

Sir Roger Manwood's School



Spring Term 2020
Newsletter

The Headteacher's Message

Dear parents and carers,

Well, I think I can safely say that this has been the most extra-ordinary term ever since starting teaching in 1989! It has been so gratifying to see the flurry of emails coming in thanking our magnificent staff body for all that they have achieved or the last few weeks, and who, I know, will continue to do so over the coming months. Especial thanks goes to the Senior Leadership Team who have been superb during this emergency, to the boarding team who had to oversee and manage the emergency exit of over 50 boarders, many back to their homes overseas, and to the IT Team who have worked wonders solving any issues with Google Classroom as they arose. All I can say, is how delighted I am that we had already planned to introduce it, as without the hours of work the IT Team did over the summer holidays we would never have been able to introduce it when we did.

My thanks also to the members of staff who have embraced Google Classroom and this completely new way of working – very few of us trained when this was around, and I think it is safe to say that it is the steepest learning curve of any professional development that the majority of us have had to do.

Mr Neame used the DT Department's 3D printer to create some face visors for White Mills Veterinary Centre using the templates that you may have seen mentioned on the media as they had inadequate Personal Protection Equipment. As you can imagine, they were gratefully received.



In addition, at the point of writing this newsletter we are in the process of collecting together all of the goggles and other safety equipment in Science and Technology for them to be collected by KCC for passing on to front line health workers.

At the very end of this newsletter I have added the thank you emails we have received from parents – I thought it only right that the efforts of staff were recorded somewhere for posterity.

STAFF NEWS

Farewell to Mrs Wnek who is retiring. We have a new Head of Drama starting in September, Mr Stephen Mount, who will be joining us from Rochester Grammar School where is Head of Drama.

We said a warm welcome back (for a second time!) to Mrs Charlesworth who kindly agreed to come out of her retirement (again!) to take over the Computer Science classes until we had found a new Head of Computer Science. I am delighted to be say that we will be welcoming Mr Dale Mitchell to the post of Head of Computer Science after Easter.

Today, we said a remote farewell to Mrs Szczerbicki as she goes on her maternity leave.

STUDENT NEWS

This coming October, Jack Calvert (Y11) has been selected to represent Great Britain at the World Martial Arts Council competition being held in Portugal. This is a huge achievement and is a just reward for the dedication he has shown to the sport, including the many hours that he has spent regularly travelling to Scotland to train alongside the team.

Issie Martin (Y12) took part in the England Hockey Super 6s Club Championships with Canterbury Hockey Club's U18 Girls side. They came away as national medallists after a very closely fought final game versus Repton Hockey Club, losing 4-3 on the final whistle. Issie was joined by two other Old Manwoodian's - Ashleigh Menniss (the Canterbury goal keeper) and Lauren Martin (who was the Assistant Coach for the team).

Several of our students who act as young carers at home were interviewed by BBC Radio Kent as part of their piece on this topic that was broadcast on Tuesday 4 February.



Alex Dack (Year 8) was selected to compete for Kent in the English School's Cross Country Championships in Liverpool on Saturday 14th March. This is the most prestigious cross country event in the schools' season and is an especially fantastic achievement for Alex as he is only in Year 8 but the

category he will be racing in is for Year 8 and Year 9 boys. He was also the only Year 8 boy selected to represent Kent.

Wednesday 4 March, Guy Reid-Easton (Y13) got to meet HRH The Earl of Wessex when he gave a presentation to him about his recent Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award residential week accompanying a group of disabled young people from all over Kent on a trip to Finland. At this presentation I also got to meet the other (adult) members of the KCC Outdoor Adventure Team that ran the trip and some of the young people that had been on the trip – I was so proud of Guy as to a person they all said what a fabulous addition to the Team he had been, and what a magnificent contribution he had made to the success of the week. The delight on the faces of the young people when they saw he was at the event was wonderful to see.



Emma Slack (Y11) was recently selected to play for the U18 Girls County Cup team. She also won a Ladies British Tour Grade 3 (regional) event earlier this year.

