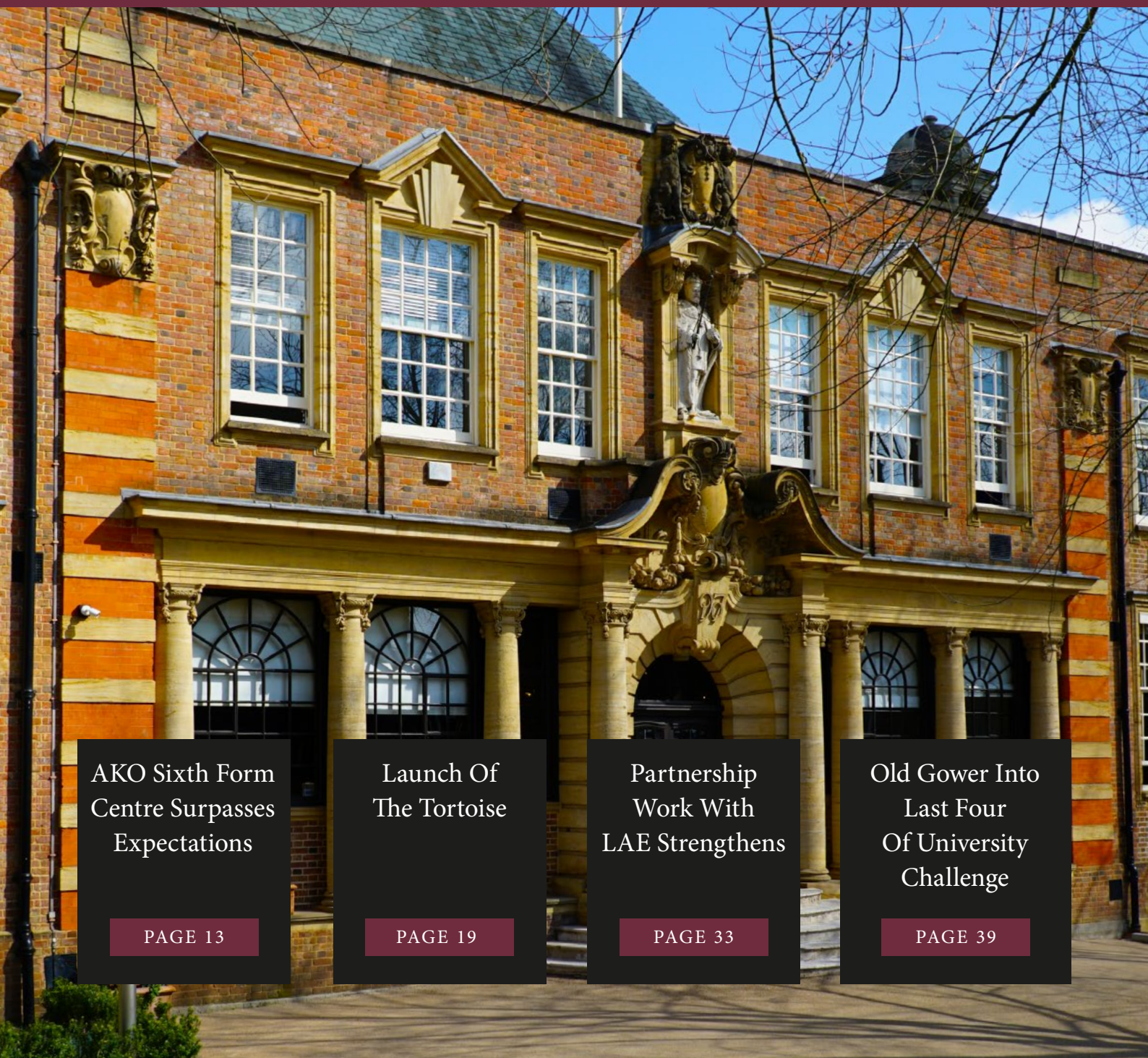


THE FROGNAL

UCS NEWSLETTER — ISSUE MARCH 2021

Celebrating the events and achievements of the Spring Term at UCS Senior School.



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Welcome To The Spring Edition Of The Frognal



This has felt like a term of **three** halves. First, that solid six week block of lockdown learning, virtual UCS running seamlessly online, lessons and co-curricular activities carrying on regardless, plenty of form time and conversations with pastoral staff. Then, secondly, we had the half term break, a chance to recharge and reset, followed by a couple more weeks of guided remote learning.

And, in the third half, everybody returned on site. There was much anticipation beforehand, and seeing pupils and colleagues in person once again did not disappoint. After so many winter days of being with just one's own immediate family, it was a joy to have the UCS community settling back into its soothing rhythms. On behalf of us all, I thank those school staff who volunteered to train up for, and then run, the lateral flow testing. That large and important operation allowed the smooth and immediate return to in-person schooling.

Throughout the term, whether off-site or on, some really affirming and impressive activities have been on-going, some of which are spot-lighted in this edition of The Frognal. Some highlights for me include the Enrichment Weeks, Sounds Unlocked and Saturday sport. Having always wanted a school tortoise called Paulatim, we at least now have the pupil-run Tortoise Magazine; also great to see the work of the Sustainability Group and the Green Impact Society's inaugural EcoReview. And witnessing sixth formers enjoying their AKO Sixth Form Centre!

I have signed what may be a record number of Certificates of Excellence this week, around 450, testament to so many achievements the pupils have individually secured. In addition, staff made some nominations for this term's Group Achievement Award, to recognise the efforts pupils made with their fellow peers. So congratulations to the following groups:

Welcome To The Spring Edition Of The Frognal



- 1. The Economics Reading Group who have done very well maintaining enthusiasm despite meetings having to be online.*
- 2. The History Boys for their Historic Present podcast that has attracted global acclaim.*
- 3. Form L-AWI who have more than lived up to their own form values of Loyal, Aware, Welcoming and Independent.*
- 4. The 27 musicians who performed in UCS Sounds Unlocked 2 during lockdown and helped to keep music alive and to raise morale.*
- 5. The organisers of the Lockdown Running Competition which ran for 5 weeks and encouraged some 40 staff and pupils to get out and run.*
- 6. The Energy Action group for working with the school to put together a series of proposals to make meaningful progress in improving our environmental footprint.*
- 7. The Monitor Team for their work and help behind the scenes and for their leadership in school assemblies.*
- 8. The Upper Remove boys who have been involved with mentoring primary pupils on Friday mornings.*
- 9. The founding members of new school magazine, The Tortoise.*

Welcome To The Spring Edition Of The Frognal



Well done to all those groups for being nominated and especially to this term's winners, who were announced in Final Assembly and for whom we will organise a fitting function next term!

Being back together again after so many weeks did, though, come as something of a shock to the system. Waking up earlier to get washed and dressed before travelling in. Meeting fellow form mates, which may have felt like a reunion but may also have become emotionally tiring. Moving around school during the day, Games and PE fully back on the agenda, hoofing a ball around at lunchtime. Taken together, all these things add up and I think it is no bad thing we now have a two week break to recover.

And so here we are exactly one year and one week on from the first lockdown. Last March we hadn't yet learnt terms like social distancing or

self-isolating. We hadn't developed an etiquette of how to react graciously when someone said to us the new phrase of shame: "You're on mute". Over the last twelve months, I have marvelled at the capacity of our pupils and staff alike to take disruption in their stride. That's not to say it has been easy. We will all have oscillated through degrees of frustration and anxiety, weariness and hopelessness. But the resilience and adaptability of the UCS community has been immensely buoying and leaves me ever so positive about what the future holds.

I hope you enjoy browsing this edition and I wish you all a peaceful spring break.

— *Mark J. Beard, Headmaster*

A Spotlight On... Teaching And Learning



Sophie Bennett, Katie Matthews and Patrick Milton are the Directors of Teaching and Learning at UCS. Their role is to ensure knowledge of pedagogy across the UCS staff body is as strong as it can be and to support pupils with aspects of their learning. At the inaugural Inside Froggnal event in March, Ms Bennett and Mr Milton discussed how parents can support pupils with their revision and after the event we asked the three Directors of Teaching and Learning what the impact of lockdown had been on UCS pupils.

In January, we switched back to teaching online for the second time. What was that change like?

SB: The transition was smooth, we were confident in our approach to Guided Remote Learning from the first period of school closure and knew that we could still deliver brilliant lessons remotely.

I want wellbeing to be a part of what we are at UCS. My vision is to cultivate a strong sense of wellbeing in our pupils, to enable them to feel confident with new information and to empower them to be bold and take on new challenges.

What were the main principles behind the school's approach to online teaching? Do they differ much from classroom teaching?

PM: It was really important to us that we followed the school timetable and that UCS pupils didn't miss out on any of the learning opportunities they would usually have on site. To be honest, online teaching follows the same principles as excellent classroom practice; lessons should be planned to include a variety of activities, facilitate plenty of questioning and make time to practise the skills and knowledge being taught.

A Spotlight On... Teaching And Learning



KM: The five-minute breaks in the middle of double lessons helped our pupils tremendously. This improved their concentration and I feel reduced the chances of screen fatigue.

Are there any specific challenges to online teaching that you perhaps hadn't anticipated? How were they overcome?

KM: Initially, one of the challenges was thinking of ways to promote collaboration and group activities online. However, using Zoom Breakout Rooms was a great way to navigate this and many teachers enabled group work in their lessons using these. We also made sure that we thought carefully about setting homework that encouraged pupils to spend some time away from their screens.

