



# KING EDWARD VI CAMP HILL SCHOOL FOR BOYS



Dear Parents and Carers

Term started on 4 January. Or did it? Was it online only for Y11 and Y13, with everyone else on 11 January? Or did it start on 8 March? Goodness only knows. Did testing start with Critical Worker children on 4 January? When did Key Workers become Critical Workers? No idea. Can I use a negative lateral flow test to allow me to come to school even though I'm a contact of someone with Covid? Yes, you can. Oh, on second thoughts, no you can't. Can I take a PCR test to override an LFD? No – at least not if the test was done at school. What if it was at home? Yes, you can. All pretty straightforward stuff – what's confusing about that?

In many ways this term has been a re-run of the autumn term, but with LFD testing as our backdrop. The testing has gone brilliantly at school – 90% of boys (or their parents) consented and the testing went smoothly. Only one positive. Now it's over to the boys to carry on at home. I suspect far more testing is being done than is being reported. I certainly hope so.

Ready to test



Labelling home test kits for the boys



The debris from a day's testing



### Boys' Achievements

Once again, it's sad to be writing a newsletter without any competitive sports reports. Hopefully, we will be able to introduce them from next term. Transport will be the hardest problem to overcome at the moment, but we'll see.

Even without sports reports, we've got some great achievements to celebrate.

- Well done our university applicants – some excellent offers received for some of the most selective courses.
  - Cambridge: 10
  - Oxford: 8
  - Medicine/dentistry: 38 – and some still waiting
- Sam Gray has won a choral scholarship to Trinity College Cambridge
- Oxford University Computing Challenge: congratulations to Taheen Islam, Y8, who came top in the intermediate age group, with full marks in the final round.
- Chemistry Olympiad: the UK has a team of 4. Camp Hill has had a team member in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and...2021. Well done, Zac McGuire.

## **Staff changes**

We're finally allowing Dr Mark Gadd to retire after more than 3 years at the school. We're grateful to him for extending his time with us to help us out. Mark said he would retire at the end of August but, as so often happens, he immediately had the school begging him to stay a little longer. Selflessly, he has been willing to serve another term and then another term at the school. He arrived on site, but at the wrong school, in 2016. After a year, he started teaching at both schools, before becoming exclusively CHB in 2018. His connections to the school go much further back: his father was a boy at Camp Hill Boys at the old site in Digbeth.

Mark studied at Birmingham University, gaining a degree in metallurgy and a PhD in Industrial Metallurgy. He became a teacher 35 years ago and has served his time at 7 Birmingham schools, including long stints at Handsworth Grammar School for Boys (HGSB) and Fairfax. I have always known him as a part-time teacher; his other role has been as a church minister.

I first worked as a colleague of Mark's when I arrived at HGSB in 1993. Working with Mark has always been a pleasure. Although an outstanding maths teacher, Mark is unassuming and modest, cheerfully contributing to department discussions, encouraging less experienced colleagues and fitting smoothly into the team. I was delighted when he joined the department at Camp Hill Boys, because I knew how quickly and easily he would become a valued member of it. He has taught almost throughout the school, teaching from Year 8 to Further Maths A Level. He organised the maths challenges last year and played an active part in the  $\pi$  day.

In stepping down from teaching, Mark hopes to give himself more time to carry out his work as a minister, as well as enjoying time with his growing family – wife, 4 children and 4 grandchildren. He enjoys cycling, so I hope he will also be able to indulge that hobby and clock up a few more miles in the coming years.

Many thanks for all you've done for the school, Mark. Enjoy your (partial) retirement.

## **Happy Easter!**

And so, after just 4 weeks in school, another strange term comes to an end, and I find myself wishing you all a happy holiday. With the partial relaxation of the lockdown restrictions, I hope you're able to have some of the family time that has been denied us for so long; Christmas day seems a long time ago.

With all good wishes

Martin Garrod

## Year 7 activities week

As the first half of the spring term continued, the strains of online learning began to show on many of the Year 7 boys (and staff!), despite the later start we had after the Christmas break. So it was decided that we would allow the boys to enjoy a catch-up and activities week just before the half term break.

