



Royal
Russell

Headmaster's Weekly Newsletter

15th January 2021



Dear Parents, Pupils and Friends,

This has been a challenging week both nationally and globally and it has therefore been wonderful to see some sense of routine and rhythm embedded with the online learning running for all of our Senior School pupils. I really appreciate the different demands that learning from home places on our pupils and I have been hugely impressed by the focus and engagement that I have seen on my visits to some of the classes.

At Year Group Assemblies on Wednesday morning, Heads of Year were able to congratulate some of the individual pupils who have been working particularly well in the first week of term. The School Assembly, this afternoon, was broadcast to all pupils and staff and is available to view [here](#).



On Thursday afternoon I hosted an update meeting for our Year 11 pupils and parents with Mrs Snelgrove and Mrs Hart. This was an opportunity to share our thoughts on the likely position for the GCSE examinations and assessments this summer as, after a flurry of announcements on this matter over the last week, we still await urgent clarification from Ofqual and the Department for Education regarding their plans.

Our core message remains the same as it has throughout this academic year; pupils in Year 11, 12 and 13 should continue to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding required to successfully master the specification being studied and enable progression and a strong transition to the next stage in their academic journey. So thank you for your patience and understanding, keep working hard on your programme of study, and the Royal Russell Staff Team will keep working hard to support you through to the successful conclusion of your GCSE, BTEC and A level courses.

Year 11 pupils and parents will have the opportunity to meet teachers at their Parents' Evening on Thursday 21 January which will be held on our virtual platform. This evening will be followed by 1:1 interviews for Year 11 pupils with members of the Upper School and Leadership Team on 27 and 28 January.

We plan to hold a further Year 11 Q&A on Wednesday 3 February at 5.30pm.

Year 9 Pupils started looking forward to their own GCSE course selection process with an information evening on Thursday, where the structure of the GCSE Options was explained in preparation for the Parents' Evening on Tuesday 2 February. We are fortunate to be able to offer 16 different options subjects and, next week, we are starting a programme of virtual taster lessons for those subjects which Year 9 pupils have not met before in their Year 7, 8 and 9 curriculum.

I shared some images of the new Science Facilities and the fabulous new day and boarding accommodation which has now been completed.

These pictures show the inside of the Science building and the Hollenden House common room.



Following the lockdown changes announced on 4 January, we quickly made new plans for our 11+ and 13+ Entrance Assessments which have now been successfully completed. This means that, in the last week, we have conducted 347 online interviews and assessments for pupils from 122 different schools! The feedback from the staff interviewing team has been very positive, with many reporting some very engaging and interested candidates keen to join the Royal Russell family. I'd like to pass on my thanks to all of the interviewing staff and to our amazing Admissions Team for helping this process to run so smoothly. I now look forward to reviewing the applications and selecting pupils for academic awards and for places to join us in Year 7 and Year 9 next September.

I know that Royal Russell is a caring and kind community, but as next Monday, the third Monday in January, is sometimes referred to as 'Blue Monday', I thought it would help all of the Royal Russell Community to have an extra focus on kindness. So please do look after each other and think carefully about how you can bring an extra smile to a member of your family or to a friend or colleague.

One vital act of kindness that we can all contribute to is to play our part in the national effort to reduce the impact of the coronavirus. Please follow the [UK Government Guidance](#) at all times, so that together, we can help reduce the suffering of so many and benefit from a return to learning together here on the School site as soon as possible.

I mentioned 'The Boy, the mole, the fox and the horse' by Charlie Mackesy in my newsletter last week and recommend it to you all. It has been described as 'soothing balm for the soul in these turbulent times' and includes some wonderful reflections on kindness and friendship. I have included the image below in this update to encourage you all to 'hang on'!

