

# Sir Roger Manwood's School



Autumn Term 2020

Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers

As I reflect on the past term, September certainly seems a long time ago!

It has been a term during which we never knew what was coming next – would it be yet another last minute change to government guidance, a rapid rise in confirmed cases, or some other unforeseen challenge? (None of us would have ever thought it would be a ransomware attack though!!)

Throughout the past 15 weeks, the entire SRMS community has had to show resilience, creativity and an inner strength that many may not have known they possessed. And not wishing to be too pessimistic, but next term is no doubt going to be just as challenging, or maybe even more challenging given the emergence of the new virus strand, but hope is on the horizon as the vaccine roll out starts and begins to gather pace.

Thank you to all of you who took the time to send in emails of appreciation – the staff know they are doing a good job despite the difficulties, but to receive such positive feedback is obviously so good to hear. What I particularly appreciated, was so many parents recognising the hard work of the **whole** team, not just our teaching staff, with many emails specifically praising our Premises Team, our Cleaners, the IT Team, the Administration Team, and/or the AEN Team. It really has required a combined herculean effort from each and every one of us in order to keep the show on the road.

Probably the most difficult thing for teachers, other than having to walk from one side of the site to the other carrying everything they need for a lesson (as if that wasn't bad enough), has been trying to deliver a quality educational experience to students who are at home **at the same time** as to those in the class in front of them. This has proven not to be easy at all, mostly as a result of unforeseen technical issues. However, I know so many parents are grateful for the efforts that have made – with so many contacting me to say that their children are so much more engaged at home than they were during Lockdown 1. Amongst the teaching staff, perhaps the steepest learning curve has been for those teachers who were having to self-isolate or shield at home, but who were not going to let that stop them teaching their students! We had a few technical issues from time to time, but generally the teacher-at-home delivering lessons to classes-in-school has gone well and I am grateful to those teachers who were willing to try this.

My thanks also go to the Senior Leadership Team, especially given the many, many hours that has had to be spent contact tracing when our cases were at their highest - when up to 8 hours were spent on consecutive weekends on both Saturday's and Sunday's, phoning round parents and staff.

Lastly, my thanks go to Governors, who have been nothing other than totally supportive throughout the pandemic but especially over the last month or so, when things have been at their most challenging.

As I write this, we are now of course in Tier 4. The announcement of that came after the announcement of the staggered start to the Spring Term and I am endeavouring to find out if schools are to remain open during the Tier 4 restrictions as they did during the Tier 3 ones (I am guessing they will) and will inform parents as soon as I am able if there is any change to the staggered start.

Attached to the email that this newsletter has been sent out attached to, you will also find this year's Christmas Quiz. The plan had been to upload that to the whole year group classes in Google Classroom as a Powerpoint but unfortunately that plan had to be revised due to the entire IT Department either being on annual leave or at home ill in bed! The quiz is something that the School Captains have written since it was introduced in December 2013, with one half of the School doing that while the other half attends the early Carol Service, and then each half swapping later in the day, and my thanks to this year's 4, who yet again have risen to the challenges thrown at them with aplomb - none of this is what they could ever have imagined when they applied back in January 2020!

It is a long time since our Library was open for students and staff to use, back in March. For the moment, it has to stay closed for everyone's safety. When one sees the titles of all the fantastic books that were on loan when the Library had to shut, one is reminded of our enthusiastic readers, from Year 7's in their Library lessons right up to the Sixth Form. But now we need your help. Despite several reminders and Library Book Return boxes being placed in every Year Group bubble area, most books remain on loan. This means that there are literally hundreds of books in homes, under beds, forgotten on bookshelves. While the Library is closed, it is at least a chance to do some sort of stock-edit, so that when we can open again, it will be better than ever but the Librarian can't do that with so many books missing. Maybe your son or daughter has one book out and you think that just one book won't make much difference - but multiply that by hundreds of students and you see our problem. So please,

over the holiday, look for those books and make sure they are returned to school. Then, when we can re-open the Library we will have a great selection for all our students to enjoy.

## **NEWS**

For the last few years the Canterbury Rotary Club, in collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University, has run an annual Innovation Competition for local school children. The competition aims to encourage youngsters to get involved with STEM - science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This year they had to change their plans rapidly because of Covid-19, so with generous input from one of our members and the support of Canterbury Christ Church University we ran a "pop up" competition, with entries sent in online. A number of students from local schools took part - though we were a little disappointed not to get as many entries as usual, possibly because of the short time frame and lack of opportunity for us to publicise the competition given the lockdown.

