



# Headlines

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April 2019: Issue 4

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As we approach the end of a long half term, I know that there had been some mixed feelings about the location of the half term break. We were a week earlier than many schools in other parts of the country, but I know that this meant that some of you took advantage of being 'off season' to book some bargain breaks. As an academy, we are free to choose our own holiday dates, but we realise that we also have responsibilities to make sure that we are thinking carefully about families with children in several different schools in our local pyramid. We therefore make sure that we discuss planned holiday dates with partner schools and usually get a high level of agreement with the 'official' Central Beds holiday dates. This year we did make a decision to ensure that we took a full two week break at Christmas, which meant that we were back slightly later than other schools. 'Payback' time comes in the summer, when Redborne's term finishes on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July – but there's still a long summer holiday to come. Next year CBC have moved the February half term back a week so that it is in the middle of the term, but if you are looking out for your bargain breaks again, the October half term in 2019 in Central Beds is again a week earlier than many other council areas, so you may beat the crowds.

The governors and I have had several meetings with Olly Button, our new headteacher, and plans for the handover are proceeding smoothly. We will continue to work closely over my final term to make sure that everything possible is done to ensure that we have a strong staffing team in place for September and that all of the features that make Redborne such a popular and well-regarded school are in good shape as we move into the 'new era'.

There is a consultation taking place into a revised Ofsted framework for the inspection of schools with an increased emphasis on the quality of the curriculum rather than just focusing on raw results and student progress. We have always prided ourselves on the breadth of the curriculum offer at Redborne and you will know that this was identified as a real strength in our last inspection. We're delighted that Ofsted has finally come around to our way of thinking and we're hopeful that this will continue to be rated as an outstanding feature next time the inspectors call. In this edition of the newsletter we will again celebrate the opportunities that are available to the students at Redborne and the successes of talented and determined students.

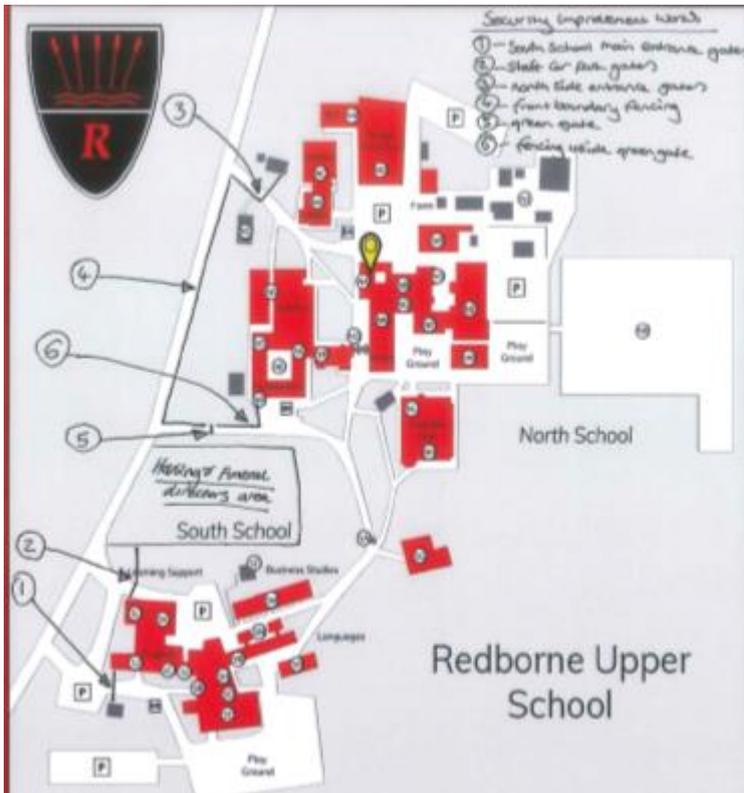
Just to remind you that the day after Easter Monday is a teacher training day, so the first day back for students after Easter is Wednesday April 24<sup>th</sup>. We know that that as we move into the exam season that this can be a stressful time for students and parents and we hope that you will be able to find that balance of support, encouragement, sympathy and coercion necessary to ensure success. Have a very Happy Easter and enjoy the break!