How did you make sure that pupils were individually academically supported whilst you weren't able to be with them in person?

PM: As well as the option to get in touch with classroom teachers for subject-specific support, Study Smart sessions continued. Pupils from all year groups can book in for a session and get some advice on developing their study skills. These were really popular during lockdown.

Online teaching is hopefully now a thing of the past. However, did you develop any skills which you will use now teaching is back on site?

SB: The way we have developed our use of Google Classroom and the G Suite more generally over the last year has transformed our practice. We will definitely keep building on how we can use these brilliant tools. I personally will also never take being in the classroom for granted ever again!

<https://sites.google.com/ucs.org.uk/study-smart/study-smart-booking> (only accessible to UCS pupils)

A Spotlight On... Teaching And Learning



Pupils in the Upper Remove and Sixth will be tackling revision for their summer assessments during the Easter break. What advice do you have for them?

SB: It's not going to be easy having just come back to school but we recommend that the pupils should try to be thoughtful about the way they structure and plan out their time during this break. Whilst many pupils will already know how they work best, they may find the 9–5 revision structure helpful. It enables them to work Monday–Friday, keeping weekends and evenings free, whilst getting through a good deal of revision. There is a document explaining this approach on the Upper Remove and Sixth Assessment Google Classrooms as well as a document pupils can edit and use for their own revision scheduling. Keep non-revision

time aside and protected for hobbies, exercise and Covid-secure socialising! We would also recommend that they set really clear expectations of what they hope to achieve in a revision session; these should be reasonable and achievable.

KM: Using the evidence-based strategies in the UCS Revision Toolkit will guide their revision away from re-writing and highlighting notes, towards knowledge-recall activities. They will find these useful for supporting their memory recall and applying knowledge to exam questions. Give them a go!

— Contributions by S. Bennett, K. Matthews & P. Milton

Lower School In Lockdown



A key part of supporting boys during the second period of Remote Learning was through form periods. This gave them the chance to talk to each other and their Form Tutor (or co-tutor) in a semi-formal setting, to watch and discuss assemblies, play interactive games and to allow the Form Tutor to get a feel for how they were coping with lockdown. The tutors in the Lower School did a wonderful job of providing a varied programme of activities for the boys. One of the advantages of Remote Learning is that there are some things you can do that you wouldn't be able to do if you were in school. Anything that required a device, such as Kahoot!, a weekly wellbeing check-in or the diversity and equality survey, didn't require tutors to haul five heavy baskets of Chromebooks to the form room. Perhaps though the best example of making the most of the situation was 'bring your pet to form period'. And just like they say "don't work with children and animals" on TV, the inability of boys to keep their pets on camera just added to the spectacle. Other activities included

debates, quizzes, 'listing' games and the use of Breakout Rooms for sketching games or just to socialise.

Some co-curricular activities had to be paused during Remote Learning. However, where there is a will there is a way and an impressive amount continued. Clubs such as Entry Debating, Lower School Bookworms, Bees Practice (Modern Languages) and Biodiversity and Environment Club all provided co-curricular opportunities for the boys while stuck at home.

There was both an Entry and a Shell virtual concert. These don't quite have the atmosphere of the real thing but they do have their advantages: we get a glimpse into some beautiful homes and everyone can watch them on YouTube at a time when it is convenient. I missed the feeling of the live concerts but I didn't miss getting home late after the concert!

— Contributions by A. Barnish

Middle School In Lockdown



When the first lockdown hit us my family decided to keep a diary of each lockdown day. Each of us selected an image to epitomise the previous 24 hours and wrote a short note of ‘highlights’. Some of my entries are quite dull such as relating yet another humiliation in the Family Darts League or repeated poor form with the bat in Garden Cricket T10. Other entries are a little more enlightening such as the day we caved in and finally acquired Netflix, becoming immersed in a wide variety of hitherto undiscovered delights. The culinary successes and failures feature regularly as do increasingly far reaching running or walking routes around the neighbourhood. The final entry was on Sunday March 7; it is recorded as Lockdown Day 268.

Some of us have emerged from this better than others and we should never imagine that recovering from the experience is easy and for some a healing process continues. I am however so heartened by the resilience, cheerfulness and

support provided by the young people in my life. A Zoom lesson with a cheery Lower Remove Geography set was guaranteed to pick me up on one of my more challenging days. My Remove group have been a delight and managed to be chatty and confident in Zoom lessons; so UCS and so refreshing. The manner in which my Upper Remove set responded to the way they have faced public exam uncertainty and a truly challenging time is humbling. I know my colleagues have experienced the same and that we have all found much to inspire and uplift us from the pupil body. We have all grown to become even more appreciative of the wonderful school in which we thrive.

Sporadic visits to a near empty Froggnal site reminded many of us how hollow these buildings are without the vibrancy of youth. It is wonderful to be back with all the pupils. I know that the new normal will be better.

Middle School In Lockdown



I do not want these Middle School boys to be known as the 'Covid Generation'; I want them to celebrate their emergence, their inventiveness, to enjoy new found skills and to focus on the positive. We have seen a History Podcast take off, reaching The Times and ITN, not to mention a worldwide audience. Boys have thrown themselves into the Diversity and Equality Steering Group with maturity and perception, and Student Council meetings have been measured as well as thought provoking. The quality of assemblies and associated debate in form Zooms has been remarkable, not to mention co-curricular clubs from Deme Cookery to Deme Warden HIIT Workout and Deme Radio. Remote Drama, Art and Music became the norm and wonderful showcases for such a broad range of talent. Boys walked, ran and cycled in challenges with each other in staying fit.

They can now use their abilities in person and collaboratively and I would urge them all to take stock and appreciate the exciting times ahead and never let an opportunity pass them by again. We are not there yet but we have all shown that our community has the strength to bounce back even stronger, even more collaboratively and with even more caring.

To say thank you and well done to such supportive Middle School boys and their families is not enough but it is heartfelt.

— Contributions by S. FitzGerald

Sixth Form In And Out Of Lockdown



“It...it doesn't seem real, “she murmured, drifting dreamlike between the work booths and reading lights.

No, I haven't let my imagination run away with me – this is just one utterly charming assessment of the new Sixth Form Centre I overheard. Another student sent me an email confirming his offer for Medicine and then described the new space as “amazing” – it was tricky to discern which he was more excited about, the potential realisation of his dream after years of hard study or the reopening of the cafe.

Forgive the following generalisation but lockdown has been a slog for all. Like every Year 13 pupil across the country, for the UCS Sixth Formers it was their third major disruption to their senior years in the school in the space of just 12 months. A full timetable has been in place throughout

these lockdowns but our pupils' wellbeing has been foremost in our thinking. Schools across the country have done their utmost to support their pupils, both pastorally and academically, but as Head of Sixth Form, I have also had a careful eye on my micro-community – under any normal circumstances Years 12 and 13 should merge to some degree: peers guiding peers at this most crucial juncture, with judicious steerage from staff. Instead, the year groups were bubbled off during the autumn, the *Transitus* (Year 12) diaspora spread across a multitude of form rooms and the Sixth (Year 13) hunkering down in a marquee, their temporary Common Room.

During this latest lockdown, we desperately wanted to give the students something that resembled the co-curricular provision they would have enjoyed in different circumstances, so Senior Debating, UCS AI Club, Biodiversity and Environment, JSoc,

Sixth Form In And Out Of Lockdown



Wellbeing Through Photography, Christianity Society, Gender Politics Society, LGBTQIA+ Society, Chemistry Lunches and British Sign Language Club all kept their cameras on and their wifi broadcasting, welcoming Year 13 students to shared digital spaces. Snippets of information came my way about individual pupils pursuing idiosyncratic interests whilst school played out online, too: painting in acrylics, administering COVID vaccinations, baking for key workers, crocheting, novella writing, exploring how to offset CO2 levels using desktop plants, setting up an online business, seeing London from a bicycle seat. It was delightful to hear about these interests and pursuits; I hope all of them continue to flourish now that we are back together as a school.

But there was one carrot that dangled tantalisingly close to all, a carrot that had steadily grown before our eyes over the course of the last 12 months, a biophilic, wifi-saturated, environmentally friendly, suffused with natural light, flexible, collaborative, comfortable carrot (if you've ever wondered where poor metaphors go to die, look no further). The new AKO Sixth Form Centre. Students were initially distracted by computer-generated images and the pell-mell of demolition, then a video of the new interior made the imagined come to life...the anticipation built. Yes, yes, BoJo was going to be opening schools up on 8th March but the real news was that UCS was going to be opening up the AKO Sixth Form Centre on the same day.

*"It...it doesn't seem real", she murmured.
But it is. We look forward to welcoming you in.*

— Contributions by J. Orchard

AKO Sixth Form Centre Surpasses Expectations



As lockdown finished, the new AKO Sixth Form Centre was opened to us, the Sixth Form students. It is certainly true to say that it has surpassed all my expectations. I walked into the Centre on the first day back after lockdown and, like many other students, was anticipating seeing a facility that wasn't much different to the old one. I was wrong. UCS has transformed and expanded the space and it is now unrecognisable from the old centre. It's an area where we can socialise, take a break, get a cup of coffee and work. The room is filled with plants, a motivating neon sign that says "One Day Or Day One. You Decide." and different seating arrangements that create a calming yet studious atmosphere.

The school has provided us with the same desks that are found in the AKO Centre. Each is equipped with charging ports, lighting, and Chromebooks, so any student can work on their own, or in a collaborative manner at any point

throughout the day. Furthermore, pupils are able to opt to sit and work with their friends in a booth which has raised chairs, creating an intimate studying experience and helping reduce distractions.

