

THE FROGNAL

UCS NEWSLETTER — ISSUE JULY 2021

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



UCS Shortlisted
For Sustainable
School Of
The Year

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Under-13
Cricketers Reach
London Cup
Final

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Live Music,
Drama And
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Returns

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UCS Education
Festival
Launched

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Welcome To The Summer Edition Of The Frognal



What a term this has been. I have been bowled over by how every year group has stepped up and committed to making the most of school life. Perhaps one of the upsides of the pandemic has been the re-evaluation of what is important in one's life, an appreciation that we cannot really take anything for granted and that maybe it's worth making the most of the time we have.

So the pupils have thrown themselves into their studies with great gusto, and most year groups have faced exams and assessments of one kind or another. Of particular note, of course, are the Sixth and Upper Remove cohorts who have worked incredibly hard to ensure they secure grades which they both deserve and can be proud of. Well done to them especially.

Additionally, the take up of our co-curricular activities - albeit with much juggling of bubbles and judicious dispensation of disinfectant to meet the regulations - has been wonderful to see. I really have found it ever so uplifting to see so much activity unfold this term. It remains the case that our many sports offerings, music ensembles, dance and drama, and clubs and societies continue to give pupils a sense of belonging and understanding of what it means to be part of something. They acquire new skills but also develop character and discipline, appreciating the importance of collaboration with others. There is much fulfilment to be found in camaraderie, self-confidence and the enjoyment of simply taking part.

Welcome To The Summer Edition Of The Frogna!



The importance of connection, be it through relationships, community or teamwork, is one of the long-term successes we can achieve through prioritising cooperation and collaboration. It is through creating authentic relationships rather than transactional ones, that we learn each other's true value. Being united and having a sense of purpose are cornerstones to living fulfilled and happy lives. Success comes in many forms: through our willingness to try new things, to discover our true selves and our place in the world, and our ability to build successful relationships in the process. Looking back on this term and indeed year, there have been many wonderful outcomes

– both individually and collectively – that we can be celebrating. In an uncertain world, we would do well to remember them, too, and this edition of The Frogna! is an important record of some of those highlights.

I wish you all as relaxing and recharging a summer break as is humanly possible.

— Mark J. Beard, Headmaster

A Spotlight On... Partnerships



Edd Roberts has been the Director of Partnerships and Public Relations at UCS since 2017 and in September **Sophie Bennett** will take on this role. Partnerships and community work is an integral part of UCS and here we discuss with Mr Roberts and Miss Bennett what makes the partnership programme at UCS so distinctive.

What is partnership work?

SB: Partnership work is the work we do to foster collaboration and the sharing of best practice, resources, facilities and events with schools in the state sector. Our projects vary in size but the principle which underpins all of them is that they should benefit all of the pupils involved; this includes UCS pupils as well as those from the state schools we work with. Partnership work is most effective when it is based on long term relationships between schools. Over the last 15 years, UCS has built a strong rapport with around a dozen local state primary schools and notably, four state secondary schools: UCL Academy, Michaela Community School, Westminster Academy, and the London Academy of Excellence, Stratford.

Why is this work so important?

ER: We are firmly committed to ensuring that UCS and our pupils play an integral role in the local community through partnerships with these other schools and local organisations. After all, UCS was founded on the principle of removing barriers to access in education and part of this today means we want to make a positive impact in our local community. Across the UK, independent schools share resources and facilities with local state schools. Some of this could be described as outreach work, however, true partnership work is mutually beneficial to all the schools involved and our partners certainly buy into this principle. We have so much to learn from them and our partner schools value this collaborative approach. The education conference which Miss Bennett organised in June was a prime example of this. Four schools worked together to devise a fantastic programme of speakers and the feedback from colleagues has been tremendous. Pupils from all the schools involved will hopefully really feel the benefits of the event for years to come as the advice and ideas from the talks is used in their schools.

A Spotlight On... Partnerships



What benefits does partnership work bring to pupils at UCS?

SB: That is such a good question and there is so much to say in answer to that! I think it's really important, when we think about partnership work, that we think beyond what we can offer to our partnership colleagues and their pupils and look to what our pupils can learn from them too. The opportunity for our pupils to work with those in other schools should never be taken for granted. Some of the most impactful partnership projects get pupils interacting with each other and some of the most impressive projects run over the last few years have sparked long-lasting friendships.

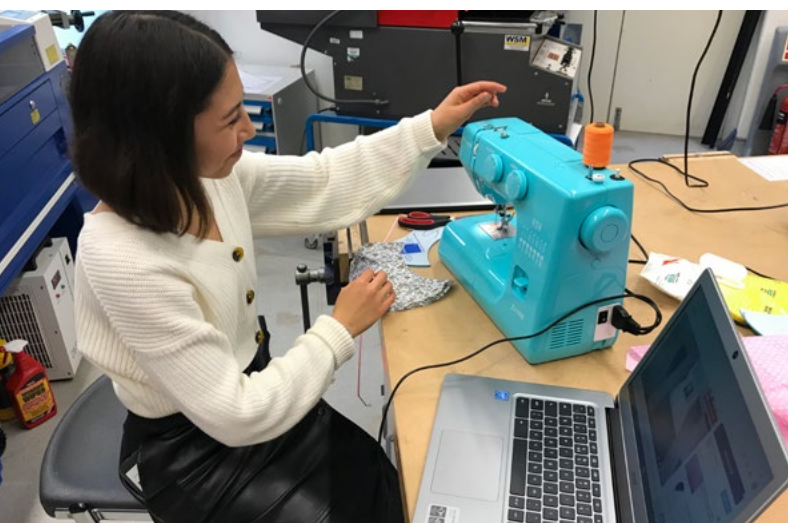
ER: The opportunities created by partnership work have enabled our pupils to experience different teaching styles and broaden their academic experiences. Many of our pupils have benefitted from the academic enrichment offered at other schools. For example, the Friday afternoon lecture series at Westminster Academy has been fantastic.

The partnerships programme has also helped pupils with their applications to Oxford, Cambridge, and American Universities and, in particular, has supported them with interview preparation.

Subject specialists from partner schools have interviewed UCS pupils and we, in turn, have interviewed pupils from their schools. This year, around 150 pupils were supported in this way and they really valued having their knowledge and skills tested by a relative stranger!

SB: Partnership work, especially in local state primary schools, has given UCS pupils the opportunity to lead and teach younger children. Currently, a group of our Remove pupils offer weekly Maths tuition to children at Richard Cobden Primary School. This has been incredibly well received by these pupils and their teachers but it has been particularly rewarding to see how the confidence and communication skills of the UCS pupils have developed through this programme.

A Spotlight On... Partnerships



What are the strengths of the current partnership programme?

SB: The range of projects and activities run as part of the programme is remarkable. Over time, these have helped to cement the relationships between the schools and this in turn leads to further collaborative work. So many departments are involved across UCS, and older pupils in particular have the opportunity to contribute to various schemes. The willingness of staff to contribute to the programme is also notable.

How have the various lockdowns affected the programme?

ER: The programme has certainly been affected by lockdown but some of its strengths are its versatility and resilience. Whilst some projects were simply not able to run, others took off and flew! One of the obstacles we usually face is the distance between the schools we work with. Sometimes it takes an hour to travel between them. However, with pupils and teachers now fluent in using Zoom we have been able to do a number of remote projects. LAE pupils were able

to attend and present at the Transitus Academic Symposium and in Friday afternoon Transitus enrichment lessons. During February and March, we also shared our co-curricular programme with LAE pupils and it was wonderful to offer their programme to our pupils. During the autumn term STEMLink was established to support partnership school pupils who may have missed out on teaching or learning during the first lockdown. This was a real highlight and I was delighted that eight UCS Maths and Science teachers were willing to offer weekly tuition, in addition to their teaching and pastoral responsibilities here. STEMLink was hugely appreciated by the pupils involved but as Mr Reidermann found, there were certainly other, more nuanced benefits. He commented:

“I’ve enjoyed it hugely and gained so much. The pupils have been extremely appreciative (which is nice) but it has really encouraged me to develop my practice. Some of the pupils had misconceptions and this made me evaluate their understanding of topics from first principles. This was particularly interesting and seeing their progress has been very rewarding.”