Congratulations to Elissa Blacklock (Y10) who attended Kent Rugby trials with 90 other players. As a result of the trial, Elissa has been selected to represent the U15 Kent Rugby squad

Alex Dack (Y8) ran for Kent in the Junior category (Y8 and Y9) of the English Schools Cross Country Championships and came 32 out of 344. He was the third Y8 boy in and was part of the county team that enabled Kent's Junior Boys' Team to become English Schools Champions.

Claire Carlotti was among the winners of the 2019 Cipher Challenge run by the University of Southampton, and will be going to Bletchley Park, the World War Two code breaking centre, to receive it later in the year.

SUBJECT NEWS

Mathematics

It's been a busy term in maths!

We held a competition for year 7 to produce Maths posters. The themes were "equipment I should bring to lessons" and "how to improve my maths grade". We had 27 impressive entries and the competition winners were in alphabetical order:

Ana Clayton 7S
Philippa Grabb 7F
Dorotea Krsmanovic 7A
Alex Margeson 7F
Sophie Plommer 7C
Joseph Showler 7C

UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge Results, February 2020

77 pupils from SRMS took part out this year in the Challenge and 40 certificates were awarded.

5 Gold	Gold for a score ≥ 89
12 Silver	Silver for a score ≥ 72
23 Bronze	Bronze for a score ≥ 60

Those who scored highly enough then entered the follow on rounds:

Gold Certificates and Qualification for the Pink Kangaroo (sadly, the Kangaroo didn't happen because of the pandemic)

Alex Reoch (Best in year, Best in School)
Henry Simcox
Leura Musselwhite Dale (Best in Year)
Louis Slack
Theo Larsen

Silver Certificates

Ariya Phachonyut
Cara Braun
Eleanor Miller
Emily Hill
Erris Barrett
Eve Pryde
Faith Connolly
Hannah Plommer
Jack Calvert
James Wisbey
Ross Gregory
Solveig Kjellberg Motton

Bronze Certificates

Annie Verrier
Baine Miller
Charlie Jakob
Eliza Collinghan
Emila Strathdee
Gabriel Lively
Jack Le Bargy
Jasmine Craigen
Joshua Roebuck
Kieran Mcgrath
Louis Parker Gorman
Maddie Bason
Maita Kusotera
Maxwell Niblet
Miles Grossman
Nathanie Thompson
Pranav Siddappa
Rory Marles
Ruaridh Meldrum
Sidney Payne
Thomas Salisbury
William Hemmings Cross

The Junior Maths Challenge is currently postponed.

On 10th March a team of 4 Year 8 & 9 pupils travelled with Chatham and Clarendon to the highly competitive UKMT Team Challenge in Ashford. Great fun was had by all. The Team members were:

Alex Townsend Jones
Kian Siadatan
Gabriel Koubanakis
Amy Watkins.

On Thursday 12th March, 8 members of Year 10 took part in one of the last out of school activities before the Coronavirus restrictions took over. They attended a Maths Feast, a maths competition organised by the Advanced Maths Support Programme for teams of four pupils. Two teams from SRMS took part, together with about 15 other teams from local schools. Amongst other rounds, there was a round where the team members had to work alone and then to check each other's answers before submitting them and a comprehension round where they were given a poster explaining a topic which was new to them and some questions on it which they worked at together. The Maths Feast does not have an overall winner, but does have winners for the individual rounds and both the Manwood's teams received a certificate as winners of a round. All team members enjoyed the

morning and are grateful to Lucy Stefaniuk in year 12 for giving up her free periods in order to act as 'teacher' and help to mark the competitors' solutions.

One team was: Elizabeth (Lizzie) Love, Erris Barrett, Miles Grossmann and Ruby Day

The other team was: Emily Hill, Chloe Lee, Joshua Roebuck and Ruaridh Meldrum

Claire Carlotti rounded off her UKMT school performance scoring in the top 100 in the Olympiad, gaining a distinction certificate a bronze medal and qualifying for the round 2 Olympiad.

She was the fastest codebreaker in the country this year, winning the 2019 National Cipher Challenge arranged by Southampton university, an exceptional achievement of which she should very proud.

She is currently successfully competing in the ongoing MathsBombe competition organised by Manchester university inspired by Alan Turing.