The week gave the boys the opportunity to catch-up on work they had fallen behind with, while also having time to enjoy creative activities which got them away from the computer screen for a while.

Year 7s took part in building challenges, creative writing, photography, cooking, nature spotting and many other activities. As an incentive to take part, prizes were offered for the most impressive contributions in some categories.

Almost all of Year 7 took part and contributed something for activities week, with an impressive variety of creations. Among the prize winners were Adeel Awan 7H for his cardboard Macbook and accessories, Rudy Hudson 7K for his cozy photo of a sleeping dog, Oliver Padley 7H for his short story, and Leo Rueff 7E for his photograph of a snowy duck pond. A few of the photos are included below, and the short stories will be published in the next issue of the Chronicle.

Special mentions also go to Ibrahim Omerbegovic, Adam Bashir, Uzayr and Yusuf Qamar for their enthusiastic engagement.

Well done to everybody who took part, and I think we all agree that it was good to return to school shortly after half term.

Looking ahead to the summer term, as restrictions begin to ease we hope to be able to offer more extra-curricular activities for the boys to enjoy in school.

Mr O'Malley



**Cushion by Abbas 7K**



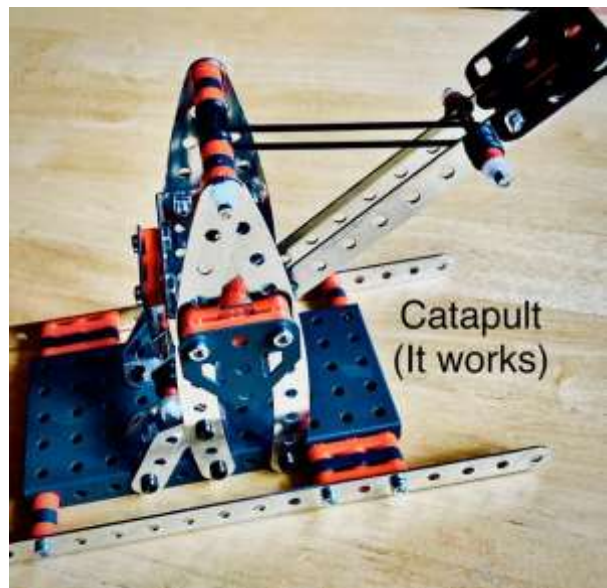
**Cat by Adam B 7E**



Macbook and accessories by Adeel 7H



Message on a fence by Oliver 7H



Catapult by Usman 7E



**Duck pond by Leo 7E**



**Sleeping dog by Rudy 7K**

## Computing

### British Informatics Olympiad

The BIO is the most prestigious (and difficult) competition we take part in each year in the Computing department. A three hour challenge, it is based around 3 questions and each requires a combination of mathematical problem solving plus practical programming skills to complete.



While really aimed at sixth-formers it was great to see students as young as Year 10 taking part for the first time this year (and proving that success in computer science is down to what you can do, not who you are).

*“Taking part in the BIO was a great experience for me, even though I do not take Computer Science as one of my A Levels. I enjoy programming and want to pursue a career in Computer Science, so this was a good opportunity for me to apply my problem-solving skills in programming tasks. The tasks themselves were quite difficult, so it required me to do some planning for how to approach the problem before diving straight into writing the code. Overall, I found the BIO quite challenging, but also fun! To anyone that is interested in programming or Computer Science, it is a worthwhile experience, and I would recommend that you take part in it.” - Imaad (y13)*

### Braben Cup

Every year we offer an opportunity to take part in this competition. Round 1 involves pairs programming against the clock. Usually this is a logistical challenge as we have three computer suites across two schools, plus regular lessons to do. This year things were much easier during lockdown, with teams able to work from home and having the choice of working together as a pair, or working independently for their team.

[We’ve been telling students for years that good teamwork often looks like this - each team member agreeing what they are to do and trusting the others in their team to do their part, rather than all working on the same thing together - although paired programming is also a key method in industry.]



