

Thomas Telford School



2020 - 2021 Governors' Report To Parents

November 2021

To All Parents of Students

Welcome to this thirtieth Annual Governors' Report to Parents. As there is no longer a statutory requirement for Governors to meet formally with parents and as the meeting has not attracted many parents in the past, no such meeting is planned to be held this year.

However, if you have any queries or concerns please send these in writing to the Headmaster or to the Chair of Governors and they will be dealt with appropriately.

M Davies
Clerk to the Governing Board

Chairman's Introduction

This is my second Governors' Annual Report to Parents as Chairman of the Board of Governors, a position of which I am immensely proud.

This Report provides you with details of the students' achievements during the last year and I am delighted to inform you that the School has enjoyed yet another successful year with tremendous GCSE results being achieved together with excellent results at A Level. Whilst there is no legal obligation for Governors to provide this Annual Report, the Board understands the importance to parents of making this information available about the School.

As you know, in accordance with government directions, conventional external examinations did not take place for GCSE, A Level, vocational and other qualifications in 2021. Instead, qualifications were awarded on the basis of teacher assessed grades, formulated using various evidence sources, including internal mock examinations and course work, to establish fair and objective grades. These processes were open to question and authentication by external examination boards. The Governors believe that the resultant qualification awards are a sound reflection of students' capabilities, proficiencies and preparedness for the next stage in their education or career development and represent appropriate recognition of students' work and achievements in what was undoubtedly a difficult year.

This year, 99% of the students in Key Stage 4 achieved 5 or more GCSEs (or equivalent) at grades 9-4 including Mathematics and English. 99% of the cohort achieved grades 9-4 in either English Language or Literature. 99% of students also achieved a grade 4 or above in both English and Mathematics. We believe that this will place the School amongst the top performing Comprehensive Schools in the Country, which is great credit to all stakeholders.

GCSE results were additionally complemented by excellent A Level results with A* and A grades at 53% (including Vocational subjects).

Teaching and Support Staff

None of this would be possible without the outstanding contributions of our teaching and support staff. The Governors are immensely grateful to this dedicated, talented and caring team. Under the inspirational leadership of our Headmaster, Sir Kevin Satchwell, they work long hours, and constantly seek innovative ways to ensure that every student achieves her or his full potential. The School continues to maintain a full complement of staff, and 98% of lessons are judged Outstanding or Good against stringent official criteria. Supply teachers are never used to cover absences, as we are convinced that the flexibility and commitment of our permanent staff is far preferable.

The School has also continued to develop its 'Session 3' programme to provide a wide range of opportunities for students to work with staff in small, select groups, which is particularly beneficial for those students who need extra support. Examples of the types of innovative contribution from our staff, and the resulting achievements of our students at all levels, are set out on the following pages. The Governors wish, particularly, to thank Sir Kevin and his teaching and support teams for all their work throughout the year and for continuing to deliver outstanding outcomes.

Destination of Leavers

All Year 11 students benefit from face to face careers interviews and are supported by both the Careers Team and their Personal Tutors to ensure smooth transitions at the end of Year 11. Of our Year 11 students, 72% progressed into our Sixth Form, 21% continued in full time post-16 education and training at other providers, 5% secured scholarships at professional football clubs and 2% took up posts as apprentices.

After A Level Results Day 2021, 75% of students will be moving on to University, with 50% progressing to Russell Group, Times Top 25 Universities or one of the premier Stage Schools. Six students have secured places on medicine courses and two students secured places on the veterinary gateway course at the Royal Veterinary College. Two students secured their places at Oxford University.

It was also positive to note that 12 students were awarded places on higher and degree apprenticeships programmes, including with Capgemini, Grant Thornton, Mondelez, Wsp Ltd UK and West Mercia Police. We are incredibly proud of the students who have secured these prestigious apprenticeship offers. These students in particular have shown outstanding resilience and determination over the past 18 months, seeking out opportunities and performing brilliantly in some challenging and highly competitive recruitment and selection processes.

Careers Provision and Business and Industry Links

Our Careers and Industry Links provision remains integral to the School curriculum and the service ensures that our students are provided with high quality programmes to guide and support them to make well-informed decisions about their future careers. This is particularly important in the current context of changes in both the local and national economy, in the School leaver and graduate employment market, and also Higher Education.

Our provision includes:

- A personalised approach to careers ensuring each student can access advice and guidance about their chosen career path
- An extensive programme to support those students wishing to apply to Oxford, Cambridge and other highly selective Universities
- A package of focused support for students pursuing a career in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science
- Practical support for the processes of job search, preparing effective CVs and job applications, developing interview presentation skills and performing highly at assessment centres
- Opportunities to experience the world of work and understand how the curriculum is applied in the workplace

A large number of students used the Careers Resource Area during the last twelve months, seeking help on a broad range of issues, including volunteering opportunities, finding employment, careers advice, gaining entry to University or Stage School and advice on the best combination of subjects for certain careers. The team also conducted many appointments via Zoom and ran numerous virtual sessions to support students who were working remotely.

Career and Activities Week July 2021

Careers and Activities week is always an opportunity for students to try out new activities, develop their employability skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and communication skills and spend some time thinking about their future career choices. As far as possible, we always try to take students out of School for at least one trip or visit, in order to extend their experience and expose students to different environments and people. This year, we were determined to run a Careers Week programme which was as normal as possible and were delighted to challenge students with a sponsored walk up the Wrekin and the Race for Life!

