

## CELEBRATING YEARS 11 & 13

Students prepare for  
examination period

## 2023/24 STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

So many excellent applications  
have been submitted, we can  
now announce the new team!

## GCSE GEOGRAPHY FIELD WORK TRIP

Year 10 Geographers visit  
Carding Mill Valley

## DELPHINUS CHARITY DAY

Students set new benchmark  
in fundraising efforts





A message from the

# Headteacher

*Dr. Barbara Minards*

Welcome to the May edition of our newsletter, the seven-week half term has been eventful with two NEU strike days, two bank holidays and a coronation! There have also been celebration and leavers assemblies, the start of GCSE and A-level examinations, school exam week for students in Years 7 to 10 and work experience for Year 12. Delphinus hosted the final House Charity day of the year with an air ambulance cockpit on site as an impressive addition to the fundraising stalls and rock band performance during lunchtime. We also enjoyed the Spring music concert with wonderful performances from a wide variety of ensembles, choirs and bands.

This part of the academic year is a time for reflection as we see Year 11 and 13 students complete their GCSE and A-level studies, sit their examinations and go on to the next stage of their educational journey. Year 11 had a celebration assembly that included a well-chosen, motivational performance of 'the final countdown' from the GCSE music group along with



entertaining tributes from each of the six tutor groups before starting their study leave.

The Year 13s leavers' assembly was an emotional and fitting tribute to the year groups' numerous contributions to the Sutton Girls community, with goodbyes and thanks to staff who had supported them throughout their time at school. It finished with an ever popular Kahoot quiz and a heartfelt speech from the Senior Student Ambassadors who led a whole year group chant of 'not for our own advantage, but for the common good'!

We wish all students well with their examinations and next steps, we hope that Year 13 keep in touch with us via our alumni network, Future First.

This half term has seen the transition between the current Year 13 and 12 Senior Student Leadership Teams. These sixth form students exemplify the School's character strengths of Respect, Positivity and Resilience, Making Good Decisions, Integrity and Love of Learning. They are fantastic role models who contribute to many aspects of school life from planning wellbeing activities, leading clubs, delivering assemblies to participating in open evenings and helping at variety of events. I would like to thank the outgoing team for all their hard work, dedication and kindness. I look forward to seeing how the new team will continue the tradition of inspiring student leadership and their positive impact on the school community.

Please enjoy reading more about what has been happening at Sutton Girls during the first half of the summer term. I hope you and your families have a happy half term holiday!

***Dr Minards***



We have setup a new online system for donating to the School Charity. In recent times the Charity helped fund a number of projects across the school such as refurbishment of our tennis courts, outdoor seating and stage lights in the main hall.

We will be relaunching the Charity after half term to raise further funds to enhance our facilities and provide an even better experience for students. Look out for a charity update next half term, in the meantime if you

would like to donate please see [this link](#) or follow the QR Code via your phone – this can be a one off or a monthly donation.

All contributions are gratefully received, thank you.



# Delphinus Charity Event

Setting the bar high for school charity events, Delphinus wowed us with an awesome rock band setlist and Midlands Air Ambulance Charity visit...

Mr P. Hughes  
*Head of Delphinus*

Delphinus Charity Day arrived in a flurry of activity... all week, students had been scouring the corridors for clues to Whodunnit, with what and where in the Cluedo Challenge.

The Delphinus forms had put together fairground games like squash pong, a coke-can shy, and 8CCH organised a fishing game in a paddling pool! 11MAP ran a cake stall and 10MDC brought fairground food; 7IPU made some of their own jewellery to sell, and crocheted



several dolphins which were the prizes for Name The Dolphin! The school Rock Band, "Cosmic

String Theory" played to a cheering crowd in the sports hall!

It was all in aid of the Midlands Air Ambulance, and Kay Starkey brought the cockpit of an Air Ambulance Helicopter for the students to climb in and take photos! She was extremely grateful for the **£1,640.51** we raised, which will directly help fund their rapid response air ambulance-led service, enabling them to save countless lives in our local area.

Thank you to all who took part and helped to run our hugely successful charity day!







