



Headlines

July 2019: Issue 5

Why don't you hit us, Sir?

Reflections on a half century in education

Welcome to the final newsletter of the year. This is, of course, also my final newsletter as Headteacher before I retire at the end of the term. So I thought I would take this opportunity to pick some memories from across the decades which may have some interest or relevance to the present day, or to illustrate the way that the world has changed over the last half century.

Schooldays in the sixties

I started secondary school in 1966. Being gay was still illegal, as was abortion and you couldn't vote until you were 21. There were very few comprehensive schools and final years of primary school were dominated by whether we would pass the 11+ exam. It's easily forgotten that most people failed this exam (typically 3 out of 4) and that we now have about twice the proportion of young people going to university that used to pass the 11+ and went to grammar school. The 11+ divided families and friends: my best friend and I ended up on opposite sides of the divide and drifted apart in the years that followed.

The student campaigns in recent years to allow shorts have amused me as, having been *forced* to wear shorts in all weathers and seasons throughout primary school, the opportunity to wear long trousers was an important rite of passage for us when growing up. For my generation, shorts were for babies - we wouldn't have been seen dead in shorts once we were teenagers!

1966 was of course the year that England hosted, and won, the World Cup. This would no doubt be regarded as reckless or neglectful parenting these days, but I recall heading off optimistically (and ticketless!) with a friend to catch the Underground for the four stops down the line to Wembley Park in the hope of securing entry to the England v Argentina quarter final. And we got in! I still have no idea to this day whether the tickets we were sold were fakes, but they were good enough to get us through the turnstiles. I didn't actually see very much of course – most of Wembley was terracing in those days - I was even shorter then than I am now and there were no giant screens for the replays (indeed no TV replays at all). However, we got safely home and England were safely through to the semis after a notoriously ill-tempered and bruising encounter. The balance between safeguarding young people and learning that sense of independence and resilience where you develop a confidence and ability to deal with situations for yourself is an interesting one – I'm not sure that in the age of mobile-phone tracking we always get it right these days.



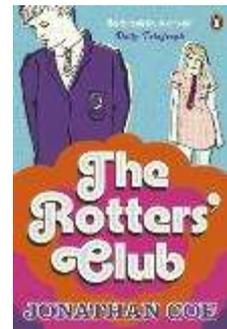
These were the days when the school leaving age was still 15 – it was my year group that was the first who had to stay on into what is now year 11. This is another easily forgotten fact about the education system in the fifties and early sixties – most students left school *without any exam passes at all* because they left in year 10 and didn't take any exams! Even after the leaving age was raised, students could leave school at Christmas or Easter in year 11 if they had turned 16 by then and through the seventies a significant minority took up that option and never made it through to the end of year 11.

The seventies: student life and the start of a career in teaching



In 1973 I left suburbia for the bright lights of Birmingham and to study chemistry. Being a student was a minority pursuit in those days – only about 1 in 10 young people went on to higher education. Much is written now about how we were lucky to get student grants in those days and to some extent that was true, but all grants were means-tested and there was no entitlement to any funding in your own right as a student – 18 year olds were still the 'property' of their parents. My parents were both able and willing to pay the parental contribution (about half the grant in my case) but some of the poorest students I knew were the children of rich parents who had fallen out with them! They got no funding in their own right (because their parents were well off) and little or nothing from their parents either (because parents and children hated each other!).