With best wishes,

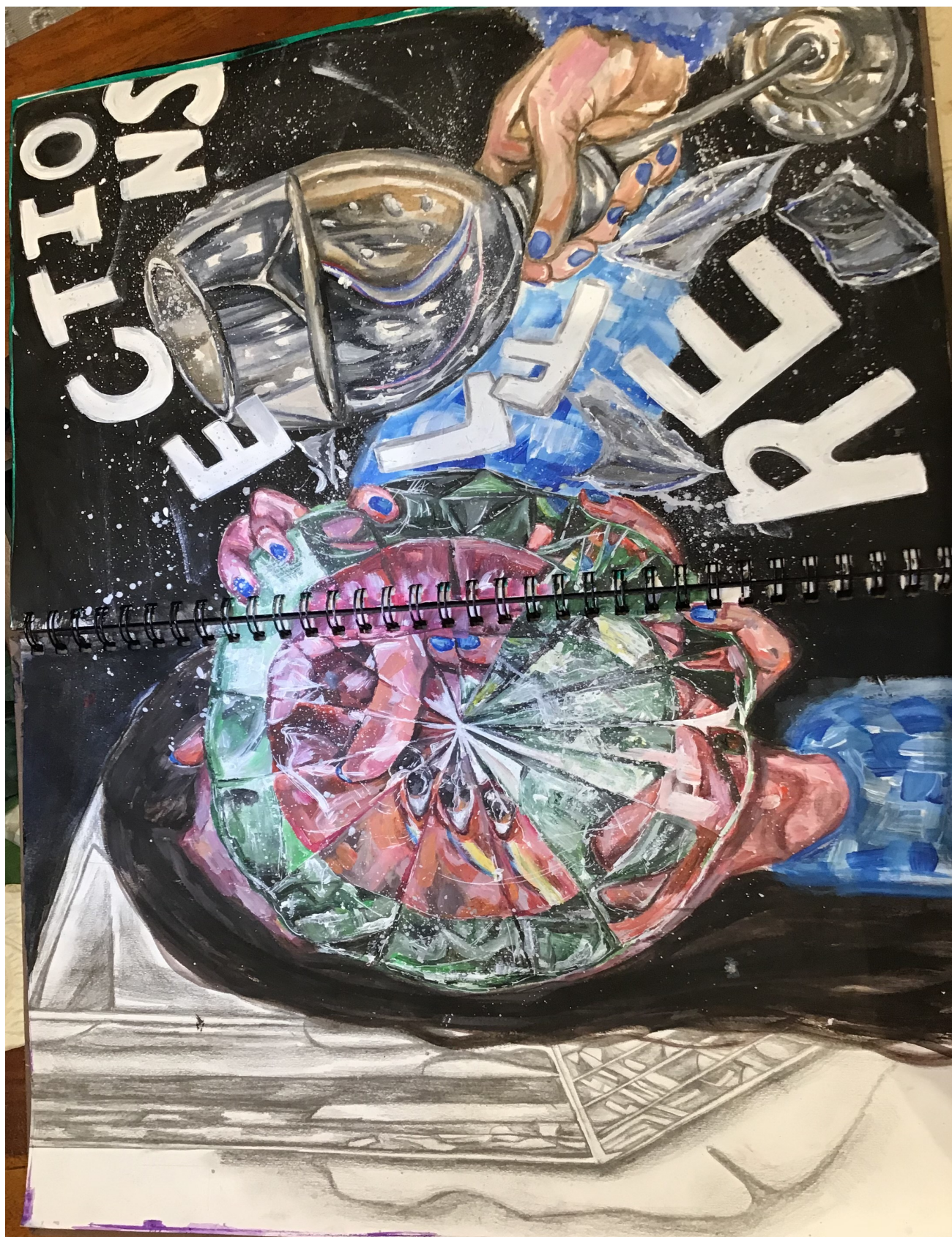
Chris Hutchinson

Headmaster



Pupil Achievement

Take a look at year 11 Vanessa Chu's outstanding piece of artwork that she created for her title page on the theme of 'Reflections'.



Year 7 Assembly - Online Superstars!

During this week's Year 7 Assembly special mentions were made to pupils who have achieved great things in their first week of online learning.

Top Girls and Boys - Merits

- Alejandro Christou - Madden 7P
- Avani Virdi - Hollenden 7S

7R English – Mrs Pepperdine

- Omar Haque and Charles de Carbonnières made spectacular snowflakes and produced great work on heroes.

7P – Computer Science - Ms Walton

- Maisy Main worked so well on the data representation lesson. She did amazing work and even asked for extra work!

Maths – Mr Jewiss

- Klara Dworakowska and Keira Rudich-Goodbody are the “Fractions super stars”!

Maths – Ms Wong

- Shailen Mistry did fantastically well in his maths lesson. Always responding to questions politely and engaged in lesson. Remained on Teams to ask clarifications which showed great independence.

7Q – Spanish – Ms Burns

- Great class to sign in – mute – blur the background and fully engaged in lessons. Isabella Earing, Jake and Erik Windle deserve a special mention for their excellent challenging work.

Games – Mr Davies

- Suraya de Almeida – Best video
- Anxo Garcia Missan - Best effort

Maths– Ms Au

Joseph Kennedy and Alexander Johnson have both been pro-active and produced good quality work.

Science– Mrs Semple

- Anxo Garcia Missan , Shailen Mistry , Tayah Rautenbach have all redone their educake test to improve their grade in preparation for a forces test this week! Great independent work!

ART – Ms Baldwin

- Vaisaali Mayooraan , Mia Hughes and Mathilda Welsh for their wonderful compositions shown for their homework.

7R Computer Science – Ms Walton

- 100% attendance and excellent at using the hand up function – best class for that yet.

