

Welcome From The Headteacher



Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2021! It seems strange to think that, when we returned from the Christmas holiday, we were expecting a staggered return to full school opening and here we find ourselves, 6 weeks on, in a very different situation. Despite the challenges, the frustrations and the, at times, total despair, I continue to be so impressed and humbled by the continued efforts and achievements of staff, students and their families.

Nothing can replace the 'proper' school experience and we are all desperate to get back to 'normal' as soon as possible but it is heart-warming to still be able to share in the talents and successes of our young people. I hope that you enjoy this edition of our newsletter and thank you for all that you do at home to make it all (just about) possible.

Rachel Wickham
Headteacher

MFL News

We were delighted to receive a donation from the Dawlish Twinning Association to support work in the Modern Foreign Languages Faculty.

As a town, Dawlish is twinned with Carhaix-Plouguer in Brittany. The Twinning Association supports and maintains this link to foster a positive relationship with France in general. Their special remit is to foster and promote links between the town and young people, and so we were especially pleased to receive this donation to support the teaching of French in College.



The Department has plans to support students studying French through a range of active learning opportunities including the use of Onatti, a French Theatre Company, who create performances for young people, enabling them to review the key vocabulary they are currently learning in a lively and entertaining way. This reinforces the skills involved in language learning through audience participation.

Head of Department Tom Sewell expressed his delight at the donation as it further strengthened the relationship between the Language faculty at the College and the Dawlish Twinning Association. Thank you to the Association for their support and generosity.



In January, students in years 7, 8, 9 and 10 French learnt about the tradition of the Galette des Rois (King's cake) in France. A few students in years 7, 8, 9 and 10 also rolled up their sleeves and made a Galette themselves following a recipe they studied in class. Madame Marc made one on Epiphany day (6th January) and shared (virtually!) the unusual design she decided to make for this year's galette. Well done to everyone, including Heidi, Laurence, Eli, Ewan, Emily and Olivia for their attempts, which were splendid.

They clearly enjoyed the task, with Olivia writing: "I really enjoyed making it as it was easier than I thought. Everyone in my family enjoyed it thoroughly and said it was delicious. We did not hide a charm in it as we didn't have one." . Laurence wrote: I thought it was quite easy as I do cooking at home a lot. I did not hide a charm in it because we were having custard with it. I have eaten all of it with my family of course! We managed to make it last two meals! One with custard and one with ice cream! We will make it again!" Ewan added "I enjoyed making the Galette, it was really easy to make. I did a square one so I didn't waste any pastry. I didn't put a charm in it as I have a little sister who wanted to eat some, so I didn't think it was a safe idea, but we all enjoyed eating it, it was delicious!"



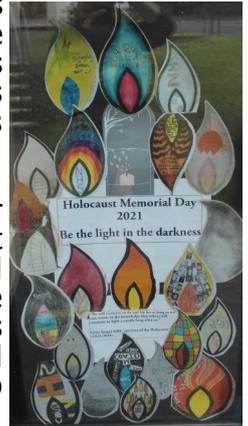
News Round Up

Students have continued to produce amazing examples of work during lockdown, which we wanted to share with you.



The GCSE Food Technology students also rose to the challenges presented with fantastic attempts to create jam tarts and pizzas. We were delighted to see that they also encouraged their brothers and sisters to have a go as well! Judging by the photos and comments everything tasted great! We have also been sent images of food by other students who are clearly enjoying their attempts!

At the end of January, we also commemorated Holocaust Day. Key stage 3 students have been reflecting on the theme for this year's 76th Holocaust Memorial Day "Be the light in the darkness" in their online history lessons. Holocaust Memorial Day takes place internationally on 27th January each year and is a time to remember the millions of people murdered during the Holocaust, under Nazi persecution and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfu.



Year 8 and 9 students were asked to consider "different kinds of 'darkness', for example, identity-based persecution, misinformation, denial of justice; and different ways of 'being the light', for example, resistance, acts of solidarity, rescue and illuminating mistruths." We also considered the pandemic and how many people are experiencing darkness of anxiety through separation from family and friends. Yet it is also a time when so many people are bringing light to their neighbours and communities. For example, within days of the first lockdown, 750,000 people signed up to volunteer for the NHS.

Dawlish College students then created their own candle artwork to reflect their understanding of this theme, uploaded it and now many of these have been displayed in our student reception window to mark this important event.



Well done to Freddie in Year 7 for his marble maze which he produced as part of his DT project work. As you will agree, it showed fantastic thinking and very strong design skills!