During the week, students in Year 7 visited Chester Zoo, undertook a field trip to Ironbridge and took part in an Enterprise challenge which enabled them to develop and better understand employability skills. Year 8 students enjoyed learning about the benefits of higher education by visiting Staffordshire University. They also developed their presentation and evaluation skills by showcasing their investigations as part of the Science Fair. The Year 9 students took part in a trip to Cosford to develop and practise their problem solving skills and enjoyed a carousel of careers activities. Some Year 10 students undertook a work experience placement which gave them direct experience of the world of work, including 12 students who were fortunate to gain places on the NHS Futures programme which is run by Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust. The rest of the cohort followed a programme designed to test their creativity and entrepreneurial skills in a workshop run by the Marches Centre of Manufacturing and Technology and enjoyed two full days of careers and money skills activities which will help them to make informed decisions about the next step after Year 11 and prepare them for the world of work.

The Year 12 students participated in UCAS and employability workshops, which were tailored to their individual career choices, and helped them to start their University and/or job applications. For students applying to university, we were fortunate that four universities were able to come in to school to deliver talks on choosing courses and writing personal statements and one of our

Governors Dr Teresa Thomas ran a most informative session for our students hoping to apply for medicine. Specialist provision was organised for our Performing Arts Academy students and the School continues to see a high proportion of these students successful in their applications to Stage School.

All Year 12 students also had the opportunity to undertake at least one week of in-person or virtual work experience and we are grateful for the continuing support of local and regional employers for supporting our programme.

On behalf of the Governing Board, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Careers Team for the tremendous support and guidance given to the students during this very important stage in their lives.

Sport

During the 2020-2021 academic year, Thomas Telford School students achieved some remarkable representative honors, in spite of the pandemic. We still had a large number of students representing their District, County, Region or Country in a wide variety of sports at some stage during the academic year. Over 50 Boys and Girls played Football for their County, District or Professional Clubs. At the very highest level, students represented England, Wales, Scotland, or Great Britain in Football, Hockey, Ice Hockey, and Kick Boxing. A number of students are also nationally ranked in Swimming and Athletics.

Below is an overview of some of the students' outstanding achievements:

Unfortunately, this year's football competitions did not take place. However, we are still proud to have been able to provide students with fixtures and opportunities to represent the school, while also placing a greater emphasis on inter house sport competitions at each age group.

During the last Academic year, we have again seen several Year 11 footballers sign scholarships at professional clubs. R Thompson and D Hutchings signed for Shrewsbury, while N Fraser, E McLeod and J Storer signed for Wolverhampton Wanderers. N Kabaye looked to go further afield and signed for Lincoln City and B McGuinness signed for Burton Albion.

Past Thomas Telford School student O Tipton signed his first professional contract with Wolves at the age of 17 and J Hodnett (Wolves) and Zac Ashworth (WBA) also continues to show their potential by being offered a professional contract at their clubs at the end of their scholarship. D Williams (Derby) has also made his first team debut at the age of 18.

Players that continue to progress through the Wales Football Association pyramid, S Corns represented the U17 ladies' squad as a 15-year-old and so did F Ashworth (U17s) and L Armstrong (U16s) in the boy's teams. This year C McLeod represented England U16's in a game against Scotland.

Twins Y and M Evans, J Byrne, S Edwards, G Evans and N Edwards all chose to continue their studies in America after leaving Thomas Telford School. Y and M Evans went to Allen Community College in Kansas and qualified for the National Finals, after winning their District and Conference. This meant they were in the best 12 women's teams across America in their freshman season. A great achievement.

It's also great to see the progress of former students with M Gibbs-White signing, on loan, for Sheffield United in the Championship. L Cundle and C Campbell have been in the Wolverhampton Wanders Premier League matchday squads. A Samuels has signed on loan for Aberdeen in the Scottish Championship and T Perry has scored for Cheltenham, where he is on loan for the season.

Over the last 18 months the hockey at Thomas Telford School has had to adapt to enable the students to still train, practice and compete. Through the diligent sanitisation work of the PE Department, the students have been able to continue to take part in hockey throughout their curriculum lessons. The implementation of social distancing and track and trace, meant that the sessions have been focused on individual skill and technique development. The gradual opening of restrictions has enabled students to take part in match play but only inside their bubbles, leading to the development of inter-house games for all Key Stage 3 and 4 students to enable them to put their practice in action in competitive situations. With the hockey teams playing intra-bubble games, with boys and girls mixing teams to allow the students to continue their match play development. This hard work and dedication from students and staff, enabled hockey to be delivered and participated in at a time where no hockey was taking place at district, club, county, regional or national level.

The impact of restrictions on our performance players was even more taxing on their development. The Director of Hockey, led online sessions for small groups and individuals to enable them to follow sessions and receive individual feedback on their performance. As soon as one on one and small group sessions were allowed the players were given the opportunity to attend

sessions to reintroduce themselves to training and make physical and technical improvement. This support was given outside of the normal curriculum and Session 3 schedule, taking place during evening, weekends and school holidays. Additionally, supported by the host of Great Britain Olympian's Michael Hoare's The Hockey Lab training camps over Easter Break. This enables students to attend the first set of training camps opened in Shropshire and through negotiations to receive this opportunity at a significantly reduced charge.