A Spotlight On... Partnerships



What new developments might we see next year?

SB: Next year is a really exciting time for partnership work at UCS. Not only do we hope to return to running more events in person and pupils working with each other face-to-face, but we have expanded our Partnerships Team! In recent weeks we have appointed 4 new Subject Partnership Coordinators (Mr Abbott, Ms Jenkinson, Ms McVicker and Mr Timpson) to lead and advocate for partnership work in their subject areas. Ms Trinder will join this team as we anticipate her work in curating the Lund Gallery will have a strong partnership element and Dr Dell will be the Director of Teaching & Learning (Community). These outstanding colleagues will work alongside Ms Holland, Ms Rancon, Mr Reiderman, and myself and we are already looking forward to launching a number of fantastic ideas and activities in the Autumn Term! We just can't wait to start.

— Contributions by S. Bennett and E. Roberts

Vuongiorno! Guten Morgen! Здравствуйте! 你好!



On the mornings of Friday 11th June and Friday 18th June, UCS extended a virtual welcome to Year 6 pupils from two of our Partnership Schools: Fleet Primary School and Hampstead Parochial School. Four passionate teachers from the UCS Modern Languages Department taught lessons remotely to some sixty pupils, in Italian, German, Mandarin and Russian.

Pupils were exposed to a carousel of languages to help them decide on the languages they would be keen to study in their new secondary school. Having a taster lesson on several languages enables and facilitates cultural competence and empathy – essential qualities for the new global citizens of the 21st century!

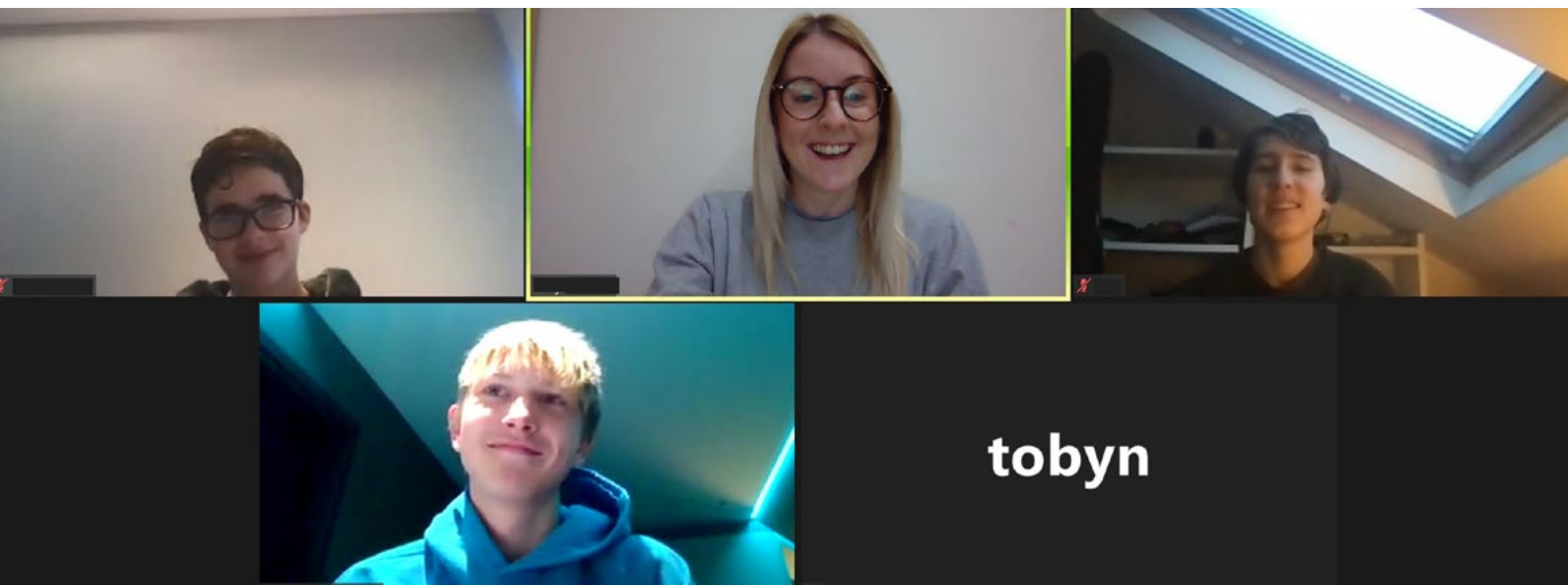
Whilst retention and retrieval of vocabulary is a feat of memory, the development of excellent and authentic pronunciation is more of a challenge. Consequently, emphasis focused on pronunciation as vital to proper communication; as such, pupils were coached and drilled in their pronunciation of new greetings words and they very much enjoyed

practising speaking in pairs. The Cyrillic alphabet was a fascinating discovery as they deciphered and traced new letters, making connections between alphabets. No mean feat, but a rewarding one nevertheless and an impressive linguistic success at such a young age!

Teaching primary school pupils also helps us as UCS teachers to reflect on the aspirations of the younger generation of students. What interests them? What inspires them and what are their Modern Languages expectations as they transition from primary to secondary school? The current social, political, and economic panorama will become increasingly reliant on the forging of global citizens, who are confident communicators – in any language – and empathetic, tolerant individuals who are able to respond with fluidity to the rapidly changing world in which we live. We very much hope that in June 2022, the MFL outreach will be able to resume in-situ, at the UCS senior school.

— Contributions by C. Rancon and H. Laurenson

Middle School Maths Mentoring



Throughout the year, Friday mornings have seen the Upper Remove students dedicate the start of their day to mentor primary school students from our partner schools. James Abrahams, Alex Christenson, Finn Enraght-Moony, Daniel Nahum, Toby Nathan and Thomas Potts worked positively and collaboratively to promote maths to young people at Holy Trinity CoE Primary School. These students enjoyed guiding the Year 6 pupils through challenging mathematical questions and they built an outstanding rapport with the pupils. The Upper Remove students were most impressive during lockdown and were consistently enthusiastic during this remote learning period. In March, these Upper Remove students were joined by eight more when the scheme expanded to provide support sessions for Year 5 mathematicians at Richard Cobden Primary School. The Upper Remove have been inspiring with their attitude and have always arrived at the early morning sessions with positivity and enthusiasm. They have developed strong communication and time

management skills by taking part in the scheme and they managed the virtual format confidently.

The staff at Holy Trinity CoE and Richard Cobden have been most complimentary to our students and they are delighted with the impact the mentoring sessions have had. The primary school students are thoroughly enjoying the club and the staff comment on the increased interest in mathematics that they have observed from their students following the start of the scheme.

The Remove will soon be taking over the mentoring scheme as the Upper Remove transition into the Sixth Form. I am sure they will be just as passionate and committed in promoting maths and supporting young people at our partnership schools. We hope that next academic year will see a return to face-to-face mentoring and our students look forward to encouraging young people to enjoy the subject and inspiring the next generation of mathematicians.

— Contributions by A. Holland

Inaugural Partnership Education Conference Launched To Great Acclaim



On Friday 18th June, UCS launched its first education conference known as The Conversation. The inaugural event focused on wellbeing and mental health and was attended by teachers from across the world. The conference had been devised and planned over the last six months by staff at UCS and three of its state partnership schools: Westminster Academy, UCL Academy and the London Academy of Excellence, Stratford. Staff from all four schools delivered seminars, workshops and talks on aspects of pastoral care and teachers appreciated the opportunity to share practice across the schools and, indeed, the state and independent sectors. The conference was masterminded by one of UCS's Directors of Teaching and Learning, Sophie Bennett, who commented, *"There is so much to be gained by sharing expertise across our schools. I was delighted that the schools involved were able to work so closely to put on such an enriching programme of staff*

development. Every school is different but as teachers one thing truly unites us: nothing is more important than the wellbeing of our pupils. Today was an opportunity for all of us to reflect on our work and learn from each other." The festival was free to attend and whilst Covid restrictions meant everything was carried out online, this did not detract from the experience. A highlight for some was hearing from renowned speaker Hayley Mulenda whose address was followed by a talk from local MP and shadow minister for children and early years, Tulip Siddiq. Talks delivered by teachers from UCS, LAE, UCL Academy and Westminster Academy were equally impressive.

