

The

REGISTER

ISSUE 5 | SPRING 2021



"ARE WE NEARLY THERE, YET?"



EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION...

"Are we nearly there, yet?" Whilst the long road-trips of family holidays still seem some way off in the distance, the question feels strangely familiar as we edge, slowly, along the roadmap.

Schools have now reopened for on-site learning for all pupils. Many of us may have felt a palpable sense of relief, as our children unplugged and left the house, returning to the familiarity of the daily school routine and being able to see their friends in person. The first green shoots of spring emerging, from a long and arduous winter. Grateful as we are for the renewed optimism and (at the time of writing, at least) brighter skies, it still feels like much of normal daily life is on hold for now, just around the next corner, almost... there.

Whilst we saw our pupils, once again, adapt to the continued disruption with incredible agility, resilience and creativity, we are also aware of the accumulative sense of fatigue, uncertainty and anxiety that children and their families might be feeling at this time. The return to school has been characterised by a profound consideration for wellbeing and the importance of kindness. Beyond a slogan, this is what the 'whole child' approach means at Mayville. Ensuring that children do not 'fall behind' in their pursuit of academic excellence is just one part of the puzzle, alongside the discovery and development of their talents, temperament and character – The head. The hands. The heart. In balance.

Although the Easter break might not bring that much desired road-trip or family holiday, just yet, I hope you all manage to enjoy something of the staggered return to normal family life.



Neil Hardcastle
Marketing &
Development Director

If you have a story that you'd like us to feature in The Register or on our social media, please email:

news@mayvillehighschool.net

Parent advocacy remains our greatest strength. Please help to spread the word about Mayville by sharing the content that we feature on our website & social media channels.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Spring Term started with an abrupt lockdown and school closures. In response to the continued challenges of remote learning, we witnessed something of a 'Creative Boom', as showcased in our pupils' incredible work on pages 4-9.

After a year of loss and disruption, we continue to focus on the 'Importance of Kindness' in helping our pupils to adjust to the return to on-site learning (pages 20-23).

Mayville now features in **Muddy Stiletto's 'Best Schools Guide'**. If you've not come across them before, their insider guides are written to offer a 'genuine insight into the schools they visit, with informal, super-useful advice from their editors – who are parents, just like you.'

<https://hants.muddystiletto.co.uk/kids/school-reviews/mayville-school-southsea/>

Our Cockleshell site has been awarded a grant from the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation, to refurbish and upgrade our on-site facilities.

Robert Sullivan, Chief Executive of the Football Foundation, said: "This grant award towards developing modern, inclusive and accessible facilities is great news for the local community."

Creative futures – current Year 11 (U5) pupil, Bryony, has received offers from four prestigious specialist performing arts colleges, to continue full-time training after leaving Mayville.

As promised in the last issue, we have been working on the continued development of our website – adding an entirely new calendar function, to keep you up-to-date with daily life at Mayville. We look forward to being able to add more events to this, as restrictions allow. mayvillehighschool.com/school-calendar/

You may have also seen the launch of *Chorus* – a blog space for staff and pupils to share their interests, thoughts and ideas. We've republished a couple of articles in this issue, on pages 10-11 & 16-18. To read more, visit: mayvillehighschool.com/stories/



A message from
THE HEAD
REBECCA PARKYN

We have recently marked a year from the date on which we first experienced a COVID lockdown. At the time, we had no idea that we would still be battling against the pandemic in the Spring of 2021.

In February 2020, few of us knew what Zoom was, but in those first days and weeks an entire community of teachers and pupils mastered an utterly different educational approach. Since then, our teachers have challenged themselves, daily, to refine and evolve their 'remote teaching skills', so that the pupils can have the very best of remote provision – academic, pastoral and co-curricular. The pupils too have picked up (and sometimes passed on) tricks and hints on how to enrich a remote learning environment.

We have always known that school is more than just the classroom or exam results, vital and central though they are. We have, however, been reminded of the importance of all the social interactions and friendships made at school: on bus journeys, at lunchtimes, playing sport and participating in creative activities – to name just a few areas that help to maintain positive mental health. We have all missed these extra things and I hope that we never miss them again.

