



Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Newsletter

Summer Term

May 2023

Message from the Principal

Exam season is now well under way, and we all wish our Year 11 students the very best with their GCSEs and other courses. Feedback from students at the end of exams so far has been positive, with recognition of how well they have been prepared by their teachers. We now look forward to the traditional Leavers' Assembly and Prom next half term so we can say our goodbyes in style.

In other news, and very excitingly, Soar Valley will finally convert to academy status on June 1st. This has been a long time in the making, have worked hard to make sure the set-up of the Trust is done as well as possible. We will be part of a new academy trust, Aspire Learning Partnership, the name being chosen to reflect the core values of the trust - aspiring to achieve the best for everyone involved, learning from each other and working very much in partnership as a group of schools. With a strap line of Excellence through Collaboration, the new trust will also include The City of Leicester College initially, with whom we have been working for a few years now, with the plan to include more schools in time.

Finally, next week looks to be a sunny one, and we wish everyone a good and safe break. Students return on Monday June 5th. From this date, please note that jumpers, introduced for the colder weather, will not be allowed as part of the school uniform.

Mrs J. Robinson

Soar Valley is 50 years old!

Incredible as it may seem, Soar Valley celebrates 50 years from its official opening this year. The school opened in 1972 as the first purpose built comprehensive school in the city of Leicester, and was officially opened in March 1973 by the Duchess of Gloucester.

Digging through the archives has been a fascinating look back through history. We have found programmes from celebration evenings where subjects such as woodwork, needlework, shorthand/typing and rural science. We also found details of the old House system, where Houses were named after local historically significant families, which are represented on the school badge, such as Beaumont (the lion) and Bierley (the cross).

Staff past and present will be gathering to mark the anniversary next half term, and there are lots of activities planned for students too as we mark this significant milestone for the school.

Visit from the Deputy Lord Lieutenant



Professor Robert Allison CBE with our Head Students on Culture Day

We were very proud to welcome one of the Deputy Lord Lieutenants for Leicestershire, Professor Robert Allison CBE, to Soar Valley.

Having heard about our upcoming Culture Day, Professor Allison was keen to visit to speak to students about their cultures and how we foster a shared understanding and mutual respect within our school community.

Dressed in his full ceremonial uniform he certainly made an impression on the students he met.

Soar Valley Stars



It has been a term where our students continue to shine, demonstrating through their endeavours what can be achieved with hard work and dedication. Here are some of the fantastic success stories we have been able to celebrate.

Lord Lieutenant's Award 2023

Rebeca in Year 9 was nominated by the school for the Young Artist of the Year category in the Lord Lieutenant's Awards this year and did brilliantly well!

Rebeca, who is a very talented violinist, was shortlisted to the final four, meaning that she, her family and Mrs Robinson, who nominated her, were invited to the awards ceremony at Leicestershire County Hall and a dinner afterwards celebrating the achievements of young people from across the county.

Rebeca received a £100 voucher and a very fancy certificate, as well as having a memorable evening.



Rebeca with the Lord Lieutenant

Junior Maths Challenge

The Junior Maths Challenge is a 60 minute test of mathematical reasoning, precision of thought and fluency in basic mathematical techniques. Students are faced with a number of multiple choice questions designed to make them think hard.

This year 39 students from Year 8 took part. We were really pleased to achieve 13 Bronze Awards, 8 Silver Awards and 3 Gold Awards.

Well done to Aman, Pritisha and Aryan on their Gold Awards, and especially to Pritisha for achieving the highest score for our school.



Aman, Pritisha and Aryan with their Gold Award certificates

Sickle Cell Awards

Councillor George Cole, Lord Mayor of Leicestershire, is supporting a drive to raise awareness of sickle cell disease. Earlier this year students were invited to take part in a competition to create a poster or flyer as part of this campaign.

Alicia in Year 8 won the competition at SVC to represent the school and was put forward as our entry. Her entry was selected as one of the final twelve, and she was consequently invited to the Sickle Cell Award Ceremony held at the Town Hall.

We are proud to report that Alicia came second, receiving both a certificate and a £25 voucher. Well done Alicia!



Alicia receiving her Highly Commended Award from the Lord Mayor



Your PASSPORT to SUCCESS

At Soar Valley we are clear that **EFFORT IS EVERYTHING**. Participation in extra curricular opportunities and House competitions is a great way to stretch yourself and make the extra effort needed to push beyond what you thought was possible.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award

It's that time a year again when our Duke of Edinburgh students are out completing their practice walks, and qualifying expedition, in order to obtain their Bronze Award. With over 80 students signed up this year we have been busy behind the scenes practising our camp craft and navigational skills in preparation for this.