Besides just spaces to work, the new Sixth Form Centre has tables and chairs next to the UCS Cafe and couches by the windows which means that you can decompress and eat something in between classes.

I personally have felt that the new AKO Sixth Form Centre has really improved the area and the atmosphere. The open plan has allowed the students to create a tight knit environment and a welcoming space, and as a result people have been sitting down, talking and engaging in debates – a far cry from the cramped nature of the previous building. We love it!

— Contributions by Georgia Krok (Sixth)

Diversity



The Diversity and Equality Steering Group has continued its work this term, gathering information and consulting with various factions of the UCS community. The group, composed of teachers, support staff and pupils, is tasked with reaching out to all the different parts of the school structure, to research and investigate the reality of discrimination and prejudice. The group meets weekly to discuss findings and propose strategies to address inclusion and representation, a process which will conclude next term. The whole pupil and staff body has now been surveyed and offered their perspectives on discrimination within the school, with the focus this term on Entry, Shell, Lower Remove, and Transitus.

A number of pupils from all these year groups in particular have been interviewed, and this element of ‘Student Voice’ is fundamental in gaining a better understanding of the day-to-day experience of our students. Every aspect of school life has been examined, a process which has consulted both pupils and staff, in an effort to structure long term change. Next term the final phase of this will take place, where the group will propose a set of ideas and strategies that can be put in place to ensure a better and more equitable place for all.

— Contributions by R. Baxter

Red January



There are clear links between education and health. Public Health England has found that pupils with better health and wellbeing are likely to achieve more academically and that the culture and environment of a school influences the health and wellbeing of pupils and their readiness to learn. Regular exercise raises self-esteem and causes chemical changes to boost one's mood. Prioritising moving your body and getting some daily natural light was more important than ever during our third lockdown and as we approached the depths of winter in January.

Red January was a national initiative to encourage young people to be active every day in January. The UCS community jumped on board with pupils and staff embracing the challenge. Some of our pupils set themselves goals of running or cycling certain distances, while others committed to taking a daily walk outside, regardless of the weather, come sun, rain or snow! I took on the Red January challenge myself and I certainly noticed the improvements

in my overall wellbeing, despite all the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic.

The importance of physical activity for mental health and wellbeing was highlighted in a brilliant assembly where Ross Doran, a member of our Transitus, shared his personal story about how running has played a positive role in his journey.

“Running is not about competing against other people, it’s about overcoming yourself and constantly bettering yourself. Every time you go out on a run you are committing yourself to the simple goal of improvement, both mentally and physically, even if one is completely unintentional. This happens as you push through fatigue and fight the ongoing voice in your head telling you to quit. Running is about a desire to make constant progress and develop yourself, one mile at a time, pushing yourself to achieve a happier and healthier you.”

— Contributions by B. Kumarasinghe

Wellbeing Through Photography



The Wellbeing Through Photography club has been running since November and is designed to help pupils improve their wellbeing while developing their photography skills during the difficult times we are living through. The club is a means for the students to express their feelings and experiences, whilst supporting their mental health. Photography and the process of noticing things through the camera puts you in the present moment, and that's the essence of what we do at the club. As the club lead, I encourage pupils to have a deeper connection with the world around them and with the people around them.

The club has covered a wide range of genres and has motivated pupils to experiment with different techniques. Through practical photography tips, I have encouraged students to focus their lens and live in the moment to create thought-provoking pictures. Pupils have had the opportunity to watch a series of short films, led by professional photographers and therapeutic photography experts. Each session has been accompanied by a task for the students to practise their photography

“The club has been extremely helpful for my mental health and wellbeing, with a lovely environment and no sense of harsh judgment at all. I have additionally learned lots of valuable tips towards improving my skills and building meaningful stories behind my photos.”

skills and learn how to use photography as a mindful technique. We have covered the work of photographers such as the iconic photographer Rankin, Emma Hardy, Francis Augusto and Daniel Regan, among others.

The pupils have learned how to mind-map and how photographic images can have a direct emotional impact. The focus of the club has been on teaching practical photography skills, portrait photography, photography lighting as well as ways of creating emotive photographs that communicate personal experiences.

— Contributions by P. Lopes

2,500 Lateral Flow Tests Carried Out In 6 Days



On Thursday 4th March at approximately 8:30am, the doors of University College School's Lateral Flow Test Centre (affectionately and officially known as UCSA) opened. The test centre was situated in the sports hall of UCS Active and pupils arriving to take their tests were impressed by the slick operation which had been masterminded by Helen Newman, Head of HR, and Barbara Calnan, Senior School Nurse at UCS. Armed with their phones, pupils registered with the NHS app and then took swabs in booths set up at the end of the hall. The samples and results were processed by UCS staff volunteers (both teaching and support staff) and pupils received notification of their results through the NHS website. Over six days of testing, more than 2,500 tests were carried out and every single one was negative. The centre enabled UCS to open as planned on 8th March and the efficient system in the hall meant pupils missed a minimum amount of teaching time in order to be tested.

The school are indebted to the staff who planned the delivery of this operation and to those who volunteered to staff the centre for making the testing run so smoothly throughout the six days. It really was a magnificent achievement.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Enrichment Weeks



Not even lockdown stopped UCS running Enrichment Weeks, with pupils attending remote sessions which went above and beyond the curriculum. ‘Does Equality have a future’ was the topically named Economics, History, Philosophy, and Politics Enrichment Week. Dr Dawson drew record numbers attending his virtual Morris Lecture entitled ‘Equality and Utilitarianism: UK Government pandemic policy’ which was recorded and is still available to view on the Enrichment Google site. Other events of the week included a Politics Takeover, where Lower Remove History students discussed democracy and how it protects minority groups, along with multiple external speakers such as Professor Chris Hamnett of King’s College London delivering a virtual lecture on the leading drivers of inequality in London.

The second virtual Enrichment Week was ‘A Better World’ coordinated by the Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Physics Departments. This was jam-packed with too many events and external speakers to mention here, but some of the highlights

included pupils cloning vegetables at home using DIY kits posted to them, and DIY kits of the human eye sent home for Remove students. Ms Holland ran a STEM daily challenge to tie into the National Science Week happening at the same time and Dr Cheale delivered a fascinating lecture on Astrophysics and the future of energy harvesting. Headlining the week was Dr Edmunds with his Morris Lecture on lasers and how they can be used to slow down atoms.

The final Enrichment Week of the term entitled ‘Movement is Medicine’ was run by the Dance, PE and Psychology Departments. It was unforgettable, with events like morning Tai Chi, house Dance workshops, and a pupil Q&A with international cricket star Dom Sibley among the highlights. Mrs Hawes also gave an eye-opening Morris Lecture on how Dance can make people better at problem solving, better team players, physically more able, and happier. It really was a triumphant end to the term.

— Contributions by H. Franks

Launch Of The Tortoise



I wanted to create an informal school magazine to which anyone was free to contribute, so decided to set up The Tortoise. You may be wondering, why The Tortoise? That doesn't sound like a cool name? Well, UCS's motto is the Latin 'Paulatim Sed Firmiter' which translates as 'Slowly But Surely', so the real question is: why don't we have a real life on-site school tortoise already? (Mr Beard, let's talk...)

We take in everything; your work does not have to be perfect – as long as it is interesting and you care about it, we'll take it.

We have four editors from the *Transitus*: Edward Rollo, Isy El Nouchi, Nerea Lopez and Sofia Jimenez Berruecos, and a design team made up of Evie Csaky, also from the *Transitus*, and Ben Goren and Pierre Silcock-Commerman from the

Sixth. The team has been hard at work – getting in articles, editing, organising and designing – and we are all very excited about you reading the first edition of The Tortoise!

Also just to say a big thank you to everyone who has contributed so far; your work has been fantastic and we can't wait for everyone to see what you've come up with!

— Contributions by Isabella Wartski (*Transitus*)

International Day Of Women In Science



Thursday 11th February 2021 was the UN's International Day of Women and Girls in Science. To celebrate this day at UCS, Sofia Jimenez Berruecos and Sara Zamet (Transitus) put together a week-long programme of amazing events to highlight women's excellence in Science and shine a spotlight on the challenges women continue to face in this field.

Chemistry Lunch was delighted to welcome back Sophie Millns (Old Gower) for a Q&A about her career as a chemical engineer. It was a great opportunity for students to ask questions about university options, internships, and career pathways, as well as learning how pharmaceutical companies have stepped up to address the challenges of the pandemic.