We have seen the resilience of the pupils – across all ages, but perhaps especially in Years 10 & 11 (L5 & U5), who have had to deal with a mountain of unavoidable uncertainty as they approach their GCSEs. Despite the many difficulties, they have responded with impressive fortitude and endless patience and they have been an example to all. I think the current generation of Mayville pupils will not be damaged by the last 12 months, but strengthened. As a society, we have surely learned to put some things in perspective, too!

One year on, and we are not there yet. But we have shown that we can, and will, flourish.

Once the pandemic is over, we will need to think hard about the relationship we have formed with technology as teachers and pupils: it has been a brilliant servant to us over the last year, but it has the power to be an exigent master. We will need to reintroduce ourselves to the intangible and 'inefficient' arts of inconclusive wondering and thinking, chatting with a friend, working away at something that puzzles us, perhaps over days or weeks, not expecting to hammer a few words on to a keyboard for an immediate answer. I want to make sure that, at Mayville, we keep these thoughts in mind, as we slowly return to once-familiar social structures.

As ever, my very warmest wishes to you and your families. I hope you have a lovely Easter, even though I suspect, for most of us, the views are going to look dispiritingly familiar!

Mayville CREATIVE *BOOM

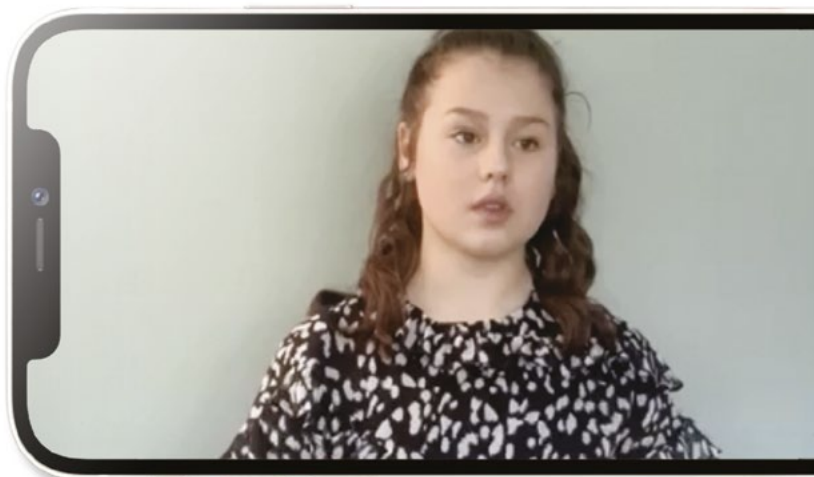
It is observed, throughout history, that periods of societal disruption or turmoil often give rise to a dramatic surge of creativity and a drive towards profound cultural change. In the aftermath of World War I and the Spanish Flu pandemic, the *Roaring Twenties* were characterised by a fresh artistic and creative energy – Jazz, Art Deco and the dance craze represented a break with traditions and a leaning towards a more optimistic view of modernity.

As lockdown separated us from a regular connection to many of the structures and routines that bind us together as a society, we saw signs of a similar explosion in creative activities, with pupils increasingly using art, photography and poetry to help make sense of the world around them.

Much like in the *Roaring Twenties*, this creative boom is enabled by utilising modern technology. Sharing work via Google Classroom, using camera phones for photography and video, capturing choreography on TikTok, or recording the parts of a music performance remotely, via Zoom – these are just some of the approaches employed by pupils to work around the restrictions of living and learning during lockdown.



Response to 'Three Worlds' (M.C. Escher) – Hannah, Year 8 (L4)



Lois in Year 8 (L4) won the ISA Musical Theatre Competition, with her home-recorded version of 'The Life I Never Led' from *Sister Act*



Bird nest made from recycled Amazon packaging
Rebecca, Year 9 (U4)



TikTok choreography – Bryony, Year 11 (U5)



Harrison in Year 10 (L5) released his debut EP in January



Hand-carved and etched skateboard – Finn, Year 9 (U4)

The story goes that when Churchill was asked to cut funding to the arts in order to support the war effort in World War II, he responded, "Then what would we be fighting for?"

Now there is plenty of debate about whether Churchill actually uttered those words but this juxtaposition of hard times with art and creativity is never more relevant. People, more than ever, now want to turn to creative projects to help take their minds off 'R rates', 'vaccinations' and 'tiers'.

In the first lockdown people wanted to use the time to learn a new skill; it almost became a pressure to do so. Now we have 'settled' into Lockdown 3.0, there seems to be something more natural about our creative projects. They are less about a grand plan to achieve something and more about naturally finding some mindful moments to keep spirits up and give our mind a break.