Even with the impact of COVID-19 our performance hockey players have still had to prepare, trial and compete for places in their representative teams. County representative honours were gained by A Bello, H Alexander, L McKinnon, C Nightingale, C Rosier, E Perkins and K Pennell. I Moore and M Pennell continued to represent the West Midlands Performance Centre and compete in Regional tournaments. H Jones had a stellar year making his National League One debut for Deeside Ramblers, competing in the England Hockey Futures Cup tournament for Mercia Lynx (Scoring in the final and winning the tournament) and representing the England Blue side at UK School Games. Former student D Goodfield continued his senior international career, representing England Men in the European Championships and preparing for the Commonwealth Games.

Netball is an extremely popular sport at Thomas Telford School, where we see high levels of participation from Years 7-13. Students in Year 7 and 8 are continuing to develop and make progress with their netball skills, demonstrating an increasing knowledge and confidence with positioning, passing and marking. There is a large number of students who play outside of school at club level, who are bringing up our standard of netball by providing well practiced fundamental skills. Year 9, 10 and 11 students are continuing to play at a high standard, demonstrating a more developed tactical understanding of their netball, where they can respond to coaching feedback. The U19 senior team, have been playing in the West Midlands Division 2 British Colleges League, where they have played some amazing netball, showing determination and consistent play.

Due to COVID-19, there has been limited opportunities for competitive matches for our netballers, however the students are looking strong, confident and showing a good level of technical understanding. Students in Year 7-11 will be participating in the Telford and Wrekin tournaments, in addition to the Shropshire County Tournaments where the Sixth Form team will also be playing. Our U14 and U16 team have also been entered into the Sisters in Sport National Knock Out Tournament.

We also have several students playing for academies during the season including, I Sarullo-Howells and P Clear at Wasps Academy Hub, R McCutcheon and L Rowe at Severn Stars Nova Academy Hub. P Underwood has made it through the first round of trials for both Wasps and Severn Stars. We also have a number of County netballers: Teigan Thompson, Renu Mahal, Erica Webb and Emily Owen,

In Athletics, our junior boys, intermediate boys, junior girls and inter girls were able to compete in one regional competition organized by the ESAA. All our teams finished in the top 3 and it was great to finally provide them with an opportunity to represent the School, after being through lockdowns.

C Carvell also won gold in the European under-20s Championships 400m relay. The 400m runner achieved a highly-commendable fourth place in his individual final, in which he was agonizingly just over a tenth of a second off a medal position in a time of 46.84. Z Gilbody qualified for English Schools Final in 1500m with an age group track record time at the Shropshire schools Competition at Oakengates.

L Rawlings followed up his recent Midland Counties success at Loughborough by claiming his sixth consecutive county crown, winning every year since he was in Year 7. His latest triumph came in the senior boys' race, crossing the finish line almost a minute clear of his nearest rivals.

The pandemic has hit many sports heavily with Swimming being one of the most affected. Here at Thomas Telford School we have not let the lack of competition hinder us as we have been planning throughout the year for the reintroduction of competitive swimming. We have high hopes that this year of returning to London in the ESSA National Relay Championships in November. Keeping swimmers active and training throughout the pandemic has put us in a position where we expect to continue to excel at local, regional and national level as we have done since the Pool opened in 2003.

The reintroduction of the full Session 3 programme means that students can now access the full range of sports available to them in the pool. Five Session 3 activities a week see all students offered the chance to participate in Swim Squad, Water Polo, a hugely popular Fun Swim and for our weaker and none swimmers the chance to learn to swim in a quiet, relaxed environment that aids their learning. It was also great to see the usage figures in the swimming pool high, and being able to provide students with an opportunity to swim, even with COVID-19 restrictions.

R James, county swimmer in previous years has made the U18 England Water polo team which has seen him gain selection for the European U18 Water Polo Championship. H Clarke who also started swimming at Thomas Telford has too been selected for the County Waterpolo team for U18 Girls.

Biathlon have also been hit by cancellation of all competitive action. These will all be taking place this year, with the qualification for the National Schools Biathlon Championships already taking place. We have 16 students that have qualified for this prestigious event taking place at Bath University in October. We are pleased to see a number of national level biathletes: K Gilbody, Z Gilbody and C Gilbody , D Frost, A Kind and R Kind still training and competing at the highest level.

The School continued success in Golf sees us looking forward to the County event in April which will lead to the National Championships at Woodhall Spa in July. J Pitchford has represented her county in U18 Golf, also competing at the European Open for her age group.

J Forrester (Year 12) created his own little piece of history by becoming the first winner of the English Under 18 Championship. An additional prize for J Forrester as a result of his national title was an invitation to an upcoming Challenge Tour event as well as Hosts Farnham Golf Club presenting him with honorary membership.

It has been another successful year in Tennis for the U15 girls who have won the AEGON Division 1 league, after beating Shrewsbury School and Moreton Hall. They have now progressed on to the knockout phase where they will face Ysgol Dinas Brân School. If successful they will qualify for Round 2 which is the penultimate match to qualify for the Regional Division Finals. In addition to this, the U13 teams represented the School in the AEGON Division 2 league this year and won their league. On an individual basis Year 10 H Crncan has been the stand out tennis performer this year. She is currently 8th in the country for her age group after winning the Scottish Junior National Championships Open and reaching the semi-final in Junior Wimbledon this Summer. Other students; I Shah and A Dean, continue to compete for the county in tennis. S Shahr who started Thomas Telford Sixth Form had an excellent year winning both the U18's Men's singles and doubles, as well as runner up in the men's championships. S Shahr also plays for Staffordshire County men's team.