Mark Beard, was also delighted with the success of the conference, *"The key to successful partnership work is designing activities which mutually benefit all the schools involved and this certainly did!"*

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Third Year Of Teacher Secondment To LAE



Every year, a small number of UCS teachers are given the opportunity to teach at one of our local partnership schools. This year, our Head of Mathematics, Micky Bullock, has taught at the London Academy of Excellence in Stratford on one day a week.

Mr Bullock is the fifth UCS teacher who has taken advantage of this opportunity and he certainly found the experience to be a rewarding one. He commented, *“It initially seemed a strange idea for the Head of Maths to work off-site for a day a week and taking on a secondment during a year that promised to be full of surprises and lockdowns seemed only to add more uncertainty. However, once Mr English explained that LAE classes are a particular joy to teach and that I would learn a great deal from colleagues at LAE I was more than*

intrigued. But what finally tipped the balance was a simple Google maps search, which showed I could cycle to work in half the time it takes me to get to UCS each day. Bingo! Well, almost. Lessons at LAE start at the rather eager time of 8.30am. My classes at LAE truly have been a joy to work with, as have the fantastic staff. And I’ve felt like a celebrity all year! I’d recommend this to any colleague who is offered the chance, as not only is it fun and different but it’s excellent for continuing professional development. I have learnt a great deal and have shared these lessons with my colleagues in the maths department and beyond.”

Next term, Ms Holland and Mr Schumacher will both spend one day every week teaching at LAE.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Academic Enrichment



Middle School Academic Enrichment

During the summer term, Remove pupils were fortunate to choose one of 16 different super curricular short courses to broaden their understanding of academic topics that lie between the traditional subject disciplines. Courses ranged from, The Human Brain, where students learnt about psychology and dissected brains, to What influences our decisions? where boys learnt about nudge theory and homo economicus. Other courses included Phenomenal Astrophysics, Appy Hour and Oriental Studies. These courses were well-received, pupils enjoyed the seminar style sessions, and some courses offered a useful insight into possible A-Level options.

Transitus Academic Symposium

Every year, Transitus pupils are given the opportunity to carry out a detailed piece of academic research and present their work to a panel of pupils and teachers at an event known as the Academic Symposium. This year, every Transitus pupil took part and this experience will stand them in good stead for university applications during the autumn. Presenting an academic talk is daunting but being questioned on the topic by a panel takes the experience to another level. Pupils rose to the challenge and the quality of talks was exceptionally high. Teachers on each panel were impressed by the level of detail given by pupils when asked questions on each subject area. Pupils enjoyed the chance to work independently on their research and many will continue this research over the summer.

— Contributions by H. Franks

UCS Pupils Enjoy Great Success With US And Canadian University Applications



Sixth Formers at UCS typically enjoy great success with applications to some of the most prestigious universities in the USA and Canada. In the last three years, pupils have been offered places at institutions such as Harvard, Princeton, MIT, McGill and Stanford. Despite the implications of various lockdowns over the last 12 months, the class of 2021 have enjoyed a similar level of success and twelve pupils are now looking forward to the possibility of studying on the other side of the Atlantic. 22 offers were made from the universities and these included 3 scholarships.

Charlie Quinn was delighted to be offered a place at McGill University in Montreal. He commented, *“It is such an amazing opportunity for me. The support I have had from the teachers at school with my application has just been tremendous. Their*

knowledge of the application process, not to mention the institutions themselves has certainly helped to turn my dream into a reality. I can’t thank them enough.” Applicants to US institutions benefitted hugely from the ACT and SAT preparation course which runs for UCS pupils throughout Transitus. The course has been running at UCS for over ten years and also gives pupils an insight into what studying overseas is really like.

Mark Beard, Headmaster, was understandably pleased, *“I congratulate the pupils who received their offers last week. They have worked so hard – and not just during their Sixth Form years but throughout their time at UCS: some of them have been with us since they were age 7! It will be fascinating to see what they do with their futures.”*

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Head Of Physics Releases 5 Star Textbook



Last month, colleagues and pupils at UCS were delighted to learn that Dr Peter Edmunds, who has been Head of Physics at UCS since 2020, has released a GCSE Science textbook. The book is designed to support pupils with the mathematical aspects of the GCSE Science courses and has already received 5 star reviews online. Dr Edmunds was delighted that it has been so well received and commented, *“I’ve always enjoyed writing new teaching resources for my classes, and two years ago started a website (sciencedoctor.school.blog) to share these more widely within the teaching community. At times, teachers have a hectic schedule and so it’s nice to make other teacher’s lives a little easier. I’ve been amazed that my resources have been downloaded 300,000 times now!”*

Collins, the publishers, contacted Dr Edmunds in 2020 and the book, which is designed to be used by pupils of all abilities, was released in mid-May. Dr Edmunds added, *“I tested some of the resources in my classes and they really enjoyed the challenge of the higher level material.”* Mark English, Vice Master added, *“We were delighted to support Peter with this. Sharing resources between teachers across schools is essential in developing pedagogy and we are pleased Dr Edmunds’ book has been so well received.”*

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Careers And Enterprise



Even as the school year was winding down, UCS students were dreaming big, considering their futures and what their hard work and education are all leading towards.

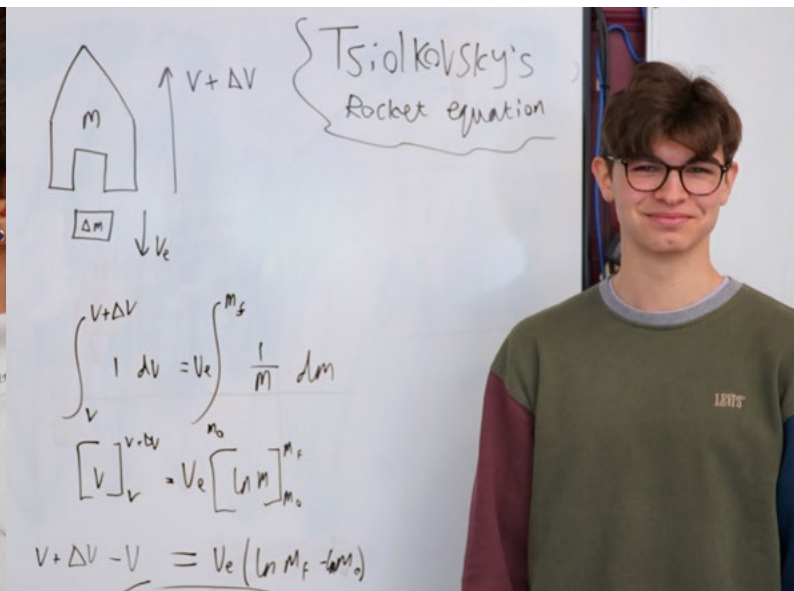
A significant date in the Transitus calendar is the annual Networking Evening, which ran online for the first time ever this year. From a long list of visitors, students selected three to hear from, and after a brief introduction, had the opportunity to network in small groups, and ask anything they liked about future careers from the individuals who are out doing the job right now.

Lower Remove pupils engaged in a year-wide Enterprise Day, where teams were tasked with formulating novel business ideas, before pitching their strategy and business plan to a panel of judges.

The two UCS Young Enterprise Teams continued operations and grew their businesses. Cauch completed the development of their time management app, and released it to the app store, whilst Exstrawdinary added to their client database and continued their resale of ethically-sourced and environmentally-friendly straws. Both teams entered the competition phase of the Young Enterprise Challenge, which required them to submit a detailed business report and a video presentation promoting their company. They were then grilled by a panel of Young Enterprise judges and made to justify their operations and business decisions. Following the competition, Cauch were awarded the Teamwork and Innovation awards – well done to both teams!