In November 1974 I was working in my room on writing up a lab practical report in the evening with the radio on in the background. This recall of detail may seem surprising 45 years later, but some events become etched in the memory. The news came over the radio that two bombs had gone off in the centre of Birmingham – the IRA had struck. Once the full horror of the terrorist attack became clear, there were 21 deaths and another 180 people injured and the city remained in a state of high alert. The following day I had tickets to see the comedian Spike Milligan. It was a remarkable gig and the laughter was a way of releasing the tension and of expressing community solidarity. Within days, six men had been arrested and charged. While some of us may have been a little uneasy that the suspects had been beaten up by police and prison guards to extract a 'confession', there was nevertheless relief that the case had been solved so quickly. Except of course that it hadn't. Six men were convicted, but it was years later that doubts started to emerge about whether the wrong men had been locked up. This was a lesson to me that has resonated down the years – however dreadful the offence, it's really important to make sure that we keep a clear head, look at the facts and not punish the innocent out of a sense of horror. *The Rotters Club*, a tale of adolescent angst set in this era, remains one of my favourite novels, not least because of the sense of time and place. And without wishing to get too political, there may be some people who are wondering what all the fuss is about with all the debate about the Irish border and Brexit. I could so easily have been in the city centre that night walking down New Street when the bombs went off. The importance of maintaining peace in Ireland cannot be overstated.



I started work in 1977 in Oldbury. Despite living in Birmingham for four years as a student, I was quite unprepared for the richness and grammatical quirks of the Black Country dialect. These were the days when form tutors were responsible for collecting lunch money and this was duly one of my tasks on my first day. After some obviously bemused looks on my part, I finally managed to deduce that "Am yow stopping sandwiches?" translated as an enquiry about whether a friend was going to stay on the school site and have a packed lunch (as opposed to "Am yow going howem?")

It was a school that was in the final stages of transition from being a grammar school into a comprehensive and many longer-serving staff resented the change. My support for comprehensive education marked me out as a bit suspect in their eyes. A well-aimed board rubber, or the use of a ruler, the slipper or the cane were a part of everyday life, and when it became obvious that I was not a fan of corporal punishment either, it confirmed the collective view that I was a complete weirdo. The quote that I've used as the title for this piece was said to me about half way through my initial year by a bemused year 9 student who hadn't considered that there was any other way of getting students to behave. It has stayed with me as a desperately sad comment from a thankfully bygone era.

The 80s and 90s: promotion, relocation and pollution

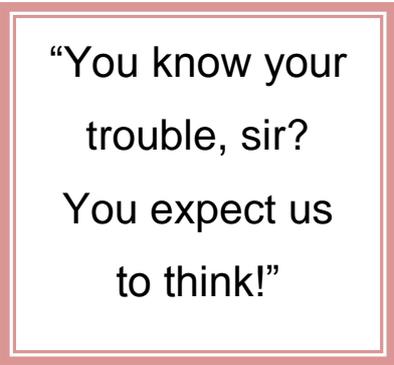
It may sound a strange thing to say, but I think at some point failure is important – we become stronger, more resilient and perhaps more aware of pitfalls as a result of experiences that may not have gone according to plan. And we can also have a better standard of comparison in the future. I have known both students and staff say that they hadn't realised until they left and moved on elsewhere what a remarkable community Redborne was. The number of ex-students on the staff and those staff who have come back to Redborne having sampled life elsewhere is a testament to how highly many people regard the school.

So thankfully I managed to escape my first 'square peg in a round hole' job for an environment that was more in tune with my values - I really appreciated the new surroundings. Jobs back in Birmingham and then later on in Reading saw my promotion to Head of Chemistry by the mid-80s. These were urban schools with many rewards for doing a good job but also many challenges.

Those who look back on a supposed golden age have distorted memories – there was never a time when all students behaved themselves and everyone passed exams and in most respects schools now are far better than they were thirty or forty years ago. I recall incidents from the eighties where a student who was determined to escape from a detention did so by climbing out of the window – on the first floor! Incredibly, he survived the 10 foot 'leap to freedom' with virtually no injuries, other than to his pride when we caught up with him the next day.

On another occasion, the combination of a disaffected student, an unsympathetic teacher and some frankly cheap and shoddy construction resulted in the student's foot coming right through the lab door when he kicked it in anger. His foot then got stuck and he couldn't get it out again – at least not until he'd calmed down sufficiently to get some assistance from a member of staff. These were definitely not the 'good old days' in terms of student behaviour!

