

Bassingbourn Village College

HERON

Autumn 2020



Autumn Term round up

This term has certainly been like no other in Bassingbourn Village College history. But through the adversity, our students and our community continues to flourish and college life goes on.

PHSE lessons this term have ensured attention has been given to support our students and allow them to express any concerns they may have, as well as develop skills to help them cope and adapt to the current way of life. We have also looked beyond 2020 and Covid-19 to consider Black Lives Matter, modern day slavery, and the role we can all play to eradicate bullying to name but a few.

Our School Council and Heads of Houses have been elected and are looking forward to working with the Senior Leadership Team in the coming months to develop ideas to introduce more inter-house activities while following the social measures in place. And our PE team have worked hard to ensure after school clubs were able to restart and over 160 students have already taken part.

For our Year 7s, we have been delighted with how well they have all settled into life at secondary school and adapted to their new routines extremely well. They have had a vast array of exciting and engaging lessons. In English they have all been enthralled by “My Sword Hand is Singing” by Marcus Sedgewick. Other lessons have allowed them to express their creative flair; in Drama they have been creating a script on a new planet, in Music they have composed their own pop song while utilizing the Apple iMacs and professional recording software. In Geography they have been excitedly working on “The Grand Bassingbourn Car Rally” where students planned a route around the local area using the map skills they have been developing.

The Year 8s have had a tremendous start to the academic year and have collectively amassed a very impressive total of merits. In lessons, students have been building on knowledge they gained with us in year 7. In Science, year 8s have been learning photosynthesis and respiration, to climate and the carbon cycle. The Science team have even adapted some practical lessons for inside the classrooms as the Science Labs are currently not possible to access. It has also been a busy term in languages with students looking at the cultural difference between French and Spanish Schools.

For our Year 9s they started their option subjects at the start of the term and have been getting on fantastically well. In 3Design students have been working on the topic of Formal Elements which has been a great opportunity to develop basic skills and drawing in a range of different media. Our Drama students have created two very impressive choreography pieces on the culture of carnival and a whole group ensemble piece based on the current pandemic which was extremely powerful and emotive.

For the Year 10s they have started back with a bang and their Achievement Leader has been delighted with how quickly they have settled back to college life. Year 10 Mentor time has been a real joy with a multitude of enrichment activities, ranging from the weekly inter-house quiz to discussions on topical issues and sessions which aim to develop their skills required by students for their future lives.

And finally our Year 11s have started their last year with us. They have worked so hard over the last four years and we are sure that this year will bear the fruits of this hard work. At the end of November they sat their trial exams which they took with such maturity and drive given the uncertainty surrounding their exams in the summer.

From the Principal

I think this has to have been one of the most challenging terms in my whole teaching career. I want to start by saying how impressed and proud I am of every single member of our community. Our teachers and support staff have continually gone above and beyond to ensure they have continued to deliver an exceptional education. Our students have also risen to the challenge and shown resilience and maturity in what is very difficult circumstances. I feel very privileged to be the Principal of such a wonderful community.



One of the changes we have had to make through the summer and this term has been the introduction of Google Classroom and live lessons. By introducing these we have been able to continue the education for those students that have been self isolating at home and we are ready should the college be closed for any reason. I have been incredibly impressed at how quickly they have become embedded into college life by students and staff alike. This is an area we will continue to develop as we now look at how this platform can be viewed by parents.

While we have been unable to hold the normal activities this term, such as our Open Evenings we have found other ways to overcome this. Our online tours of the college were very successful and gained a lot of interest. Furthermore our celebrations for Remembrance Day as well as end of year festivities, again while different, have been enjoyed by everyone.

Unfortunately the end of term will see us saying goodbye to Sue Murphy who is leaving us after nearly 14 years as Inclusion Co-Ordinator and SENCO. Sue has also been our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer as well as Prevent Lead. During her time at BVC, she has fostered close relationships with students and parents alike who fall within the SEND Department umbrella, and also with staff both past and present. We wish Sue good luck and happiness in whatever she chooses to do next. We have also recently said goodbye to our Latin GTP, Rose Hoskins, who moves on to her next placement. Again, I wish her well for the future.

I do also want to thank you in particular for the words of support and the lovely messages that we have been sent, especially in the last two weeks of term this has meant a lot to us all.

Finally, I hope everyone is able to take some well deserved rest over the festive period and enjoy time with your families. Wishing you all have a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy new year.

Vickey Poulter

We are very proud of all our students' achievements and like to share them publically as often as we can.