— Contributions by D. Armitage

Mathematics Outside The Classroom



UCS has continued to thrive in all competitions maths-related and this year many pupils across the Lower Remove, Remove and Transitus have been taking part in the ongoing Caribou Challenge – the world’s biggest online maths competition. UCS pupils have done very well and as a school we are ranked number one in the country. A special mention goes out to Leon Aziz who has scored best in the country across several rounds.

This term, many pupils in the Middle school took part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge and 17 went on to secure a Gold award. A special well done to Daniel Nahum who achieved the best score in the school and was invited to take part in the Maclaurin Olympiad.

MathsJams also continue to be hotly anticipated fixtures and we have been blown away by the quality of students’ elegant 5-minute talks about an area of maths they have been exploring independently. Highlights from the final MathsJam of the year included Lucas Chow’s brief introduction to the Mandelbrot set and Joseph Sinclair’s derivation of ‘the Rocket Equation’.

— Contributions by D. Armitage

Shell Pupils Take On Faraday Challenge



On 20th April, twenty Shell pupils took part in the Institute of Engineering and Technology's Annual Faraday Challenge. The competition gives pupils the opportunity to research, design and make a prototype solution to a genuinely difficult engineering problem.

Each Shell form group formed a team of four, with each of the five forms competing against each other to win a prize for themselves and a trophy for their House. The day started with a brief and boys then planned their projects taking into account the limitations of a budget. Once they had made the critical decision about what they needed and could afford, they were then able to select from a wide range of mechanical to electronic mechanisms. With the components selected, it was a race against the clock to build and present their prototype to Network Rail who were sponsoring the competition.

The pupils built some truly impressive projects and each demonstrated the sophisticated problem solving skills and sense of creativity of the teams. One boy commented, *"It was really fun! I learnt a lot, and it helped me to better understand what it means to be an Engineer."*

At the end of the day, the projects were sent off to be externally assessed. Each team was assessed on six criteria: planning, development of product, use of budget, product engineering, the presentation, and teamwork, all resulting in a total score out of 100. In the end it came down to a just single mark and this year's winning team was SBCJ. Congratulations to the winning team and well done to everyone who took part!

— Contributions by B. Jenkins

The Historic Present Features At History Festival



The Chalke Valley History Festival in Wiltshire is one of the largest history festivals in the UK. It has run for the last 10 years and usually attracts over 10,000 visitors. A few months ago, the organisers of the festival came across the Historic Present podcast (the history podcast hosted by Charlie Gordon and I) and invited us down to the festival as Press. This meant we were able to interview a number of leading historians for the podcast, as well as making educational videos for the festival itself.

We first spoke to the former leader of the Liberal Democrats party, Sir Vince Cable, about his new book *Money and Power* and the rest of the week was spent frantically running from one end of the festival to the other, interviewing one famous historian before sprinting to another's

book signing. We learnt very quickly that there would be little time to rest or catch our breath. We spoke to some familiar faces, such as Guy Walters and Andrew Chatterton, as well as comedian and history lover Harry Enfield. By the end of our time at the festival, we had managed to interview a plethora of historians, lecturers, authors and comedians, who all willingly helped with the podcast. Before leaving, we spoke to contemporary historian and author Sir Anthony Seldon, who revealed to us that he was Mr Beard's GCSE history teacher, back when the Headmaster was in school!

Overall, the festival was a truly amazing experience; we learnt so much about being part of the press, as well as learning from the deep insights into specific historical subjects by dedicated experts.

— Contributions by J. Howe (*Upper Remove*)

Lively Discussions At Weekly Politics Society

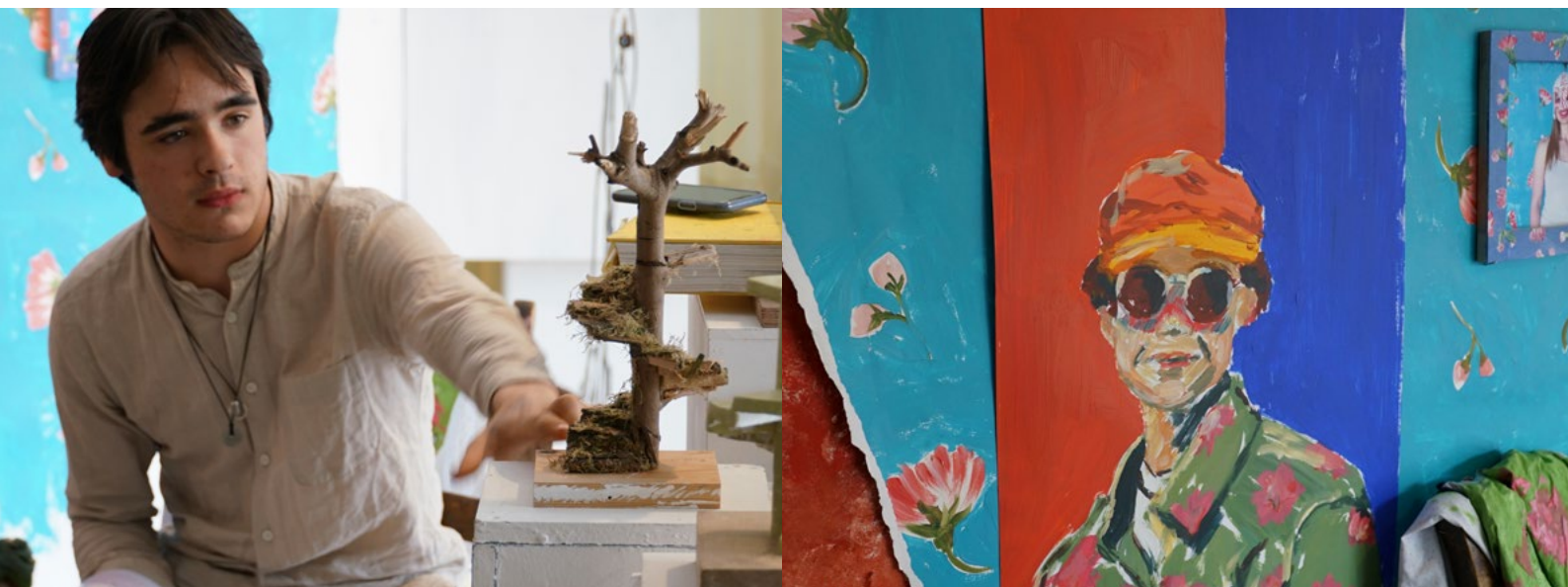


The challenges of the past year have not prevented the Politics Department from providing an increasing range of opportunities for our pupils across the whole school. One highlight of this was the online Q&A with Baroness Jay, a journalist, life peer and previous Leader of the House of Lords. Baroness Jay praised our Transitus pupils for their thoughtful and knowledgeable questions and commented on how pleasing it was to see such engagement in political issues. This real interest in the world around them has been displayed even further by the determination to create a Politics Society as soon as we returned to school. As founding member Ross Doran (Transitus) writes, it has been a place of stirring and lively discussions! *“The Politics Society has been a great platform for political debate and an opportunity to explore topics outside of the A-Level curriculum. Whether studying Politics A-Level or not, the society and its*

members have been able to explore a wide range of issues, leading to a real diversity of conversations. Discussions have spread across various themes, looking at things from the future of the Labour Party, to the Israel-Palestine conflict, as well as a debate on the state of democracy on the continent of Africa. There is a considerable variety of political convictions at UCS, which ensures that there are always productive debates to be had. These meetings have been lively and engaging and have made us all consider different political perspectives. This platform has allowed us to share knowledge and ideas while developing an ability to debate and consider political topics not covered on the A-Level course. We hope to be able to expand this even further next year, when we will hopefully be able to invite guests in to share their own political opinions”.

— Contributions by L. Smith

The Lund Gallery



The Lund Gallery ended a Covid induced patchy academic year with two celebratory exhibitions and these made our community feel a little more like things were getting back to normal.

Transitus pupils had worked hard to prepare themselves for a big practical session upon return to school and we were able to showcase their work in the Lund Space – it looked incredible. Like artists, creators, designers and curators all over the world this past year, our pupils have been busy adapting, innovating and reimagining. Work on display included huge inflatable ‘blobs’ by Julien Van Eeten, handmade paper sculptures by Evie Csaky, biomorphic ceramic forms by Eddie Baum, Film Noir inspired paintings by Ace Howlett and architectural staircase forms by Sasha Adam-Grylls. Work in progress shows are an important part of the A-level course as it allows students to work through ideas, seek solutions to problems, draw in and consider the audience and seek new resources to further their explorations.