The challenge was for entrants to "think of a novel, simple and robust way of making life more enjoyable or solving a problem that they have experienced during lockdown and the subsequent easing of restrictions". The solution had to be in the form of an idea, device or product (not an app). All entries were judged on the basis of originality, clarity and presentation.

**Charlotte and Holly Fletcher** were awarded second prize. They took a light-hearted approach to the challenge, with a "contraption" which allowed someone who is ill to feed their dog. The sisters, Year 7 and Year 9 respectively at the time of the competition, even made a fun video to show their rather wacky device in action. The judges' comments were: "Charlotte and Holly have addressed a real issue with fun and humour. They worked hard to produce a video which demonstrates the problem and engineered a solution which works. They must have had to work hard to make it work and get the video just right. It probably required a number of trials, takes and editing."

**Samuel Rumary** (Y9 at the time of the competition) was awarded joint fourth prize for his two-piece system that sterilised items in a shopping bag.

The Rotary Club of Sandwich ran a photography competition during the term on the theme of lockdown. The Club awarded a £30 Waterstones voucher to the winners in each category and a £20 Waterstones voucher to the runners up. This is the email we received from Rotary: "We enjoyed looking through all of the entries, and the subsequent discussions that took place. We all felt it was a difficult task to decide who should be winner and runner up in each

group. Our task was made slightly easier by the supporting narrative provided by the entrants. The winners and runners up are listed below:

### **Senior Category**

First Prize: **Jodie Michael** (Y12). Jodie's photographs met the criteria well and captured the mood and tranquility we felt when outside during lockdown. She has carefully thought about composition and used light effectively. However, this was lost to some extent by the quality of printing. Her narrative was succinct but powerful.

Runner up Prize: **Leura Musselwhite-Dale** (Y10). Leura's photographs were technically pleasing with her use of contrasting light and colour. She had thought carefully about composition and nicely put her pictures in context with her narrative.

### **Junior Category**

First Prize: **Alexandra Rooke** (Y7). Alexandra's photographs were really interesting. Both her outdoor photographs showed real clarity with two interesting perspectives. She made good use of contrasting light, including depth of field to create mood. Her narrative was very well written, again it successfully put her work in context.

Runner up Prize: **Sophie Ainsworth** (Y9). Sophie's photographs were highly relevant to the brief and were nicely executed. She captured mood with her use of colour. The tall smoking chimney stack brought her picture to life. Her use of narrative and pictures told a story. We liked the clarity of her pictures and the final piece where she experiments with water.

**Dylan Thorley** (Y12) was awarded the highly prestigious Lord Lieutenant's Award for this work in the Sea Cadets, and Captain Stokes was awarded the Lord Lieutenant's Meritorious Service Award at the same ceremony for the work he has done over many years for Cadets in the Dover area but more especially for the work he has done with the SRMS CCF since joining us.

**Daniel Hodgson** (Y13) appeared on BBC Question Time and actually got to put a question to the panel.



A thank you to the anonymous sender of some very rare Manwood's items associated to our CCF.

The photo is of the Cap Badge and Buttons once worn by members of the Officer Training Corps (OTC) which was originally the name of the CCF up to the outbreak of WW2.

They will take pride of place on display in the CCF Hut, alongside other artefacts associated with the Cadets.

If any other items come to light they would be gratefully received by the CCF.

Despite the stresses of the pandemic, occasionally one is still reminded that, even though we are living through tough and unprecedented times, we are still fortunate. One such time was when I read an article in the East Kent Mercury about a young lady of 24, Ella Wolf, who had been diagnosed with cancer in her eye but which had now spread to her liver and was incurable unless treated. Ella is an ex pupil of Sir Roger Manwood's School. Her treatment, which is not funded by the NHS, was estimated to cost £240,000. To help the fundraising effort, SRMS held a non-uniform day for Ella on Friday 6th November, which raised £3800. A phenomenal amount. Ella has now started the treatment and initial scans show that it is working. More details of her story and the treatment she is seeking funds for, can be found on her GoFundMe page, <https://www.gofundme.com/f/evtkm-ella039s-fight>

I wish all members of the Manwood Community, pupils, staff, governors, parents, carers and extended families, a restful holiday and I look forward to welcoming Year 11 and Year 13 back on Monday 4 January 2021, and all other year groups on Monday 11 January 2021 (which will be **WEEK 1** in the timetable).

Best wishes

Mr Hunter

**Headteacher**