To keep up to date with what's happening in college, please make sure you have subscribed to our Parentmail service.

The weekly student powerpoint and parent mailing keeps parents and students informed of events that have happened and calendar dates to look out for.

For a more 'instant fix', why not follow our news feed on Twitter (www.twitter.com/Bassingbournvc) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/bassingbournvc)?

Alumni can keep in touch with the college through our dedicated LinkedIn Bassingbourn Village College group (www.linkedin.com/groups/8369302) or by emailing

alumni@assingbournvc.org

and asking to be added to our database.

Parents interested in helping with our Parents and Friends Association can email PFA@bassingbournvc.net

Or follow our PFA Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/BVCPFA/

Message from our new chair of Governors

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to introduce myself as the new Chair of the Bassingbourn Village College Local Governing Body. There are huge shoes to fill as Steve Morris has stepped down from his position of Chair after 3 years in the role. During his tenure as Chair he supported and challenged the School Leadership Team with distinction, oversaw the appointment of a new Principal, was instrumental in BVC joining the Anglian Learning Trust and recruited a Governing Body with a wide range of skills. We are very lucky however that he will remain on the Local Governing Body in his capacity as parent governor. I am also sad to report that Alison Butterworth is finishing as vice-chair as her second term of office has expired. As a long-standing Governor and leader, she has been hugely influential in supporting the Leadership Team to drive the School forward over the last 8 years. Her contributions to School life will be greatly missed and the Governors are saddened to see her leave.

I joined the LGB in 2018 with a background as a teacher in secondary education. I currently run a local business, have previously chaired the Education Committee at a School in Edinburgh and am also a member of the Academic Committee at a School in Bedfordshire. I greatly look forward to working with the School's outstanding Leadership Team more closely and getting to know more members of the BVC community.



The challenges currently facing Schools due to Covid-19 should not be underestimated. Teachers bear a huge workload at all times and in 2020 they have had to adapt to completely new ways of working. Assessment, lesson planning and communication are radically different and more time consuming, and it is to the immense credit of the Bassingbourn Village College staff that there is clear evidence of effective learning across all groups. Many schools have struggled and, understandably, seen standards fall far below what would normally be acceptable. That is clearly not the case at BVC, and the students are fortunate to have the magical combination of effective leadership and committed teachers.

The Governors would like to extend enormous thanks to all those who work at the College for the risks they have faced, for the fantastic work they have been doing in enabling learning and for keeping the community as safe as possible.

Will Clayton
wclayton@anglianlearning.org
chair@bassingbournvc.org

Screen Bank Project

Lockdown presented a number of families in our community with many challenges, one of these was the inability for a number of students to access online learning due to the lack of devices. The local community around Bassingbourn Village College recognised this and came to our aid. Volunteers, businesses within our local area and our local councillor worked tirelessly, supported by our own Mr Church, to repurpose donated old laptops and computers to our students.

Over the course of the last few months, a total of 80 devices have been reissued to allow those in our student body access to the equipment they need to continue their education from home. This means that if, as a college, we needed to close for any reason or students need to self-isolate they now can.

We are very grateful to be part of such a caring community, as this project would not have happened had it not been from the tremendous support from our local businesses.

A massive thank you to all involved.



Health and Fitness

We still have been able to run a number of activities as normal this term and our year 9 Health and Fitness students took part in a 3 hour first aid course to help with their upcoming exam and to also provide them with valuable life skills.

The course involved learning about:

- Common sports injuries and how to treat them
- How to bandage effectively
- How to tie a sling
- Knowing the symptoms and treatment for Asthma, Diabetes and Epilepsy
- Learning how to use a defibrillator
- Learning how to put a casualty in the recovery position
- How to deliver CPR



Remembrance Day

At Bassingbourn Village College we commemorated Remembrance Day slightly different this year, but most importantly, as a community, we took our time on 11th November to show our respects and consider what the day meant to us all.

Our Remembrance Day Inter-House Competition encouraged our students to design, bake, draw or create something that they thought encapsulates the message of "never forgetting" our fallen Soldiers. We were inundated with a number of entries and the amount of time taken by so many was breathe taking. Entries included cakes, decorated stones, pictures, poems and class videos.

Well-done to 9 Darwin, Eleanor Murfit and Isobel Parsely for being a top three winners.



Duke of Edinburgh

During the Autumn we have been doing DofE a little bit differently. Students have changed their activities to meet current guidelines; whether this is volunteering by litter picking, helping in their neighbour's garden, walking or cooking meals for the family.