So far, we have completed one of our qualifying expeditions which was a huge success. The Year 9 girls were brilliant. They showed fantastic teamwork skills and resilience throughout the two days. All of the girls taking part met the 20 conditions needed to pass. So, it will not be long until they have hold of their fancy certificate.

Miss Warner has done a great job leading such a mammoth undertaking and we want to thank her and the many other members of staff who gave up their time to support the students throughout the process.



Language Leaders Teaching Teachers

The **Language Leaders** programme is facilitated by the organisation 'Routes into Languages' and upon successful completion students receive a nationally recognised certificate of achievement.

The programme aims to help students build their confidence whilst gaining leadership skills through teaching younger students.

In March our Language Leaders had the opportunity to practise their lessons to members of staff who joined them after school for an introduction to their chosen language.

The students are now perfecting their lesson plans and teaching skills ready to teach Year 7 classes next half term.



Culture Day

Culture Day was a massive success again this year. Our Head Students chose to focus on Eid, having had a theme of Diwali previously, and throughout the week students were given opportunities to learn about the importance of this celebration to our Muslim students and their families.

The week culminated in a Wear What You Will Day, where students chose clothing that reflected their culture or identity and we raised over £800. We donated the money to the Disasters Emergency Committee's Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal.



St Edmund Hall

University of Oxford



This year a number of our Year 10 students have been chosen to take part in the Unlock Oxford programme. Run by the University of Oxford, the programme is intended to equip students with the knowledge required to make an informed choice about their future studies and the confidence to see themselves as future Oxbridge scholars.

Students will work with the university throughout Year 10 to Year 13 and will be supported to apply to Oxbridge should this be their ambition.

Here Karena tells us about her experience on the first trip to Oxford.

"The Unlock Oxford trip to St Edmund Hall really broadened my understanding of further education and allowed me to see that Oxford University might be part of my future if I want it to be.

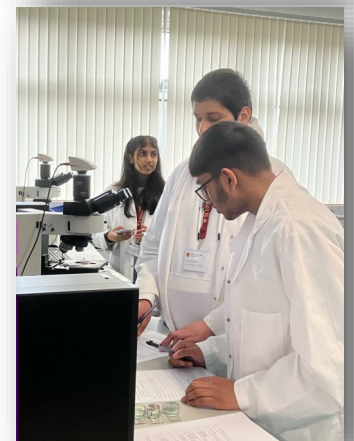
Upon arriving, we were welcomed by the programme mentors as well as some students from St Edmund Hall who shared their thoughts about, and experiences of, university life. After the initial introduction, we were taken on a brief tour of college grounds. The evening ended after a quizzes on trivia and the history of the college.

The following morning we were taken to enjoy breakfast in the cafeteria and to be reunited with the other schools on the residential. We were given lots of information about the application process for university and the financial side of further education. There were also activities designed to help us understand our personal goals and potential routes into university. It was eye opening to see the range of different courses offered by the university and it gave me a lot of insight as to how each of them varied.

Later we toured the historic campus dotted around the beautiful city, which included a visit to the famous Bodleian Library. My group were able to visit the Department of Materials Science, a course that many students, including me, were not familiar with. We were tasked with exploring the different compositions of modern materials and even had the opportunity to use the laboratory equipment. It gave me a first-hand look into life at Oxford and what it would be like to work with such fascinating equipment on a day-to-day basis.

Overall it was an amazing experience that helped develop my understanding of Post 18 education as well as the accessibility of Oxford to students just like me. I really enjoyed the visit to the materials science department as it was great to be given the chance to perform a practical with professional microscopes.

The professors and students were all very helpful and friendly when sharing their advice. The experience felt far less intimidating than I originally thought it would be, and I found everyone was approachable and happy to help. I am grateful to Oxford, and my teachers, for the new paths this allowed me to explore for my future."



Welcome to The Brilliant Club



The Brilliant Club

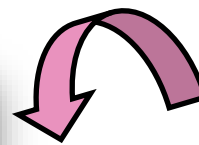
Over the Spring Term some of our Year 9 students had the chance to take part in the Scholars Programme, an initiative run by The Brilliant Club.