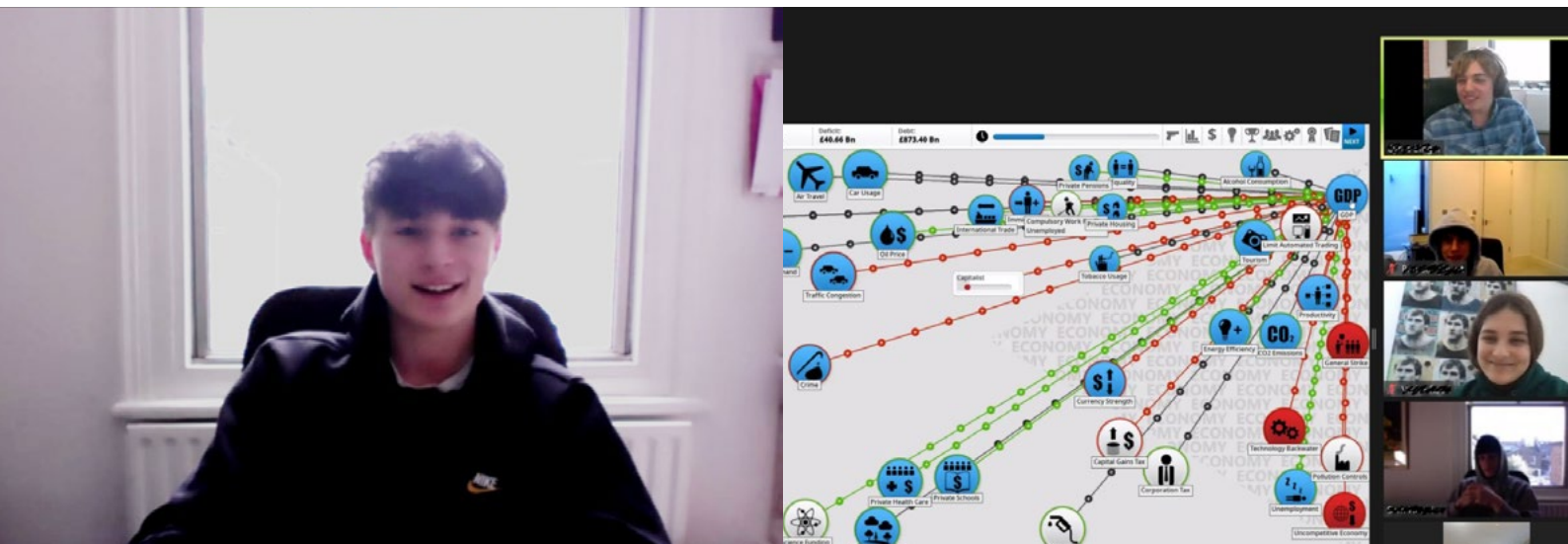
Upper School Gender Politics Society created a 'Women in Science' interactive quiz for pupils and staff, which revealed some surprising data about factors affecting women in the workplace and the relationship between motherhood and careers.

The quiz helped to challenge societal gender norms and led to a thought provoking discussion about how we can make scientific roles more inclusive.

In addition, Sofia and Sara, alongside Mr Roberts, devised a whole school assembly to promote awareness of the day. Staff and students from across the school gave presentations celebrating the achievements of women scientists from across the spectrum of STEM. We got to hear insights about historical scientists such as Flenmie Pansy Kittrell, the first ever African-American woman to receive a PhD in nutrition, as well as the modern-day Professor Sarah Gilbert and her work on the COVID vaccine. Staff were also asked to nominate women scientists who had inspired them, and we were flooded with responses which were shared on Twitter throughout the day. These tweets exemplify the spirit of community at UCS and our commitment to encouraging and celebrating diversity in all its forms.

— Contributions by E. Dell

The (Animal) Spirits Are High In Economics!



Lockdown has not reduced the efficiency of our Economists. In fact, we have increased our provision and adapted the way we work to make the most of the situation.

The Economics Society has been revitalised this year by an excellent group of willing and enthusiastic pupils. We have engaged in a range of topics and activities during Monday lunchtimes, both in the classroom and remotely on Zoom. From Economics games, analysing the stock market to student lectures, the society is certainly keeping Mr Sharp busy.

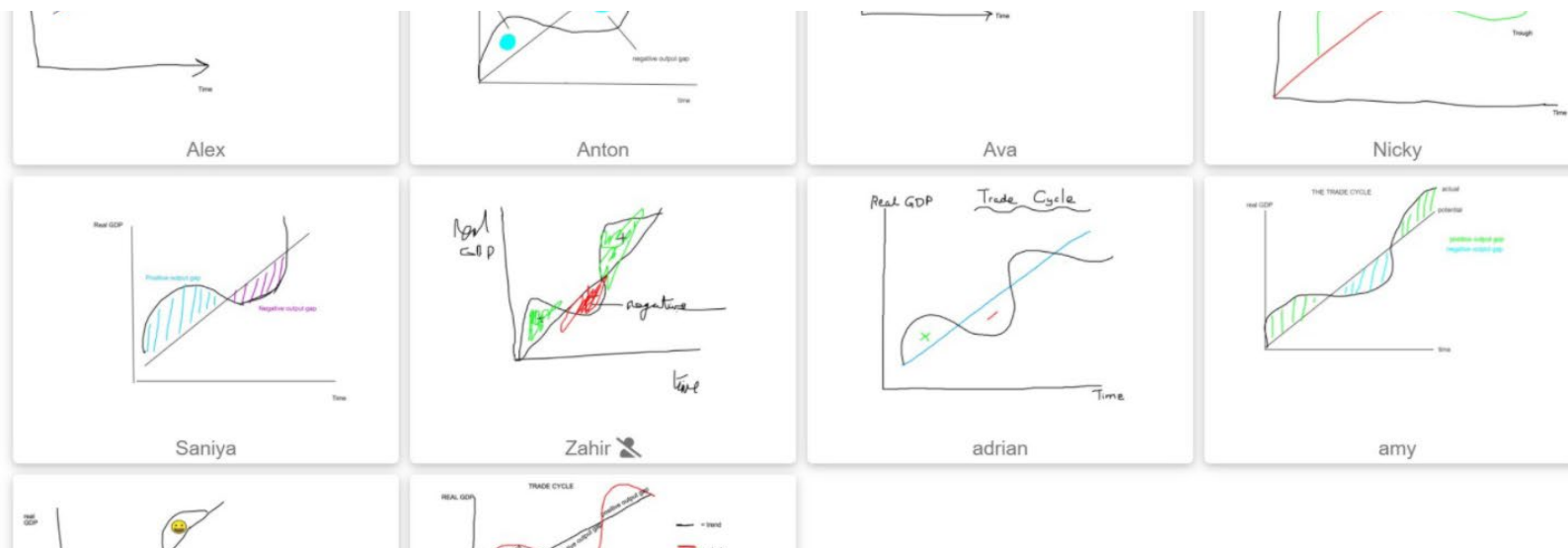
For the first time, we introduced our very own reading group which meets every fortnight on a Thursday lunchtime. It is reassuring to see such a large number of Transitus students taking advantage of this fantastic opportunity carefully curated by Mr Schumacher. The group kicked off with Ha-Joon Chang's *Economics: The User's Guide*. In the Spring Term, the group were reading

articles around policy responses to coronavirus, the race to provide broadband in Africa, and China's Belt and Road Initiative. Next book in the queue: *The Entrepreneurial State* by the great Mariana Mazzucato!

Noticing we didn't have a group that looked at finance and investment, Lukas Jorgensen put forward a proposal to start his own society. Under the watch of Mr Nicholls, the UCS Finance Society has attracted a loyal customer base and meets remotely every Thursday, after school. The society has had notable OGs such as Jonathan Tang of Citibank speaking on the role of quantitative analytics in financial markets and has also given opportunities to our own students to lead talks and discussions.

To encourage our pupils to step away from the laptop we asked them to take a photograph of *Everyday Economics* led by Mrs Shah. We had some marvellous entries but our winner was Seth

The (Animal) Spirits Are High In Economics!



Sagayam who was thinking about Economics on his daily bike ride around Regent's Park: he noted that the cost of parking around the park was very expensive but this rationing of parking space reduced congestion and pollution in the area and thus made his bike ride, and the experience of others, much more pleasant. That's a super example of Economics in action, every day!

The department was also involved in a range of external competitions such as The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and the Durham University student essay competitions. As part of their holiday work, all students, particularly our Transitus cohort, were invited to enter. Four of our Transitus pupils have also taken part in the IEA Budget Challenge and submitted an excellent report detailing their proposals for the UK March Budget – their championing of increased fiscal stimulus suggests Rishi Sunak was reading!

Our Friday afternoon academic Enrichment programme was flourishing with professors from University College London volunteering to speak, not just to our students, but also to our partner school students. Each remote session was attended on average by at least 100 young people from all over the country.

All this and a whole lot more we've got planned for the next academic year. Watch this space.

— Contributions by P. Fernando

Dan Snow Joins UCS Pupils' History Podcast



In November, two Upper Remove historians decided to turn their conversations about History into a podcast. Jonah Howe and Charlie Gordon had no idea how popular their initial broadcast on Spotify would be and they then decided to turn the pilot episode into a regular series. Four months later, the podcast has gone from strength to strength. It has now reached an audience of over 2,000 listeners and in February, they were joined by renowned historian and television broadcaster Dan Snow.

Charlie commented, *“We decided after the first broadcast that we wanted to give people of our age a platform to discuss History and Politics and we have used Instagram to offer people the chance to appear. We have had some extremely informative interviews with a number of leading historians such as Guy Walters, Andrew Chatterton, James Holland, Ian Johnstone and James Rogers.”* Jonah also has a strong interest in Politics and has

enjoyed the debates which often take place during the broadcast. *“Things have got quite lively at times. Whilst we have looked at aspects of Modern History, we have also discussed things going on around the world today. Trump, the handling of the coronavirus pandemic, and capitalism are all things which people of our age have an opinion on.”*

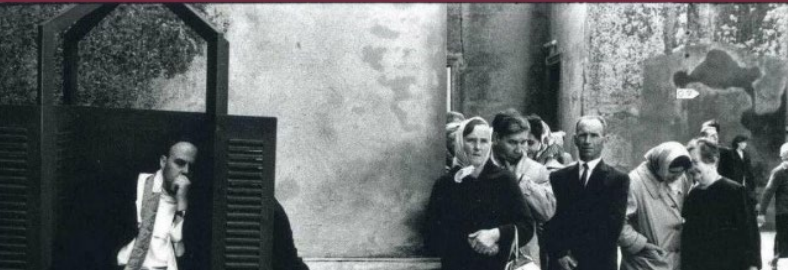
If Charlie has enjoyed working with each of the long line of historians who have taken part in the podcast, the chance to interview Dan Snow, the latest guest, was a real boon. He said: *“I still can't believe any of them agreed to come on the podcast! We have seen Dan on TV and it was really exciting talking to him. We were both nervous but he gave a real insight into Blitzkrieg and the Battle of Britain.”*

The Modern Historic attracted the attention of The Times and ITN during March and can be listened to by [clicking here](#).