For the first time we had nearly twice as many entries from CHG than from CHB, plus a pleasing number of Year 8 students taking part - more than 130 competitors overall in 68 teams. Results are still to be confirmed, but 41 students gained a Distinction and thus qualify for the 2nd round in **March** (exact date TBC).

### TCS Oxford Challenge

The Bebras Challenge earlier in the year is open to all, but the TCS Oxford competition is only open via invitation. Fortunately, more than 300 students (188 at CHB, 129 at CHG) have reached that standard and this year's competition takes place on **Thursday 18th of March**.



Competitors have 60 minutes to accurately complete as many challenges as possible, using a mixture of Blockly and Python (depending on age bracket). If taking part, it is well worth having a look at sample questions here <https://oucc.uk/>.

We now need to know how many of 'the 300\*' would like to take part, so watch out for an invitation link please.

\* that's for the classicists/film buffs amongst you. If you recognised that reference it might interest you to know that while the '300' Spartan warriors became immortalised in opposing the Persian army, they were supported by a force of 700 Thespians - don't you love the imagery that suggests(!)



## Lockdown Running for Young Minds UK

At the start of the latest lockdown, eight of our year 13 students decided to try and make a difference. The below is taken from their Gofundme page:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/khsjye-lockdownruns4charity>

*'After seeing others around us being negatively affected both mentally and physically by the consecutive lockdowns, we have decided to come together and raise money for YoungMinds. YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.*

*We have decided to raise the money through running, which is one proven solution to improving mental wellbeing. In doing so we hope to inspire others to do the same. We aim to run 1000km (between 8 participants) over a period of 10 weeks, starting from Monday 11th January 2021. (Approximately the same distance from Birmingham to Italy).*

*In return, we aspire to raise at least £1000, and would love for as many people to get involved as possible.*

*Follow us on Instagram @LockdownRuns4Charity to see daily updates!'*

The boys reached their 1000km lockdown running target in just over six weeks and also raised £1752.00 for Young Minds UK. They also inspired hundreds of students (total 897.55km) and staff (total 1584km) to get out and run over the lockdown period. An inspirational effort all round.

Inspirational Year 13s

Richard Amoshe, Yusof Elsherbiny, Abhinash Nirantharakumar, Rishi Pingili, Patrick Achusiogu, Adam Audhali, Dylan Rees & Chethan Biju.



I am so immensely proud of the boys for the achievement. They have done this off their own back, not only to raise money for YoungMinds UK, but also to help improve the mental and physical wellbeing of hundreds of people in what was a tough lockdown for many.

TJB

PE Department

## **School Sport- March 2021**

In my previous newspaper article I rounded it off by saying we were optimistic that fixtures will take place in the New Year. Four months down the line and here we are. As I write this, it's just been announced that inter-school fixtures can begin from 29<sup>th</sup> March, albeit in an adapted form to meet Covid regulations etc. Fingers crossed the relentless effort and commitment the boys have shown throughout the year will be rewarded with some game time after the Easter holidays. Over the term, the PE department have reflected on what fantastic pupils we have at the school. Throughout all year groups, they turn up week in week out with a smile on their face and excited to play some sport, even if it is yet another adapted game of touch rugby!

Senior sport has been a superb success since we've been back in school. Over 300 pupils have been playing sport of some sort on Wednesday afternoons. Rugby, football, cricket, handball, lacrosse, volleyball, rounder's, basketball and ultimate Frisbee have all taken place and been enjoyed by pupils. It is genuinely fantastic to see so many smiles on faces and so much physical activity taking place.

Thank you as ever for all your support! Let's hope we get some sun and fixtures after Easter!

TJB

PE Department

## **Sport Education Competition**

During the latest lockdown, students were introduced to a new tournament that was run in a format that was new to us all. This competition was the Sport Education Online Challenge. It involved a number of different challenges each week that they had the autonomy to be creative with. Challenges as simple as 'Keepy Uppies' or specific fitness workouts, were given to the students, and each group put their own stamp on them.