**Steve Gray, Headteacher**

## Site Security

We have been concerned for some time about the extent to which the site has very open access. While we are aware of the community dimension of the school and we certainly do not want to turn the school into a 'fortress', we are also keen to make sure that we take suitable precautions to keep our school community as safe as possible during the working day and to reduce the chances of unwelcome intruders at weekends and in the holidays.



We have therefore devised a plan for improved site security involving fencing and gates along the western boundary of the school, adjacent to Flitwick Road on the north part of the site, and close to the school building in south school.

This will mean that at times other than the normal start and end of the school day, entry will be via gates and a video camera linked to reception. Access to the bus bay in south school is unaffected and the drop-off points will be outside the fenced area. Parking on-site before the end of the school day will no longer be possible once the gates are in place.

Contractors have already set up on site and most of these works should be completed by the time we return after Easter. Funding has been possible due to the additional capital grants for schools announced in the budget last Autumn.

We are confident that these works will improve security overall, but will also have some other benefits, such as improved registration of sixth formers who wish to bring cars on to the site. We are also hoping that it will be a further step towards improving road safety at the start and end of the school day – just to remind parents that to encourage good punctuality and ensure that students can get to their lessons safely, we do restrict access to the north car park from 8.30 to 8.45 in the morning. If you have musical instruments or ingredients for catering to drop off, or need easy access to the north site for any other reason, we would ask you to arrive before 8.30. You will know that we do have senior staff checking on punctuality in the mornings and the new system will enable us to have a greater impact on checking that students arrive in time for the start of lessons at 8.40. Parental co-operation with punctuality is much appreciated.

## Bonne Chance!

We would like to wish all of our French students who are taking their final GCSE and A level speaking exams after Easter the best of luck!

*Miss Crossley and Mrs Shaw*



## Another amazing EPQ evening

*Report by Miss Crossley*

On the 18th March 2019, students, parents, staff and governors were welcomed into The Connolly Hall for an evening exhibition of work undertaken for the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). The qualification, worth half an A2 level, is an opportunity for students to independently choose a topic that enthuses them and that they can take further, developing an essay or creative artefact in an area independent of their other A levels.



For the presentation, students set up a 'market stall' to display their work creatively and face probing questions from their individual supervisors and the wider audience.

The evening was fantastically well attended and it was extremely impressive to see the huge variety of specialist subjects on offer; from projects on space elevators to the production of magazines aimed at animal rights. Students showcased dance production, answered challenging questions about Japanese Colonialism and investigated the golden ratio - a wealth of projects was on show.

The Connolly Hall was filled with an exciting atmosphere throughout the night and it was fantastic to see so many people enjoying the exhibition. Thank you to the EPQ supervisors for their invaluable support throughout the year and for all who attended the evening and made it so successful.



## We're lambing...



This is of course a very busy time of year on the farm, with lambing taking place. Staff and students are both very busy tending to our flock of sheep, who sometimes get a bit adventurous.

It was an interesting surprise when I drove in recently one morning to see half a dozen sheep cheerfully munching away on the grass bank by the car park. Thankfully we were able to round them up easily enough before any damage was done either to sheep or cars!

This photo of some of our recent arrivals was taken by Zsuzsanna Csabai in year 10

# Careers update

*Report by Teresa Farrow, Careers Leader*

Mrs Farrow took over as our new careers leader at the end of the Autumn Term and has been very busy since in setting up programmes to support all students. Careers education and guidance now goes well beyond a work experience placement, which we use for selected year 10 students in the summer term. Mrs Farrow writes about her first term in her new job here:



It is very important for our students to meet employers to help them understand the world of work and this term we have been able to arrange a number of such opportunities:

- In January sixth formers who had expressed an interest in accountancy met with Luton-based Foxley Kingham Chartered Accountants who spoke to them about their apprenticeship which leads to Qualified Chartered Accountant status (ACA) with the ICAEW, considered to be a 'Gold Standard' accountancy qualification recognised globally.
- In early February, a group of year 11s attended an in-school talk led by an apprentice with the Kier Group who spoke about his experience of the construction industry and the pathway he has taken.
- In mid- February Year 9 students had an extended assembly delivered by SEMLEP (The South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership) which focused on current labour market information and the wide range of apprenticeships now available.
- The first week of March was both National Careers Week and national Apprenticeships week. To celebrate this a number of employers were invited to set up lunchtime stands in the Atrium so that students could find out about employment opportunities with them and generally ask questions. Close to 150 students attended the event and benefited from being able to speak to representatives from Center Parcs, Machins solicitors, SEMLEP, Youth Support Services from Central Bedfordshire Council ('CBC') and The Academy of Social Work and Early Intervention from CBC.
- Over fifty of our year 12s attended an Apprenticeships and Universities fair in Milton Keynes in the early part of March and were able to speak to employers and universities as well as attend a range of workshops to support career decisions.
- We've also had workshops from:
  - The National Citizens Service – focusing on body language and presentation in readiness for interviews and the world of work.
  - JCP, part of the Dept for Work and Pensions - Employability Skills.
  - Bedford College Apprenticeship Ambassador – helping them with their searches for apprenticeship and applications to the college for full time courses starting in September.

# Battle of the Bands

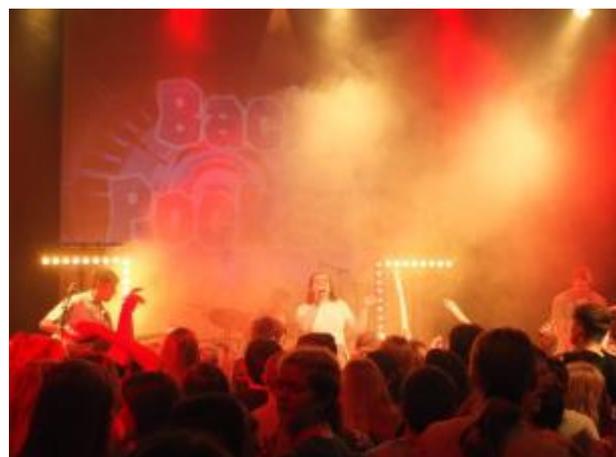
*Report by Charlie Galvin*

Ten bands, three finalists and one winner: Battle of the Bands 2019 was in one word, AWESOME! Each band had gone through auditions, sound checks and hours of practice for the night, their impeccable standard showing their dedication. From original songs to “Blame it on the Boogie” and the Friends theme tune, it was an incredible experience that brought on crowd-surfing, screaming and “questionable” dancing from an electric audience of over 300. After watching each band then perform their two songs, many awaited as the judges nailed it down to the three finalists: The Misfits, No Rest and Back Pocket. All of them then performed spectacularly, and it was Backpocket that secured the win and were crowned the deserving winners of this incredible night. They will be playing at AmpRocks on the 5th of July, whilst the two other finalists will be playing at the Ampthill Festival 2019.



Well done to everyone who performed on the night including: Tone Deaf, The Shambles, Box of Crayons, Daisy and the Alphas, Discord, Saphira, Park Avenue, No Rest, Misfits and Backpocket. All the bands should be proud of their amazing talents and for being some of the most genuine, funny and professional bunch of people in Redborne.

Thank you also to the tech team of year 10, 11 and sixth form music technology students for providing such an awesome experience. A special thank you to Mr Price, Mr Bottone and Mr Cappello for their efforts running the event.



Backpocket went through to the Bedfordshire finals at The Stables on March 27<sup>th</sup> and in a closely-fought contest were just beaten to the winning spot. Well done to Harry Ashby, Micah Baker, Josh Vadiveloo and Phoebe Taylor and don't forget that you will be able to see them in action at Amp Rocks in the summer, where it's now been announced that the line-up will be: Squeeze, The Vamps, Jo Whiley, The Cuban Brothers... and Backpocket!

## Spanish Immersion Trip to Malaga

*Report by Ella Cope, year 11*

It's hard to find the words to describe this year's Spanish trip; from the arrival day right to the final day confidence was built and new friendships formed. Staying with a stranger away from home and away from your comfort zone was a challenge every student on this year's trip overcame. The new Spanish school was welcoming and inspiring; throughout three hours of Spanish lessons not once did I lose interest because of the enthusiasm of the staff. The day trip to Granada was adventurous and interesting, along with the day in Málaga (when we went for a shop in the Spanish version of Oxford Street) which was extra fun! The Spanish school was daunting but as soon as we got talking with the students from there we knew we would stay friends via social media! Overall the trip will be unforgettable and many memories were made.