The final show, ONLINE, was an exhibition showcasing selected works by the 2021 A-Level pupils. In keeping with the remote nature of school over the past two lockdown periods, viewers found this exhibition existed entirely online. Our students had to adapt quickly to make artwork that either existed in digital format; for example, making digital drawings with a graphics tablet or documenting physical work through photography and video. By scanning the QR codes, viewers were able to explore a selection of the pupils’ work in small bitesize portfolios. One could see how ideas came to fruition, how they were refined and the thoughtful outcomes resulting at the end of their exploration. The nature of working this way challenged our students to be resourceful while studying at home. They reinvented their working methods and levelled up their achievements.

— Contributions by V. Trinder

Activities Week



Activities Week takes place every year in the final week of the summer term. For many pupils it is an opportunity to try new things, forge new friendships and develop new skills. Due to the pandemic, the annual trips to Skern Lodge in Devon and the Battlefields in Northern Europe could not take place for the Entry and Lower Remove year groups but nonetheless, through the ingenuity of Mr McAra and other colleagues, a brilliant and enriching activities week was able to take place.

Highlights of the week included:

- *Entry: a public speaking course, a trip to Go Ape and a film making course.*
- *Shell: an outdoor activity experience at Stubbers.*
- *Lower Remove: MUN conference and a UCS Apprentice competition.*
- *Remove: an Enrichment extravaganza, workshops on wellbeing and equality, and sailing.*
- *Transitus: leadership training courses, trips across London, and a walk along the Thames.*

Pupils of all ages thoroughly appreciated the opportunity to engage in these activities and it was a wonderful way to finish the school year.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

UCS Highly Commended At Sustainable School Of The Year Awards



On World Earth Day, pupils and staff at UCS were delighted to learn that the UCS Foundation had been shortlisted for the Sustainable School of the Year in the Sustainable City Awards. The prize was eventually awarded to Hammersmith Academy but UCS's work in this area was classified as highly commended. The awards are organised by environmental charity Global Action Plan and partnered by Investec, Mayor of London and LEDnet (London Environment Directors' Network). They seek to recognise individuals and organisations who have developed imaginative solutions and approaches to help Londoners from all backgrounds live, work and spend their leisure time in ways that are good for health, wealth and the planet.

In January, UCS pledged to go Carbon Zero by 2030 and are currently working through a series of measures in an effort to meet this target. James

Firth, the Environmental Impact Coordinator of the UCS Foundation, commented, "We are so pleased that what we have done across the three UCS schools has been recognised by being shortlisted for this award. We are making great strides in this area but what is really special, is that so many of our initiatives have been pupil-led. Around sixty pupils getting involved in planning a significant number of projects. For example, the work of Year 9 pupils devising and implementing a drive to improve recycling across the school has been particularly eye-catching and over 75% of our waste is now recycled. Year 12s should also be congratulated on their work with Oxford University in devising short films to promote communication on the subject of climate change."

Earlier this year, UCS teamed up with the Camden Forest initiative and 100 trees were planted across the borough in pupil's gardens. 60% of UCS pupils

UCS Highly Commended At Sustainable School Of The Year Awards



and staff travel to school via sustainable means and an independent travel scheme running at the UCS Junior Branch further encourages pupils to walk to school whenever possible. Pre-pandemic, this scheme achieved a 50% reduction in daily vehicle use. In the last 12 months, the number of pupils cycling to UCS has doubled and the school is working with Sustrans to further encourage this. Staff are strongly discouraged from driving to school although there are now five electrical charging points for their cars on site. The school's biodiversity and allotment societies contain pupils aged between 4 and 18 and their enthusiasm for growing vegetables, keeping bees and looking after chickens is evident. As a Green Flag School, the 'Eco Warrior' team is well-established at the

UCS Pre-Prep and throughout the Foundation's curriculum, sustainability is firmly embedded.

Mark Beard, Headmaster, stated, *"I congratulate my colleagues Mr Firth, Ms Casey and Mrs Lenton who have done so much to promote sustainability across the UCS Foundation. Our pupils are carrying out sterling work in an area which is of huge importance to us all."* Tristan Jenkins (Remove) concluded, *"Everyone at UCS knows how important our work is and it has been fantastic to see the whole community working together. Improving air quality, reducing emissions, and encouraging biodiversity are fundamental to life in the 21st century. There is more to be done so watch this space."*

— Contributions by J. Firth

Green Impact



This term has seen big drives in developing biodiversity and sustainable transport at the Senior School. The Entry and Shell year groups especially have been busy maintaining the allotment area. Each lunchtime this area has been a hive of activity with pupils busily tending to plants in the greenhouse, looking after the chickens (!) and weeding the vegetable beds. With sunflower and pumpkin competitions hotly contested, it has also been great to see the rest of the school community getting involved as well. Alongside this, the Entry have been busy filming information documentaries for submission to the BBC Gardeners World competition!

The other big growth area this term has been led by the Remove ‘Transport’ Group. Having completed a rigorous air quality survey of the whole Senior School site, they published their results to the Headmaster with a range of suggested improvements to counter dangerous air pollution.

Encouragingly the levels of air pollution were lower than expected but during commuting periods the traffic levels outside the school are especially high. The team are now looking at ways to encourage parents to avoid driving past the school and pupils to take more sustainable modes of transport. To assist this, they have developed a ‘Mechanic’ team who have been learning new bicycle maintenance skills and can now offer immediate assistance to anyone who has any issues with their bicycle.

With the appointment of Mark Zangwill and Charlie Benjamin as student leaders of Green Impact, we open a new chapter on the society and I very much look forward to Green Impact continuing to embed Sustainability at UCS.

— Contributions by J. Firth

UCS Celebrates Pride Month



The very concept of ‘pride’ sits in direct opposition to shame, and to social stigma – both of which have for too long had far too much power. Which is why Pride Month is such a vital celebration of the equality, dignity, and self affirmation of the LGBTQIA+ community. At UCS, with our Pride flag flying, we have found a few ways to celebrate and, along the way, to raise money for some wonderful and worthwhile charities. Led by the LGBTQIA+ Officers of the newly formed Sixth Form Union – Nerea Lopez and Julien Van Eeten – and the President and Founder of the LGBTQIA+ Society – Jesse Katz Roberts – there have been a number of events to celebrate Pride. Not least of these was an assembly on the history of Pride, and how to be a good ally to the LGBTQIA+ community, which went out to the whole school at the beginning of the month. On Friday 18th June, the school community also arrived in their brightest and best colours for ‘Rainbow

Day’. This raised much needed funds for our two chosen charities. Our first charity, Mermaids, is committed to helping gender-diverse teenagers, and provides resources and support to young people and parents alike. The second – Just Like Us – is a charity specifically focused on empowering young LGBTQIA+ people, and championing LGBTQIA+ equality. The celebrations were limited by the current COVID restrictions, but there is a strong and lasting commitment to supporting and championing the LGBTQIA+ community – both in school and in the wider community – which will last much longer than the month.

— Contributions by R. Baxter

Curriculum Drama Update



Pupils of Drama and Dance across all year groups have enjoyed a flurry of activity this term as we have slowly but surely (and safely) returned to exciting, creative, exploratory practical Drama lessons. Entry and Shell pupils worked towards the inaugural House Drama & Dance competitions. In Drama classes, pupils have been applying their vocal and characterisation skills to a range of duologues, from *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* to *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. In Dance, the boys have been learning ambitious choreography in preparation for the competition.

Meanwhile, Lower Remove Dance students have been busy preparing to be members of UCS's first ever GCSE Dance cohort, starting in September 2021! Following a term of practical choreography, they have been exploring the theory of Dance in preparation for this physically and intellectually demanding course. Lower Remove Drama pupils have thrown themselves into the physical-storytelling world of *Frantic Assembly* – a visceral, exciting, dynamic practitioner whose work is inspiring and unique. Responding to a stimulus,

students have worked tirelessly in lessons to devise, rehearse and perform their original pieces in a *Frantic* style.