The boys' Tennis team progressed through to the regional finals but didn't have to hit a single ball after the other AEGON league opposition withdrew. Regional finals will take place in September 2021.

Alongside the success of the teams and individuals across a range of sports we have also had national representation in sports outside of the School curriculum. Once again, we have Ice Hockey specialists in Thomas Telford School. Grace Garbett, who started at Thomas Telford in Year 7, and has just completed Sixth Form, represented Great Britain in the U18 Ice Hockey teams. T Stanton in Year 8 plays for England Ice Hockey.

In combat sports, C Taylor has represented England in the International Championships in Karate, winning Gold. Both E Smith and E Prinold (U16) have represented Great Britain at kick boxing. K Murray (U18) has represented England in Boxing.

D Eatough in Year 13 represents England U18 squad in Handball, and is hoping to make his competitive debut and continue his Handball career into the adult men's team. Other handballs, such as J Bletcher, who plays for Great Britain, as well as C Belcher a Great Britain Handballer and also an England Cricketer. H Minifie and G Tamas are currently playing for Shropshire County Handball.

We have seen a huge growth in Cheerleading, with a great number of students joining local clubs. T Paterson, Year 12 and O Smith Year 10, lead the way in this at Thomas Telford who have both competed at Worlds, one of the biggest, most prestigious cheer competitions in the world.

Performing Arts & Music

Highlights of the year in the Performing Arts Department included: The Sixth Form performance of 'Bring it On' in July, and the virtual 'Arts Night' production in December.

During the pandemic we were fortunate that the Sixth Form Performing Arts students were able to continue performing in a Performing Arts Academy 'bubble.' This enabled us to produce an excellent quality of performance in a Musical Theatre Arts Night

which we were able to record and publish securely in December. Students choreographed and performed a selection of musical numbers which was recorded to a high quality by our media team.

Performing Arts Academy students completed their stage school auditions in school this year, and we were able to support them with Studio Space, and high-quality camera links at their auditions during school holidays. Staff were on hand to support this, and coached students in preparation for their audition day's activities. This resulted in a high proportion of Performing Arts Academy students securing places in the Stage School of their choice.

We were fortunate to be able to continue teaching students in our specialist spaces throughout the pandemic restrictions, enabling students to continue engaging in practical performance work. This had a positive impact on all performing arts students, and ensured that they could access their full range of curriculum experiences. During lockdown teachers continued a high quality of provision online, and Music school lessons also continued virtually, with students accessing their instrumental and vocal lessons with peripatetic teachers online. Music School teachers have responded well to this, and all teachers were able to provide this service to students from March 2020 through to April 2021. This enabled students to continue with their learning until we were able to resume face-to-face provision in the summer term 2021, and minimised drop out of music school lessons. To date we have 110 students studying lessons. Music examination boards resumed some graded examinations in summer 2021, and we were able to successfully enter some students for examinations during that time, all of which successfully passed their qualifications.

Students attended academic Session 3 activities in Music, Dance and Drama throughout the year, ensuring that all students were able to catch-up effectively for any time lost from lockdowns and isolations and fulfil their potential in their qualifications. Further Session 3 activities for Performing Arts Academy enabled us to be able to stage Sixth Form Musical 'Bring it On' to a socially distanced audience in July. This was performed over four nights, and was the first opportunity that we had been able to perform to an audience since the beginning of the pandemic. This was a fabulous experience for students, staff and audience alike.

In the summer term we were able to resume some Session 3 activities with lower school, and a Year 7 and 8 Performing Arts club attracted a large number of students who were keen to experience practical performance activities again. Year 8 students developed their Drama and Dance skills, and Year 7 students worked on a rousing performance of 'It's a hard-knock Life' from Annie. Music School students performed a series of solos which we were able to record to create a valuable 'concert' performance experience for our young musicians.

Also in the summer term we were able to record a further collection of musical theatre virtual performances, in a 'Summer Showcase' recording. A Level music students also contributed to this, and recorded a selection of high quality performance work, which they prepared for their end-of-year recitals. We invested in an improved range of microphones which were used to produce professional quality recordings, completed in recording sessions arranged on Saturdays to ensure the optimum recording ambience to support students in the capture of a professional recording sound.

Year 9 Drama Students were able to visit an outdoor production of 'Animal Farm' performed by the National Youth Theatre at Soulton Hall in June. All students enjoyed their first experience of live theatre in 2021, and this contributed to their studies for an Arts Award Bronze qualification.

We are pleased that we were able to produce a pleasing range of activities for students throughout the year. We are looking forward to extending this to our full provision once all restrictions have been lifted.

Session 3

A comprehensive programme of Session 3 activities (3.15pm – 5.15pm) provides a wide range of sporting, performing and cultural activities which are accessible to all year groups. Combined with subject specific support in small groups, or individually, the Session 3 programme, the full details of which are displayed on the School website, provides exceptional opportunities for every student at the School.