# Year 11 Celebration assembly

Ms K. Rafferty  
*Head of Year 11*

Year 11 had a lovely celebration morning before setting off for study leave for their GCSEs, awards were given out and

students shared some memories of the last 5 years.

I am very proud of all their achievements to date and a huge thank you goes out to all the staff both teaching and non-teaching

who have supported the students to get to this point.

Best wishes to you all as you take on your exams. We know how hard you've worked and how well you've prepared. You've got this!





# We bid a fond farewell to the Year 13 Class of 2023

Mr M. Charles  
*Head of Sixth Form*

On Thursday 11th May, we bid farewell to Year 13 students as they began their study leave in final preparation for the A-Level examinations.

The leavers assembly included some inspirational words from Dr Minards, a review of the students' time at Sutton Girls by Mr Charles and an epic performance by the

Sixth Form band. There was also time to view a range of photos, giving students a trip down memory lane, seeing themselves in photos from a wide range of trips in lower year groups.

The School Ambassadors also reflected on their time at Sutton Girls highlighting some of the wonderful achievements of the year group and spoke of their resilience in adapting to the ever-changing nature of school and

the wider world. Their talk was both informative and engaging, and was a perfect end to the assembly.

Year 13 have worked extremely hard for two years, and deserve to be extremely successful in the summer. We cannot wait to see them go on and progress even more.

We wish them all the very best for the examinations!



# Announcing the 2023-24 Student Leadership Team

*In their specific teams, students will exemplify and act as role models for their particular strength, using the different aspects of their character focus to drive their projects forward.*

Mrs M. Lucas  
Assistant Headteacher

The new Student Leadership Team have now been appointed. The applications were excellent and really reflected how the school's character strengths can be applied to everyday life.

Congratulations to Harkiran (Student Ambassador for Respect), Isobel (Student Ambassador for Positivity and Resilience), Maiya (Student Ambassador for Making Good Decisions), Tilly (Student Ambassador for Integrity) and Penny (Student Ambassador for Love of Learning).

Well done also to Stella (Senior Prefect for Respect), Neha (Senior Prefect for Positivity and Resilience), Megan (Senior Prefect for Making Good Decisions), Eve (Senior Prefect for Integrity)

and Rebecca (Senior Prefect for Love of Learning). The Senior Prefects work with the Student Ambassadors to lead the different teams. New House Captains have also been selected – well done to Poppy and Maneesha (Aquila), Alex and Adwaita (Cygnus), Freya and Madison (Delphinus), Saran and Aisha (Pegasus), Dipal and Amy (Phoenix), and Amelia and Sophia (Ursa).

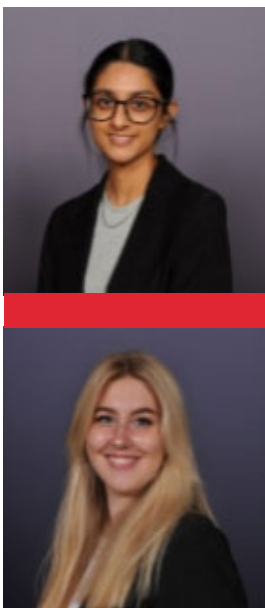
Many other Year 12 students have also gained leadership roles as Prefects in each of the Character teams. The Respect team will be planning events in school to celebrate and raise awareness of Equality and Diversity, the team for Positivity and Resilience will be promoting activities to take care of our Wellbeing, whilst the Making Good Decisions team will be running Student Council and Environment Committee.

There are also students in that team who will be supporting Careers and Year 12 transition. The House system will be overseen by the Integrity Team which includes the House Captains. There are also Prefects in that team who support with the new Year 7s' transition into our school community.

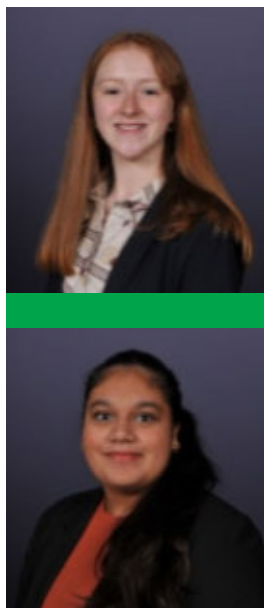
For the first time this year, the Love of Learning team includes a Prefect for each of the subject areas, along with helping in the library and with the school newspaper. It is fantastic to see our students so enthusiastic in wanting to contribute to the whole school community in leadership roles.