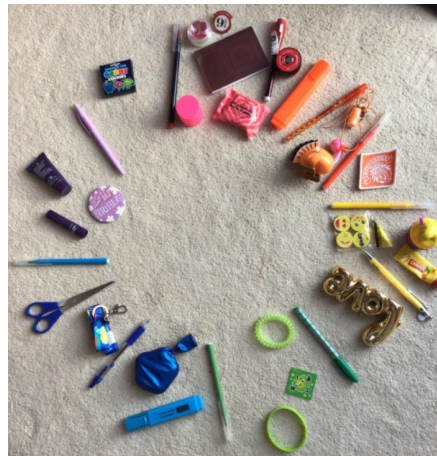
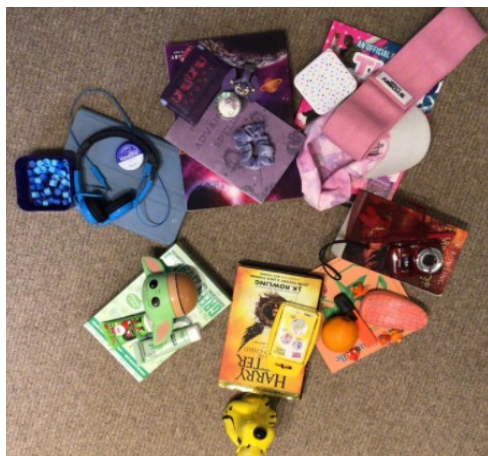
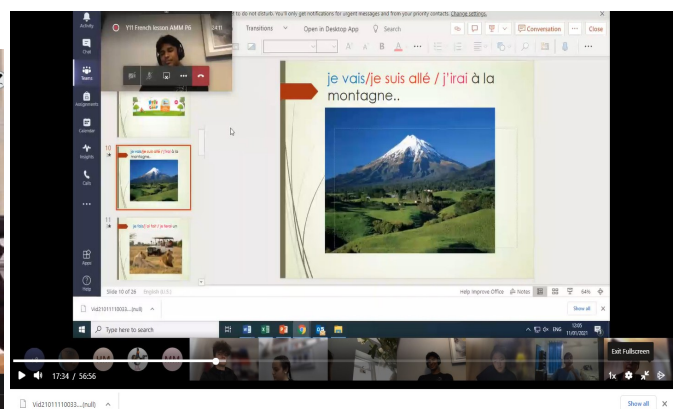
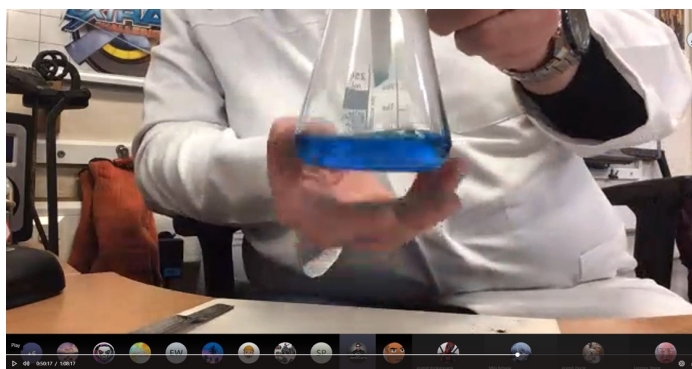
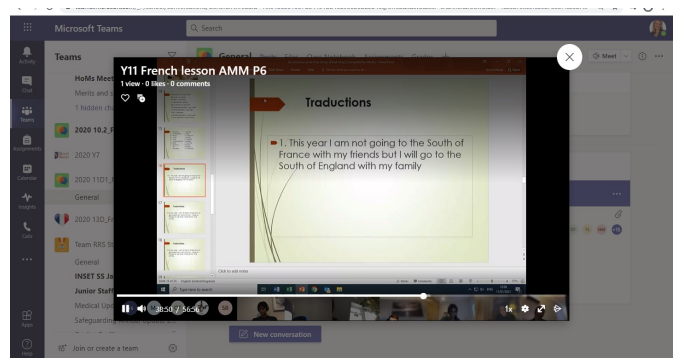
Online Learning

Each week we'll be sharing a selection of highlights from our online learning program.

This week's includes;

- A look at Mr Baron's teaching environment and screenshots from his Year 8 Online chemistry lesson .
- Some screenshots from Ms Mawers Year 11 French lesson on the topic 'Les Vacances' where students revised past, present and future events and worked through some difficult grade 8 translations.
- some fantastic pupil responses to their Year 7 Art lesson on the theme of colour.

What a fantastic week!



Lockdown in the Library

Although quieter than usual, the Library has been a hive of activity this week hosting our critical worker pupils who are coming in to school to work each day.

The pupils have managed to keep up with all subjects, including PE and Games – running the Cross Country track when the weather has been good and finding other ways to stay active when rain has prevented outdoor exercise.

All pupils have adapted really well to the new way of working, bringing in blankets (and slippers!) from home to stay cosy. A daily mug of hot chocolate has also helped! Well done to all of you for staying focused and working so hard.



Spotlight on the Library

Please click on the Spotlight below for the Hodder Education Review from the Library.

**SPOTLIGHT ON
LIBRARY ONLINE
RESOURCES :
HODDER
EDUCATION REVIEW**



From the Sport Department

Games Videos

Pupils have been busy filming their Games activities as part of their online learning programme. Well done to all the pupils who participated and sent through their Games activities.



From the Sport Department

Head Boy Jack's Outdoor Workout



Key Diary Dates

Upcoming Parents' Evenings

Year 8	Wednesday 10 March 2021
Year 9	Tuesday 2 February 2021
Year 11	Thursday 21 January 2021
Year 12	Thursday 25 February 2021



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