The Brilliant Club is a charity formed with the sole aim of supporting students to see themselves as potential candidates to apply to the most competitive course at the most competitive universities.

PhD candidates from across the 24 Russell Group universities—world-class, research-intensive institutions—work with students in state schools to support them to develop their academic potential.

The programme started with an amazing trip to Oxford University. We were welcomed by Keble College and given the chance to find out all about university life.

The students really enjoyed the trip, and it helped that it felt like we were at Hogwarts!



Keble College



UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM



Following the launch trip we were lucky enough to work with the amazing Riana Popat, a PhD student from University of Nottingham. Her area of expertise is theology, ethics and philosophy, and she is an expert in her field.

Here Zahrah, one of the students who took part in the programme tells us what she feels she learned from the visits, the weekly tutorials and the assignments.

“The Scholars Programme not only taught me information I didn't know about universities but has also inspired, and empowered, me to strive to do better in my studies.

Throughout the topic we delved into areas of theology that I was not aware of previously. This kept me motivated to listen attentively and involve myself in group discussions.

Although the various assignments were really demanding they, and the tutorials, gave me a clear insight into what university study would actually consist of.

When going to Oxford University and the University of Birmingham, the idea that I could be one of the students I had seen seemed impossible, but the programme allowed me to see my true potential.”



French Spelling Bee Regional Finals



Shuada, Abdi and Moosa at the University of Nottingham

You may have seen on Twitter that the Soar Valley winners of the national Spelling Bee Stage 2 took part in their regional French Spelling Bee competition on May 10th at the University of Nottingham.

Shuada, Moosa and Abdi all had 1 minute each to translate and spell as many words as possible from a list of 200 words. There were a total of 1,574 students who started the Spelling Bee in September, and only 27 made it through to the third stage of the competition. This places Shuada, Moosa and Abdi in the top 2% of language learners in the East Midlands! All 3 students showed incredible resilience and bravery, and did Soar Valley **very** proud.

After an extremely tense tie break, Moosa was able to secure a spot as one of the **top four students in the East Midlands**. He will now have to learn an additional 100 words and will then be competing at the National Final where the entire year-long competition will conclude with one final Spelling Bee battle at the University of Cambridge on June 30th.

Watch this space to find out if he is able to continue his excellence and secure a win at Cambridge!



Moosa with his top four medal

House News @SVC

Not surprisingly much of the House activity this term has centred around the coronation of King Charles III. Two of our competitions resulted in some really impressive entries.

Students really embraced celebrating the coronation of King Charles! Not only did they throw themselves into every House competition, they also revelled in learning about our previous monarchs and the historical importance of the ceremony.

Designing a commemorative 50p coin was a firm favourite, with Victoria appropriately being victorious! However, a huge well done to Watermead who had an enormous number of students participate with 71 entries overall.

House Results - 50p Competition!

House	Rank	House Points	Entry points
Victoria	1	150 pts	280pts
Watermead	2	120 pts	710pts
Abbey	3	100 pts	150pts
Castle	4	90 pts	190pts
Beacon	5	85 pts	20pts
Bradgate	6	80 pts	10pts

1st Charis Muzenda 10.11 (Victoria)

2nd Afreen Maheebub 8.6 (Watermead)

3rd Sukhbir Kaur 9.7 (Abbey)

As well as this, the Year 7 students had a fantastic time creating posters of previous monarchs.

They outlined five key facts about each monarch as well as notable events during their reign.

Not only were they informative, but the posters looked fantastic decorating the dining hall in the run up to the Coronation!

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House competition results - Y7 Coronation poster

House	Rank	House Points
Victoria	1	150 pts
Abbey	2	120 pts
Watermead	3	100 pts
Bradgate	4	90 pts
Beacon	5	85 pts
Castle	6	80 pts

1st 7.11 - Victoria
Queen Elizabeth II

2nd 7.7 - Abbey
King Edward VII

3rd 7.5 - Victoria
King William IV

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE



It has been another busy term in PE with lots of extra curricular sport on offer, as well as some very special opportunities for students to step out of their comfort zone and do great things!

**East
Leicester
Athletics
Tournament -
Saffron Lane**



Tuesday, 16th May saw East Leicester hold it's annual Athletics Tournament at Saffron Lane Stadium. Many students at Soar Valley had spent the previous 5 weeks attending trials and practise sessions after school on a Wednesday and Thursday to try and get themselves selected for the team.