The competition was run as a mixed house/form tournament, with a leader board being updated weekly and a winner in each year group eventually taking 1<sup>st</sup> prize. The students were in groups with fellow members of their school house, who also shared their form class but, of course, were all in lockdown. This gave an extra challenge of being able to communicate with each other in difficult circumstances and complete a piece of work that provided evidence of their challenge completion.

After a series of excellent pieces of work being produced that were both creative and interesting, a winning team emerged from each year group in years 7-10.

Those winners are as follows:

**Year 7 Winners – 7C Beaufort (The Sporty Seven Squad)**

Affan Aamir, Muawiyah Abdi, Ahmed Abdirahman, Ismail Ali, Kha Au, Akbar Butt, Krish Das, Danyaal Tahir.

### Year 8 Winners – 8J Howard (The Howard Story)

Hassan Afzal, Muhazim Ahmed, Mohamed Eltair, Ethan Ho, Alexander Hopkins, Abdirasak Ismail, Jed Jimenez, Jesse Okunbor.

### Year 9 Winners – 9J Tudor (Team Emerald)

Amaan Ahmed, Seth Fisher, Kaif Hussain, Francis Luke, Mekaeel Pervez, Shrikannan Selvaganapathy, Sushant Shyam.

### Year 10 Winners – 10J Howard (Big Men)

Kibria Awais, Simon Mebrahtu, Ankur Ramesha, Abdullah Rashid, Hanzalah Rayaz, Sulaiman Tahir, Ethan Philippe Tumbos, Caleb Wilton.

Each of these teams will be presented with their prizes at the beginning of their next games session as unfortunately assemblies are currently carried out remotely.

On the whole it was an excellent effort by everyone who took part and maintained a level of physical activity throughout lockdown in an innovative way.

PE Department.

## Music

With the school on 'lockdown' for much of the term, it has not been possible for the Music Department to hold most of its normal activities. Sadly, orchestras, bands and choirs could not take place. It was also not possible to hold Spring Term activities such as the Teatime Concert or House Music Competition.

Even so, musicians are resourceful, and so there has been a lot going on 'online':

Boys with a strong interest in and love of music have kept going in a wide variety of ways. Some of these boys write about their experiences later in this report. One who has achieved very special success, however, is Sam Gray.

Sam has been one of our leading musicians throughout his Camp Hill career, and first came to special notice when he gained the lead role in the Junior Musical *Smike*, based on the Charles Dickens novel 'Nicholas Nickleby', when in Year 7. Since then he has developed his enjoyment of music and his skills, gaining a distinction in both grade 8 singing and piano. When in the Sixth Form he decided to try for a music place at Cambridge, and a choral scholarship, we made contact with Trinity College, a college with a fine reputation for music, and a superb Chapel Choir.

I am delighted to report that before Christmas he found out that following tests and interviews on 'zoom' he had gained a place for music at Trinity College, Cambridge. Recently, he found out that he had also been awarded a choral scholarship in Trinity College Choir. This is a wonderful achievement, as it is an outstanding choir. For those of you who do not know the choir's reputation, they were voted the fifth best choir in the world in Gramophone magazine's "20 Greatest Choirs"!

Over the past year the ‘grade’ examinations of the Associated Board and Trinity College have all gone ‘online’ and have been examined by video recording. Some of these videos have been recorded by the pupils ‘solo’ at home, others have been with the instrumental teachers, and others have been accompanied by myself, Miss Pearcey and others. It’s been enjoyable to record some of these short recitals. I particularly enjoyed Sam Cole’s grade 8 trombone, which we recorded in a local church – socially distanced, of course! Many of our pupils took advantage of this new system, and we have received good results:

| <b>First name</b> | <b>Surname</b>     | <b>Instrument</b> | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Classification</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Hrishikesh        | Narayanan          | Guitar            | 1            | Merit                 |
| Vidyut            | Tutika             | Guitar            | 1            | Merit                 |
| Aditya            | Prasad             | Guitar            | 1            | Distinction           |
| Darasimi          | Oluyeye            | Saxophone         | 1            | Distinction           |
| Finn              | Sambridge-Davies   | Trombone          | 1            | Distinction           |
| Idries            | Bharmal            | Guitar            | 2            | Pass                  |
| Aakshat           | Kumar              | Guitar            | 2            | Merit                 |
| Harvey            | Murray             | Cornet            | 3            |                       |
| Alex              | Hopkins            | Violin            | 3            |                       |
| Harrish           | Satkunarajah       | Guitar            | 3            |                       |
| Clement           | Franklin           | Trumpet           | 3            |                       |
| Rahul             | Chauhan            | Clarinet          | 3            | Merit                 |
| Rishi             | Chauhan            | Clarinet          | 3            | Merit                 |
| William           | Lin                | Violin            | 3            | Merit                 |
| Sampanna          | Raut               | Drum Kit          | 4            |                       |
| Rohan             | Desai              | Drum Kit          | 4            |                       |
| Richie            | Yang               | Violin            | 4            | Merit                 |
| Kenny             | Lau                | Violin            | 4            | Merit                 |
| Adith             | Raghava            | Guitar            | 4            | Merit                 |
| Rajan             | Gill               | Guitar            | 4            | Merit                 |
| Sam               | Nouhov             | Jazz Saxophone    | 4            | Merit                 |
| Rajun             | Brring             | Clarinet          | 5            |                       |
| Aarondeep         | Singh              | Clarinet          | 5            | Merit                 |
| Jacob             | Close              | Singing           | 5            | Merit                 |
| Wilf              | Kan                | Guitar            | 5            | Merit                 |
| Harley            | Hau                | Violin            | 5            | Merit                 |
| Se                | Mouthaan-Ward      | Drum Kit          | 6            |                       |
| Cyrus             | Maleki-Toosserkani | Guitar            | 6            |                       |
| Darius            | Maleki-Toosserkani | Guitar            | 6            |                       |
| Krishnan          | Sen                | Clarinet          | 6            | Distinction           |
| Udayan            | Nayyar             | Guitar            | 7            |                       |
| Keshav            | Najran             | Guitar            | 7            |                       |
| Joe               | Clark              | Jazz Saxophone    | 8            | Merit                 |
| Sam               | Cole               | Trombone          | 8            | Merit                 |

We have not been able to present the certificates in assembly, of course, as there are none, but we will celebrate the boys' success at some point when we get 'back to normal'.

Our instrumental lessons went 'online', and I was delighted that most of our instrumental pupils took up this opportunity to continue their musical education, some 91% in fact.

I am indebted to our dedicated team of seventeen visiting instrumental teachers for their hard work in enthusiastically taking on this work, even though unfamiliar and, at times, difficult. I have heard stories of some challenging – and amusing - lessons, particularly with the more inexperienced pupils: the beginner violinist with an instrument out of tune, the starter trumpeter trying to apply 'valve oil' to the correct part of the trumpet on 'zoom', and the cellist with music balanced precariously on a radiator!

When we got back to school two weeks after half term, we did try to reassemble some music making, with careful Covid-19 restrictions in place, such as ventilation, distancing and wearing masks.

Two of our choirs – in their 'year bubbles' reconvened. Our new Year 7 choir is now being run by Miss Batchelor on Wednesday mornings, and on Thursdays I rehearse the Sixth Form Choir.



Year 7 Choir

The House Music Competition is to be organised using recorded submissions, and will be assembled and adjudicated in the Summer Term.

It was not possible to hold the Instrumental Parents Evening 'live' as we normally do, and so we held online meetings using the school parents' evening program. Our instrumental teachers have reported that this was most successful, and that they were a valuable opportunity to talk to parents about their sons' progress. We may continue to use these meetings in the future.

I have been pleased that we have had a PGCE music student from Birmingham City University with us all term. Miss Batchelor is a graduate of Birmingham University, and has been most successful in 'live' teaching, and invaluable to the department in helping to teach and set work over the

'lockdown' period. She is with us for much of the year, so we look forward to her input in a variety of departmental activities in the summer.