Finance, Administration and Premises

Director of Finance, Stephen Turton, has maintained a firm rein on the finances, achieving optimum value for money. The annual programme of repairs and a refurbishment of several areas took place in the summer holidays. The two areas vacated when the new careers centre was opened have been converted to two science laboratories during the summer break increasing the laboratory provision for the science department. The phased programme of external and internal maintenance ensures that the fabric of the School is maintained to the highest possible standard, and the groundsmen have once again kept all areas tidy and have ensured that playing surfaces and pitches have been conserved in good order. It continues to be very pleasing that students respect the quality of their environment and contribute to its ongoing pristine condition.

IT Director David Smith's work to keep the School abreast with the latest technology has continued, and his department has worked tirelessly installing new infrastructure, hardware and software upgrades.

This has included the upgrading of the AV systems in the Music rooms, ensuring high quality audio can be delivered to support the fine analysis required for Sixth Form Performing Arts course work. In addition, two of the systems are portable which allows them to be used by Performing arts to support their work in the community.

In order to further improve security a state of the art high definition CCTV solution has been installed.

New email servers have been installed allowing us to migrate email to the Cloud. This will help to ensure that email is always available.

98 new laptops have deployed with charging carts to allow even more students to access on-line resources in lessons.

Our non-teaching staff and administration team have again worked tirelessly to provide effective support to the senior management team and teaching staff, whilst members of the catering and cleaning departments provided an excellent service for all.

Staff and students have also continued to utilise fully the Fitness Centre and Swimming Pool facilities on a regular basis. Bespoke classes and individual fitness programmes remain popular amongst all users.

Advisory Council

The Parents Advisory Council and its two sub groups, the Road Safety Group and the Social Development Committee, make an excellent contribution to the effectiveness of the School, providing advice for the Headmaster, supporting initiatives for the students and fundraising. Members offer valuable feedback on the School's policies and procedures, and it acts as a forum where issues relating to students' progress and welfare can be discussed. It has been difficult to meet due to COVID-19 restrictions, but we hope to be able to meet in person soon.

The Social Development Committee has continued to support the School and its students through fundraising and distributing funds to projects and departments in school to enhance the opportunities available to our community. Since last report the Committee have hosted two Golf Day events that have raised over £5000 for future assistance with The Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme. Entering 2022, we will hopefully see the return of events hosted at school to reunite students, parents, family and staff. The continual support and contribution of parents within the committee and those attending events is greatly appreciated. Wholeheartedly displaying the ethos of being part of Thomas Telford School.

A special thanks to Mr. Foster, Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins and Mr. Nightingale for their continual hard work and dedication.

The Road Safety Group works to encourage parents to park and drive responsibly in the vicinity of the School and is always ready to liaise with the local authority and the Police to help to resolve issues which arise. The Group has continued their work on reviewing the effectiveness of the transport around the vicinity of the School and Mr Parker has continued to meet with local council planners to discuss issues pertaining to the School and its members with relation to existing and future developments.

Sponsors

The Mercers' Company and Tarmac Holdings Limited ("THL"), the School's main sponsors, are completely committed to the aims and objectives of the School. They continue to offer generous financial support to the students in a wide variety of ways. Each

Sponsor nominates four Governors to serve on the Governing Board and this provides the Sponsors with ongoing information regarding the achievements of the School. The Headmaster is also able to seek advice from Sponsors when needed.

Governors

There has been a change to the composition of the Governing Board. Dr Niall Aston TD was also appointed on 22 June 2021 as a nominated Sponsor Governor by The Mercers' Company to replace Mr Mike Dudgeon OBE DL who had served on the Board for just over seven years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Dudgeon for his significant contribution and support during his tenure.

I would also like to take this opportunity to record with regret the sad passing of Robert (Bob) Taylor who served on the Governing Board for over 30 years and whose commercial and industrial experience was of enormous value. We greatly appreciate the significant contribution which he made to the success of the School.

In closing, I wish to place on record the Board's thanks to the teachers, support and administration staff and the Headmaster for their hard work and unfaltering commitment during the extraordinary circumstances presented by the pandemic situation. Moreover, I thank all parents for continuing to support the School and congratulate students on their tremendous achievements during an unprecedented time for education.

John Bowater

Chairman of Governors

Action and Events During 2020 - 2021

Students' efforts, hard work and progress recognised by subject teachers are awarded a Headmaster's Commendation and 1,972 commendations were awarded last year. The student who receives the most Commendations is recognised at Achievement Evening where they are awarded a trophy and a prize.

There was a large reduction in events last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however alternative events have been organised where possible for our students. Below are some of the events which have taken place:-

- Virtual Achievement Evening
- Virtual Sixth Form Taster Sessions for Year 11 students
- Sixth Form Information Video for external Sixth Form applicants
- Virtual Music, Drama and Dance Events
- Virtual Options Taster Sessions for Year 8 students
- School Production of "Bring it on!"
- Sports Day
- Virtual Science Fair
- The opening of the Reynolds Building
- Induction Tours for Sixth Form Students
- Summer School for new Year 7 students
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

On a termly basis, the Governing Board continue to monitor progress against issues arising from the School Development Plan.

Governors monitor Health and Safety including near misses. Termly reports are received and all incidents are reviewed to minimise future risks.