## A good start at the White Hart?



Oakman Inns, owner of The White Hart in Ampthill opened their doors to Redborne students from year 11 and 12 for an information evening about their apprenticeship programme. They have a range of opportunities including roles in front of house and the kitchen.

Laura, the learning and development manager, spoke to students about what type of training they would receive as well as the huge number of opportunities and benefits they would have access to working for the company. The head chef of The White Hart also spoke to students about his career journey, giving advice and points for them to consider.

The evening ended with a practical element to give the students a flavour of what the training may involve including pizza and mocktail making!

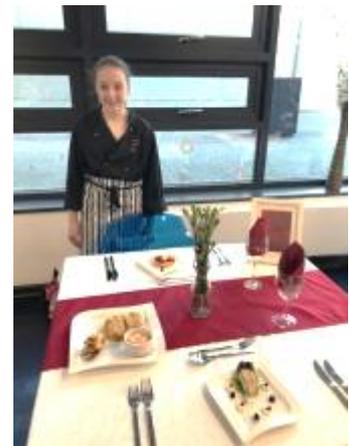
## Redborne's Masterchef?

Report by Amy Gates, year 10



On the 16<sup>th</sup> January I participated in the Amptill Rotary cooking competition, I had to prepare a menu, time plan and two healthy courses. The food was not allowed to cost more than £10. Four external judges came to evaluate our food. I made a garlic stuffed chicken Kiev, potato wedges and a coleslaw accompaniment. There were at least eight of us that participated. I was really pleased with how my dishes turned out and I won this part of the competition. I was now through to the next round with other school or college competition winners.

The next round took place at Hitchin College on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February. This time I had to submit a menu, costings, time plan and make three courses within a two-hour time frame, I had up to £20 to spend. There were around 12 competitors where the top two students would go through to the next round in Sussex. I decided to make mackerel pate, with the garlic stuffed chicken Kiev, sweet potato wedges and coleslaw. For the dessert I made crème patisserie tarts. I had to set the table ready to present the meals as well.



The competitors were very strong with fantastic dishes produced. I was pleased with my efforts and how my dishes turned out. As the final results were announced I was given a highly commended certificate for my work. I was really pleased with this as it meant I had come third. Although I didn't make it through to the next round I really enjoyed the experience.

## Hats on for charity



Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March turned out not to be the day that we left the EU after all, but it was the day when Redborne supported a charity day to raise funds for brain tumour research. Staff and students made direct donations through sales of pin badges and wrist bands and there were also cake sales and events around the school.



## Bounce and smile

*Report from Mr Day*

In support of *Comic Relief 2019* and *The Big Smile: Project Gambia*, 51 pupils across years 9-11 took part in a fundraising charity event. The challenge: to keep our trampolines bouncing NON-STOP for 24 hours. All of the girls rose to the challenge and persevered throughout the night, even after having a sleepover at school had lost its lustre!



Splitting the fundraising money equally between the two charities, the raised funds will go towards supporting vulnerable people and communities in the UK and internationally. In fact, eleven of our pupils, through Maulden Netball Club, will be travelling to The Gambia later this year to deliver training and resources. The girls are looking forward to the experience, and seeing how their efforts can make a difference to people's lives.

A huge thank you and well done to each of the pupils, as well as Mrs Birkett, Mr Stevens and Miss Nemeth for their assistance on the night.



## A Freudian trip

*Report from Rosie Till, year 13*

As year 13 psychology students, we recently visited the Freud museum in London which is the house in which he lived for the final year of his life. We watched a few video clips about his life and were given a guided tour of the house. As both a Jew and a psychoanalyst he was a target for the Nazi Regime and was driven to escaping Vienna to continue life in London. The museum included his consultation room, made up of the office and front room. Freud's office was peculiar as it was heavily furnished with over 2000 antiques and heavy rugs, delivered to the house from Vienna. We also saw the Anna Freud room, the room where his youngest daughter, a child psychoanalyst, lived and worked. This room was a real contrast to that of her father as it was sparsely furnished.