We are looking forward to working with the new Student Leadership Team from next half term and wish them every success in their new roles.

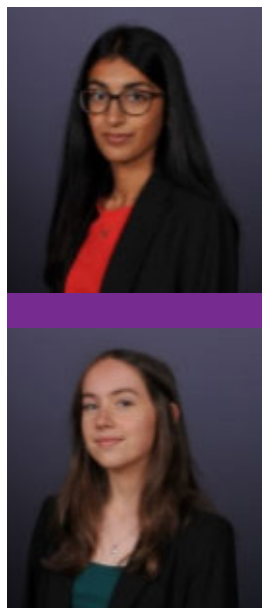
## Respect Team



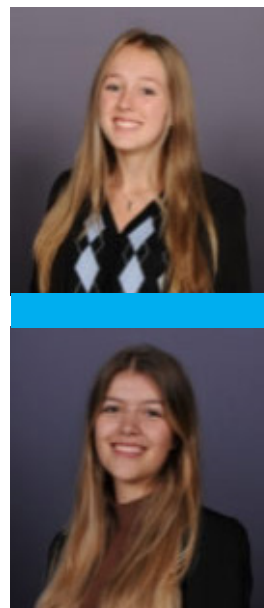
## Positive and Resilient Team



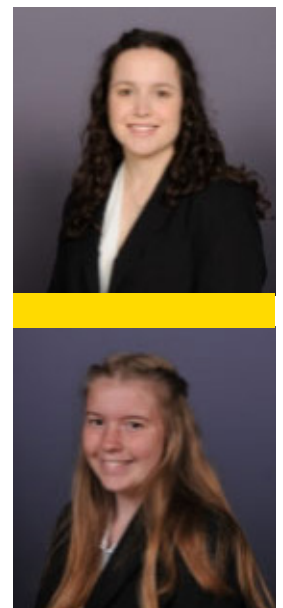
## Make Good Decisions Team



## Integrity Team



## Love of Learning Team







# SCGSG Spring Concert 2023

Mr C. Collet  
*Head of Music*

Thank you to everyone who joined us on the Thursday 27th April for our Spring Concert. The talent of

our students and the leadership of our excellent music teachers really shined through. It truly was an uplifting and inspiring evening, congratulations all students who participated.

The total profits raised from the ticket sales were a wonderful **£625.15** and have been donated to the Disasters Emergency Committee.





# A Day in the Life

This half term, we've been finding out about Year 13 student Liyah's typical school day...

I'm Liyah and I'm a Year 13 student- though not for much longer, which is a little scary.

I got to school as early as I always do and spent a few minutes doing some *Duolingo* Japanese lessons, and then organising my to-do list for the day. As I write this, my first A-Level exam (Psychology) is exactly two weeks away, so for half an hour I revised the "Attachment" topic by using prompts I'd written for each subtopic and using these for active recall. I explained all of the content I could remember for each prompt aloud, like I was teaching someone else. Considering it was so early, I was alone in the common room so I must have looked a bit mad, but it's the revision technique that works best for me.

After my friends arrived, we discussed how my Biology class were going to get Mr Tromans out of the room later. It was our last lesson with him today, and we'd prepared a card and surprise gift (based on an inside joke our class has). We settled on seeing if we could get Mr Pockson to help us out, and he agreed. I then went to registration, excited for Biology.

Period 1 was a supervised study where I turned on my earphones and shuffled a lo-fi playlist as I



revised Biology. I first did some flashcards on plant transport and then did practice exam questions for the remainder of the time.

Next, it was my Biology lesson. I was hoping Mr Pockson could distract Mr Tromans long enough for us to put his gift (a custom T-shirt we had made about the joke) onto the skeleton at the back of Room 26. Our teacher then returned, but failed to notice his gift. We spent the next twenty minutes doing exam questions on the nervous system while trying to stifle our laughs.