I've lost track of the number of times I've directed students towards art during my career; in my opinion, its ability to relax and focus the mind is infinite. Just the other day, I received this wonderful piece of writing from a pupil in Year 2 (L2).

"Hi my name is Anika (L2) and you know it is Lockdown at the moment? You can't do anything outside. But inside we can do anything you do for fun and some relaxation. Therefore I have started drawing and some painting. Over the last couple of weeks I felt sad not seeing my friends at school but drawing and painting has helped me to relax and calm down when I am feeling lonely. So drawing and painting became one of my hobbies."

It was a message that needed sharing. Not only because of the incredible ability it showed for pupils this young to be so self-reflective but also how it is so important that we all find some time at the moment to do something mindful.

Being a parent of 3 young children, my mindfulness sometimes happens for a swift half an hour in between bathtimes and evening wake ups. But the point is, I find that short time to completely focus and relax my mind.

Overall, I guess the point I am trying to make is that whatever your interests, find time for them now more than ever. Whether it is art, music, running, games or reading. Prioritise your mindful moments. They will do you the world of good.

*Will Schmit, Assistant Head Junior School
(First published for 'Chorus', 20th January 2021)*



Anika in Year 2 (L2) painting to relax, during lockdown



Sky, Year 6 (U3) – winner of the Junior lockdown art competition



Rosie B, Year 6 (U3) – runner-up, Junior lockdown art competition



Hadley, Year 3 (U2) – Junior lockdown photography competition



Zahra Y, Year 6 (U3) – Junior lockdown photography competition



Some of our youngest children explored their feelings through colour and story. In Anna Llenas' book 'The Colour Monster', the eponymous hero wakes up feeling very confused. His emotions are all over the place – he feels angry, happy, calm, sad and scared all at once! To help him, a little girl shows him what each feeling means through colour. Our Pre-Prep pupils listened to a reading of the story, via Zoom, before drawing their own colour monsters.

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU DO IT'S WHAT IT DOES TO YOU

Mr O'Neil's Year 11 (U5) English class wrote poems, inspired by Simon Armitage's *'It Ain't What You Do, It's What It Does To You'*

*I have not bummed across America
with only a dollar to spare, one pair
of busted Levi's and a bowie knife.
I have lived with thieves in Manchester.*

*I have not padded through the Taj Mahal,
barefoot, listening to the space between
each footfall picking up and putting down
its print against the marble floor. But I*

*skimmed flat stones across Black Moss on a day
so still I could hear each set of ripples
as they crossed. I felt each stone's inertia
spend itself against the water; then sink.*

*I have not toyed with a parachute cord
while perched on the lip of a light-aircraft;
but I held the wobbly head of a boy
at the day centre, and stroked his fat hands.*

*And I guess that the tightness in the throat
and the tiny cascading sensation
somewhere inside us are both part of that
sense of something else. That feeling, I mean.*

I have not ventured across Alaska
with no food to spare, one pair
of snow boots and an ice-pick.
I have stayed with homeless people in Cornwall.

I have not trekked along the Sahara,
barefoot, listening to the intervals between
my crunching feet marking their way
across the sandy terrain. But I

climbed the steepest side of a mountain
so I could be free from the noise
of the world below. Each step raising
me towards my goal; it's finished.

I have not untied a bungee cord
while waiting on a platform to jump;
but I gave comforting words to a man
at the homeless shelter, and smiled.

And I guess that the tightness in the throat
and the tiny cascading sensation
somewhere inside us are both part of that
sense of something else. That feeling, I mean.

James Harrison

I have not sailed around the world nonstop,
I have not punched a crocodile in the Outback,
I have not free climbed up The Shard.
I have flown a plane over Stonehenge.

I have not caught sight of the Northern Lights
I have not travelled to the Wailing Wall
I have not swam in the buoyant Dead Sea
But I have camped in the New Forest with my family.

Cycled around the New Forest on a warm summer's
day the fresh breeze cooling my slowly tanning skin
We sit affront the beautiful yellow sunset
descending over the Hampshire countryside.

I have not felt my heart pound through my chest
Before plummeting 134m attached only to a bungee
But I restored a small fleet of dinghies
For the sailing club juniors to learn and enjoy.