After a masterclass in model-box making and special-effects makeup, Transitus pupils are working in a spirited and collegiate way on their upcoming practical performances. Those familiar with *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller or *Mother Courage* by Bertold Brecht may be in for a surprise, for the students' brief is to rip those plays up and reinterpret them in a completely different style.

A fond farewell is extended to our Sixth, who have demonstrated astonishing maturity and resilience over the past two years. Their practical lessons, their assessed performances, their trip to Edinburgh, their trips to live theatre in London, their Senior School Production – all have fallen foul of Covid. Undeterred, they came to lessons with a steely determination, a smile, and a shrug, and got to work. Like their Upper Remove counterparts, they deserve every success in August.

— Contributions by C. Bhantoa

Co-Curricular Drama Returns In The Autumn



Despite the recent disruption, Drama at UCS is in rude health. It is a testament to the Lower Remove's imagination, positivity and passion for the subject that we have secured all-time record high GCSE numbers during a pandemic. The arts, rather than fading into the darkness, have been illuminated. We are delighted to announce that our Senior School Production this November will be *The Illusion*, written by Pulitzer Prize Winner and Academy Award nominee, Tony Kushner.

In a desperate search for his estranged son, a remorseful father ventures into the cave of a mysterious sorcerer. As the father becomes increasingly lost between imagination, madness and reality, this highly original comedy asks if magic – or something else entirely – is the greatest illusion of all. This hilarious adaptation of Pierre Corneille's classic features a large cast of challenging roles, an ambitious set design and real magic.

We are so excited that the beating heart of the department – live theatre – will be returning to the Lund with an ambitious, visually spectacular production which will challenge the cast and Stage Crew. Auditions have taken place and rehearsals will begin in earnest in September. The performances will take place on 23rd, 24th & 25th November – ticket information will be released in due course.

You will be aware of our new co-curricular club launching in September: Trinity Acting Exams. 70% of places have now been filled and to sign up please visit UCSDrama.com.

We eagerly await the government's next move, so that we can return to normality as soon as it is safe to do so. We have exciting plans at UCS Drama – including trips to live theatre in London, resuming our biennial trip to New York City, taking a show to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and so much more!

— Contributions by C. Bhantoo

Drama – A Pupil Perspective



Theatre is, at its heart, an expression of ideas and emotions produced by a collective of creative artists, working in harmony to deliver, at its best, the most visceral and accurate portrayal of real life possible. This is achieved through a medium of live visual storytelling, which both engages and enraptures an audience. This is something rather hard to accomplish during a national lockdown, which enforces isolation, stopping in-person collaborative work and an audience being able to view a production in a group setting such as a theatre.

15 months on since the first lockdown, the notion of this ability to connect to an audience through collective work was beginning to sound like a dream, like a distant memory. So being able to, at long last(!), create theatre with my peers and perform feels both nerve-wracking and exhilarating simultaneously. The feeling you get

when performing material that you have created, especially if it is able to communicate what you want it to successfully, is like no other.

Not only is creating theatre immensely enjoyable, but it also ineffably helpful in the development of many transferable skills, such as public speaking, creativity, lateral thinking (coming up with solutions to problems and frustrations you may encounter in the devising process), leading (if you have come up with an idea), following (if you are exploring someone else's suggestion), listening to others, communicating effectively, and, of course, the ability to work well in a group.

Theatre, for me, is a way to connect with others like no other, and the fact that this most important of art forms almost disappeared has made it, now that it has returned, feel all the more valuable.

— Contributions by Oliver Sykes (*Transitus*)

Lower School Drama And Dance Competitions Rock The Lund



The inaugural House Drama and Dance competitions took place over consecutive evenings in June in the Lund theatre. Lower School boys had spent the term practising in their lessons and putting the finishing touches to their performances in their lunchtimes.

The drama pieces were performed by two boys from each form. They were not all performing the same piece but a scene from the brilliant book, *The Boy with the Striped Pyjamas*, was a common choice. They all showed great skill in depicting the characters of this powerful and harrowing story and they managed to portray the subtle and complicated emotions of the two boys. The other pieces chosen for the drama part of the evening were more spectacular and equally well performed.

The dance pieces were dramatic and visually impressive. Every boy in the Lower School performed in these pieces, which was quite an achievement by Mrs Tran. The Shell performances involved a prop of a stool, with boys jumping over them, swinging them around and jumping

on them with great skill. Anyone who watches *Strictly* or *Dancing on Ice* will know how difficult dance performances are when a prop is involved and those dancers get to spend all day, every day practising. What was very noticeable in both year groups was the contrast between the anxiety and apprehension, pre-performance and the pride and excitement on the boys' faces as they scrambled up the theatre steps back to their seats afterwards.

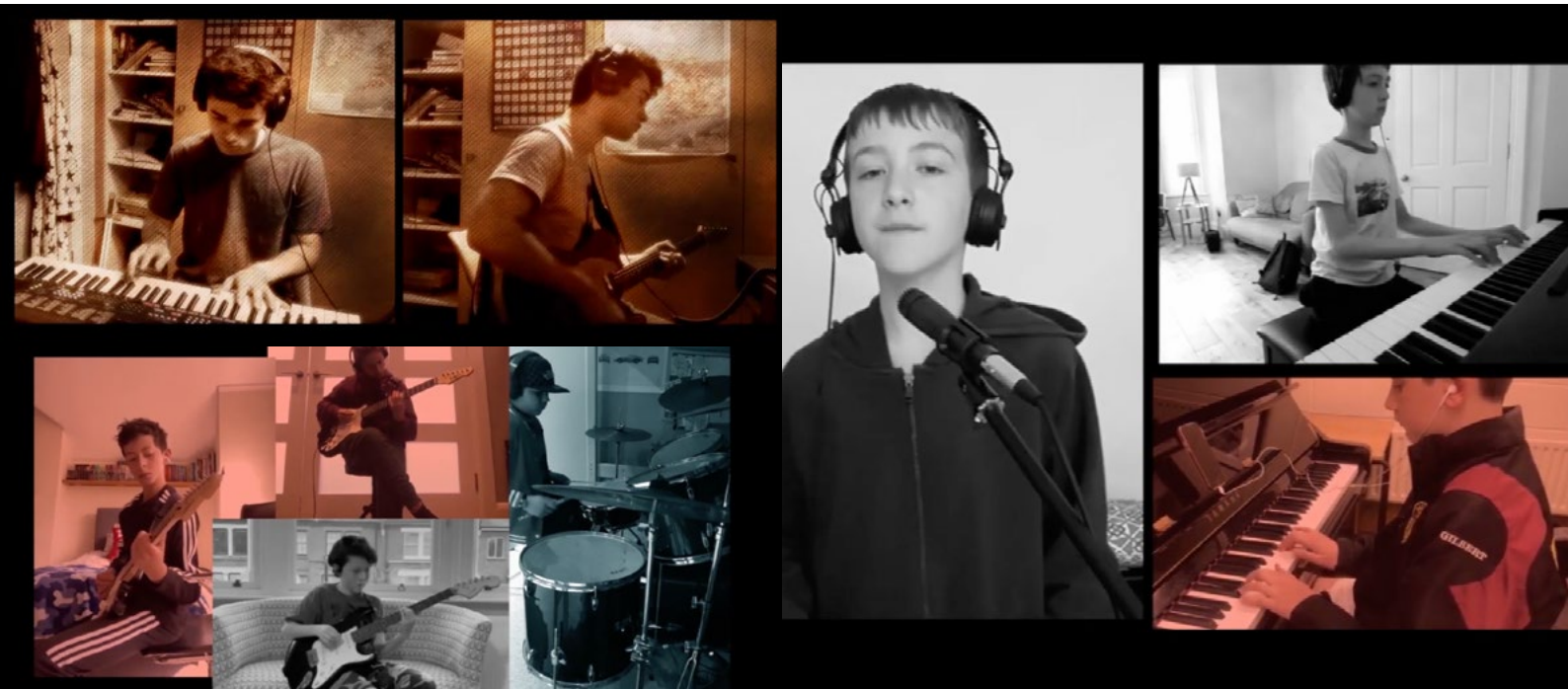
The winners were as follows:

- *Shell Drama: Eagle*
- *Shell Dance: Hawk*
- *Entry drama: Kestrel, and*
- *Entry dance: Falcon*

Thanks must go to the drama department (including Martin Hutchings) and Mrs Tran for doing all those dance routines involving every boy, single-handedly.