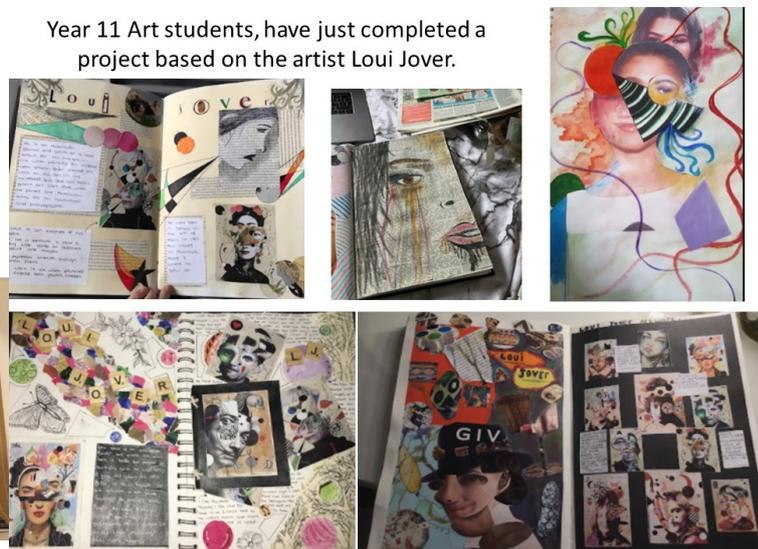
It has also been fantastic to know so many of you have been taking part in the PE Department's challenges. These simple exercise opportunities require no equipment and are great for keeping fit! Why not have a good at their latest challenge? <https://youtu.be/Q0nFrGXzTBY> Check out our Facebook pages for their other challenges.

Below and on the following pages are also examples of the fantastic Art work students have continued to produce in lockdown.

The Year 10 Art students, have just begun The Tin Can project. Students have been asked to create some research on the History of the Tin Can.



Year 11 Art students, have just completed a project based on the artist Loui Jover.



Art In Lockdown

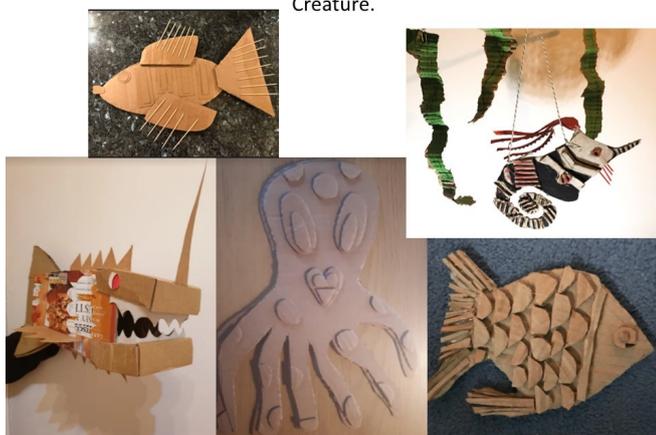
It is clear that lockdown is a unique and unsettling time for everyone and particularly our students, who have missed opportunities to work with each other and share their ideas and thoughts. Their writing has reflected their feelings and anxieties about the current situation. We received this piece of creative writing which sums up how many of them are feeling.

*Students are learning, the classrooms are dead
Books in the library are dusty, unread.
Playgrounds are empty and left all alone
Learning from laptops, Ipads and phones.
Teachers are working all day at what cost?
Friends being missed and special time is lost.*



Examples of some of the brilliant Year 7 Leger Posters.

Year 8 art students, The task was to design and make a fantasy Sea Creature.



Year 9 Art students, developing their painting skills using coffee.



Please remember that the pastoral team at college are here to support families with any issues during this difficult time. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if we can help with anything. Whilst the team will endeavour to make contact with students as a 'check in' the best way for students to reach out is to email directly the pastoral team. The staff will then be able to arrange to call back at a convenient time. We appreciate fully how difficult home-learning can be and the difficulties and anxiety that students may be experiencing – We are here to help.

Thanks

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Tfriend@dawlish.devon.sch.uk – Y9, 10 & 11 Welfare Officer

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Cphillips@dawlish.devon.sch.uk - Inclusion Officer

Anxiety UK

Charity providing support if you have been diagnosed with an anxiety condition.
Phone: 03444 775 774 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.30pm)
Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

CALM

CALM is the Campaign Against Living Miserably. A charity providing a mental health helpline and web-chat.
Phone: 0800 58 58 58 (daily, 5pm to midnight)
Website: www.thecalmzone.net

Men's Health Forum

24/7 stress support for men by text, chat and email.
Website: www.menshealthforum.org.uk

Mind

Promotes the views and needs of people with mental health problems.
Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm)
Website: www.mind.org.uk

Samaritans

Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.
Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline)
Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

Sam Banks joined us in January as Assistant Principal, having moved from St Cuthbert Mayne School in Torquay. The students asked the following questions:

Getting To Know You

Where were you born? I was born in Freedom Fields hospital in Plymouth, sometime after its construction in 1852 and before its closure in 1998, when services were transferred to Derriford and the building was converted to residential use. I won't give away my exact date of birth, but some readers might have worked out that the aforementioned dates reveal a pretty precise age range.