Students continue to receive an Annual Report at the end of the academic year and parents and Personal Tutors discuss progress and set targets. This year, due the challenges in the education system, a report to parents on student progress was provided every half term, totaling six reports. In usual circumstances, parents receive modular reports on progress every four to five weeks and are asked on each occasion if they are satisfied with homework and the general standard of work. We very much value this regular line of communication with parents.

Community and Outreach Programme

Background

Thomas Telford School continues to take a lead role in Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust (TTMAT) in practical and financial terms and whilst the School is unlikely to legally transfer into the trust it operates in every other respect as if it were. TTMAT is actively progressing its growth plans and in March 2020 completed the transfer of the West Midlands University Technical College in Wolverhampton, which became the Thomas Telford University Technical College in September 2020. In addition, TTMAT is actively seeking additional Primary Schools to join the trust to enjoy similar benefits to Redhill Primary Academy and plans for a new primary free school in Priorslee have been agreed with the Regional Schools Commissioner.

Sharing successful practice with other Schools is a natural part of the work undertaken by us. We have a range of initiatives underway involving work with other Schools and receive support from The Mercers' and Training Schools Programmes. These are carefully planned and budgeted for, to ensure that they are successful and there is no negative impact upon the children or staff of Thomas Telford School. Below is an outline of the School's extensive outreach work with other Schools which despite restrictions imposed by the pandemic continues to form a considerable part of the School's annual commitments in its efforts to support the Government's agenda to raise standards.

Joint Professional Development with TTMAT Family of Schools

Staff from Thomas Telford School, Madeley Academy, Walsall Academy, Sandwell Academy and Thomas Telford UTC regularly support each other with moderation of assessment, curriculum development and other training at departmental level and senior staff from all the organisations have used remote communication in this period to further develop and adapt the curriculum during the pandemic. Throughout the lockdowns regular communication was maintained to provide mutual support on managing risk assessments, key worker and vulnerable student provision and remote learning. Considerable professional development and support has been provided to Thomas Telford University Technical College in preparing a Key Stage 3 curriculum based on the Thomas Telford model, to deliver to new students being admitted into Year 7 from September 2021.

Links with Partnership Schools

Madeley Academy

- Careers Service provided
- Madeley Academy students attending lessons at Thomas Telford School
- Swimming lessons delivered at Thomas Telford School when restrictions allowed
- Science, History, Geography, MFL and Mathematics teachers from Thomas Telford School teach at Madeley Academy.
- Support for students applying for Medicine/Veterinary Science (mock interview, help with personal statements, MedSoc, Ethical debating)
- Collaboration in English and MFL

Walsall Academy

- Support for students applying for Medicine/Veterinary Science (mock interview, help with personal statements, MEDSOC, Ethical debating)
- Swimming lessons have been delivered at Thomas Telford School when restrictions allowed
- Support with addressing action points from Ofsted report (November 2019)

Sandwell Academy

- Swimming lessons have been delivered at Thomas Telford School when restrictions allowed
- Support with helping to raise standards in focus areas identified in the school development plan

Redhill Primary Academy

- Weekly Swimming sessions when restrictions allowed
- Use of the Theatre for a Shakespeare performance and a talent contest 2019/20
- Use of the 3G Football facility when restrictions allowed
- Participation in an English writing project 2019/20
- Performing Arts sessions when restrictions allowed
- Mathematics club when restrictions allowed

Thomas Telford University Technology College

- Collaborative development of the curriculum
- Support with student recruitment
- Providing staff to work in PE, Humanities and MFL

Projects in the English Department

Public speaking

Despite there being no formal competitions to attend in the 2020-2021 academic year, we have utilised the time well in the English Department to develop our public speaking talent pool. Firstly, we introduced a new unit into our Year 7 scheme of work. These sessions introduced our students to elements of classical rhetoric and gave them exposure to some famous speeches. Students were given opportunities to develop and perform their own speeches in front of staff and their peers. They were also introduced to formal debating and encouraged to debate different topics in their lessons. The aim is to develop and apply these skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, students will be encouraged to debate aspects of the literary texts they study in Years 8 and 9. Students in Years 8 and 9 were also given opportunities to read, write and perform in front of an audience. Finally, KS3 classes learnt a famous poem by heart and took part in a poetry recital. We feel that these opportunities to develop oracy are vital for the development of our students. It is particularly important in light of the anxiety and confidence issues that have been caused by the pandemic.

Library

Due to COVID-19, the library was closed throughout the academic year 2020/21 and therefore a mobile library service was provided to students in Year 7-9 students in their English lessons. Other year groups were offered a personal shopper service where books were delivered to them. A Year 8/9 book group continued to run via Zoom rather than in person, and was well attended. A very well received visit by the rap poet, Rob Bradley, was held during the summer term for Year 8 students.

Projects in the Science Department

Year 8 Virtual Science Fair – After moving to online learning in January 2021, all Year 8 students took part in a virtual Science Fair. They were able to work collaboratively with some of their peers to carry out a project of their choosing. All of the students were assigned a teacher who offered support via video tutorials.

Preparation for Oxbridge/Medicine applicants – students applying for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science at University were invited to take part in virtual mock multiple mini interviews (MMI) in November. They all received individual feedback prior to their interview date. Subject staff also helped prepare the Oxbridge students for their virtual interviews.