In 1988 I became Head of Science and moved to Milton Keynes. The standard theory lesson in those days involved copying off the board or out of a text book, or completing endless worksheets with missing words. My job was to try and move things on with a greater focus on learning rather than just keeping students busy. Once again this wasn't always appreciated by students (or staff) who were being moved out of their comfort zone. "You know your trouble, sir?.." said one year 10 student not long after I'd started, "Your trouble is that you expect us to think!" I guess I'd plead guilty to that charge and I hope I've got a few more students thinking in the intervening years.



**“You know your
trouble, sir?
You expect us
to think!”**

The other task that tested my diplomatic skills to the limit seems completely bizarre now, but I was faced with civil war in the science department from the teachers who were divided into smoking and non-smoking factions. I was pitched into an argument about whether we should continue to allow

smoking in departmental meetings. As a non-smoker myself my sympathies lay with the smoke-free side, but the science staff room was one of the two designated smoking areas in the school for staff. In the end we persuaded the smokers that they could wait until the end of the official meeting before lighting up but it was a close-run thing to avoid mutiny in the staff room.

A few years later legislation phased out smoking in public buildings completely, although for a quiet life I did indulge my addicted colleague who was found with his head up the fume cupboard for five minutes at the start of break each day with his own specifically designed 'smoke extraction test'. While it would be a very foolish head who claimed that there were never any prohibited items on his or her school site, the prevalence of smoking both in schools and in society at large has dropped dramatically in the last 30 years as advertising bans, public health campaigns and increased taxation have all taken their effect.

The new millenium and arrival at Redborne

As the new millenium came I felt I was ready for deputy headship. At this level, interviews are of course very competitive and there were a few failed attempts along the way. On one occasion, I had gone to a two-day interview where I hadn't made it past the 'cut' on the first day. I had mixed feelings – disappointment obviously, but with a lingering doubt about how well I would have worked with the head who seemed to be a bit of an unpredictable maverick. I suspect those doubts on my part had shown during the first day. A little while after I started at Redborne, my local paper thudded on to the doormat with a headline that announced that the head I might have worked with had been suspended because of an alleged assault on the deputy - a lucky escape!

I started at Redborne in 2002 and it was a splendid September. I recall receiving a very warm welcome from both staff and students and I was really impressed with how polite the students were compared with schools I had worked in previously. Drawing up in the car park in the morning with the sun coming up over the farm and the sound of sheep in the fields, I knew I had been lucky enough to secure a job in exactly the right school for me. I trust that you will give Mr Button a similarly warm welcome.

Redborne has long been a really good school, but there was of course work to be done. Ideas about data tracking and a greater emphasis on student progress were starting to take hold and this was an area where we needed to improve. When Ofsted came to inspect in 2005 the student progress data was still marginal and I remember vividly a two-hour grilling by an inspector in which we went over tables, graphs and charts time and time again. I emerged exhausted at the end but confident that I'd done enough to convince the inspector that we were at least 'good'. Of course we were even better in 2008 and held on to the outstanding rating for nearly a decade before the tougher criteria caught up with us, despite the report being even more complimentary than nine years previously, especially about our continuing commitment to a broad-based curriculum, something which once again is coming back into fashion.

In 17 years I've met lots of amazing and talented students, worked with many dedicated and skilled teachers and seen the campus transformed with some fantastic new buildings. I've enjoyed many productions and concerts and continue to be amazed by the professionalism of our public performances. And I've been proud of many of the improvements that we've put in place.

The planning for the handover from Mr Croft started over three years ago and in the last 18 months I've had fantastic support from all my colleagues on senior team. We're now in the final phase of that transition and while I've had a wonderful time here at Redborne and it now feels like the right time to move on. Thanks for all who contribute to our superb community culture and I am sure that the future for Redborne will be a bright one. Good luck to Mr Button, and farewell from me!