Do you prefer tea or coffee? That's a simple one. If it's a Saturday or Sunday morning then it's tea, switching to coffee in mid-morning through to the early afternoon. I like reasonably strong tea (a well-steeped bag of Yorkshire is perfect), and I subscribe unapologetically to the George Orwell protocols surrounding its preparation, of which the most significant one is that the milk be added at the end. This, as Orwell notes, allows you to exactly regulate the amount of milk, which is important for an enthus-tea-ast like me who prefers the strength of the drink to come from stewing of bag and sparsity of milk in roughly equal proportion. Although I'm willing to be civil with practically anybody, I find it hard to get along socially with people who pour cold milk onto a tea bag and then add hot water. It's as if they've just given up even trying. At times in my life I have also enjoyed brewing tea from loose leaves, but, at the moment, I simply don't have time. If I'm at home I tend to become a little more adventurous as the sun crosses the meridian. I will often brew a pot that is half-and-half English Breakfast and Earl Grey. Give it a try – you won't look back! If I'm out and about, it's more likely to be coffee – probably something exotic like a *caffè e latte* for a weekend treat. Monday to Friday it's usually 'black' coffee (no milk) at work, because it avoids the daily stress of checking that there is a) milk and b) milk that is fine and has not gone off. And that's it really – in short, I'm just not fussy either way.

What football team do you support? Football was a big part of my life for many years, both as a player and a fan. As I've aged, my love of following the game at elite level has waned a little and I no longer feel at home among some of the more parochial tribalism you see and hear among some fans. Since I haven't formally revoked my affiliation, though, I suppose I support Manchester United (predictable, I know, but unless you're 'raised' on a team, it's natural to just pick one that appears to be very successful). I don't really have time to watch matches, but I did see the other day that they (notice how I didn't write "we") beat Southampton 9-0. It reminded me of the first Premier League match I ever went to watch live. It was 4 March 1995 and I was playing for Kitto Rangers at the time, and our manager had organised a trip to Villa Park to watch Aston Villa play Blackburn Rovers. The match finished in a 1-0 win for Blackburn and was one of the most drab games you could imagine. As we boarded the coach to go home a rumour started to circulate – subsequently confirmed when the driver tuned in to Radio Five Live - that Manchester United had beaten Ipswich Town 9-0 at Old Trafford. It felt like a long wait for Match of the Day that evening. Recently I've started coaching the Under-7 side of one of my children; I think it might give me a new lease of life in the sport.

What do you like about working at Dawlish College? Ever since my first day attending interview here, I have been struck by the warmth and friendliness of all the staff and students and the genuine sense of community. Staff have been so welcoming to me and I like the way we all work as a team, no matter what our role in the organisation. Students, likewise, have accepted me immediately and shown the best sides of their characters in the way they have made me feel like I belong at this school. I have also really enjoyed starting to get to know all our parents and carers, albeit over the phone or by email for the most part. All that said, I have to admit I'm particularly fond of those people who read the college newsletter. You know who you are!

What are your hobbies? Having three young children, most of my hobbies are, in fact, their hobbies – playing ninjas and that sort of thing. I also enjoy walking and cycling with them, and rockpooling or paddle boarding in the summer. If I have a free moment on my own, I quite like to play a bit of guitar or piano. I'll play pretty much anything, as long as it was written by Bob Dylan. I like reading and occasionally panic about all the books that have been published that I still haven't read. I also love cryptic crosswords. Here's a clue for you: *Dilapidated cage? Well, old-ish school (7,7).*

Tell us one fact we would be amazed to know! When I left university, before I trained to be a teacher, I worked for a few years as a farmer in Somerset. I milked the cows (Holstein Friesians, apart from the odd Montbéliarde) and performed light tractor duties. My proudest moment was when my instructor, Graham, handed over the certificate that licensed me to carry out artificial insemination on the cows. The benefits of adding this skill to my CV were not just professional: it sparked an interest in genetic crossing and mammalian gestation periods that I still hold to this day. Don't believe me? Try asking the team that lost the tiebreaker in the pub quiz at The Bookbinders because they didn't know the gestation period of a mouse is 21 days. And, looking back, it was probably that display of ignorance that