This trip challenged my views on Freud's theories as our tour guide explained to us that the psychosexual stages of development, especially the Oedipus and Electra complexes, are not necessarily sexualizing children.

She said that rather than feeling romantic love towards the parent of the opposite sex, the child feels adoration towards them, and is therefore jealous of attention received between parents.



## Senior student elections

Campaigns for the senior student elections have proved more popular than ever this year – we had a new record of 14 candidates putting themselves forward. In the 'primary' phase students submitted letters of application and were interviewed by panels of staff and fellow students. As a result of this process the final seven candidates were taken through to the final round of campaigning where they made their 'pitch' to the students in assemblies. Polling day on Wednesday April 3<sup>rd</sup> saw 568 people cast their votes, with the best turnout being in year 10, where 163 people voted.

We used a preferential voting system and after three rounds of voting, with some people's third or fourth preferences coming into play in the final round, the three winners emerged. So congratulations to our senior students for 2019-20:



**Joe Wilde**



**Rhianna-May Duffy**



**Dan Clements**

## Fern's decade of determination

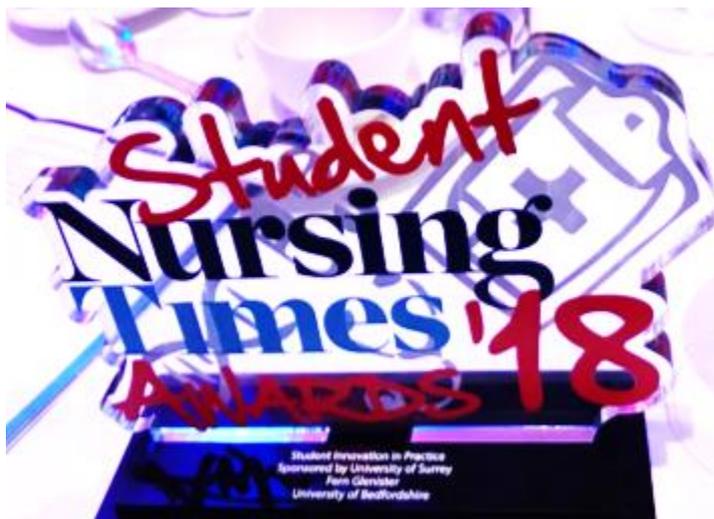
It's always good to hear news of students who have made a success of their lives after leaving Redborne and this was a particularly heart-warming story. Fern Glenister was a Redborne student between 2005 and 2009 and it's fair to say that her teenage years were not easy for her. It was far from obvious when she was back in years 10 and 11 that the future would be a bright one. This is not the story of someone who moved smoothly into the sixth form, on to university and then into a career.

Fern left Redborne with a determination to show that she had a potential that could be realised and that she could prove any doubters wrong. Working to overcome a number of problems in her personal life, she then set out on a journey that has taken a decade, via study at Bedford College and then the University of Bedfordshire, to reach the point where not only has she graduated with a first class degree in nursing, but won the Nursing Times award for being one of Britain's best nursing students, having shown her determination to give something back for all the assistance that she received in her adolescent years.



*Fern writes: "I qualified back in September with a 1st class! Very surprised but extremely chuffed. I'm working in an acute psychiatric unit at the moment. It has its challenges but it's fun and rewarding most of the time. I will venture back into the world of child and adolescent mental health soon though."*

*Before I qualified, I won a national student nursing award for the work I did with adolescent mental health. This March I go back to judge the next round of applicants. How the tables have turned!"*



It's always good to celebrate success, especially when it has not come through a conventional route. Although I realise that none of the current generation of students and very few of the staff will remember Fern, I wanted to include her story to show that even if you are a student who feels that at this moment you are not enjoying school and can't see what the future holds for you, if you can get the appropriate support at the right times and you have the talent and the determination to make something of yourself then amazing things may follow.