Steve Gray, Headteacher

Redborne tops the table with D of E

Redborne has long had a commitment to encouraging students to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh award, as is shown by the honours boards on display in the Connolly Hall. Many students benefit from the scheme and as this newsletter goes to press this year's cohort of Gold Award students are just about to set off for their practice expedition in the Lake District. Each year, there is a published statistical review and while for most people (there will be a few statistical obsessives out there, I'm sure) the personal experiences will mean more than the numbers, there is nevertheless a huge amount for Redborne to be proud of.



Of the 34 centres in Bedfordshire that operated the D of E scheme in 2018-19 (including schools in the private sector):

- Redborne had more students (58) completing bronze award than any other centre;
- We had the second highest number of silver awards (19) and gold awards (11);
- The number of new starters at silver and gold (51) was the highest of any state school;
- The total number of completed awards (88) was the highest of any school;
- Our completion rate of 69% was the second highest overall for any of the ten schools that entered more than 40 students at the start of the year.

This is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of the students, the support of the parents and, of course, the leadership of the staff in school who give so willingly of their time, often at the weekends, to support the students in their endeavours. Well done to one and all!



Site Security, access and punctuality



The new fences and gates are now fully installed and, while as is so often the case with these projects, there have been a few technical issues that have needed sorting, we are now up and running. In the initial stages we have just had the gates shut at night and for a brief period in the morning to control traffic and monitor punctuality as students come on to site. We will be extending the times at which the gates are closed during the school day – if parents need to gain access when the gates are shut you should use the call buttons on the posts by the side of the drive. We are still discussing arrangements for sixth formers – there is the possibility of card access or using a PIN code.

If you are leaving the site in a car, the gates will open automatically when you drive up to the yellow line. We are aware that the sensors in the road have been placed quite close to the gates and this should be modified over the summer, but the gates will open and miss your bonnet at the moment – no-one has been scraped so far!

The new punctuality procedure has been a great success – the number of students arriving at 8.40 or later has dropped dramatically since we introduced the same-day detention system. The area that we are still targeting is students who are on site at the right time but are still late to lessons because they are chatting to friends or have left it until the last minute to go to the toilet. Thanks to parents for their co-operation in supporting us with getting students here and in lessons on time.

We have had some concerns expressed by the contractors on the new estate about parents parking at the end of the school day. The estate road has not been adopted by the Local Authority and is fully owned by Connolly Homes, i.e. this is still private land. Despite the fact that signs are installed on the verges of the roads at the site entrance, some parents are ignoring the requests and continuing to park in their entrance road. There is a concern that this is causing traffic problems and is dangerous considering the high number of large lorry movements in and out of this entrance on a daily basis. Mostly because of these safety concerns, but also because we are keen to keep good community relations in general and with Connolly Homes in particular, your co-operation would be much appreciated.

Lessons from Auschwitz

By Jasmine Ellis-Rance and Rhianna-May Duffy, year 12

On Tuesday 19th March we visited Auschwitz-Birkenau and Oswiecim with the Holocaust educational Trust. We were selected students, chosen to participate in a scheme called 'Lessons from Auschwitz', set up to increase knowledge of the Holocaust for young people, and to highlight clearly what can happen if prejudice and racism become acceptable; educating young people so events like this are avoided again. We wanted to understand the seriousness of the occurrence and gain first-hand knowledge of the Holocaust.

The visits were preceded and followed by half day conferences in order to ensure an exceptional experience. At the first conference, we were introduced to key members of the Holocaust Educational Trust, as well as attending seminars on the history of the Holocaust and hearing a first-hand Holocaust survivor testimony. This was mainly to prepare us for the trip to Poland.



There were in total six death camps, all of them on Polish territory, strategically located to be close to large Jewish populations and on the main transportation routes. Auschwitz was established as a concentration camp within months of the Nazi occupation of Poland in 1940 with the first political prisoners arriving in June: political prisoners, prisoners of war, Roma and Sinti and Jews.