These trials eventually saw us finalise a team of 109 students, from Year 7 through to Year 10, who represented the college at the ever-competitive event.

We had some outstanding individual achievements, including the following event winners:

Ayla Basibuyuk U13 Girls 800 metres – 3min24.09

Dhrudip Mahesh U15 Boys Javelin 29m60cm

Mia Dhuna U17 Girls Discus 17m74cm

Jessie Peter U17 Girls Long Jump 4m80cm

Angelo War U17 Boys Triple Jump 9m10cm

However, the stand out performance of the night was **Charlie McLaughlin** winning the U15 Boys 100 Metres in a time of 12.53 seconds. This is the first time in over 20 years that a Soar Valley student has won this event.

The teams did exceptionally well overall: the U15 Girls were 4th in their competition; the U13 Girls, U13 Boys and U17 Girls all finished 3rd, and the U15 Boys and U17 Boys both came 2nd. This is a phenomenal set of results.

Overall, when all of the results were added together, Soar Valley came an amazing 2ND place! This is a fantastic achievement.

Well done to everyone who took part and represented the college and all those who came along to the trials and practices but didn't make the final team. We are extremely proud of all of you.

This Girl Can @ TCOLC

Ten of our Year 9 students were invited to attend a "This Girl Can" event at The City of Leicester College. The whole event had been planned and lead by Year 9 students from TCOLC.

The event included three different sports: dance, football and a brilliantly designed obstacle course. The City of Leicester girls did a fantastic job leading each sport and really inspired our students, so much so that our students now want to return the favour and plan an event for them here at Soar Valley.



Eco Team News

The Eco Team at Soar Valley have been busy over the last term. They have looked at plastic bottle waste in the dining areas and have ordered two plastic bottle bins for the school grounds so that we can ensure that plastic bottles are recycled separately from other waste. They have also completed a student survey on the number of students who bring a sustainable water bottle to school. The Eco Team will be shortly running a competition in school to enable those students who do not have a sustainable water bottle to obtain a metal bottle with the SVC logo.

After completing a week of assemblies for 'Earth Day' the students distributed packs of wild flower seeds for students to take home and place in pots or in a garden to provide food for pollinating insects.

After completing a collection earlier in the year for a local foodbank the students have visited that foodbank to gain an insight into how it runs and to help with the distribution of food. The students had a wonderful morning talking with people in the community, helping with the continuous influx of contributions and handing out numerous items of food.

They are presently preparing for the annual 'Leicester Schools Mealbarrow Competition'. The team have planted their wheelbarrow [see above] with vegetables and fruit and are watching it flourish. The mealbarrow will be judged and on display at Abbey Pumping Station early in July.



The Mealbarrow



Dates for Your Diary

Term Dates	
Summer Half Term Break	May 29 th – June 5 th
Summer Term ends	Friday 14 th July

Other Events This Term	
School Show	June 7 th and June 8 th
Reports Home (Yr7-10)	June 9 th
Year 7 Celebration Evening	June 20 th
Year 8-10 Celebration Evg	June 22 nd
Year 6 Transition Day	July 5 th
Year 10 WOW Week	July 10 th - July 14 th
Sports Day	July 11 th

Active Citizens Update

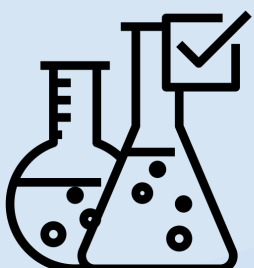
Our Key Stage 3 Active Citizen students have been working on a project to inform students and parents about engine idling outside of the school gates.

They completed a survey outside of the school gates to count how many cars had their engines idling for more than the recommended allowance of 10 seconds. The results from one day at the end of a school day showed that 13 out of the 35 cars counted had their engines idling.

Their next step is to create posters for around the school to raise awareness of the issue, and to ask parents/carers to sign a pledge where they agree to sticking to the maximum allowance of 10 seconds of engine idling whilst cars are stationary both outside of the school gates and in and around the city centre.



The Eco team at the Wesley Hall Community Project Foodbank



Fancy working at Soar Valley?

Science Technician Apprenticeship Level 3

Are you aged between 16 years and 18 years old. Do you want to join a fantastic team? Soar Valley is a great place to work and an excellent place to begin your career. If you are interested in finding out more, or wish to apply, please click on this link [Science Technician Apprenticeship Level 3 - Find an apprenticeship \(findanapprenticeship.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.findanapprenticeship.gov.uk).