At last, he noticed that the skeleton at the back of the classroom was not as naked as usual and seeing his reaction to the T-shirt was hilarious. We found out that he had a surprise too, as he brought out cakes for our class. As we ate, he gave us a speech that honestly made me quite emotional, because he is one of my favourite teachers I've ever had. We ended the lesson with a Kahoot game and then went to break.

Period 3 was a Psychology lesson, where we went through some high-scoring essays from last year's cohort and I then finished my "Attachment" revision. At lunch, I grabbed some pasta and chatted with my friends.

My last lesson was Chemistry, in which we went over electrochemical cells. I felt more confident about it after the lesson, and added that I would finish the exam question set Mrs Aston gave us to my to-do-list for tomorrow. I didn't have a Period 6 lesson, so I walked home while listening to my favourite podcast. When I got back, I spent some time playing video games before finishing the Biology practice questions I had started earlier.

We're always looking for students to share a day in their life. Are you interested in writing for the school newsletter? Email [Mr Hall](#) for more information.



# UKMT Mathematical Challenge

by Delta and Bethany  
in Year 8

Our school takes part in a super fun maths challenge each year called the UKMT Maths Challenge and this year was no exception.

The UKMT Maths Challenge is a 60-minute (Sixth Form students get 90 minutes) multiple choice challenge that encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought and fluency in basic mathematical techniques.

No one in school is left out as everyone has the chance to participate. Year 7 and 8 took part in the Junior Maths Challenge (JMC), Years 9, 10 and 11 in the Intermediate Maths

Challenge (IMC) and Sixth Form took part in the Senior Maths Challenge (SMC).

We have interviewed several Maths teachers on their opinion of this fun challenge. They say

that it's a brilliant way to test yourself with unusual problems that often have a simple answer when you see it, you just need the perseverance and resilience to find it!



**United Kingdom  
Mathematics Trust**

## ABRSM High Scorers' concert at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

by Sara in Year 8

During the Easter term I was invited to play piano in the ABRSM High Scorers' concert at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. High Scorers' concerts give young musicians who score highly in their practical exams an opportunity to share their performances with a wider audience, including fellow musicians, teachers and family. I felt privileged to be invited to play and chose a piece from the current ABRSM Grade 7 syllabus called Twilight, which was one of the 3 pieces I had played in my last ABRSM exam.

During the concert I not only had the opportunity to perform my own piece in a beautiful



recital hall but also listen to the performances by other talented musicians who played different instruments, pieces and grades. These musicians included two of my peers from SCGSG: Tara from Year 7 and Nifemi from Year 9,

who both played awe-inspiring and moving violin pieces.

Although the concert was initially nerve wracking, it was an extremely rewarding and enjoyable experience.



# Year 13- 'Lessons from Auschwitz' trip to Poland

by Hadia in Year 13

On March 15th, myself and 3 other Year 13 students had the opportunity to participate in a one-day trip to Poland as part of the 'Lessons from Auschwitz programme'. The experience commenced with a visit to Oswiecim, a town which in 1941 had a Jewish population of 58%, reduced to just 1 Jewish member in the town by 1953. Visiting the town and one of the two synagogues which once stood proud at the heart of it, we were able to gain an understanding into the prosperity provided by the diversity and culture of the towns inhabitants, only to be stripped away by the Nazis ideas of a 'Subhuman Race', resulting in the extermination of all they deemed inferior, in particular Jews. Starting our visit with this trip to Oswiecim allowed us to rehumanise the victims of the holocaust and keep some



of their personal stories in our minds as we navigated the inhumane displays in Auschwitz camps 1 and 2.

Both Auschwitz camps gave us a glimpse into the incomprehensible atrocities committed during the Holocaust and showed the barbaric consequences of intolerance and hatred left unchecked. Alongside rehumanising the victims and seeing them as more than just inconceivable statistics, we were also encouraged to rehumanise the perpetrators- to see they were normal people like you and me, whose fanatical ideas were given the opportunity to be executed. We saw each stage of the process a prisoner underwent, from a multiple days' journey to Auschwitz-Birkenau in a small cart with 80 other people, to the jarring selection process, and the dire fate faced regardless of whether the prisoner was selected to work in the camp or was sent immediately to the gas chambers- almost everybody who entered Auschwitz-Birkenau never returned home.