Projects in the Mathematics Department

Primary Club – Last year we were affected by the requirement to keep all students in their bubbles and so we were only able to work with one local Primary School (Redhill Primary Academy). One of our teachers attended the Primary School each week in the summer term and worked with eight Year 6 students. The sessions were run with the rationale of keeping high-achieving students engaged within mathematics. Students looked at mathematical puzzles and ideas as well as covered curriculum content at KS2 level 6. The students developed techniques used in secondary education and had the opportunity to explore ideas within mathematics. The response of the students at the end of the programme was again positive and so the sessions will run again this year, initially with just Redhill but with a view to inviting more schools later in the year.

STEM - One member of the department has taken on a STEM role and worked with representatives from our partner schools to raise the STEM profile and engage more students in STEM activities. This included a poster competition, a visitor during Careers and Activities week and some targeted activities within lessons. Some planned activities were sadly cancelled due to social

distancing/bubble rules. A STEM library has been set up on the OLC with shared resources and STEM resources/activities were shared with students in Sixth Form who hoped to study STEM subjects at university.

Projects in the Religious Studies Department

The onset and continuation of the global COVID-19 pandemic presented some unique challenges and significant opportunities to revisit our methodologies for the RS department. Many of the planned activities for the year had to be postponed and or rearranged due to the lockdown and the COVID-19 restrictions.

Mrs Antwi took over as the new Head of Religious Studies in September 2020. The priority for the autumn term was to identify and assess the impact of the first lockdown on the progress of students across all year groups. Strategies were put in place to support students who had fallen behind academically and also to address issues that arose with student wellbeing.

Again, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, our scheduled trip to the Gurdwara, Harvest and Remembrance services could not ahead. Although Ethical debating sessions could not go ahead, Mrs Antwi provided support for students in preparation for their BMAT/LNAT examinations during the autumn term. By the second lockdown, the department had rewritten aspects of the KS3 and KS4 curriculum to ensure that while the required content was delivered, student wellbeing and support was at the core of each lesson. Session were delivered via zoom and also recorded on Camtasia for student to access while at home.

During the summer term, the department revamped the RS curriculum at KS3 and KS4 and the Statutory RS curriculum to ensure that the recommendations from the research review published in May 2021 on the provision of Religious Education in schools in England were clearly evidenced in our schemes of work.

In the summer term, the Religious Studies Department organised the Spirited Arts competitions for all Year 9 students giving them the opportunity to join hundreds of schools from around the world taking part in this year's annual competition. Nine entries have been made and we await the results.

With the easing of lockdown, the RS department continues to look forward to being able to go back many of the activities that continues to enrich the knowledge, understanding and cultural capital of all students at Thomas Telford School.

Projects in the Physical Education Department

Hockey

The fifth Rush Hockey tournament was held in June 2019. Parents, grandparents, students and teachers attended a successful evening that once again raised the profile of Hockey at Thomas Telford School. The Director of Hockey hosted and organised three Primary School Hockey festivals for the Telford and Wrekin Primary Sports Association and also hosted the England Hockey Quick Sticks tournaments for over twenty Primary Schools across the County.

Alongside this, the Director of Hockey has organised elite individual sessions with a number of students that have helped them to achieve regional and national talent camps.

Football

Level 1 coaching will no longer be delivered in school as it is now a solely virtual qualification, however we will be introducing the FA officiating qualification at the beginning of this academic year (November / December).

Proposed scholarship soccer tour to NYC is very much on the cards which will give Sixth Form students an experience of College / University lifestyle in the USA and open opportunities to secure soccer scholarships in the next academic year

We were able to take students to St George's Park in Burton on Trent, the home of English Football, on a single occasion last year due to restrictions. Our players are used for footballers to teach on the various FA level 2, B License and A License coaching badges. Links are still on-going to continue this moving forward.

We still have staff involved in Shropshire Schools Football and we will host trials and fixtures at the School when able to do so.

Athletics

Members of the PE normally team organise the county and regional Athletics competitions, alongside Telford Athletics club at the track in Oakengates. These events did not take place this year, however students were able to use the track which provided them with an opportunity to compete at the facility and to develop field events that are difficult to host at School.

Fitness

It was a frustrating year not being able to have the high numbers we are used to in the Fitness Suite due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, this didn't change the support and opportunities offered to both staff and students.

Not only did Fitness continue to be a very popular Session 3, it has continued to facilitate many of our students during Physical Education lessons. However, big changes needed to be made to suit the government guidelines.

Session 3

Normally, we allow all year groups to use the Fitness Suite during Session 3, however we were able to continue to keep high numbers while bubbling the year groups. The most popular year was Year 7 at reduced but full capacity of 30 students each week. This year we have been able to open Fitness Session 3 to all year groups, Monday – Thursday with a maximum capacity of 60 students.

Online PE lessons for all year groups

It was really important for students to stay as active as possible and continue Physical Education lessons during lockdown for both their physical and mental health. Therefore, we were able to offer online Fitness lessons to Year 7-11 via Zoom on top of setting practical and theory PE tasks. The online lessons consisted of HIIT classes, Abs classes & fun challenges which relating to different sports taught at Thomas Telford School. This proved a great success with students tuning in weekly to take part.

Fitness Equipment

To continue to promote staff wellbeing, all staff had the opportunity to borrow equipment from the Fitness Suite to use at home with support if needed. The spin bikes turned out to be extremely popular with staff. On top of this, staff had the opportunity to have a personalised training programme made which three member of staff took up.