Sixth Form Choir

As I mentioned earlier, over the term a number of school musicians have been proactive in organising some sort of musical activity. Here are a selection of the activities from some of our senior musicians:

**Sam Gray** sang with the National Youth Choir:

"Last Summer, I took part in a week-long course with the National Youth Training Choir, singing with other students from around the country. We got to explore choral music from throughout history in various crash courses and hear fantastic lectures from guest speakers on topics ranging from vocal percussion to the role of singing in the civil rights movement. However, the main project for the week was working on and remotely recording a brand new contemporary composition called "The change we need" by a composer on the young composers scheme, and after a lot of editing together, the piece was released earlier this year. The music blends influences from Western and Indian Classical music together, and the text focuses on the need for young people to play an active role in society and to be the change that they want to see - quite an apt song for 120 teenagers to take on. It was an incredible experience to be a part of and it meant that I got to make music in a way that I'd never done before at a time when I was missing being able to sing in a choir the most. I hope to be able to take part in similar projects across the coming years."

**Charlie Moore** and friends started a 'Music Newsletter':


"Over Lockdown, some of the departments at Camp Hill Girls started to send out short newsletters to pupils containing some wider reading for their respective subject areas. Since the music department didn't have one of these newsletters, I joined forces with Holly Mia Garside to create The Semibreve, a student-led newsletter including articles about both classical and contemporary music. By the power of social media, we were able to virtually curate articles from different contributors, which I then formatted into a small online newspaper. The Semibreve has proven a

great opportunity for some to contribute articles, and we are always open to new contributors and ideas! The Semibreve lands in student's inboxes once a month, and we are hopeful it will long continue!


FEbruary 2022
THE SEMIBREVE
KEYC&H MUSIC

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**New to  
Classical?**  
CHECK OUT THIS  
ISSUE'S  
RECOMMENDATIONS



**THE LEGACY OF  
'GIANT STEPS'**



**THE HURDY-GURDY  
THROUGH TIME**


Curated by Holly Mia  
Garside

Edited by Charlie  
Mouze

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# THE SEMIBREVE

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The CBSO performs Mahler's Symphony no. 8 at Birmingham Symphony Hall ©Andrew Fisk

## The Magic of Mahler's 8th.

**O**ver a year ago, mere months before the first lockdown (wow that's gone by quickly), I was lucky enough to have performed Mahler's Symphony No. 8 as part of the CBSO Youth Chorus, alongside the CBSO Chorus, CBSO Children's Chorus, University of Birmingham Vocalists, Baltimore Choral Arts Society and of course the CBSO itself. Conducted by the mesmerising Mago Gorbunov-Tyba, it was truly the peak of my experience as a musician thus far, and what I consider to be a turning point in my life in so many ways.

These Svarajayakumar of SX shares my admiration for the symphony, stating: "Mahler's Symphony of a thousand is about the journey from earth to heaven. Something that touches me even though I have never experienced such a journey. I was lucky enough to perform it among the CBSO last year! I was not used to Mahler's works before performing it; however, now I can say that I am now a huge Mahler fan. My favourite bit of the symphony would have to be its climax with its magical use of percussion and brass. Mahler eight will always have a massive place in my heart. Miss Hawthorne also made an appearance as a soprano in the CBSO Chorus, and mentioned how privileged she felt to be able to sing with us in such an exciting performance of the symphony."

**Musical fact**

During a long orchestral performance, the tuning of the string section tends to drift flatter due to body heat expanding the instrument slightly, while the wind instruments get sharper the longer the concert is, the harder it is to keep the orchestra completely in tune with each other!

**Matthew Anderson** sings in Birmingham Cathedral Choir:

"I have been lucky enough to have been singing at Birmingham Cathedral for about eight years now, but never have I appreciated it more than this past year, as obviously it provides something to do outside of school hours. It may have involved a significantly reduced congregation size and having to sing stood at least two metres away from other people, but it's still been great fun nonetheless. All

the services have been livestreamed online for people to watch, and obviously standing far away from the person who I share a voice part with have provided a challenge, but singing at the cathedral has really been my first step back towards something we used to call 'normality'."