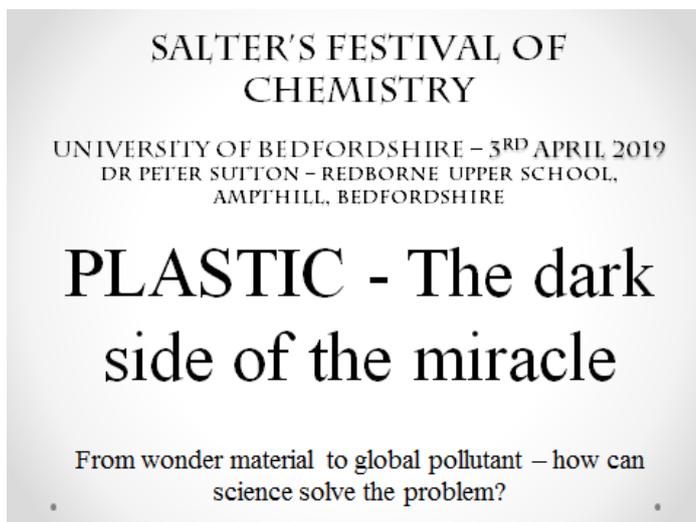
*Believe in yourself and never give up – be inspired by Fern's fantastic example.*

## Dr Sutton speaks at the Salters' Festival of Chemistry

This Royal Society of Chemistry sponsored Festival of Chemistry was held at the University of Bedfordshire's Luton Campus on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.

Dr Sutton was invited to be the guest speaker for the event and spoke about the relatively recent realisation that plastics have become a serious physical and chemical threat to many species of life on Earth. The plight of these species, particularly those living in marine environments such as the Blue Whale and the Manta Ray was highlighted, as was the ubiquitous threat from microplastics, with their ability to absorb other chemical pollutants.

Possible and often innovative solutions to this problem were provided, with examples of goods and materials that could be made from ocean waste and other sources of plastic, including: trainers, new road-building materials, strong composite materials, mattresses, and carbon nanotubes that can be used in hi-tech electrical goods.



From left to right: Dr Bushra Ahmed (Chairperson and Salters' event coordinator), Dr Ahmed Eroje (judge), Dr Sutton, Marium Begum (judge), Professor S. Sveenivasaprasad (Head of Department) and Audrey Strong (Salters' representative).

## School Council Wellbeing Survey

The school council for the past term have really had their focus on addressing the issues with the mental health and wellbeing of students at Redborne. We decided that putting out a survey would be the most suitable way to gauge an understanding of what students from Years 9 to 13 believe would be the best ways to tackle such issues. A group of students worked together with Ms Tink to devise the questions and we had over 400 responses from across the school. We have analysed the results and Rhianna-May Duffy presented the findings to the school's pastoral committee. We are now looking to implement a plan next term. In addition to this, Roshni Patel has written a monthly newsletter titled "Positivity", shedding light on the matter to raise awareness. Issues to date have discussed ways to combat exam stress and the use of social media.

Finally a group of four students from the council (Dan Niles, Molly Bulteel, Charlie Galvin and Rhianna-May Duffy) spoke about their work in front of an audience of about 100 at the community forum on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April and were excellent ambassadors for the school.

This first chart shows that about two thirds of students who responded to the survey rated themselves as 'OK (3) or happy (4 or 5)', whereas the other third had a less positive view of their school lives.

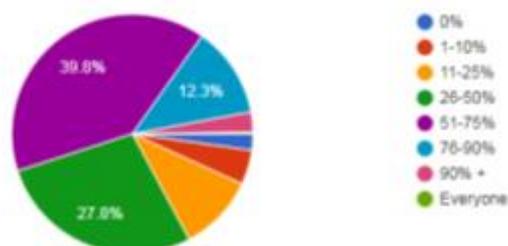


We also wanted to find out whether students had an accurate perception of how other students were feeling (see chart 2).

You will see that the actual figure of 67% from chart 1 was correctly chosen by the largest number of people (the purple slice in the chart below). Almost half of students thought that their peers were less happy than they actually are according to chart 1.

**Generally, across school, how many people do you think would give themselves a happiness score of at least 3 out of 5?**

407 responses



1 person thought that no-one in the school would be unhappy, whereas 9 people thought that no-one in school at all is happy!