

School Newsletter

March 2021



Dear Parents

As the Spring Term draws to a close and we approach the Easter holidays, I wanted to start by offering my sincere thanks to everyone in the Upton community who was involved in the seamless Covid testing of our pupils which enabled them to return to school on Monday 8 March. This truly was an example of team work and I am grateful to each and everyone of you who provided or offered assistance in this process. Quite simply, we could not have done this without you.

Covid Home Testing Kits

Covid testing should now be continuing at home and your daughter has been given additional home testing kits this week to be able to continue testing throughout the Easter holidays. Any families who require additional testing kits can order them through this link for collection or home delivery <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-households-school-children>

Lenten fundraiser for Caritas Charity

Thank you so much for all donations received so far via Justgiving as well as our donations on the last day of term. Although we were not able to organise our usual fundraisers due to lockdown and Covid restrictions in schools, we felt it was still important to consider the more vulnerable in our local and wider communities during Lent especially. Pope Francis urges us to consider the more vulnerable, "None of us can think we are exempt from concerns for the poor and for social justice." The last day for Charitable donations is Easter Sunday on 4th April: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/upton-hall-fcj2>

BTEC Information Technology success!

Since September, Year 12 and 13 BTEC IT students have been working hard to prepare for their unit examination which was due to take place in January 2021. Despite lockdown, during the second week of January, the girls took their externally assessed unit 2 examination. This was a 5-hour practical database examination, which took place over two days. The students took it all in their stride and dutifully turned

up to school over three cold January days to be tested for Covid-19, attend a revision session and then finally completed the two day examination. We were pleased to find out this week that ALL of our candidates achieved Distinction! Congratulations to all of them and to Ms Smith for her hard work in preparing them

The Davidson Inventors' Challenge

Two groups of students (one from Y10 and one from Y12) are currently participating in The Davidson Inventors Challenge run by the Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology department of the University of Cambridge. The aim of the competition is for teams to 'think of a problem and evaluate innovative solutions to current-day global challenges'. The theme this year are the Sustainable Development Goals developed by the United Nations. Each team has been asked to pick a particular goal and come up with a potential solution to solving it.

Both teams have submitted their project ideas and are currently awaiting feedback from the University's team of reviewers. They will be submitting their final report entries on Monday 19 April and the top three entries will be chosen on 3 May 2021. We wish them luck! More information about the Davidson Inventors Challenge can be found at <https://www.ceb.cam.ac.uk/events/davidson-inventors-challenge-launches-uk-schools>

Candles in the Dark

This term our Year 8s have been exploring "Candles in the Dark" in their RE lessons. They have studied the lives of inspiring people, including saints such as Mother Theresa, Oscar Romero and Father Damien. In addition, we have discussed important issues, such as racism and the work of people like Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks.

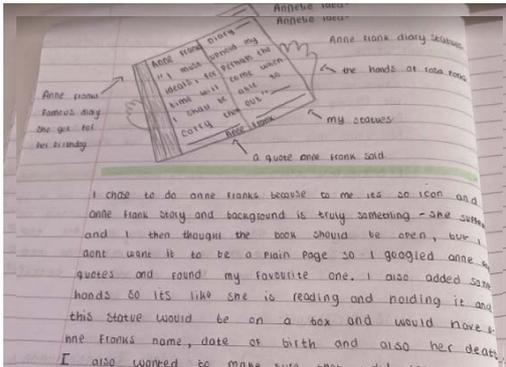
As a final reflection, we explored recent attacks on statues around the world fuelled by the Black Lives Matter protest movement. Instead of focusing on hate, we focused on giving those who deserve a statue a space to shine. Here is what the girls came up with!

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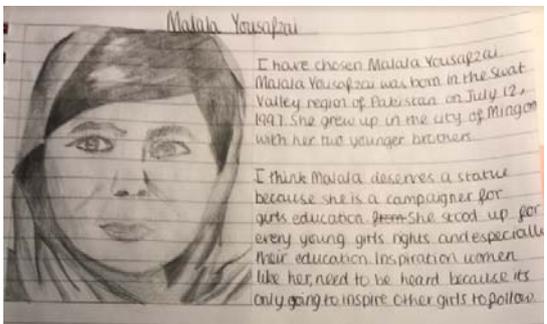