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Interlingua – The New UCS Modern Languages Department Journal

INTERLINGUA ISSUE TWO - THE ITALIAN ISSUE



special Mandarin
second number of the
of Modern Languages

the year of the Ox, in
to bring you some
ects of the Chinese
including recipes,
with Ms Wu and Ms

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Ms Wu and Ms Liu give us an insight into how they celebrate Chinese New Year.

What is your first memory of Chinese New Year?

Ms Wu: Family reunion, food, red.

Ms Liu: Food, firecrackers, family reunion.

What is the very image/symbol of Chinese New Year for you?

Ms Wu: The upside down image of 福 and the red couplets.

Ms Liu: 福 and couplets which can be used only for the Spring Festival.

Can you talk to us about what would a typical Chinese New Year look like in your hometown?

Ms Wu: I would like to share my childhood memories for this question. For Chinese New Year we would go to our grandparents' (usually my father's side) house to celebrate together. I remember my grandparents would get up super early, preparing all the dishes. My parents would clean the interior decorations, and help my grandparents. My cousins and I were obsessed by a small firework called "SmallPao". If you threw these small firecrackers on the ground forcefully, they were very loud noise. We could play with it for a whole day. The food feast normally started around 12 o'clock. Typical dishes were fish, chicken with sticky rice inside, eggs with pork and rice balls. We would watch the Chinese New Year Gala together. When the adults felt it was the time, children were given the red envelope (with money inside). I still remember that in order to get the red envelope, we had to give candies on the bedside, which meant that I would have a sweet new year. The first day of New Year was the best day for children because they do not have to do any homework (we believe that if you do homework on the first day of the new year, you will be doing homework all the time in the rest of the year) and you can wake up late, wear my new clothes and start to visit relatives who lived in the same city.

Interlingua is the UCS Department of Modern Languages Journal. It provides a space for pupils, teachers and Old Gowers to explore any aspect of language learning. Our pupil articles cover the full range of year groups and can focus on any aspect of language learning, be it a language spoken at home or those studied at school.

The Modern Languages Department is vibrant and dynamic in its research and teaching of all aspects of language, culture, film, history and literature. At present, we offer French, German, Italian, Mandarin and Spanish in the Senior School and Interlingua is an essential tool in the promotion of cross-curricular links, linguistic and cross-cultural competences and communication. To date, we have explored translation in the inaugural issue published in the Autumn Term 2020, 'The Translation Issue', and, most recently, celebrated all things Chinese on the occasion of the 'Festival of the Lanterns' on 26th January, along with the new Chinese 'Year of the Ox'.

The Spring Term pays homage to everything Italian – Maradona, Napoli, Italian immigration to

Argentina, along with the 700th anniversary of the death of Dante and a portfolio of work by Transitus Art History pupils. The links to the three editions may be found below:

[The Translation Issue](#)

[The Italian Issue](#)

[The Mandarin Supplement](#)

The Summer Term 2021 will see the publication of Interlingua 3, 'The Careers Issue', and we are looking to inspire and inform our pupils from Entry to Sixth as regards the pathways and possibilities afforded by languages in their future careers or choice of degree programmes. Planned articles and interviews include: Daniel Wittenberg, 'From UCS to the BBC'; Linus Smith, 'Spanish, German and French to Investment Banking', as well as contributions from sports journalists and postgraduate students. All contributions and suggestions from parents are most welcome! If you have a language learning experience or a work-related transferable linguistic skill, we would love to hear from you – please contact me via email: helen.laurenson@ucs.org.uk

— Contributions by H. Laurenson

Virtual School Trips



Whilst language learning at UCS is dynamic and vibrant, with dedicated and passionate language specialists who thrive on the challenge of teaching language, culture, film and literature, nothing beats an authentic language learning experience in a country where the target language is spoken. Indeed, the transference of linguistic knowledge from the classroom to the everyday transactional immersion in a foreign country is one of the most fulfilling and memorable pupil experiences. Seemingly mundane interactions in Buenos Aires in October 2019 – asking directions, buying lunch, chatting to Argentinian pupils of the same age – resulted in an almost ecstatic response from UCS Sixth Form pupils. This essential rite of linguistic passage has been repeated numerous times over the years on UCS Modern Languages trips – in Antibes, Salamanca, Paris, Beijing, Berlin, Valencia, Hamburg, Seville and Salzburg, to name but a few. Horizons were broadened from the narrow lens of North London, as were pupils' key skills of resourcefulness, maturity, independence and empathy.

In one fell swoop, the Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020 put paid to exciting plans for trips to Sicily, Valencia, China, Argentina and Antibes. The Scylla and Charybdis of global pandemic and Brexit have impacted adversely on linguistic horizons, running the risk of a triumph of insularity with the potential to dismantle the inroads made into cross-cultural understanding. The core values associated with our young people becoming global citizens are intrinsically linked to language learning – communication, problem-solving, openness, tolerance, respect for others – valued by employers and essential in everyday life.

What was a language teacher to do? Why, of course, provide a series of Virtual School Trips, narrated in the target language and functioning as a trailer for the full feature film that will be the next batch of UCS Modern Languages trips in the very near future... on se croise les doigts.

Virtual School Trips to Rome, Valencia, Buenos Aires and Hangzhou are [available on the UCS Modern Languages Google Site here](#). (only accessible to UCS pupils)

— Contributions by H. Laurenson

Art and Classics Inspire Throughout Lockdown

BOCCA



In March, the second edition of Bocca was released to the UCS community. Bocca is the UCS Classics and Art History journal, which celebrates the study of Classical Languages, Cultures and Art throughout the Senior School at UCS. Articles are written by pupils, teachers and Old Gowers and the response to this second edition has been terrific.

[The magazine can be read here: Bocca.](#)

This edition of Bocca was loosely built around the theme of 'lockdown', conceived as it was in the midst of the pandemic. All the contributors responded to the prompt in their own way, finding inspiration in art and culture far beyond the confines of the Latin, Greek or Art History syllabuses. These articles highlight the breadth of the pupils' interests, not to mention the depth of their engagement with the study of the subjects. Rachel Fenner (Sixth) reflects on how societies

have reacted to pandemics, discussing this with regard to Titian's work. Jess James (Sixth) explores the lack of paintings by female artists in the National Gallery and Trudie Brady (Sixth) examines the use of Sophocles' Philoctetes and Women of Trachis to investigate grief, death, abandonment and ethics. Extracts from the winning entries of the Middle School Classics Essay Competition are also included, such as: Aaron Gareh (Lower Remove) and Matt Goldberg (Lower Remove) writing the diaries of Odysseus and Sisyphus respectively; Samir Rahman (Remove) making a claim for the influence of Constantine; and Jonah Howe (Upper Remove) reimagining the defence speech of Gnaeus Calpurnius Piso.

— Contributions by J. Lewis

Green Impact UCS



Springtime is associated with new beginnings. Green Impact UCS have most certainly been nurturing the school's sustainability 'green shoots' and have made impressive progress. Jacob Gold, William Brady and Adam Kassam have demonstrated the ethos of the society by working on Zoom, to overcome the year group bubbles, to launch the brand new 'Green Impact UCS' website. Do [check it out here](#). The group achieved the Bronze Eco-Schools Award in January and are well on their way to exceeding the requirements for the Silver Award.