Chinese

New Year Lion Dance Performance

In order to celebrate the Chinese New Year 2020 (Year of the Rat), on Friday 31 January a lion dance team from Kudos Combat Martial Arts & Fitness Academy delivered two wonderful lion dance shows in the school hall. Accompanied by the bustling music of beating drums, clashing cymbals, and resounding gongs, performers imitate a lion's movements in a lion costume. The "lion" was very interactive with the spectators by picking their Red Envelopes in the hope of bringing prosperity and good luck to them all for the upcoming year. Apart from Year 7, we also invited Y5 & 6 from Sandwich Junior School to watch the show. Children were bursting with joy at the very interactive display of Chinese culture and equally staff joined the fun and loved the celebration.



Music

Just around the time we began to close down the provision at school, the Orchestra were getting ready for the trip to Hardelot in France. We had concerts planned and some important group bonding sessions planned by Mrs Cullis. Sadly, due to the travel ban we were unable to go. I would like to give my thanks to Jane Cullis and Miss Wadsworth for the organisational time that went into planning the trip. Let's hope it won't be too long before we go on tour again.

We were also working towards our big Concert at the end of April called Sounds of Stage & Screen. This was to be musical extravaganza with music and songs from famous, and not so famous films, TV programmes and musicals. Our plan is to put this concert on as soon as possible once we return to school giving the Orchestra, Jazz Band, Chamber Choir, String, Brass and Woodwind ensembles along with soloists the chance to share their hard work with you. I do hope this will be sooner than later!

We are also much closer to having our Recording Studio operational. The main cabling is done to connect the 3 recording spaces to the control room. Some vital equipment has been purchased and Simon Foster (one of our singing teachers) is soon to be fitting the control boxes and plugs to the rooms. This is a very laborious job but according to Simon, a flask of tea and the radio is the secret! I will keep you posted as this exciting project moves forward.

I would like to thank our peripatetic music teachers that come in each week to deliver the individual lessons to your children. They are a great and loyal team and this is a particularly worrying time for them as they are self-employed. If they are offering lessons on an online platform during this time, I hope to take advantage of this provision. Most importantly, please encourage your children to keep playing and doing some practice as often as they can.

I look forward to seeing your children back in the classroom and in rehearsals as soon as possible.

Library

World Book Day at the beginning of March was celebrated with several events in the Library. We held a Book & Cake Sale with donated books from parents, staff and students. Library prefects brought in a selection of delicious cakes! Thank you very much to everyone who supported this. We made £195 for Book Aid International. www.bookaid.org

Also on World Book Day we held a Book Title Quest for Year 7s. Many members of staff wore a badge showing a book title. Students had to record as many as they could and then find out the author. Guess who was 'The Lord of the Rings'?

There was also a World Book Day competition and I have received some wonderful entries. Unfortunately, events have prevented the judging of this for the time being (they are all in a folder at school) but, be assured, this has not been forgotten. Winning students will be notified and prizes given once we are all back to normal.

Years 7 and 8 were lucky enough to have an author visit on Friday 13th March. Ross Welford came to talk to them, despite an increasingly difficult situation. He started his talk with some impressive magic (he is a member of the Magic Circle) and went on to talk about the Magic of Reading. With much audience participation and hilarity he composed a 'Lost and Found' story. He then went on to hold a writing workshop with one Year 7 class, which produced some impressive results. At lunchtime he joined our Reading Group to hear what we thought about his latest book 'The Kid Who Came from Space' which we had just finished. Fortunately, the comments were all favourable!



Many students had ordered copies of Ross' books which he signed and illustrated for them. I hope everyone is enjoying reading these books now!

Every year we hold a Carnegie Shadowing Group. This involves reading as many of the books shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal as possible. In normal circumstances we would be starting to do this now, as the shortlist has recently been announced. Amongst the short-listed titles, you may be interested to know, there is one by two Old Manwoodians, Marcus Sedgwick and his brother Julian. The book is 'Voyages in the Underworld of Orpheus Black'. Marcus has been short-listed before and although he has won a number of book awards, he has never won the Carnegie Medal. Let's hope this is his year! For more information about all the books short-listed please go to www.ckg.org.uk

I would also like to give a big thank you to my fantastic colleague, Mrs Bedford, who stepped in and worked many extra hours in the Library after my accident before Christmas. She kept everything going so the Library could remain open. So – Thank you!