Emily 8H

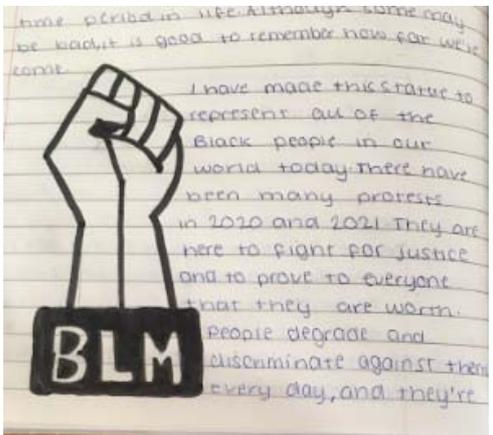


and it is a reminder that slave trades still go on in the world today and they have to stop because it is wrong and it will never be right. My statue would be built in West Africa to remember those who were affected by this horrific event.

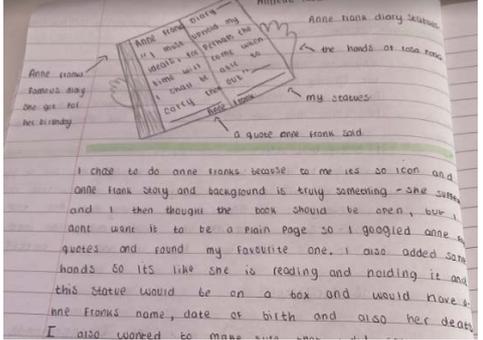
Harriet 8H



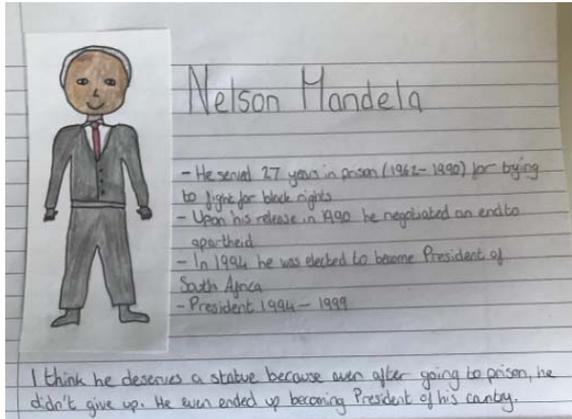
Mollie, 8S



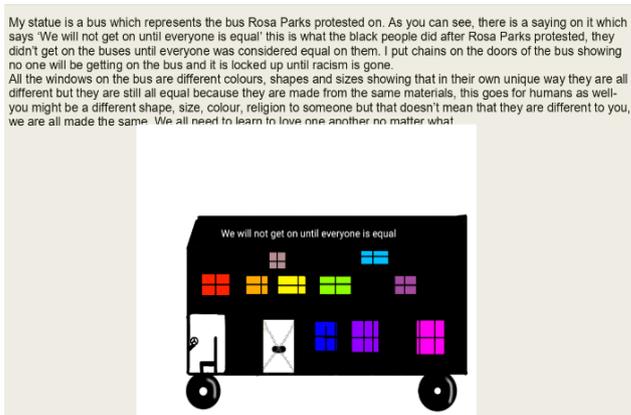
Annelie, 8S



Mollie, 8H



Jessica, 8H



Upton becomes a NOS Certified School



Over the past year, staff have successfully completed a comprehensive online safety training programme demonstrating our commitment to keeping your daughters safe online. We have achieved National Online Safety Certified School Accreditation for our whole school community approach to protecting young people in the online world. National Online Safety is a digital training provider with extensive resources in online safety, developed

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in line with the Department of Education's statutory requirements.

Its CPD accredited courses and educational resources support UK schools in educating the whole school community in online safety– including all school staff, senior leaders, teachers and parents – on how to make the internet a safer place for young people. James Southworth, co-founder at National Online Safety, said: "Congratulations to everyone at Upton Hall School FCJ on becoming a National Online Safety Certified School. By completing our training programme, the school has shown its strong commitment to implementing an effective whole-school approach to online safety."

"It can be increasingly difficult for schools and parents to stay ahead of online threats and ensure both children and staff are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Upton Hall has shown a strong commitment to equipping staff with the skill and knowledge they need to understand online dangers and how best to react to any problems."

Uniform

Summer Uniform - Year 7 and 8

From the start of the Summer term, the style of blouse worn as part of the school uniform for Year 7 and 8 pupils will change to a white short sleeved open necked blouse. This can be purchased from the online uniform shop on the school website.