The modern relevance of the lessons learnt through the once-seemingly distant atrocities of the Holocaust were something I could only appreciate following the trip- it enabled me to draw shocking parallels between the antisemitism driving the holocaust, and the various forms of intolerance seen today around the world. The holocaust remains a haunting reminder of the extreme consequences of intolerance, emphasising the importance of challenging bigotry before it can prevail.







# School community celebrates culture with special non-uniform day

Mr S. Hall  
*Marketing Assistant*

In school on Friday 5th May, students have dressed in outfits that celebrate Culture. It was a fantastic day with a wide range of outfits and cultures on display for the whole school community to learn about.

Students and staff alike took part and dressed up, sparking engaging conversations around an individual's culture and heritage, and what certain colours, fabric, prints and items of clothing means to them.

The day was an ideal example of where students have shown our

character strength of Respect, beginning to appreciate how our culture and background shape our views and perspective of the world.





# Year 9 EEP Robotics Challenge Heat at RAF Cosford

by Eva in Year 9

It was at about 07:30 that morning that I started to really feel the excitement.

The coach for our team – which consisted of the 13 of us, plus Mr Opong, Miss Male, and Sixth Formers Leah, Hannah and Sophia – arrived at school to pick us up at 08:00, but most of us were up in one of the computing classrooms over half an hour before. I think the closeness of the competition had finally dawned on us, and we were desperate to make final adjustments and alterations to ensure we had the best chance we could at making our hard work and ultimate commitment come to fruition. Then, when the time came, we packed our robots in a bag and got on the way to RAF Cosford Museum.

After running through our presentation twice on the coach, I was fully charged with excitement and determination to succeed. Arriving at school that morning to a committed atmosphere of friends – and not to mention driving into the Museum site,

seeing the magnificent planes and spotting the other school teams – finally made the whole thing feel more real to me, and the buzzing jitters of anticipation rose inside. We were guided into the building, and as we made our way to our assigned team table I couldn't help but wonder at the history all around us.

Our first round of the day was the Speed and Control Challenge, which admittedly presented its challenges for us. Our robot had been working beautifully when we'd tested it at school – we'd managed to get it going at a good speed, and without swerving much. But when we tested it at the competition, it kept turning at all different angles on the way back. However, we luckily had two attempts at the challenge, and after our first attempt didn't go as well as we liked, we did what we could to try and improve – we went to the back of the room and practised, practised, practised manually fixing its direction. We encouraged each other; gave each other tips; adopted a growth mindset when things went wrong.

And although we didn't come out at the top of the leader-board for that challenge, we didn't come out at the bottom either, and we also left that room feeling more bonded as a team than ever before.

That really proved helpful in the Teamwork Challenge that followed, where our big team of 13 was split into separate groups to build a 'rocket car' design per each group in just 12 minutes. I felt our team dynamic was brilliant: we all were comfortable discussing with, leading with and listening to each other, no matter who we ended up working with, and we all managed to stay calm under the pressure and produce stable designs.

Then came the Mat Challenges – the ones which we as a team had found the most difficult from the outset. Our robots had to perform a series of different actions and movements, including lifting objects up and moving them to other spaces on the mat. This was tricky: sometimes, the robots would work perfectly and do exactly as you needed them to; at other times, things would go completely wrong. It was always a risk whenever you put your robot down on the mat, especially when we only had two attempts at getting as many challenges done in the space of 5 mins and 40 seconds each time. The first try was before lunch, and it really highlighted the areas we needed to improve on. I'm proud to say that our second official attempt definitely went much better than our first, after a very committed couple of hours.

In between those two attempts was the Project Presentation, which we delivered to a group of friendly volunteers who work in STEM, straight after lunch. In all honesty, this was what I was most nervous about. Our whole team







had spent so much time providing information on our journeys over the course of the process, and I had poured in hours designing presentation slides and writing detailed notes as a guide for what everyone would be saying. For me, the nervous jitters were back with a vengeance in that five minutes before we walked into that room, as we loaded up the slides onto Mr Opong's laptop and tried to motivate each other to really do our absolute best. I just remember repeating the words we can do this, we can do this, we can do this in my head over and over again, endeavouring to make myself believe them; I remember saying them several times aloud to my teammates, trying to make them believe them too. I knew we could do it - we'd worked too hard not to be able to. But we just really needed to bring everything we had for the next twenty minutes.