We are very proud of all the participants for showing great resilience when completing their sections of the award. At the moment, expeditions are on hold but students can still achieve the **DofE Certificate of Excellence** when they have completed all three other sections.

Three Year 11s have completed their Certificate of Excellence so far so well done to those students.

Hopefully we will be able to complete an adapted version of the expedition in the summer.



Soul Box

On Wednesday 14th October, Mrs Miller arranged for the year 11 Religious Studies group to have a fantastic opportunity to have a virtual meet with Soul Box. Two years ago at Bassingbourn Village College the year 9s were privileged to experience SoulBox from the Higher Tour. Higher Tours are an evangelical Christian organisation who equip, encourage and strengthen local churches to reach young people with their message.

Soulbox's virtual live meeting to our school was an inspiring experience, which undeniably provided an insight into their beliefs. This helped us (as RE students) to more readily see how these beliefs influence and effect people in a modern world. This experience makes it easier to connect our knowledge to modern context.

As well as this, Soul Box is an organisation that we all like and find uplifting as we remembered fondly of our experience two years ago. They have produced numerous variety of good music, and were able to answer our many challenging questions about their motivations, and what got them started making the music we love to hear today as well talking about how the lockdown had impacted their faith and Church.

By Fraser

Year 11



Construction

Year 9 construction have been working incredibly hard this term and even managed to make chimney's just in time for Santa to pay a visit.

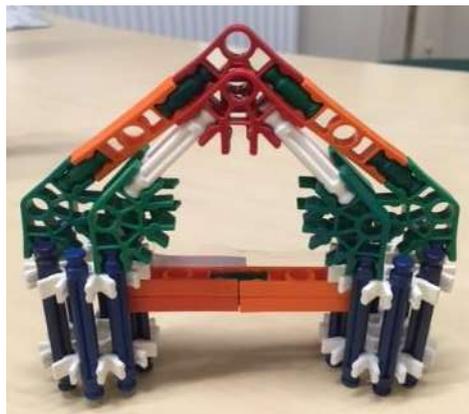
As always they remain very grateful for donations of supplies of bricks, concrete, sand or tools as they do manage to get through provisions very quickly.



Christmas Decoration Winners

Year 7 students enjoyed homework with a difference this term - the annual Christmas decoration challenge.

Students had to produce a 3D decoration in the shape of their initial, using mainly recycled materials. The year 7 classrooms have certainly come alive with all the decorations on display.





Staff and students celebrated the end of term in traditional style - by wearing an assortment of Christmas jumpers!

Raising funds for Save the Children, everyone who participated paid £1 for the privilege of brightening up their school uniform with the addition of a festive jumper.



While it may not have been our usual festive celebrations, all the year group bubbles managed to find a way to add some Christmas cheer into their classrooms.



A massive thank you to Bury Lane for the beautiful Christmas Tree that was kindly donated to us. The Year 7s had a lovely afternoon decorating it and it sits pride of place in the Prom.



BVC Sports Leaders

Every year the PE department selects between 14-16 Year 10 Sports Leaders for The Leadership Academy which is organised by South Cambs School Sports Partnership. Our selected Sports Leaders meet with other leaders from South Cambs Schools such as Comberton, Impington, Cambourne, Swavesey and Melbourn at the start and end of Year 10 .

Throughout the academic year they accumulate volunteered hours when they support and assist with local primary schools or at clubs that are run outside of school. Throughout 2020 our sports leaders have helped at big primary events like the cross country at Wimpole and Mini Olympics in Cambridge as well as helping to run festivals. In addition they have also supported Year 3/4 events for our local primary schools with kurling competition as well as refereeing the high 5 netball tournaments. Impressively some of the leaders also achieved further coaching qualifications as part of the academy.

A HUGE well done for our gold certificates Sports Leaders - Aimie, Charlotte and Emily who amassed over 100 volunteering hours!

A fantastic achievement for those who received a silver certificate— Evelyn , Imogen, Ellie-Rose, Nadia, Joe, Lucy who volunteered over 50 hours!

And well done to our bronze certificates who are Will, Lizzie, Johanna, Millie, Oliver, Hugo, Joseph who all donated over 25 volunteering hours.

Community Support

As we say goodbye to a difficult half term, we have been extremely grateful for the words of support many of you have taken the time to email into us; they have certainly kept our morale up.

“I would be grateful if you could pass on my thanks to Mrs Poulter (and the whole school staff) for everything she is doing at the moment in an extremely difficult situation. I really do appreciate her updates and emails and would like to pass on my thanks.”