— Contributions by A. Barnish

Virtual Rock Festival



UCS bands have been busy since the January lockdown working on Zoom, then live at school, preparing for this summer's Virtual Rock Festival. This has involved the remote recording of parts individually by band members, with the results combined at band level in four videos released on UCS YouTube.

The Entry band achieved remarkable accuracy and co-ordination in The White Stripes *Seven Nation Army*. Contributions from the Shell included virtuoso guitar solo performances from Charlie Rollo and an affecting duet version of the Eagles *Hotel California* with Luka Moriarty. The Lower Remove presented a barnstorming rendition of Iron Maiden's *The Trooper*, with explosive vocals from Tom McQuaid and the Remove served up an imposing reading of The Arctic Monkeys *RU Mine?* with charismatic frontman Oskar Gershfield

to the fore. Upper Remove contributions included some remarkable 'one man band' lockdown videos from Leo Hall as well as an energetic live version of The Beatles *Don't Let Me Down*, powered by Charlie Cash's cascading drum kit. The Transitus treated us to superlative performances of Bruce Springsteen *I'm on Fire*, Bill Withers *Ain't No Sunshine* and Alicia Keys *If I Ain't Got You*, with notable contributions from guitarists Max Globokar and Xandie Lockwood, and vocalists Oliver Sykes and Stella Petti.

Congratulations are due to all band members on achieving musical excellence under challenging circumstances, and to UCS Rock Supremo Shelley Walker for her tireless work coaching the bands and for producing such a high quality set of videos.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Midsummer Music Festival



The second half of the summer term saw a feast of live music making in the form of 'Midsummer Music', a three week festival comprising ten lunchtime concerts. Proceedings commenced with recitals by Transitus and Remove singers co-ordinated by Head of Singing Suzie Purkis. Amongst the Transitus, tenor Liam Lichy Lightman was stylish in Richard Strauss' *Allerseelen*, and baritone Ben Miller typically committed in *My Way*, whilst for the Remove, George Rollo impressed with his communicative baritone in Herbert Howells' *King David* and Akbar Ali's bel canto tenor beautifully caught the Neapolitan atmosphere of Tosti's *Malia*. Instrumental recitals by Lower Remove, Remove and Transitus musicians then followed, with highlights including Finn Kjaergaard's sizzling violin rendition of Monti's *Czardas*, Sacha Maslov's commanding account of WH Squire's *Tarantella* for Cello, and David Verran's posed interpretation

of Stravinsky's enigmatic *Three Pieces for Clarinet*. The midpoint of the series was formed of solo recitals by Leo Sassoon (piano) and Jaren Ziegler (viola) as part of their preparations for ARSM diplomas and national competitions respectively. The series was rounded off with a concert by Shell musicians, including a full toned rendition of Fauré's *Élégie* for cello by Alex Haines, followed by Entry musicians once again demonstrating their impressive strength in depth as a cohort, with notable contributions from Joseph Sainsbury (oboe), Sammy Assael-Francis (cello) and vocalists Zane Rakusen and Samuel Fielden.

The concerts were well attended by pupils and staff and it was a joy to have live audiences back in the GSLT.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Cricket Fixtures Return After Half Term



After a 14 month absence, inter-school fixtures returned immediately after the May half-term break. On Monday 7th June the Under-13A took on the Central Foundation Boys School in the opening round of the London Cup. The resulting 199 run victory set the tone for a remarkable half-term of Cricket, which saw over 40 fixtures played in a little over 3 weeks and notable success for a host of UCS players and teams.

The Lower School sides demonstrated much potential for the future. The Under-12A got off to a slow start with an opening day loss, but recorded wins against Latymer Upper, Fulham Boys and Westminster Under as the season progressed. The Under-13A have been outstanding and are possibly the stand-out team of the season. They are currently unbeaten and are looking forward to playing Emmanuel School in the London Cup Final.

The Under-14A got off to a winning start by brushing aside Latymer Upper in the cup but found consistency difficult over the course of the term. In contrast, the Under-15A are the most improved team in the school. A thrilling early victory over Mill Hill School set the tone for the season and the side reached the semi-finals of both the ESCA and LSCA competitions.

In a break from tradition the senior sides played in year group bubbles. The Under-16A side remain unbeaten since 2017 and are clearly a talented group of players. The Under-17A team also went through the season without losing a game and enjoyed excellent victories over Latymer Upper, Mill Hill and Watford Grammar. The Under-18A team departed the school having contributed much to Cricket at UCS and it was pleasing to see them sign off with a win over Watford Grammar in their final game.

— Contributions by D. Brown

Bowled Over By Cricket!



At the beginning of the year, when I found out that cricket was compulsory, my instant reaction was a subtle, sarcastic ‘oh brilliant’. In the first week of cricket, we had no idea what was planned for us. Then, Mr Van der Looy announced that there was going to be a Super Smash Shell cricket tournament. Split into 8 teams, we set off on a test match to get a taste of what cricket is like. The result was not great, something like 45-4 to them, a little disappointing!

My goal for the first couple of weeks was to try not to get bored, and see what it would be like. However, by the time the first session had finished, I realised that I had thoroughly enjoyed it, despite the scoreline. Over the next few weeks, we had training sessions which consisted of

bowling, batting, and fielding exercises. I enjoyed these thoroughly. I like bowling the most out of everything because the techniques were taught very well and it’s my strongest point in cricket.

At the beginning of the season, my bowling was very much below adequate. Through training and Super Smash matches, my bowling has become my best feature in cricket in less than a term. I would like to improve my batting more than anything as my experience is very low and my year group has some very talented bowlers who are very tricky to bat against! I now have the privilege of playing in the A/B teams and I feel very lucky to have the support and enthusiasm from both my coaches and my peers.

— Contributions by Frederick Beard (Shell)

Netballers Return To Regular Fixtures



This term, we were delighted that we were able to play several fixtures against other schools. Our first match, and indeed our first ever competitive match as a team, was accompanied by an enormous amount of excitement among the girls. The 30 degree heat made what was already a difficult match against South Hampstead High even more challenging but, nonetheless, we remained positive, and fought on vigorously. As the match progressed and the team got into a rhythm, the girls displayed some brilliant teamwork. In the attacking circle, Ava and Talia showed great consistency, scoring some stellar goals whilst, further down the court, there was consistent vigilance of the space and of the opposing players. It was a tough match but it was certainly well contested by UCS, and the team should be proud of their outstanding efforts despite the 14-28 loss.

The weather remained hot for our second match which was played against Highgate. Our teamwork on court and our persistence and determination resulted in a 27-9 win. The game began with a UCS centre which acted as the crucial impetus for the girls during the first quarter, leaving UCS up by 8 goals and setting a tone of positivity for the remainder of the match. Despite the intensity of the sun, the girls pushed on and performed astonishingly in the following three quarters: their attack speedy and seamless, and their defence tight on the opposing players. It was a wonderful way to conclude the year; each player superb in their positions and exceptionally committed to marking their players. Well done!

— Contributions by Sara Zamet (*Transitus*)

June Basketball Festival



You win some, you lose some. And this term, we lost some!

It has been a challenging time for school sport, for reasons too obvious to be stated, and so it was a huge positive that the Senior Basketball team, having been deprived of their season, had one last opportunity to compete against our North London rivals. A one-day tournament was hosted in June by Dwight International School on their outdoor courts. I had high hopes going into the competition. This year's team was strong: excellent perimeter shooters, athletic and with a high basketball IQ. Unfortunately, they failed to show most of this on the day of the tournament, which was a great shame for them! Watford Grammar School were the deserved overall winners but our

players came away feeling that they had not done themselves justice. Things could have turned out differently. The first two games against Dwight and Mill Hill were close, but having lost them both, the momentum went out of the team. During a normal season, you can have a bad day and come back better next time, but that just wasn't possible this year. However, it was a fantastic festival of basketball, with a dunk competition and a three point competition in which UCS came second, thanks to Joe Sher. Whilst we didn't fulfill our potential in the tournament, I am sure we will bounce back strongly next season. It's been a journey, lads!