I tried to feel as confident as possible when we walked into the room full of our judges, as we got the presentation up on the screen, as we stood together as a team, as we began to tell our audience about our journey. I felt a warm feeling growing inside as we went along; I realised that we could do this, that we were doing this. We knew ourselves, we knew each other, we knew what we had learned and what we were saying. Even in the Q&A session afterwards,

something you can't really entirely prepare for, I just felt the words flowing as I answered question after question, always linking back to our pride in each other and our absolute commitment as a team. We returned to our team table in a loud, charged, laughing haze of relief and overexcitement and happiness and hope and pride - because, no matter whether we had won or lost, we knew we had all done our absolute best, and whatever happened we would still be a team which had stayed together from the start.

Sitting in the lecture hall for the Awards Assembly afterwards was when the nervousness returned for me. In retrospect, I was really just overreacting, but in that moment I felt that if we didn't win this Project Presentation, then it would be my ultimate failure, that I would never be good enough, that I had let my team down. The STEM volunteer announcing the presentation award was talking about the winning team's extraordinary teamwork, resilience, attention to detail and commitment, and I really hoped it could be us in spite of my nerves. And then I heard the words, "Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls!"; I remember us all exchanging looks of pure joy, then hurrying in an elated state to the front of the room; I was given a trophy to hold, a snapshot of this perfect moment

of all of us together was captured by a camera, and I know that I just couldn't believe what had happened. We left the Museum jittering with glee this time, sitting and talking and laughing with the friends who we couldn't have done any of this without.

On behalf of the entire team, I just want to say a huge thank you to all of the teachers and students who dedicated their own free time and resources to make this entire experience possible for us. Thank you to the Year 10s (last year's robotics team) and Year 12s, who offered us invaluable advice every step of the way. Thank you to Miss Male for all your help, kindness and support on the day of the competition heat. Thank you so much to Mr Opong - without you and your hard work and commitment, absolutely none of this amazing opportunity could have happened at all for us, and for that we are all so, so grateful. And, last, but not least in the slightest, I just want to say thank you to my fellow teammates. You have all been so supportive of all of us throughout, both as unstoppable fellow robotics club members and as good, kind friends, and that's what made this whole process so wonderful in every way for me. I'm just so proud of us, and I know this was a truly special experience that none of us are ever likely to forget. Go team!!!



# Year 10 Geographers explore Carding Mill Valley for GCSE fieldwork

Miss E. Perry  
*Geography Department*

On Friday 5th of May, 60 of our Year 10 Geographers visited Carding Mill Valley in Shropshire to conduct their physical fieldwork enquiry.

The students worked together to collect data on river velocity and sediment size as part of the investigation, and almost all of them ended up in the river!

Despite fears of rain (which we were very prepared for), the weather held for the day, and

everyone enjoyed exploring the valley, getting some practical experience and seeing their classwork come to life. The students were exemplary and a credit to Sutton Girls!







# Mrs Tunstall introduces Year 8 to the Pickleball revolution!

by Isabella in Year 8

Pickleball is a fun sport (which originated in the United States in the 1960s) and is a fantastic introduction to paddle and racket sports. There are elements of tennis, badminton and table tennis, so if you like any of them you are sure to have fun!

It is relatively easy to understand and has very few physical requirements. Good hand-eye co-ordination, being agile and having a speedy reaction time can help you succeed, and there is evidence to show it boosts your cardiovascular system, gives you a good aerobic workout, without much stress and improves your

cognitive functions and memory recall.

You can play on Tuesday lunchtimes, and you only need to bring trainers, so be sure to try it out soon!



You can look forward to our next newsletter at the end of the Summer 2 half term in July. In the meantime, keep up to date by following us on:

**facebook.com/suttcold** or **twitter.com/suttcold**



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