Birkenau was built in 1941, as the sub-camp from Auschwitz and was later developed to be the main extermination centre. During this time, the Nazis lived on site, with the head of Auschwitz even

bringing his family with him, living in a building just outside of the camp. Since Auschwitz was a work camp, many of the victims had different jobs; some of the women went to work as maids in the SS buildings and houses.

One of the key things that struck us on this trip was the enormous number of pots and pans collected from Canada – the building where the luggage from arrivals would be taken too. People would bring cooking equipment with them, with the prospect of making a new life for themselves and their family. The pots and pans remind us that all these people had homes and lives, just like us. They are simple, everyday objects, which signify how innocent victims of the Holocaust were. As soon as they arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau their lives were literally stripped away. Many who were sent straight to the gas chambers never had their identities recorded.

All of those involved in the Holocaust were individual human beings, including victims, perpetrators, bystanders and collaborators. This opportunity has made us realise how impersonal statistics can be. It's exemplified the value of remembering individuals, rather than regurgitating that 6 million people died; this is just incomprehensible.



In the last conference, the seminars were looking at modern genocides and analysing them as well as equipping us of how to spot the early signs of a genocide. For example, the Rohingya are an ethnic group, the majority of whom are Muslims, who have lived for centuries in the Buddhist country of Myanmar. They have been denied citizenship in Myanmar since 1982, which has effectively rendered them stateless. They are not allowed to leave without government permission, and live in ghetto-like camps, with a lack of basic services and opportunities. This is leading to large persecution of the people of the Rohingya. Crackdowns on the Rohingya have often reported torture, arson and murder by the Myanmar security forces. Persecution is still happening today.

We also learnt about the importance and significance of the Holocaust. Because of this, events like these should not be described as 'Modern day Holocausts' as the scale of the Holocaust across the world was huge and using the term to describe other events undermines its significance. What happened should not be spoken of lightly, and it is hard to put this across to people. "Hearing is not like seeing" *Rabbi Barry Marcus*.

Today, Swastikas are found graffitied on walls, parks and even in classrooms. This emphasises the lack of respect for Holocaust victims. This experience showed we need to actively educate our friends, family and colleges on the gravity of the Holocaust, so that we do learn from history.



The Other Play | 2020

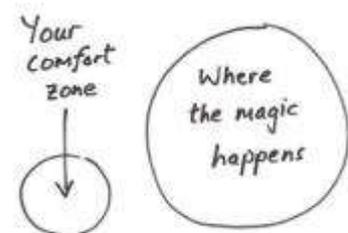
Each year, Redborne's Drama Department will offer Years 9 and 10 the opportunity to audition for a small-scale but fully directed ensemble production.

Auditions will take place as we approach the Christmas holidays, and roles and scripts will be issued to successful students before the break.

Rehearsals will be 3.15-4.45 on Mondays and Wednesdays and the process could contribute towards the 6 month skills section for bronze or silver D of E.

Please bear in mind that you would need to be successful in audition and survive the whole process (students who have repeated rehearsal absences will leave the project) in order to use "The Other Play" as evidence for D of E.

Please do not audition if you cannot commit to the rehearsal or performance dates! For 2020, the production will be *Teechers* by John Godber, and the performance dates are 20th and 21st May at 7.30pm.



The Iceland trip 2019

Report by Ellie Moore, Year 12



The Iceland trip 2019 was amazing! It snowed the entire time we were there, giving us picturesque white views for miles. We stayed for 3 nights, leaving at 5am on Wednesday and getting back late Saturday night. We managed to squeeze lots into our stay, visiting many spectacular landmarks in the South-West of Iceland.

One of my highlights were seeing the geyser at Strokkur, which erupts every 8 minutes. We also went behind a waterfall and visited the famous Pingvellir National Park, the only place on land where you can see the Mid Atlantic Ridge where the tectonic plates are pulling apart. I also enjoyed exploring Reykjavik with my friends.