A useful website for book recommendations, quizzes and competitions for our students and younger children is www.booktrust.org.uk

Finally, I hope in these difficult times that a lot of you will be able to spend some time reading. The solace and distraction a good book can bring is immeasurable.

I wish you all a restful holiday and I look forward to welcoming everyone to our virtual online School (!) on Monday 20 April.

A very happy and restful Easter,

Best wishes,

Lee Hunter
Headteacher

Thank you emails

I just wanted to message you to thank you for your clear and reassuring leadership of the school during these difficult times. As a parent of two students, your regular communications have been much appreciated. I have felt well informed about the decisions that are being made and understand the difficult balance you have been trying to achieve supporting the health and education needs of all the students, staff and wider community.

I just wanted to send a quick message to acknowledge how utterly fantastic I think yours and the schools response to the current situation has been. From educating the children, keeping contact to a minimum, installing hand sanitiser and regular parent updates. All of these measures have gone above and beyond in a time that is surely extraordinarily stressful for you all. I would like to send my thanks and appreciation for all you have done and are still doing.

I would just like to pass on our thanks and support for how you have handled the unprecedented situation we have found ourselves in. Thank you all for working hard to provide continuity and support. Please pass on our best wishes to all staff and their families in these uncertain times.

We just wanted to express our thanks to all the staff at SRMS . You have been So informative with everything during this difficult time. Our son is in year 11 and we appreciate all The help and advice that has been given so far. I'm sure there will be more to follow .

Firstly, thank you and all staff for keeping us informed during this crazy time. It must have been doubly tough when you add in the boarding element. Secondly, can you please pass on our thanks to all of our son's teachers (past and present) - it's definitely not how his year group (or any of us) envisaged his time at Manwood's ending and they are (understandably) very upset that this is going to be their last day. Who knows what will happen over the whole exam headache - what we do know is that the school could not have prepared them any better for their forthcoming exams - he was looking forward to taking them. My son was in Year 1 at Primary school when he said he was going to go to Manwood's - it has never disappointed as a school and he has thoroughly enjoyed his time here.

I just wanted to write and say THANK YOU to all the staff (teachers and administrators) for all you have done to manage this near-impossible situation. As a parent, I have really appreciated all the information you have given us updating us regularly on the ever-evolving situations here & abroad, the steps you have taken over the last few weeks to ensure the safety of our children whilst in your care and the decisions you've had to make to do the best for the children's ongoing education. I have been amazed at how well you have reacted - and how well-judged your reactions have been. The fact that my daughter, and most of her peers, have NEVER felt unsettled by any of the changes or at the prospect of Corona I put down to how the school has handled this SO well. The fact that when I was

forced to suddenly pull my daughter out of school earlier this week (to self-isolate with me as I have symptoms) she had work to do at home ready & planned was incredibly impressive. Google Classroom will be a lifeline over the next few weeks - thank you for preparing her so well for it. I am bracing myself for a few months at home with my daughter now - sharing the kitchen table as a work desk. Interesting times! For you, I know the work continues - and thank you for continuing to care for the children of key workers and those pupils who need extra support. Anyway, I know this is an incredibly challenging time for you all so do not want to take up too much of it by making you read this! But equally I felt I really needed to say how AMAZING you have all been. And how much it is appreciated. I know from friends that other schools have not been as open and organised (and that's come from friends who are teachers!). Please do pass on my thanks to everyone. And when this does pass, what a reunion it will be for staff and pupils.

Speaking personally and reflecting the views of the parents of my daughter's friends, I would like to say that I think the School is doing a fantastic job of keeping parents informed and I am very grateful for the hard work of all of the teaching and non-teaching staff at SRMS during these strange times.

Hello, I just wanted to say thank you for the work you're sorting for home and for the organisation at this difficult time. If you're running a staff league, a big shout out to French department. Super organised, really clear for Y10 and a lot of it! Volume is good right now!
All the best to you all and good luck.

