



Y8 student Dobrochna was inspired by the use of the rainbow to symbolise the NHS, used here to bind and control the virus represented by the green creature.

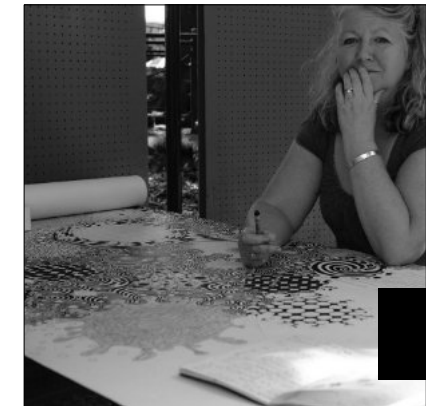
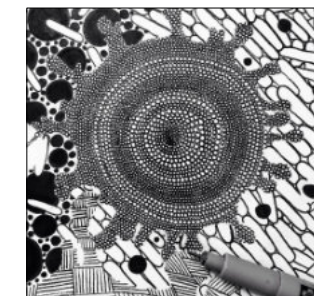
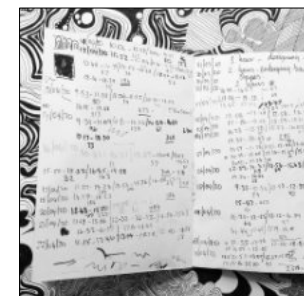
The arts has been important to the wellbeing of many people during the pandemic and especially during lock-down. Back in April, Bristol based graffiti artist SP:Zero started a collaborative work of art called [“Spread Art. Not The ‘Rona”](#) that included different artists’ interpretations of the virus, with prints of this work sold to raise money for the NHS. 162 artists from 21 countries were represented in this piece including our very own Art Teacher Mrs Saganic.

During the first lockdown Mrs Saganic asked students to create their own virus - these included patterns, characters and illustrations with messages that signify the times we are living through. A selection are shown above. Mrs Saganic said “I am constantly inspired and proud of what our students achieve and as I received the work I have laughed, smiled and sometimes even had a tear in my eye! I am really pleased with how students are documenting our time, it’s very inspiring! I can’t wait to do an assembly on “The Art of Lockdown” at some point.”

A COVID JOURNEY

Armed with a 10-metre roll of paper, Art Teacher Mrs Saganic embarked on a personal journey at the start of the pandemic to reflect through art the duration and spread of the virus. Which would end first? Her paper or the virus?

To date Mrs Saganic has completed over 6 metres of her roll and has been keeping a journal of minutes spent on her artwork (thousands to date!) which will accompany the piece as either spoken word, or as a graph. She is using Sakura ink pens to create this piece, which explores time, obsessions, composition and the Japanese pursuit of “Kodawari” - an uncompromising devotion to a craft through attention to detail, commitment, insistence, excellence and persistence.



Mrs Saganic and her extraordinary, and still growing, piece of art.

STAFF NEWS

GEOGRAPHY

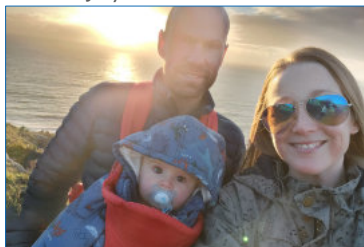
Thank you to Ben Keen, our Geography trainee, who has been a brilliant addition to the Humanities department this term. Huge congratulations to him for securing a teaching job at The Purbeck School.

NEW TEACHER TRAINEES

We welcome four new teacher trainees in January - Miss Stacey and Miss Emadian in the English department and Mr Nicholls and Miss Cooper in Humanities.

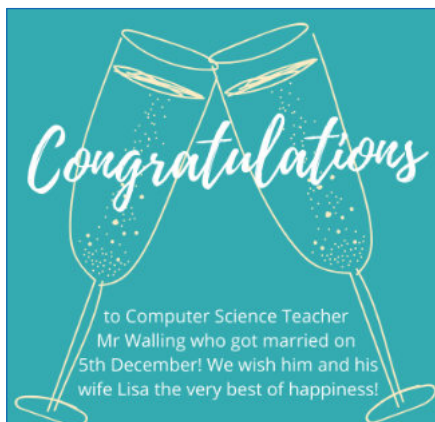
FUTURE STUDENT?