And I guess that the tightness in the throat
and the tiny cascading sensation
somewhere inside us are both part of that
sense of something else. That feeling, I mean.

Ben Keevil

I haven't disarmed a fierce bank robber,
With only my small, freckly and clenched hand,
Saving valuable jewels and possessions.
But I did once help find an armed suspect.

I have not hiked up the Marble Mountains,
with a gasp of success let out near end.
With this no sights of beauty had my eyes
experienced. But with ease seen beauty

from the sight of Durdle came an entrance
that revealed the sea's shimmering life.
Birds blocked the light from the fiery sun.
This did not dismember the vision seen.

I have not marched across the skies in flight,
soaring the sky with a smoke trail behind
But I did help stabilise a hurt boy,
whilst waiting for the health saviours to show.

And I guess that the tightness in the throat
and the tiny cascading sensation
somewhere inside us are both part of that
sense of something else. That feeling, I mean.

Daniel Lennox

SLAM POETRY

Mrs Hardcastle's Year 7 (Remove) class have been working on slam poetry. Slam poetry is its own genre, sitting halfway between rap lyrics and poetry, and is designed to be performed to an audience with energy and passion. The poems often talk about personal identity and problems within society, using rhyme and rhythm to affect the listener.

I am a girl

I am a girl,
Not an object.
I am strong.
I am proud.
I won't be silenced by a crowd.
This is my body -
No, means no.
I should be able to walk alone,
Without pretending to be on the phone.

Powerful?

Yes

I

Am.

I am strong
I am fearless
You can't change who I am.

I can play sport
As good as boys
But some will deny
This truth.

We all need to come together,
As one.
Be a community.
Stick together.
Always and forever.

I am a girl.

Mika Bessey

Covid

Who would have thought, in this day and age,
Covid would be killing people.
We're trapped inside our rooms,
No conversations, only on Zoom.
Some people's futures are doomed.
Wearing masks, all day long,
We're not even allowed to sing songs.
The death toll rises,
Some sit and pray,
Hoping to live another day.

Our frowns are disguised -
Smiling in the outside
Breaking on the inside.

Isobel Hext and Savannah Pennery

Perfect World?

Welcome to a world where racism is real,
And people of colour are deemed ideal.
We are taught not to feel strange,
Yet society cannot accept change.
They judge a book by its cover,
Not truly knowing how we blubber.
The hurt, the torment, the shame we suffer -
Day after day, becoming tougher and tougher.

When they stop and stare
And we have to act like we don't care.
I did not choose my skin colour,
So I am no different from another.

I pray each day with the hope
That every person will soon cope.
This must come to an end,
As we can no longer pretend,
That this world is perfect.

Anusha Ahmed

DIGITAL LITERACY

A LOCKDOWN SILVER LINING

Each day on the news we hear about how lockdown has had a detrimental effect on children's education; the concern being their academic progress. However, I feel that we are somewhat missing a point in regard to the other learning that is taking place. Covid-19 has forced a rapid acceleration in the rate of change around how people learn and the shift from traditional learning methods to a 'blended learning' approach.

Long before lockdown was even heard of, Mayville had already implemented blended learning, through the use of *Google Classroom* and all that it has to offer. The first lockdown, although daunting, gave us a great foundation to enable switching to remote learning – practically seamless in its application – and teaching undertook a significant transformation within a very short time.

This also led us to rethink the traditional learning that takes place and how technology can support the teaching and learning process. Teachers, pupils and parents alike have had a huge learning experience of new technology: *Google Meet*, *Screencastify*, *Loom*, *Mote*, *Nearpod* are but a few of the applications that have catapulted our IT skills into expertise, sculpting lessons into a different, more twenty-first century format. Remote learning has shown that pupils have accepted and adapted to the changes in their learning and their ways of working and they have stepped up to the challenge in a positive way.

Creative integration

Creativity has led to pupils implementing and communicating new ways of submitting work, showing that they have demonstrated originality and inventiveness in their work, often collaborating in teams remotely. Likewise, the innovative learning methods that teachers have delivered have used integrated technologies. Digital literacy is one of the soft skills needed by twenty-first century workers and, by adapting to the new way of working, teachers at Mayville have enhanced our pupils' digital skills.

"Although lockdown is not an ideal situation by any means, we need to identify the unique opportunities that this has allowed our pupils to experience and the skills they will have mastered in readiness for the future."