“I have to say how impressed I am with the system that BVC has in place which is efficient and minimises disruption to the entire school.”

“I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for the excellent work you do.”

“I just wanted to say how well I think your staff as a whole are managing, my daughter is in isolation, and everyone has managed to engage her and keep her positive. She is missing the social side of school, which really shows me how well you all maintained the social aspect so far despite it being so difficult for you all while in school.”

“As a difficult term comes to an end, I wanted to email my thanks to all the teachers....this email is just a great big thank you to you all for the positive attitude you have shown during this horrible time and for managing to keep the school as safe as you possibly can.”

A note from the Parent Friends Association

Sadly we haven't been able to hold any fund raising events this year apart from a few coffee bars at the start of 2020. We had some great plans to run a race night in the summer term, support the year 11 prom and hold a year 7 welcome event in September; unfortunately these were all cancelled. However, there is some good news as this term we have still been able to make some significant purchases for Bassingbourn Village College; the long awaited gym mats for the PE department, recycling bins for all classes, a life size human Skeleton for PE, dress making equipment, an on line language subscription for the language department to name but a few.

As you can imagine funds are now running low. We are currently unable to hold fund raising events and it looks unlikely this will pick up until the summer term at the earliest, so please can we ask you all to donate **just £2 a month** (or more if you'd like) to enable us to continue to support the school. **WE NEED YOU!**

Thank you all for your continued support throughout these odd times, we look forward to seeing you all at future fund raising events. If you would like to join the team of helpers or have any innovative new fund raising ideas then please email us pfa@bassingbournvc.org we would love to hear from you.

Merry Christmas!

Kate and Tom

BVC PFA

Account Name: Bassingbourn Village College PTA

Sort code: 60-18-42

Acct No: 20560842

NB: we can claim Gift aid on your behalf more details/forms @ www.bassingbournvc.net/parents/pfa



Alumni News - James Fox

When were you a pupil at Bassingbourn Village College?
2008-2013

Any stand-out memories of BVC?

There's lots of memories I have from BVC. I really enjoyed the school trips I went on, especially the history trips. Sports day was always fun, especially the year my house won! Probably one of my best memories from BVC was when I did the Duke of Edinburgh award, it was a fantastic experience that I won't forget.

Memorable or inspirational teachers?

Ms Murugan - my maths teacher - was one of my favourites, she always worked us hard but fairly and definitely helped make the lessons more enjoyable. Miss Hields and Mr Jenner were my most memorable science teachers, I remember some lessons with them really well and they inspired me to choose a scientific career path. Mr Jenner was particularly scary when cross though! I really enjoyed French and Spanish lessons with Mrs Keen and Mrs Becerra-Castro as well; they inspired me to do both languages for my GCSEs and I'm glad I did.

Where did you go after BVC?

After BVC, I studied at Hills Road Sixth Form (Maths, Chemistry, Biology) for my A-levels. I then went on to Bournemouth University to study Biology and graduated last year!

What is your current career?

I work for a pharmaceutical company called AstraZeneca as an apprentice bioinformatics scientist (kind of a mix between biology, data science and computer science). I've been working for AstraZeneca and completing a Master's degree in bioinformatics as part of my apprenticeship for the last year or so and am due to finish in late 2021 / early 2022. My day to day role is to develop tools and programs that make the lab scientist's jobs a little easier by automating or simplifying tasks. It's a really fun and rewarding job, most days have their own interesting problems to solve.

What led you to that?

I've been very into science since BVC and knew I wanted to pursue a career in that field, but it was only when I was at university that I realised I wanted to go specifically into

bioinformatics. I did some self-learning outside of my studies because I didn't know anything about coding and applied for some jobs. I found my current job on the gov apprenticeships website. It was a no-brainer to apply since they were also offering a Master's degree alongside it!

Have you travelled during your studies/career?

I haven't been abroad with my studies or career, but I have been across the country. I studied in Bournemouth on the south coast for my undergrad degree. I also lived in Brighton for a year whilst doing an internship between my 2nd and final years of uni – this was an amazing experience. With my jobs, I've been to Scotland and the north of England on business trips. I've had some really fun trips across Europe outside of work and studying and am planning plenty more after this year!

Any advice you'd like to pass onto BVC students now?

My biggest bit of advice would be to put as much effort into your studies as possible regardless of what grades you are predicted. Hard work really pays off and can be really rewarding. Don't worry if you haven't a clue what you want to do in the future; just pick the subjects you enjoy the most and put everything into them. At the same time, have fun, I loved my time at BVC and have lots of fond memories.