Thank you so much for the School's management of this difficult situation. Your emails and advice have been extremely informative and transparent. The online provision has been excellent for my son in Year 10 and this has helped him to focus and continue his learning whilst maintaining social distancing. The work so far has been exactly the right amount and level for him and he is very happy with it. I am very impressed with the support the Staff have been giving, especially considering the difficulties faced. I hope that the situation becomes easier over time and with the children away from school the risks will be lowered for everyone.

I just wanted to say thank you and well done for all the preparations you have put in place during this crisis, and for all the information. I cannot be more impressed with how well my two sons are working right now. They have taken to home schooling very easily and are working on the same school timetable as school, and have not needed any intervention or help from me at all. So thank you for sending them in the right direction, a great start to life at secondary school. I loved your message of positivity last week, it was very moving.

Well done to all of the staff for their hard work and commitment

I have nothing but praise for all staff at SRMS. As a parent I feel I have been kept up to date with events as they have unfolded by the school. My son has been kept busy with the online work your wonderful teachers have set. Please pass on my gratitude to all at SRMS, well done.

Thank you for all the School is doing for the kids. It's not easy I know and you are doing a great job at keeping us informed - and the teachers are doing an amazing job too. I completely agree that teachers need to only set work which is sustainable for them. I would completely support the teachers sending the answers for pupil to check their work. We all need to be taking responsibility of the pupil learning.

We are hugely appreciative of all the effort the staff are making. Especially as we now know what it's like trying to teach our son. Medals for teachers should be mandatory.

I just want to take this opportunity to say thank you for all the School is doing during these "interesting" times. It is truly appreciated.

Thank you for the excellent communication over the past few weeks. The staff have really done the School proud and have been working so hard to get work out to the students. We completely understand that this level of work is not sustainable and the teachers and staff really do deserve a rest. Thank you for all you have done collectively for my daughter and please pass on my gratitude to her phenomenal teachers.

I wanted to say well done to everyone at SRMS who have got through this very unusual and difficult week so well.

I want to thank the School staff for all you do and your continued efforts and dedication in educating our children in these very challenging times.

Thank you for your regular and continuous emails during this difficult period. I wanted to let you know that we have been so impressed with the online work delivered via Google Classroom, the marked work etc... It is working very well for our daughter - we never seen her work so much in fact! So we wanted to say a huge thank you to all the teachers for the amazing work they are producing and all the extra time that it requires.

Thank you so much for everyone's effort in this unique time. Please pass on our support to everyone. Everyone at SMRS has our full support.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Sir Roger Manwood's School during this trying time. Your labour of love is really appreciated. Your daily emails giving information to parents and carers are informative and useful. Please extend our sincere appreciation to all the teachers who are spending their time providing learning materials during this challenging time to our children. We are very grateful and appreciative.

Firstly, can I just say how impressed I am with how well you and all your staff have approached these most unprecedented circumstances. From the very beginning, communication has been superb and regular updates have helped keep us as parents keep fully informed at all times. As a teacher myself, I fully appreciate how much time and effort is put into these online lessons and work set. Please accept our sincere thanks and appreciation to all the staff at Sir Roger Manwood's School.

We think things are going brilliantly with Google Classroom. As a parent it is an immense improvement being able to discuss learning with our daughter and potentially being able to support her. Thanks to all.

Firstly, thanks for your messages this week. I have a younger son in another local secondary and the communication has not been anywhere near as often or thought through - so well done to you and the whole school team... I am very proud that my son goes to your school.

Thank you. Your staff are doing a great job.

I wanted to say thank you to the teachers. I really appreciate the online work that's being set and the interaction and stimulus it creates, both from an individual's point of view and a group aspect (it enables the children to get in touch with one another and have normal 'school' conversations). Many thanks to all.

Please pass our thanks on to everyone at Manwood's for all you are doing for us in these difficult times.

Can I take this opportunity to thank the Manwood's staff for the incredible speed in which you have set all the working from home classes and the hard work that has gone into this. It's been a tricky time for everyone. I think all the staff have been fantastic. Thank you again.

I am a parent of Year 8 and 10 children at Manwood school. I would like to thank you for the great work the teachers are doing under the current Covid-19 situation. Our children are doing great working from home and have a good routine in place.