All of us have had to embrace technology, to adapt and change. Although we cannot anticipate the future of technology and what will be used in business, we can and are preparing our pupils with the 'soft skills' that will equip them for life beyond school.

Jayne Mills, Director of IT & Communications

(First published for 'Chorus', 1st February 2021)



Spotlight on...

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

FUTURE-FACING CREATIVITY

the straps light up
so you can still see the
backpack from the front



this main part
glows up.

This backpack comes
in handy if you ever
end up walking in the
night during hikes or
camping.

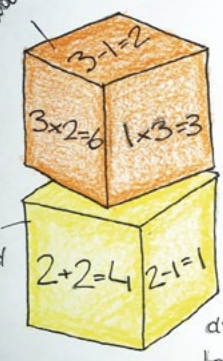
after walking in the sun,
the light is absorbed and
the backpack glows when
it gets dark.

It'll be easy to find your
friends if you need to.

Phosphorescent Camping Backpack

Photochromatic building blocks!

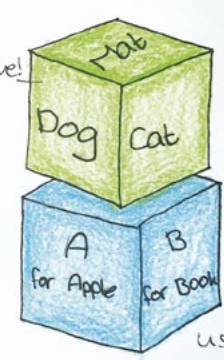
wooden



Sealed & varnished

when these
cubes are put
in the sun,
they change
appearance to
teach two
different subjects
to young kids

UV sensitive!

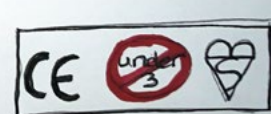


Each cube
is varnished
so they're
non-toxic and
they won't be
destroyed by
rain when
left outside
after it was
used in the sun

Before ↑

Comes with
a UV light!

After ↑



Senior pupils have been designing products, utilising modern and smart materials, including their knowledge of chemical finishes when possible.



Poppy Davenport (Year 11, 2020) created this incredible piece, as part of her Textiles GCSE work last year.

Inspired by a desire to create glamorous, high quality garments, sustainably and without damaging the environment, she designed this dress to be worn on the red carpet at Cannes Film Festival.

Constructed from durable eco-friendly fabrics, recycled and recyclable elements, the dress also incorporates a powerful message on the environmental impact of fast fashion.





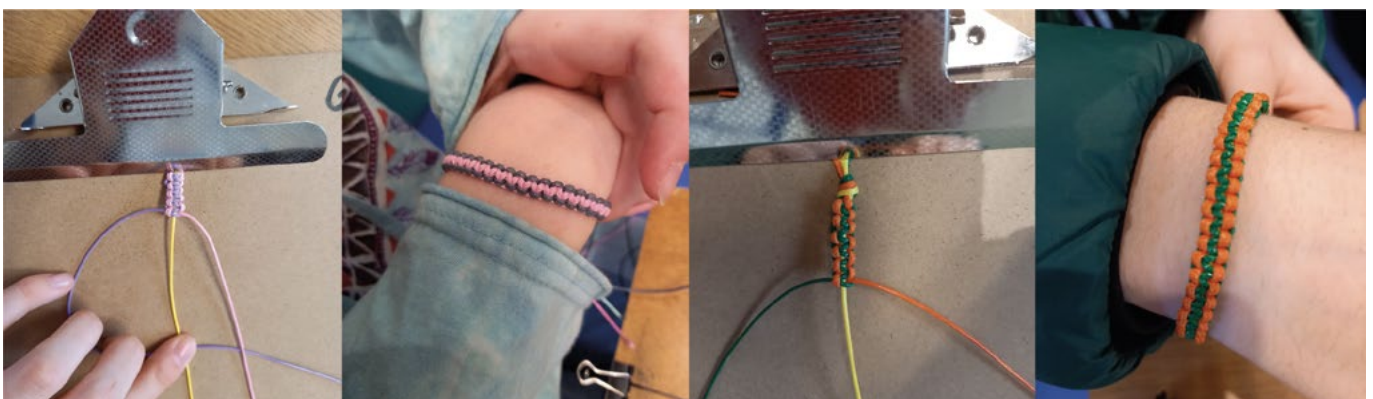
OFF SCREEN DAYS

Lockdown learning involves a greater amount of screen time, compared to in-school or blended learning. In response to this, pupils throughout the school took part in a number of dedicated 'off-screen days' during the school closures.