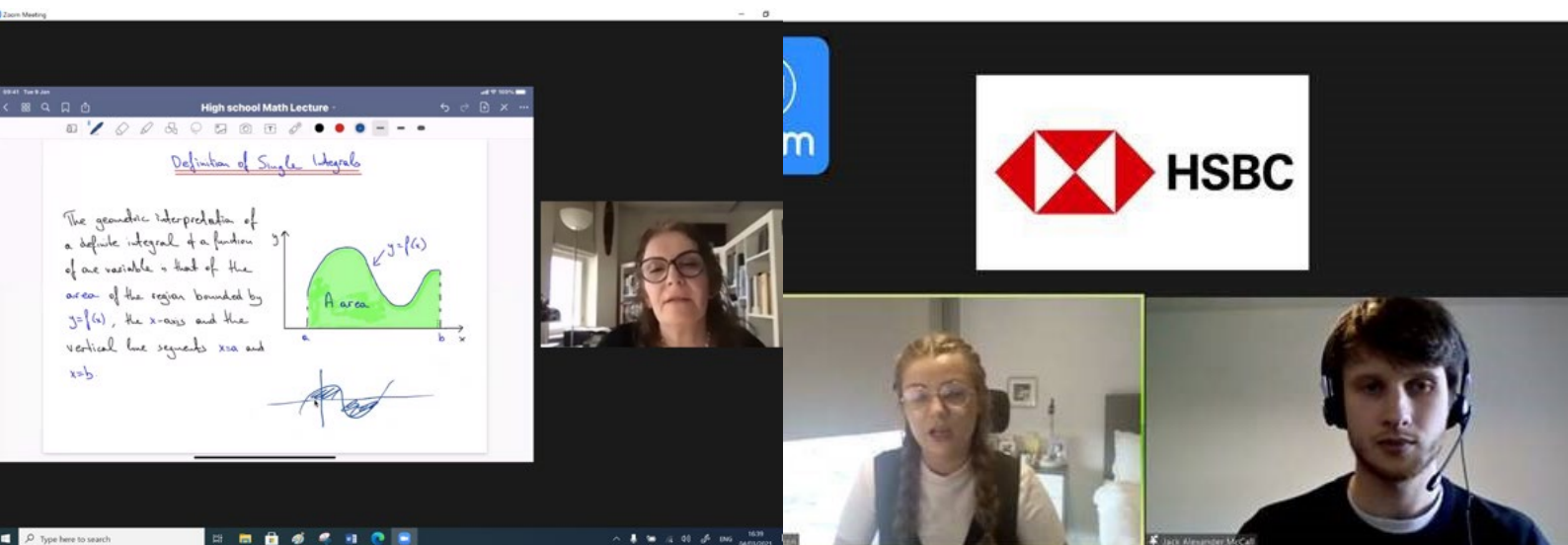
It is hard to summarise all that the society have accomplished this term. The Sixth and Transitus (along with Jack Leader from Remove) have contacted energy companies, negotiated competitive quotes and put together a succinct proposal to the Estates team – with the aim of transferring the school across to an entirely green energy source. Upper Remove and Remove pupils have continued to focus on sustainable transport and air quality. Samir Rahman and Joe Young have

spearheaded an air quality monitoring programme around the school to document the current levels of air quality. Results will be presented at the beginning of the Summer Term. The Remove also offered advice and cycle skill sessions led by Sustrans to all members of the school community. Email environment@ucs.org.uk for more information. The Entry have been extremely busy with Ms Anthony, setting up wildlife cameras around school to document the animals that frequent the school sites, and are well into the seasonal jobs of getting the allotment area ready for the new growing season. Please do check out the brilliant Eco-Review on the website to find out more about what Green Impact have been up to.

A final achievement was the nomination of UCS as Sustainable School of the Year in the Sustainable City Awards. This is recognition for all that our pupils have achieved this year and we look forward to hearing the results in the Summer Term.

— Contributions by J. Firth

Careers Afternoons



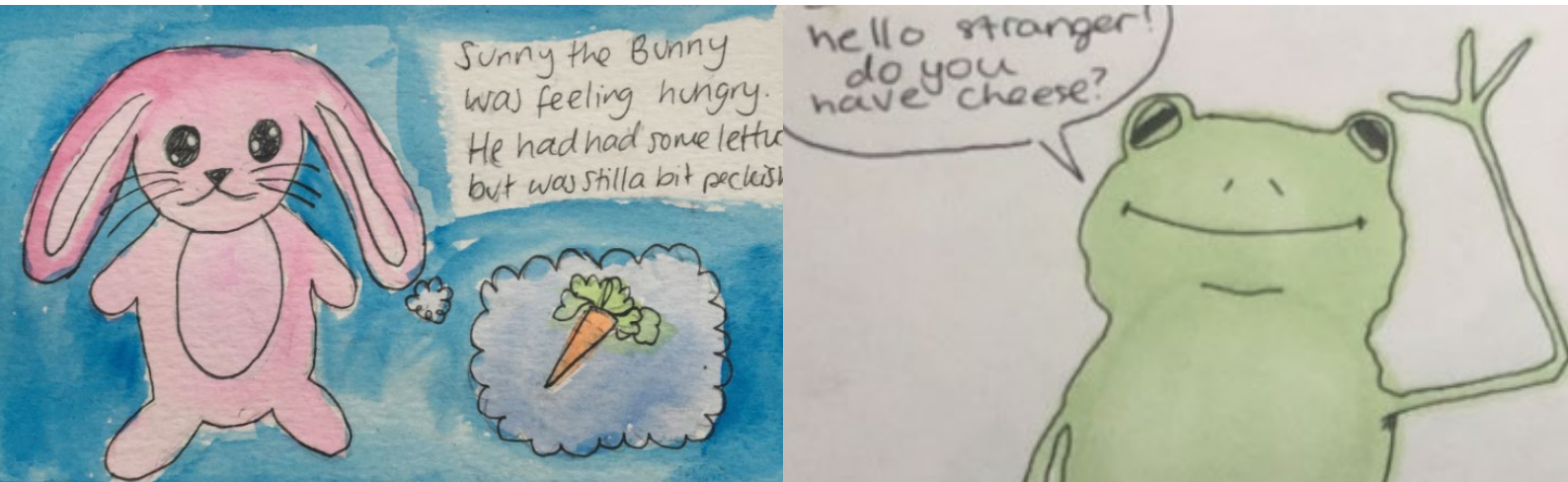
Careers Afternoons have become hotly anticipated fixtures in the UCS calendar. Even in these digital times, the virtual UCS school doors have been opened wide to company ambassadors from far-reaching industries and backgrounds. Presentations have been attended by eager and ambitious pupils from across the year groups and audience sizes have surpassed 50.

The term kicked off with a presentation from the Head of Emerging Talent at JPMorgan Chase, who discussed the realities of working in investment banking, as well as his top tips for finding a footing in the sector. Later presentations featured, among others, EDT – offering advice on securing work experience in the world of Science – HSBC and AECOM, who both gave an insight into their respective sectors. During National Apprenticeship Week, we heard from Pearson College London, who outlined the realities of degree

apprenticeships: an alternative to the traditional university route whereby students balance a university degree with a full-time paid job. Those accepted into one of these competitive programmes benefit from three years of work experience and all tuition fees paid by their employer. Students will learn a lot more about this novel route into higher education throughout their time at UCS.

— Contributions by D. Armitage

UCS Sixth Form Community Service And Partnerships Programme



While being confined to our homes did require a logistical rethink, it did not affect the core aim of the Community Service & Partnerships programme: to work with those beyond UCS in the interests of the wider community. In what proved to be another challenging term, it was the turn of Sixth Form pupils to step up and fulfil this cornerstone of the UCS ethos by contributing their time and energy on Friday afternoons to the Community Service & Partnerships initiative.

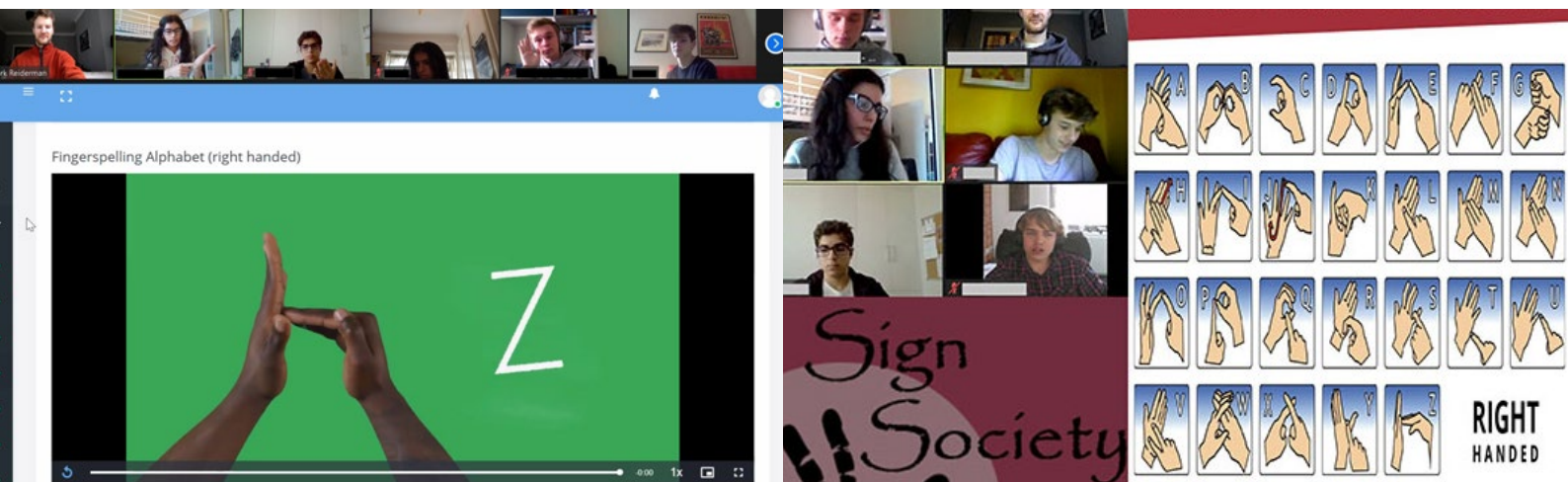
In recognition that the elderly continue to be disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, whether directly or through the resulting social isolation, Sixth Form pupils have done a splendid job of maintaining and developing the links between UCS and Age UK Camden. Our pupils established a pen-pal scheme between themselves and the residents of care homes and performed in bespoke concerts. Some even took requests from some of the residents.

“Thank you for the great opportunity. I will definitely continue to learn sign language.”

Pupil from Year 13 in London Academy of Excellence, Stratford

In addition to the challenging circumstances in our community’s care homes, the education of young people has clearly faced considerable disruption over the past 12 months. In response to this, a group of UCS students channelled their creativity into writing and illustrating short stories for young children, which were distributed to the pupils of several local primary schools. Others designed fun and engaging educational activities for Year 5 and 6 pupils who are learning a Modern Foreign Language.