**Tom Li** writes about the changing landscape of music in school, and of his many activities both in and out of school:

"While returning to school in September was wonderful, it was still extremely surreal as all of the usual ensembles which were vital in shaping my musical development were unable to run. This doesn't mean all music was axed though; sixth form choir was born, as was 'woodwind trio' consisting of me, Connor Huss and Matthew Anderson. You can listen to 3 pieces we recorded last term in December- [Teddy Bears' Picnic](#), [Tico Tico](#) and [Walking the Dog](#). Our music A-level group also sings and plays together regularly and I arranged "Don't Stop Me Now" as a testimony to our resilience, which you can listen to [here](#).

While the musical connections we all crave so dearly are still out of sight, we have still managed to adapt, due to our immense resilience. Recordings have become the new normal and multitrack videos have meant that we are still able to 'play together'- I organised a large project back in lockdown 1 to record a short piece for bassoon ensemble. You can watch it [here](#).

The National Youth Orchestra have been taking full advantage of everything being online too, running projects which have involved more young musicians than ever before. Over 600 musicians (myself included) took part in #NYOLiftOff this February, which ran in regional groups over 16 days, allowing us to connect with young musicians in our general local areas. Over the Easter holidays, I will be taking part in another NYO Inspire project in instrumental groups, for which I submitted a video audition in January this year.

Connecting with other people through music has been a challenge this past year, but our collective resilience has meant we have and are going to get through this."

**Deniz Yoruk-Mikhailov** writes about "The return of live music II":

Ever since the first lockdown brought many musical activities to a stand still, musicians have had to think creatively about how to continue making music together from afar. The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's Junior Department was one such affected body of young musicians. They have many students from schools throughout the country ranging in age from 10 to 18, and had to find a way of continuing the wide range of musical activities they deliver on a weekly basis throughout the pandemic. With the recent relaxation of restrictions, there has been a limited return to live music-making, seeing many ensembles return to a version of normality for the first time in months, with ensembles such as string quartets and various larger woodwind groups returning to the Conservatoire building.

Online theory and aural classes have continued throughout the lockdown through Microsoft Teams, working for half an hour each week to develop musicianship, broaden musical knowledge and establish fundamental skills such as harmonisation. Similarly, the Junior Conservatoire has offered online instrumental tuition whilst in-person classes haven't been possible, as well as some sectional Zoom meetings with work on smaller ensemble pieces and remote performance classes. Some attempts were made to try and organise a larger ensemble, with weekly string sectionals to practice Vaughan Williams' Fantasia Upon a Theme by Thomas Tallis, but the relaxing of covid measures should enable live rehearsals, which will be greatly more beneficial to students, in the coming term.



With restrictions ideally being further relaxed in the coming months, the Junior Conservatoire hopes to reopen more fully after Easter, welcoming students back each week, rather than in fortnightly sessions, as well as hopefully reintroducing choirs and larger orchestras, which have been put on hold since the first lockdown. In the meantime, solo instrumental lessons are expected to return to the Conservatoire and smaller ensembles will be able to meet more frequently, finally enabling the full reintroduction of everything the Junior Conservatoire has to offer once more.

The music department looks forward to getting back to all its activities very soon!

SFP

## **Senior Debating**

The Year 12 debating society has been busy during lockdown, continuing the work they did before Christmas. Eashan Varma, Rufus Hall and Omar Ismail competed in the first round of the ESU Mace national debating competition in a difficult draw against KES, KEHS and South and City College Birmingham. The Camp Hill team debated against KES, opposing the challenging motion 'This House believes that government economic policy should prioritise the collective happiness and well-being of the population over economic growth'. It was the first time in its history that the competition has been conducted via Zoom, which added an extra layer of difficulty to the competition.

While, sadly, the team were not successful in this national competition, the boys' experience spurred them to set up several online debates via the school's Google Classroom facility. During February, the senior debating society ran debates on such motions as: 'This House believes that Kanye West is more relevant than Shakespeare' and 'This House would ban job applicants from disclosing the names of educational institutions they have attended'. The standard has remained consistently high throughout the 'online phase' of the school's debating provision, demonstrating once again the boys' flexibility and tenacity in making the best of a difficult situation. We look forward to get back to in-person debates soon.

Daniel Wilkins