The best bit though was seeing a glacier! It was breathtaking. It was really interesting, and we were able to spot the features we'd learned about at school, linking the textbook to the environment in front of us! On the last night we sat outside hoping to see the northern lights, but unfortunately we didn't get lucky. However, we did get a very nice late night walk out of it, so our efforts weren't wasted.



Lastly, to finish off our trip we went to the blue lagoon, a geothermal spa, where we treated ourselves to silica-rich face packs and swam in the 38 degree geothermal lagoon.

Thank you to all the teachers who came on the trip and helped make it amazing. We had a lovely time and it's a trip I'll never forget, a once in a life time experience!

Summer Concert and Proms in the Park

Another fabulous occasion, and a great send off for Mr Bottone! The weather was set fair for this year's Summer Concert and proved to be a fitting tribute to all the hard work put in over the years by the students and staff. The festival atmosphere was enhanced by the barbeque and refreshment stalls and a large audience of several hundred was wowed with some fantastic performances.



This included the world premiere of *Sanguinare* – an impressive orchestral piece composed by Eloise Crossman in year 12. The crowd was swelled by a significant number of former music students who had come back for the farewell concert by Mr Bottone – the Facebook group chat organised by our year 13 students had worked its magic.

At the end of the main proceedings the year 13 students returned for a surprise encore – a tribute to Mr Bottone with a re-worked version of The Beatles' *I Want to Tell You*. They then presented him with a huge card signed by many students past and present and a specially engraved conductor's baton as a parting gift.



The evening concluded with a duet by Bottone and Gray, backed by the staff band and the boys' acapella group, with almost all of those on stage at that point saying Goodbye-ee as they leave Redborne for pastures new.

The concert was another example of the high standard of music that he and his department have managed to achieve over a number of years. He will be missed by students and staff alike, although he will still be seen from time to time in his new role with Inspiring Music.

The department will be left in safe hands as Mr Price takes over the reins from September.



The music department was in action again a few days later at the Ampthill Festival *Proms in the Park*. The Jazz Band played an energetic set under the leadership of Mr Price, and Mr Bottone conducted the Ampthill Concert Orchestra with his characteristic panache.

The choir also contributed their voices to a number of pieces, including Karl Jenkins' *Adiemus* and extracts from *The Jungle Book*.

The Ampthill Rotary Club came on stage to present us with a very welcome cheque for the school's contribution to music in the local community, which will be used for upgrading instruments within the department. The evening finished in traditional 'Proms' style with much flag-waving and audience participation with Jerusalem and Land of Hope and Glory before the dramatic finale of Carmina Burana, effectively synchronised with the firework display over Ampthill Great Park.

Another great night for Redborne and for the local community!



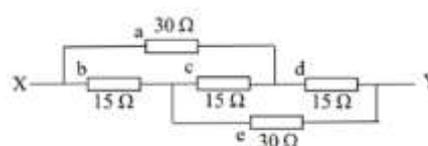
Quite the challenge!

Report by Olivia Calloway

This year, students in all year groups were given the opportunity to complete the British Physics Olympiad Challenge. This is a series of questions that really push the boundaries of the pupils' understanding and application of physics knowledge. Only the bravest were up for the challenge - giving up their own time after school and during lunch times. The papers are designed to stretch and challenge the top young physicists in the country, against other students - both nationally and internationally. The amount of interest from Redborne students was incredible, and their commitment and enthusiastic attitude was a real credit to the school.

Due to the challenging nature of these questions, any mark is worth commendation. One exam question in the year 11 paper asked pupils to calculate the speed of the moon, when given the size of the shadows during a lunar eclipse. Another y12 question asked pupils to calculate the number of neutrinos generated in the sun every second from the fusion reactions inside. I've also included a circuit diagram which pupils had to find the total resistance of:

Every student put in tremendous efforts and showed great perseverance.