UCS Sixth Form Community Service And Partnerships Programme



This term also saw a huge uptake in the number of pupils enrolling in an online British Sign Language course, covering fingerspelling, greetings and much more. The enthusiasm shown by pupils led to the launch of Sign Society, a virtual gathering of UCS and London Academy of Excellence pupils on Friday lunchtimes. Not only did this provide all those concerned with an opportunity to share and practise the new skills they were learning, but it also offered a platform for continued collaboration between partner schools.

Beyond our immediate community here in North London, some pupils worked with Missing Maps, an open-source, collaborative project that uses OpenStreetMap to digitally map parts of the world that are vulnerable to natural disasters and conflict. This term, Sixth Form pupils mapped over a thousand buildings and hundreds of kilometres of roads, in countries from Tanzania to Bangladesh. The information provided by UCS pupils working from home, once approved by

“Thank you to your pupils; our children have really enjoyed the stories sent to us by UCS.”

Teacher at Rhyl Primary School

volunteers on the ground, will eventually go on to be used by organisations such as the British Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières and the World Bank.

Circumstances over the past term have certainly been challenging and prevented the Sixth Form from contributing to the Community Service & Partnerships programme in exactly the same way as in previous years. However, we never fail to be amazed by the imagination, ingenuity and initiative that UCS pupils show when presented with a challenge.

— Contributions by M. Reiderman & C. Rancon

British Science Week



British Science Week is a ten-day celebration of STEM that takes place annually during March. UCS normally runs free Science week activities on site for partnership schools during British Science Week. Unfortunately, this was unable to take place this year but together with Forest School, we created remote resources for our local primary schools to run the week with their pupils. This collaboration led to set of enriching activities being created around this year's theme, 'Innovating for the Future'. The activities were centred around a video from an expert in the field and then an experimental activity. These activities used equipment which could be sourced from home to investigate areas such as, wind power and biogas.

Our collaboration with Forest School also saw the 'Spring Engineering Challenge' take place this term. The challenges encouraged pupils from our partnership schools to design an engineering product using recyclables from around the house.

It was great to see both primary school and sixth form pupils get involved with these engineering challenges. The challenges included creating a vehicle powered by a balloon or a tower that was able to hold a textbook 15cm above a table. We received over 80 entries to these competitions and the creative and innovative designs were most impressive. Some of the balloon powered vehicles travelled over 6 metres and some even flew! We would like to thank all the partnership schools that were involved in the Science Week activities and look forward to hopefully seeing them face-to-face next year!

— Contributions by A. Holland

Partnership Work With LAE Strengthens



UCS works closely with around 20 state schools. The majority of these are primary schools but four are secondary schools which are scattered across London – Westminster Academy, UCL Academy, Michaela Community School and the London Academy of Excellence, Stratford (LAE). Understandably a large part of our partnership work was placed on hold during lockdown but remote learning did present several opportunities which have caused our ties with LAE to be stronger than ever.

Throughout the Spring Term lockdown, LAE and UCS shared a co-curricular programme for Year 12 pupils from both schools. This enabled pupils from each institution to experience an incredibly diverse range of activities and make new friends. With two schools working together, the offering to pupils from both schools was remarkable. UCS teachers staffed cardiovascular training sessions and rock band rehearsals for LAE students and UCS pupils joined societies at LAE which ranged from STEM book group to musical appreciation.

Friendships were forged amongst the pupil body, connections were strengthened between colleagues and this was all done through the medium of Zoom from the relative comfort of home. On Friday afternoons, Year 12 LAE pupils joined the Academic Enrichment lessons run for the Transitus and their presence was appreciated by pupils and staff alike.

After half-term the focus switched to supporting pupils at state schools who had missed out on learning due to the lockdown. Ms Holland, Ms Potter, Mr Schumacher and Mr Reiderman ran STEMlink for groups of LAE pupils. Each group was given a weekly support tutorial in a subject of their choice and the feedback from pupils about these support sessions was universally positive.

Thank you to all staff who have supported partnership work throughout the term.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Drama



The Drama Department is excited to announce the launch of a new co-curricular activity: **Trinity Acting Exams**. Trinity lessons will take place after school from September 2021, and will be available to all year groups. Lessons will be fun, practical explorations of acting and performance skills. Pupils will work towards gaining graded qualifications in Acting, which in certain categories will also attract UCAS points, but will also develop critical transferable skills such as public speaking, confidence, and teamwork. Trinity College London examinations are highly regarded worldwide. The atmosphere of the lessons will be playful and explorative. The course is designed for everyone: pupils do not need to be studying Drama in academic lessons in order to take part in Trinity; whilst students who are taking Drama at school will find that Trinity lessons will complement their studies.

Danny Swanson: Trinity Coordinator

We are delighted to have Danny Swanson joining us from September to deliver the Trinity lessons. Danny, a RADA-trained professional actor and former Head of Drama, Head of Lower School and Designated Safeguarding Lead at St Albans School, will join the Drama Department as our new Trinity Coordinator. His expertise and experience will come to bear in challenging, exciting lessons for the students.

Learning Tailored to the Individual

Classes will be capped at 12 pupils, allowing each learner to receive ample individual attention throughout their hour-long lessons. For Upper Remove, Transitus and Sixth students, we have a dedicated Grade 8 duologue slot available, where just two students at a time can work on a scene with Danny without any distractions.

Drama



Diversity

Diversity is important to the Drama Department. The Trinity course allows students to choose freely the characters and texts they would like to perform, based on what speaks to them. Playwrights of colour, women playwrights and playwrights from the LGBTQIA+ community will be celebrated. New writing will be embraced. Trinity lessons will be a safe place in which pupils can explore important social issues through Drama; and learn to empathise with characters who are different to themselves.

Whole School Productions

One of the major benefits of the Trinity specification is Whole School Production Assessment – if your son/daughter takes part in any of our co-curricular productions throughout the year, on-stage or backstage, they will receive a Trinity graded certificate.

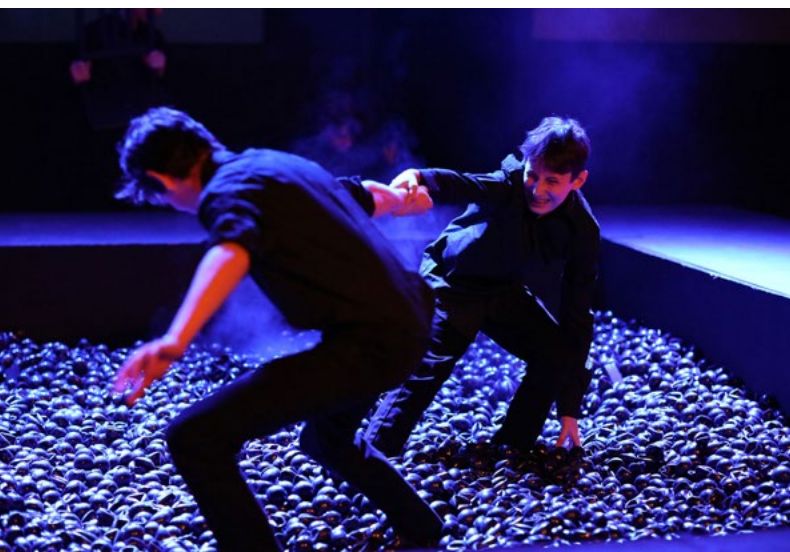
Tracking Progress

Each student and parent will receive a written report from the Trinity Coordinator, providing feedback on their progress as well as tips for improvement.

Public Performances

Parents and friends will have the opportunity to watch students' work at the annual Trinity Showcase, to be held in the Lund Theatre in the Summer Term. This celebration of the students' achievements will be a perfect opportunity for them to share their work and receive their exam certificates in front of their family and friends. This event will be professionally photographed and filmed.

Drama



Grades

Entry students will be able to enter for Grades 3 or 4; Shell students Grades 4 or 5; Lower Remove students Grades 5 or 6; Remove students Grades 6 or 7; and Upper Remove to Sixth will be able to enter a Grade 8 exam. Students who have prior experience with LAMDA exams will be able to enter the next grade up with Trinity.

Taster Lessons

Danny Swanson will be coming into UCS in April to provide free taster sessions for Lower School pupils. There is no need to sign up for these; taster sessions will take place in students' academic timetabled lessons.

Timetable

Trinity will run after-school at the Senior School for two terms: Winter and Spring. Lessons are an hour long; and there are 12 lessons per term. The timetable for lessons can be viewed at www.UCSDrama.com.

Cost

Trinity at UCS costs £180 for an entire term of expertly-led lessons resulting in a formal qualification. Bursary places are available. Students can sign up to one or both of the terms available each academic year.

Book Your Place

To find out more, view the timetable or book your son/daughter's place, visit www.UCSDrama.com. Places are limited, available on a first come, first served basis and will likely sell out before September 2021. Book now to avoid disappointment.

— Contributions by C. Bhantoa

UCS Sounds Unlocked 2



As we entered another lockdown at the start of 2021 our leading musicians started recording themselves at home as part of UCS Sounds Unlocked 2, a second series of remote concerts broadcast on UCS YouTube. The Entry were first out of the blocks with Joseph Sainsbury debuting his own remarkably mature piano composition Winter Piece, Sammy Assael Francis and Oliver Cheng contributing impressive performances on the cello and violin respectively, and the concert concluding with a perfectly synchronised virtual duet between Joseph Sainsbury and Kousei Hamakima (flute). Amongst Shell musicians, Benjamin Kotok Nicolls (piano) brought an incisive clarity of touch to Scarlatti's Sonata in D Minor whilst the Lower Remove concert was distinguished by Finn Kjaergard's commanding interpretation of Arvo Part's Fratres, one of the pinnacles of the solo violin repertoire.