Miss Woodward and her partner welcomed a baby boy, Evan, to their family back in July.



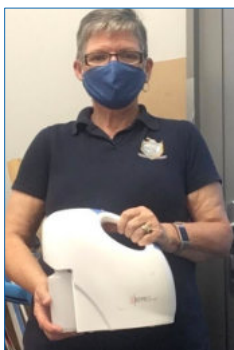
Miss Woodward, who teaches English, will be back in her classroom in February when her maternity leave ends, and is really looking forward to seeing all her students again!

Changes are afoot for the **Senior Leadership Team** too: in January our School Business Manager Anna Carvisiglia will be heading for pastures new and we wish her the very best for her new position at Kingston Maurward College. Andrew Thomas will join us, and brings with him a wealth of experience in financial and strategic management.



KEEPING OUR HOUSE IN ORDER

A **HUGE THANK YOU** to our cleaning team, led by Sue Absalom (pictured), for their hard work and dedication in keeping the school Covid-safe. Sue has been here all day every day since our return in September. We **welcome** new Facilities Manager Ian Byrne who joined us at the start of December and have said a sad **farewell** to his predecessor John Hayes who has moved back to Wales.



ALL ABOUT ALUMNI

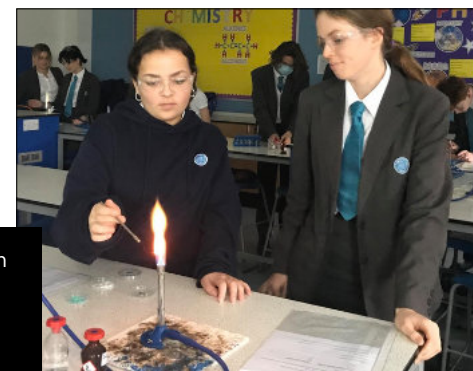
Calling all alumni! We would love to hear from you and feature your stories here in the newsletter each half-term.

Please complete our **Alumni Survey** so that we can catch-up and find out if you'd like to keep in touch. We'd love all ex-students to complete it - whether or not you'd like to be featured here - it will only take a moment or two!

[CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE THE ALUMNI SURVEY](#)

YEAR 11 NEXT STEPS

The application windows are open, or will be soon, for applying to sixth forms and colleges to study A-Levels and other post-16 courses - so our Year 11 students and their parents need to have this firmly in their sights by now. You'll find information on school and college websites and most are holding "virtual open evening" type events. If you are struggling with your choice why not have a chat with our Careers Lead Mrs Probert?



Our most talented Year 11 scientists attended an inspiration session run by The Purbeck School's A-Level science department.

ROUNDING THINGS OFF

CLIMATE CHANGE: The impact of ecological changes are close to the hearts of many of our students. Did you know Dorset Council have put together a strategy and action plan setting out what the Council will do to address climate and ecological change in the future and want to hear from local residents?

You can have your say by completing the consultation survey on their website [here](#). The consultation runs until 20 January 2021.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
FROM US TO YOU!**

AND FINALLY...

Last, but most definitely not least, **a big and sincere thank you to all our families.** You have been incredibly supportive to the school over this extraordinary year which has involved us having to close, adapt, chop and change, cover more classes, and react to fast moving situations like never before. You have understood and engaged, and offered kind words and thanks, and this means a lot.

Thank you everyone, and a very merry Christmas to you all.

2020 - what a year!

COVID UPDATE

As you may have seen on the news, a new rapid testing system is being made available for school staff and students in secondary schools. This is being rolled out from January and over the Spring Term. The idea is that staff and students who are close contacts of positive cases will be eligible for daily testing, preventing the need for immediate and lengthy periods of self-isolation, and reducing the risk of bubbles being sent home.

We will digest the guidance and train staff in readiness for the roll-out of this programme and will be in touch in the new year when we have more information to share.

You can read the press release on the government's website [here](#).

A phased return in January has also just been announced. Government guidance on this is due to be published on Monday 21st December, after which we will make our plans and write to all parents before the start of term.