On the Senior School day, pupils in years 7-10 could choose their own projects – Birdwatching in Science, Buddhist meditation in RE, book-making in English, cooking in MFL or game design in IT were just some of the choices available. The day was designed to get pupils engaged in creative and tactile learning experiences, across the whole curriculum.

Year 11 pupils had the choice to take part in the projects or use the time for exam work & revision.

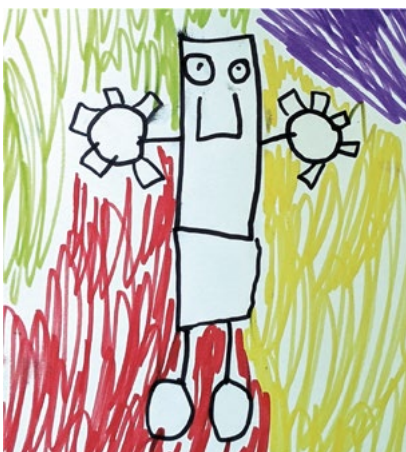
Keyworker pupils, that were in school, also had the option of an alternative programme of activities and games, including making cakes and friendship bracelets for Valentine's day.





On one of the Pre-Prep and Junior School off-screen days, pupils spent some time with local artist 'My Dog Sighs'.

From humble beginnings, giving his work away for free as part of 'Free Art Friday', the former teacher and Southsea resident has since exhibited all around the world, gathering a huge following of collectors and admirers in the process. He was kind enough to share his time and expertise with our pupils (and staff!), who created their own My Dog Sighs inspired pieces.



LEARNING DIFFERENCES

PROVIDING SUPPORT, REMOTELY

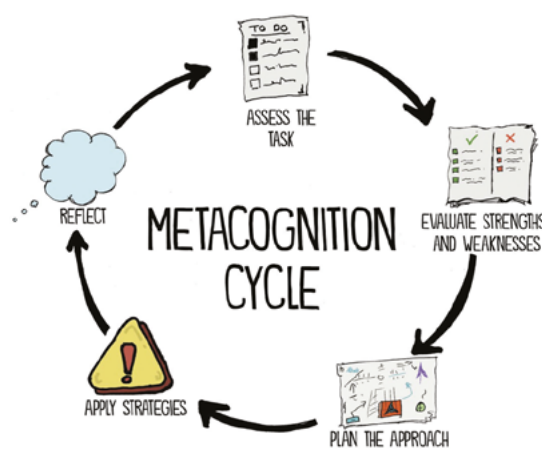
The word 'remote' conjures images of being far away. Distanced. Isolated. An island surrounded by warm blue shallow water. This is ideal if you are looking for a holiday and some peace but what if the last thing you need or want, is to be remote?

For some pupils with learning differences, remote learning has propelled them into a world of insecurity and the unknown, filling their minds with anxiety and self doubt. This is not surprising, as being away from 'school' – a place of safety and security, which is full of routine and reliability and familiarity and friendships – means that they are unable to apply their learning strategies.

Learning strategies – learning to learn

Our children in the Nursery School are in the beginning stages of their learning journey – learning how to listen and understand, learning how to play and work as a team and learning to be curious and ask questions. They are learning how to cope when something goes wrong and how to celebrate when something goes right. They are learning how to learn. They are developing 'strategies'. We should never underestimate the ability of our pupils to develop their own unique learning strategies and their adaptability to use them. They use them so effectively, to navigate their way through their learning journeys throughout their lives.

Our pupils with learning differences often rely heavily on their unique learning strategies, to overcome the barriers to learning. There are many different strategies that pupils use, such as: planning, monitoring and evaluating, effectively known as 'Metacognitive Strategies'. These can look very different for each individual pupil.



We are currently experiencing an unknown future. This is hard for those who are 'born to plan'. Planning is a strategy to help us cope, it helps to reduce anxiety. Planning involves a routine. Having a routine is a strategy. It allows us to know what is happening next. It brings familiarity and familiarity brings security. Security brings peace. Familiarity involves friendships, conversations and laughter, debates and disagreements. A hug, a smile, feeling safe, a sense of belonging.

How do we support our pupils when their main strategy is the need for reassurance from their teachers or friends? How do we support the individual who struggles to get started in class, who discretely looks round at everybody's work and then develops their own ideas or just needs their teacher to suggest different perspectives? How do we support the pupil who asks their friend, 'do you think this is a good idea?' before starting their work, just because they know that sharing ideas helps to grow bigger ideas. How do we support the pupil who worries that they haven't read the question properly, worrying about getting their work wrong, worrying about keeping up and not falling behind? How do these pupils cope remotely?