Huge congratulations should go to:

- *Year 13 commendation award:* Michael Wetherill, Archie Sewell, Emily Barrett, Jack Lynch, Edward Charleton, Xing Xing Sarney, Daniel Shield
- *Year 12 commendation award:* Sam Kebble, Rory Wilson
- *Year 11 bronze 1 award :* Oliver Brady
- *Year 11 bronze 2 award:* Edward Poulett
- *Year 11 commendation award:* Thomas Warnford
- *Year 10 gold award:* Tommy Ilgunas, David Crossman, Keiran Milne, Finlay Barford, Evan Lewis
- *Year 10 silver award:* Oscar Tucker, Louise Holman, Ben Lynch
- *Year 10 bronze award :* Thomas Blomfield, Christopher Holman, Lucy Rhodes
- *Year 10 commendation award:* Henry Francis, Niamh Whitehead, Will Harvey

Well done to you all!

Redborne Racing on the podium

We finished 2nd overall out of 14 cars in the Eastern counties at the Ford test track in Essex. From this podium finish, RR have qualified for the Greenpower Final at Silverstone in October! This is an electric vehicle project in which students design, build and race a car over 90 mins to achieve the highest mileage on one set of 24V batteries. Last year, RR finished 22nd from over 300 other teams nationally.



The students involved are:

(Year 9) Leighton Sims, George Cole, Henry Ambrose, Liam Waby, Will Treanor, Callum Ankerman
(Year 10) Hollie English, Hollie Madigan, Bradley Pollard, Jaeger Bagley, Nathan Craddock, Nathan Ducker

School Council report

Mental Health Forum - Recently, the school council has been focusing on improving wellbeing in the school. With results from the wellbeing survey last term, many initiatives are developing to encourage students to look after and improve their emotional health. Last half term, we were asked to speak at a local community forum – ‘Busy Getting Stronger’.



Charlie Galvin, Dan Niles, Molly Bulteel, and Rhianna-May Duffy spoke about the importance of supporting those with mental health difficulties and implementing positive wellbeing at school, as well as the results from the student survey and what we've been doing/going to as a school to improve wellbeing. All students who either attended the forum as part of the audience or spoke found it an extremely valuable experience. One member of the audience commented afterwards; "It's so inspiring to see other young people being brave to speak out – to know you're not alone."



Hut Project - Alongside the year council we have made much progress with clearing out and cleaning the hut behind the humanities building.

Our hopes are to turn the space into both a 'student-forum' meeting area, in which any students can meet us to propose any ideas they have for the school, and a mindfulness area to boost the work of the Mental Health Committee.

Toasty Tuesday- We have been hosting fundraisers in the Culcheth Centre since 18th June to purchase additional toasters for the centre with some help from store managers at Waitrose and Tesco who have agreed to supply us with some bread. Surplus profits after the purchase of the toaster will go towards refurbishing the hut.

Form Times- senior students have been going into year 9 and 10 form rooms so that we can have a chat and hear any suggestions from those who perhaps don't feel comfortable coming to find us themselves.

Senior Students - Our key goals for 2019-20.

- Canteens – we've already had some discussions about making North School canteen into a more sociable area. There will be some improvements in place for this September with some new furniture, redecoration and refurbished flooring. There have also been discussions about how we can reduce the amount of pushing in the queues and we have agreed with Mr French that we will be able to purchase some 'airport-style' barriers to improve queue-management. We also hope to introduce healthier and more inclusive (e.g. vegetarian and vegan) menus to the canteen, with the help of the hospitality department.
- Environment - By introducing more recycling bins and planting more plants/trees around the school we also hope to make Redborne a bit more environmentally friendly. We would hope to fund this venture by hosting some fundraisers, for example, a Krispy Kreme sale or a non-uniform day to celebrate Earth Week.
- Mental Health - We would love to raise awareness for mental health issues. By introducing a mental wellbeing scheme into form times, we can ensure all students know where to get help.
- We also enjoyed our first official engagement helping to 'meet and greet' at the induction evening for year 8 students and parents who are joining Redborne in September.