— Contributions by T. Hardy

Functional Movement Software Revolutionises PE Lessons At UCS



Over the last 12 months, pupils at UCS have benefitted from a fresh approach to PE. Throughout this time, pupils in Years 7, 9 and 10 have been using Functional Movement Software (FMS) to monitor their performances in PE lessons. At UCS, each PE lesson starts with 10-minutes of exercises which are individually generated from assessments. The software is provided by FMS UK and allows teachers and pupils to individually track their developments and support them in developing correct movement habits.

Edward Sawtell, Director of Sport at UCS, has been impressed with the impact the software has made to lessons and on pupils, *“It is clear that our pupils are moving more efficiently than they were a year ago. This means they are developing better gross motor skills and learning the skills for specific sports*

should be easier. The improvement to movement will stay with our pupils. It hopefully will set them all on the right path to enjoy good physical wellbeing for the rest of their lives.”

FMS was used during the various lockdowns of the last 12 months. Mr Sawtell added, *“The FMS platform offered our pupils support even when exercising at home. Our lessons were conducted by Zoom and it was fantastic to see pupils doing their movement patterns in their homes and gardens.”*

The scheme has been such a success that it is being expanded to include all pupils in Year 6-11. One Entry pupil explained, *“The exercises have definitely helped me to get stronger. I particularly like the one that has strengthened the side of my back. I’d never thought about doing that before.”*

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Upper Remove Pupil Raises £1,500 For Local Primary School



During the most recent lockdown, an Upper Remove pupil, Lukas Horvat, raised £1,500 to support pupils whose learning had been affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. In May Lukas donated this money to Richard Cobden Primary School in Camden who will use this money to buy laptop computers for a number of their pupils. Lukas commented, *“My friends and I know how fortunate we have been over the last 12 months to get full access to online learning. We were keen to do something to help and I am so pleased that Richard Cobden Primary School is able to put this money to good use.”* Kathy Bannon, Headteacher at Richard Cobden added, *“We are delighted by Lukas’s donation. This money will be used to buy equipment for our pupils who need it most. This donation will*

have a significant impact on pupils’ learning and we can’t thank Lukas enough.”

Throughout the term, Year 5 pupils at Richard Cobden Primary have been working with UCS pupils via Zoom before school every Friday morning. The UCS pupils, from Remove and Upper Remove, work through maths problems using Zoom for 30 minutes every week. Headteacher, Kathy Bannon, commented, *“This scheme has been a real hit. Our pupils get so much out of working with the older UCS boys. Not only are they being supported with their maths but the UCS pupils are excellent role models and our pupils relate to them extremely well.”*

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Aimee Scoops Music Prize And Looks Forward To Warner Recording Experience



Earlier this term, a Transitus pupil, Aimee Davis, learned she had won first place in a music competition organised by the youth-led organisation UKstuckin. Aimee wrote and recorded the song, Move On, during the first lockdown and is excited about the prospect of spending several days in a music studio which formed part of her prize. Aimee commented, *“Lockdown was a strange time for everyone for my age. I created the chord sequence which reflected my daily walks which quickly became a little repetitive. However, I eventually started to enjoy the routine and the lyrics also represent this development. They originally formed part of a short poem which I wrote after returning home from one of these walks. I remember an overbearing sense of emptiness: the*

shops were closed, their windows were empty and the streets were deserted. I tried to recreate this sense of desolation in the recording by layering my vocals and adding a large amount of echo.”

Aimee joined the Sixth Form at UCS in September 2020. Head of Sixth Form, James Orchard was delighted to learn of Aimee’s success, *“The song is wonderfully haunting and Aimee’s voice immediately reminded me of Skye Edwards. We are delighted for Aimee that this song has received this recognition and I know she will make the most of her time in Warner’s Firepit Studios.”*

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Remove Violist Returns To The Royal Festival Hall



Jaren Ziegler (Remove) is looking forward to returning to the Royal Festival Hall this summer. In 2020, Jaren performed solo at the iconic South Bank venue as part of the Rotary Club's Youth Makes Music Concert. Next month Jaren will perform there as part of the National Youth Orchestra following a successful audition during the spring. Jaren is understandably extremely excited about this opportunity and commented, *"I have really missed performing to an audience over the last 15 months. I have spent a lot of time having lessons, doing auditions and performing using Zoom. This has its limitations so I just can't wait to be back on the stage."* This concludes another successful academic year for the ambitious violist. In April he was awarded 1st place in the North London Festival Solo String Competition for ages 14-18. In May, Jaren auditioned for LGT Young Soloists and has been invited to perform with them later in the year. The chamber orchestra is

considered by some to be the finest youth orchestra in Europe. Jaren has also been selected as a semi-finalist in the Cecil Aronowitz International Viola Competition which will take place in November. He is the youngest competitor and one of only 4 from the UK.

Jaren is a music scholar at UCS. He practices for three hours every day and takes a leading role in a number of the school's impressive ensembles. Chris Dawe, Director of Music at UCS, is understandably delighted by Jaren's persistence over the last year and commented, *"Jaren has worked extremely hard throughout the various lockdowns. He has performed in several school recitals but on the whole, there have been few opportunities to perform to live audiences. Nonetheless, Jaren continues to make superb progress and richly deserves these successes."*

— Contributions by E. Roberts

AKO Sixth Form Centre Formally Opened



Pupils have been using the new Sixth Form Centre at UCS since March but on the final Wednesday of term, staff, pupils and members of Council gathered to officially open the building. The centre, known as the AKO Sixth Form Centre, is nothing short of spectacular. The design process was a full collaboration between pupils, teachers and architects. The work was informed by the latest educational research and pupils have been delighted with the new facilities which provide ample space for Sixth Form pupils to work and relax in. The centre is, quite simply, a triumph. Earlier in the year, Georgia Krok (Sixth) commented, *“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!”*

Nikolai Tangen, whose AKO Foundation provided the funding for the renovation, closed the event with a short speech and reminded everyone that the space was designed to facilitate collaborative learning. He commented, *“Nobel Prizes are the result of team-work not individuals working alone.”* Pupils, staff and parents are hugely grateful to the AKO Foundation for allowing this work to happen and thousands of pupils will hugely benefit from this redevelopment for many years to come.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Inaugural Sixth Form Graduation



This term, the annual speech day ceremony traditionally held on the final Friday in May was replaced by a series of year group specific prize giving ceremonies. However, the Sixth Form were treated to something a little different!

On Wednesday 30th June, the outgoing Sixth Form enjoyed a UCS first: a graduation ceremony. Pupils were welcomed to the Great Hall by Mr Beard who introduced renowned actor Damian Lewis as the remote guest of honour. Damian read to the audience a poignant exert from Helen McCrory's 2018 Prize Giving speech. It was a wonderful tribute to the actor who passed away in the spring.

Each pupil was then invited on stage to receive a book to mark their time at UCS. These students are understandably excited about the challenges ahead of them as they move on to university and Head of Sixth Form, Mr Orchard, addressed them and reminded them all of the need to carry the UCS values with them through whatever walk of life they choose.

The final speeches were given by Georgia Adams and Jolly Bankes, the Captains of Monitors. Both pupils thanked the staff for their support throughout their time at UCS and complimented their fellow students on the resilience they had shown over the last two years. They observed the movements over the last 12 months which have already brought about numerous changes across society and they encouraged their peers to continue with this work when they leave UCS. The ceremony finished with a distinctive version of the school song, *Paulatim*. Indoor singing is currently forbidden in large groups but Alex Sneader and Lucas Wolman gave a stirring rendition of the song. The audience respectfully (and perhaps surprisingly!) remained silent but joyfully put their arms aloft during the chorus. *Up, up and let us follow where our founders led.*

— Contributions by E. Roberts