The Remove concert was the customary rich mix from this talented year group, including George Rollo's superb bel canto baritone in Bellini's Vaga Luna and a fiery rendition of Bloch's Suite for Viola from Jaren Ziegler. There were also distinguished contributions from Transitus musicians, including an elegantly poised performance of Kreisler's Praeludium and Allegro in the Style of Pugnani by Lukas Jorgensen (violin) and a quite remarkable version of Cavallini's Duo for Clarinets in which mirror images of David Verran (clarinet) achieved impeccable ensemble in a true musical and technological tour de force.

Many thanks and congratulations are due to all those who took part for keeping UCS Music alive and raising everyone's spirits in these challenging times, as well as to Music Administrator Aino Konkka for assembling and editing the videos.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Functional Movement And Physical Education



This year the PE Department has been working closely with Functional Movement Systems UK to provide UCS pupils with the tools to develop and preserve healthy movement habits. The programme is not about competition or elite sport, it's about everyone. A tool to identify poorly developed or maintained movement patterns that potentially make gross motor skills or specific sports skills difficult.

FMS UK are considered leaders in the world of movement. After over two decades of working on and testing their theories around the neurodevelopmental sequence with elite athletes in the FA Premier League, the NFL, the NBA, the NHL, US Military and Navy SEALs, FMS are now linking with UCS to refocus their attention back where they began in schools and junior sport.

The initial Functional Movement Screen consists of seven movement tests that require a balance of mobility and stability. The patterns used provide observable performance of basic mobility and stability movements by placing children

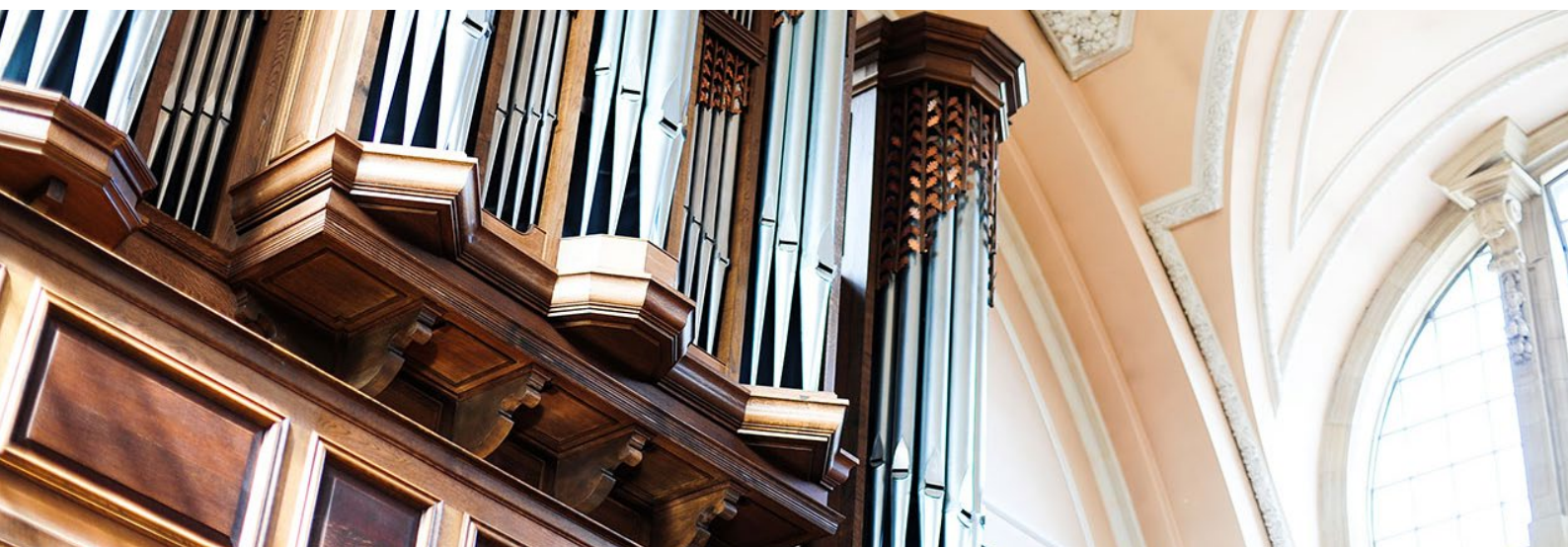
in challenging positions where weaknesses, imbalances, asymmetries and limitations become noticeable.

This joint programme captures fundamental movements, motor control within movement patterns, and assesses competence of basic movements uncomplicated by specific skills. It determines the greatest areas of movement deficiency, demonstrates limitations or asymmetries, and then correlates these with an outcome. We aim to retrain the body and importantly the brain to improve movement efficiency and re-establish sound movement patterns.

It's been particularly pleasing to see UCS pupils engaging so well in the early stages of this programme. We are already seeing our young people move more efficiently, ensuring the physical, mental and social benefits of participation in physical activity are accessible to all.

— Contributions by D. Brown

Old Gower Update



Although we have not had the opportunity to gather in person, the Development and Alumni Relations Office has been working away in the background on some exciting new projects. We are delighted that the newly refurbished AKO Sixth Form Centre can now be put to full use with the return of pupils to Frognal. We are very grateful to the AKO Foundation for its generosity, which has enabled us to redevelop the space and allowed us to meet the needs of pupils in 2021 and beyond.

Furthermore, we will soon be launching an exciting new online community for UCS, available initially to all Old Gowers. UCS Connect is a bespoke platform where users create profiles, groups, photo albums and events, but can also list employment opportunities and mentoring requests. Think Facebook meets LinkedIn. We will share more information as soon as the platform has been rolled out.

Finally, we have been fortunate to offer some online meeting opportunities for Old Gowers and supporters of the School. This term, we hosted the 1970 and 1971 Leavers' Reunions, as well as the Corporation AGM. And while a Zoom reunion or meeting is not the same as getting together in person, it does allow for more people from outside the UK to join us. So far, we have had participants from Las Vegas, San Jose, Portland, Switzerland and France. Under normal circumstances, it is unlikely that these OGs would have been able to attend, so we consider it an unexpected benefit of these strange times. We also managed to send the reunion attendees a 'Reunion in a Box' to give them a small taste of our usual offerings at Frognal. The box contained a pack of crisps, some drinks and a UCS-branded facemask.

We will continue to monitor things as vaccinations are rolled out and restrictions are lifted. We are really looking forward to an opportunity to meet in person again.

— Contributions by S. Crofton & E. Dwek

Old Gower Into Last Four Of University Challenge



Former UCS pupil Michael Kohn has been captaining the Imperial College London team in the latest series of University Challenge. The programme is aired every Monday on BBC2 and despite losing their first match of the competition against an impressive team from Strathclyde University, the Imperial side booked their place in the semi-finals with comprehensive wins over St Andrews, King's College London and finally Durham. Michael's performances as the team's captain have certainly caught the eye. He revealed that the team trained hard for the series and each member took responsibility for brushing up their general knowledge in particular areas. Their outstanding knowledge, combined with lightning-quick reactions to starter questions, secured the team a top-four finish. The semi-final was broadcast on Monday 22 March. The team raced into an early lead against Warwick University. Michael pounced on the starter question about the poet Louise Gluck and the team scored full marks

“On behalf of the UCS community, I would like to congratulate Michael on his team's success. Reaching the semi-finals is a remarkable achievement and it was wonderful seeing him skipper the side. The level of general knowledge he displayed throughout was simply phenomenal and we have hugely enjoyed watching every performance throughout the series. Well done!”

E. Roberts

on the Latin bonus questions which immediately followed. Warwick fought back quickly and the two sides were neck and neck for the next twenty minutes. However, in the final five minutes of the show Warwick answered questions on Yuri Gagarin and American poetry and eventually ran out winners by 160 to 135 points.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Debut For Inside Frognal And Frognal Extra



This term has seen the introduction of two new communication channels – Inside Frognal and The Frognal Extra.

The Frognal Extra is a blog about life at UCS. It was started in January and featured biweekly posts from pupils and teachers about events at UCS and, unsurprisingly given the timing of the launch, life and education in lockdown. The range of articles was fantastic and included Ms Baxter reflecting on the changes made to the co-curricular programme during lockdown, Christian Dillon (Entry) discussing the impact that a walk in the snow had had on him and Georgia Krok (Sixth) evaluating aspects of UCS which had supported her during the winter. If you would like to read the blog, please see: <https://ucsfrognalextra.wordpress.com/blog/>

The inaugural edition of Inside Frognal was broadcast on 2nd March. The purpose of Inside Frognal is to give teachers and parents an opportunity to discuss aspects of education and to offer parents an insight into some of the work which might go under the radar at the Senior School. In the pilot episode, Mr English, Ms Bennett and Mr Milton spoke about the developments in Teaching and Learning at UCS and how pupils might approach revision. If you missed it, the talks are available here: <https://youtu.be/nvM8NngPIXg>. Parents joined a live 30-minute Question and Answer session with these teachers afterwards and feedback from the event suggested there would be the appetite for further events. A second Inside Frognal is planned for Tuesday 18th May. The topic for discussion is yet to be confirmed so do contact me (edward.roberts@ucs.org.uk) if you have any suggestions.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