Joe Wilde



Rhianna-May Duffy



Dan Clements

PYN conference

On Friday 5th July, a representation of Redborne's Pride Youth Network group were privileged enough to attend a conference in London where they got to meet 14 other schools who also attended and discuss issues relevant to inclusivity and diversity.

The Pride Youth Network group is made of LGBT+ students who want to make Redborne and society a more inclusive and understanding place. At the conference they attended they were witness and part of a discussion panel of what the future of gender could be and the social responsibility activists have, as well as attending workshops run by the London Gay Men's Chorus that provided a great deal of fun for the students and cumulated in a performance of The Greatest Showman's *This is Me* song which had a powerful message for the students.

They have come back with many ideas of what they'd like to achieve next and will be running a fundraising stall at Redborne festival say to raise awareness of LGBT+ issues.



Mia makes it to the Megacrew

Mia Beeney in year 10 is a member of a dance school, called IMD Legion, who recently won the Hip Hop International UK championships and have qualified for the HHI World Championships taking place in Phoenix, Arizona in August this year. It's the biggest street dance competition in the world, with teams from Europe, Asia and beyond all competing and IMD Legion are one of just two UK teams going. Mia will be dancing in two categories, the Varsity crew division and the Megacrew division, and she's incredibly excited about the trip and opportunity to compete on the world stage. Many congratulations Mia and have a great trip!



Connolly Foundation invests in staffing for the future

It's not just school pupils which benefit from the Connolly Foundation, but future teachers as well.

Students who opt to study for a postgraduate teaching qualification at Redborne School, in conjunction with the University of Bedfordshire, are eligible for a £1,000 grant and subsidised accommodation whilst learning.

The Connolly Foundation is also offering 30 rooms in 11 new units being built by Connolly homes adjacent to the school, providing accommodation for students for the duration of the course with subsidised rents.

Nigel Croft, a trustee of the Connolly Foundation and former Principal of Redborne School is delighted that the foundation is offering this support to students.

"The Connolly Foundation is committed to supporting education and teaching projects across Bedfordshire", he said.

"This new way of getting that final teaching qualification whilst being permanently in school and learning from and with qualified staff will result in high quality post graduates entering the profession."



Beginning of term arrangements

We are making a change to the traditional start of term arrangements to ensure a more effective transition for students in Years 9 and 12:

- Monday 2nd September: Staff training day
- Tuesday 3rd September: Staff training day
- Wednesday 4th September: First day for Year 9 and Year 12 students. Some Year 13 students to attend by invitation to assist (e.g. with buddying)
- Thursday 5th September: First day for Year 10 and Year 11 and year 13 students

Registration

In order to further improve pastoral support, guidance and ultimately behaviour and attendance we have decided to move registration to the beginning of the school day. Please note, the beginning and end of the school day will not be affected. The revised timings are shown below:

| Current timings | | Proposed timings | |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| 8.35am | Movement time | 8.35am | Movement time |
| 8.40am | Lesson 1 | 8.40am | Registration |
| 9.40am | Movement time | 9.00am | Movement time |
| 9.45am | Lesson 2 | 9.05am | Lesson 1 |
| 10.45am | Break | 10.05am | Movement time |
| 11.00am | Movement time | 10.10am | Lesson 2 |
| 11.05am | Lesson 3 | 11.10am | Break |
| 12.05am | Movement time | 11.25am | Movement time |
| 12.10pm | Lesson 4 | 11.30am | Lesson 3 |
| 1.10pm | Lunch | 12.30pm | Movement time |
| 1.45pm | Movement time | 12.35pm | Lesson 4 |
| 1.50pm | Registration | 1.35pm | Lunch |
| 2.10pm | Lesson 5 | 2.10pm | Lesson 5 |
| 3.10pm | End of day | 3.10pm | End of day |