Mobile Phone Usage

Pupils should not be using mobile phone during school hours in line with our policy. Pupils breaching this policy will have their mobiles confiscated.

Should a parent/carer need to contact their child during the school day, they can do so through the main office. Please do not encourage your daughters to use their phones by accepting calls from them in the day and then calling into school yourselves as a result.

School Attendance

School attendance is imperative if your daughter is to reach her full potential during her time at Upton Hall. Never has it been so important for your daughter to

be in school after several, significant periods of partial closure.

It is a legal requirement for schools to keep accurate records of school attendance. If your daughter is unwell, we require you to provide details of your daughter's illness on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence. Simply stating that your daughter is unwell will lead to the absence being unauthorised.

Thank you for working with us to ensuring your daughter is punctual and in school. If there are any barriers which impact on your daughter's school attendance, please do get in touch with your daughter's Head of Year so that we are able to offer support and work with you to resolve any issues.

Years 7-11

To report an absence or planned absence, please email attendance@uptonhall.org

Please attach a screen shot or photograph which confirms the details of any appointments. Any absence requests submitted on paper should be taken to **Mrs Kershaw in the school office**, and any same day requests should be made by 8.30am.

Sixth Form

To report an absence, please email sixthform@uptonhall.org or telephone the school and select the option to report a student absence. Please clearly state your daughter's name and form group. Email details of any planned absences at the earliest opportunity to sixthform@uptonhall.org. Please attach a screen shot or photograph which confirms the details of any appointments. Any absence requests submitted on paper should be taken to **Miss Baguley in the Sixth Form office**, and any same day requests should be made by 8.30am.

We wish to encourage you, where possible, to ensure that appointments are made outside of school hours.

Rewards

During the last lockdown, so many of our students engaged with their learning so well. We wanted to recognise the students' efforts and positive attitudes

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to learning throughout this academic year so far and lockdown. We have held reward events and our sixth formers even had a lovely breakfast. We wanted to recognise the students' positive attendance as well as the number of students with increasing achievement points. Although, we were not able to be all together our form tutors ably led Easter services and reward assemblies during form time. We conducted virtual raffles in each year group and two students in each year won an Easter egg and a £20 'One For All' voucher. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you too as we needed your help and support so much during recent lockdowns and this showed what an effective partnership we have at Upton between us, parents and carers and our students. Thank you.

NSPCC Advice

Should you wish to access some external support for extra guidance on keeping children safe, coronavirus and/or online safety please consider exploring the materials on the NSPCC website. It is important that all our students access support when needed and there are some great links and resources on this website. I would also urge our students to maintain their high standards and take responsibility for their actions and conduct outside of school too:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>



Sign up to be involved in our research project with financial incentives:

You may remember that we have been involved with a research project with the University of Glasgow. A researcher visited Upton and was impressed with his initial findings about our FCJ values and distinctive nature of Upton Hall. Since returning after lockdown, we have been back in touch with Lee Shannon (University of Glasgow researcher) with regards our involvement in the 'Values to Virtues' project. The team of researchers from Glasgow, Liverpool and Rome are interested in the values, morals and attitudes that people develop when they're young. They are interested in exploring how young people perceive values education, their

attitudes to the ethos of their school and their relationship with staff. The University research team have developed several research methods to help explore these issues and challenge our young people to think about what matters to them and the values they live their life by. Please explore the link below to see how you can get involved with activities such as surveys, diaries and competitions which all have the added benefit of financial incentives! We would really appreciate you signing up but there are only 50 places. We at Upton do not find out the names of the participants for data protection reasons.

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/interdisciplinary/research/educationresearch/plmrt-values-to-virtues/participants/>

Parking

Since returning to school, I have received a number of complaints from local residents and parents about parking around school and the actions of parents when picking up and dropping off in the morning/afternoon. On many occasions, these actions can be extremely dangerous for your daughters and there have been a few incidents where cars have been damaged. Can I remind everyone that parking is not allowed on the double yellow lines. There is a safety reason for this. As a school we cannot stop anybody doing this as we only have legal rights within our school boundary. However, I cannot imagine why anybody would want to put the lives of anybody's children at risk of harm in order to save 5 minutes walking time.

Hopefully over the next few months, life will gradually return to something closer to normal and we will be able to thoroughly enjoy a summer term. I should like to wish you and your families a Happy Easter. Stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Andrea Gaunt
HEADMISTRESS