Gym instructors' course

Due to the delay of COVID-19, the Gym Instructors course was able to conclude last year. The course had to be adapted to suit COVID-19 restrictions which saw our students' complete three video assessments instead of one face to face assessment. Students adapted well to the change and a new course has been set up this year for both our Year 12 and Year 13 students, which started in October half term.

Key Worker students

Our key worker students had the opportunity to use the Fitness Suite for Physical Education lessons. This was again bubbled but students enjoyed taking part in different activities such as Spin sessions and Years 9-11 having the opportunity to try out our new equipment including kettlebells.

Saturday School

We were able to use the Fitness Suite and Swimming Pool for Saturday Schools for different year groups. Students had the opportunity to use the Fitness Suite or Swimming pool during their 30 minute break time which again proved very popular with each year group who took advantage of Saturday school.

Staff sessions

To help promote staff wellbeing, we have continued to open up the Fitness Suite for all staff when possible but under COVID-19 restrictions. Equipment was spaced at least two metres apart for the safety for staff. Staff Spin sessions were held each week when restrictions allowed, which continue to prove extremely popular.

Nuffield Health

Normally we give the opportunity for our BTEC Sixth Form students to help or workout during other year groups Fitness lessons. Unfortunately, this wasn't able to happen due to bubbled classes. However, Mr Lowe was able to organise a Nuffield Health membership for those students who wanted to take advantage of the opportunity.

Projects in the Art and Technology Department

The STEM Workshop

Guests from the STEM workshop at the e-Innovation Centre, University of Wolverhampton visited the school during Careers Awareness Week to introduce a number of engineering challenges to a group of Year 10 students. The students explored careers within engineering and manufacturing by completing a number of team tasks. Students had to design and make a mechanical device to lift and move items, design and prototype a new innovative product using a singular sheet of material, in view of it being CNC machined and press formed and they developed an awareness of lean manufacture. All of which was delivered in a fun and exciting way.

Virtual Harry Potter Studios

To enable students to become aware of the career opportunities in Art and Technology a virtual session with the Harry Potter studio staff was arranged and the Year 8 students greatly enjoyed the experience.

Starbucks Competition

The Art and Technology Department worked with Year 7 and 8 to produce new packaging designs for Starbucks, these were to be for Remembrance Day and the students came up with some fantastic designs which were judged by staff at Starbucks and reward packs were given.

WRL week – 'rollercoaster design'

The Art and Technology teams worked with Year 7 students in a huge practical design and make task. The students thoroughly enjoyed the day and there was much excitement as they worked in teams to design and make a large scale model of a replacement log flume for Alton Towers.

Large Scale Year 13 pieces

Since we were unable to run our usual artist in residence scheme we decided to get the Year 13 students working at a large scale piece in class time. Students responded extremely well to this and their work can be seen displayed in the Atrium. Working at such a large scale in class was a real challenge but it gave our Year 13 students a great deal of confidence for working on their final pieces later in the year.

Charity and Community support

Despite the unusual circumstances of the last academic year, Thomas Telford students and staff wanted to continue our tradition of support to the community. We did this in a variety of ways and despite restrictions, are really pleased with the fundraising efforts and grateful for the support of everyone that contributed.

Our non-uniform day in October saw us raise over £1,000 to donate to Telford Crisis support who were raising money for new freezers to store food donations. Our contribution would have enabled them to purchase what they needed. We also supported Save the Children with our annual Christmas Jumper day in December.

In May, a number of Year 12 students ran events to either raise money for good causes, or to raise awareness of certain issues, like mental health. A group of Year 12 girls organised a charity bake-off event, with some amazing entries from talented students and staff. The cakes were then auctioned. Year 12 boys organised and ran a football tournament to raise awareness of the importance of exercise in maintaining good mental health, whilst another group took part in the Cancer research, "Walk all over cancer" encouraging as many people as possible to raise money by walking at least 10,000 steps per day.

Throughout the summer, the whole school embarked on the challenge of walking 12 Miles up the Wrekin and back, to raise money for Cancer charities. Staff and students took part and had a great time, raising money for some great causes. In the same week, students also completed our very own "Race for Life" event on school grounds, completing circuits to run a minimum of 5K. These events alone helped us raise over £17,500!

Although many of the larger events were cancelled, many individuals took part in efforts to support the community and charities by completing walking, running or swimming challenges, amongst other things.

The money raised in the last academic year was nearly £20,000 and we are very grateful for all of the donations and support shown to the students.

GOVERNORS

The School is constituted as a company limited by guarantee, registered under the Companies Act. Its Governors (who are directors of the Company) are nominated by the two Sponsors of the School, which are The Mercers' Company and Tarmac Holdings Limited, and by the Governors themselves.

The Governors retire by rotation in accordance with the Company's Articles of Association, which provide that at each Annual General Meeting of the Company, one third of the Governors must retire, being those longest in office since last election, but are eligible for re-election.

CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY

The Chairman of the Governors is Mr J F Bowater and the Company Secretary is Mrs M Davies.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The accounts for the School's last complete accounting year, being the twelve months ended on 31 August 2021, are to be considered for approval by the Board of Governors on 2 November 2021.

Our full Annual Report and Financial Statement for the academic year can be accessed via our website.

The audited accounts, will be submitted to the Governors on 2 November 2021 for their approval.