The Mayville difference

We know our pupils at Mayville. We understand their learning differences and we know their strategies. We know their friends and their families. We know how to support them. From our very youngest to those who are near the end of their Mayville Journey, we have been encouraging them to adapt and develop new strategies. Teaching them, and us, that it is OK to try something new. A new way of doing something is hard. It makes us feel uncomfortable and at times frustrated but we are there to reassure our pupils that we are with them every step of the way. Pupils at Mayville are valued as individuals, celebrated for their uniqueness and supported and nurtured to be the very best they can be. Our staff are dedicated and committed to reaching out to every pupil, ensuring that they are not alone in their journey.

Remote doesn't have to be 'remote'

Connection has been the most effective strategy staff have been able to offer our pupils and I am not talking 'internet', as that is an issue seemingly out of our control but a personal connection with our pupils and their families.

Staff quickly learnt to adapt to delivering learning in different ways. They are now consistently offering live lessons, pre-recorded lessons, live story times, assemblies for celebrations, quizzes, links to educational videos, 1:1 support and 1:1 catch-up sessions. We have encouraged our pupils to follow the school timetable, attend tutor times and lessons ready for learning. We have supported pupils in setting up routines, helped with organisation skills and actively encouraged pupils to take a break and have lunch, go for a walk and get some fresh air. In the Senior School, we have reduced lesson length to allow pupils to take a short break between lessons, as they would in school. We have followed up with individual calls home and offered pastoral support to those pupils who needed a little extra, to get them settled and adjusted.

For those pupils who need to work alongside their friends, we have breakout rooms in *Google Meet*, where pupils can work collaboratively in virtual rooms. Work can be shared to teachers using *Google Slides* or *Google Chat* and immediate feedback and help can be given. The pupils know that a teacher is always there for them. We offer

flexibility to help manage workload and extra time. We know our pupils need this. We know it makes a difference to them.

Our pupils with learning differences are already experienced in using technology. They are fully versed in using *Read Write*, a programme that will read text aloud. In reducing the reading demand, it allows pupils to focus on comprehending the text. Pupils can use the 'speech to text' function on *Google Docs*, as well as *Read Write*. In reducing the demand on handwriting and spelling, it enables pupils to take risks with their ideas and use their extensive vocabulary. Pupils have really engaged with the variety of online learning styles, such as quizzes or *Google Slides*. They are enjoying uploading their work in a variety of formats, such as short videos, presentations and photos of work in action. This ensures that pupils can demonstrate their understanding, in a way that supports their individual interests and strengths. Staff have encouraged pupils to be as creative as possible and, in the Junior and Pre-Prep departments, interactive live cooking, art, PE and dance lessons have taken place.

We know that, no matter how good our remote learning is for all pupils and particularly those with learning differences, we cannot reach all of our pupils in the way we want. We know that it is because there is no substitute for classroom teaching. We have encouraged these pupils to come to school, to enable them to use their unique learning strategies 'in-situ'. Although 'school' is currently very different from what they are familiar with, some of our pupils are managing better just by being at 'school'.



Continued from previous page...

We know that there is also a difference between our younger pupils, who have absolutely loved being on *Zoom* meetings, seeing all their friends, experimenting with what they look like close up to the camera, compared to our Senior School pupils, who are likely to take a more passive role in *Google Meet*, camera off and muted! We have counteracted this with how we, as staff, communicate with pupils of different ages, to ensure engagement is consistently effective.

However, we have noticed some incredibly positive changes in our pupils. We have seen an increase in independence. We have seen an increase in organisational skills. We have seen pupils taking risks with new challenges and learning perseverance. We have seen an increase in attention and focus. We have seen confidence levels rise when pupils ask for help.

Our pupils have written songs, poems and stories. They have played instruments, danced and learnt yoga. They have motivated each other to do online workouts in PE. They have created works of art and baked cakes and biscuits. We are seeing families bonding during STEM day – cooking together, sharing and negotiating resources and space, learning how to be patient with each other, joining in shared reading sessions, playing games together. They have learnt how to argue... and make up. Our challenge, as a school, is to learn from our pupils and bring more of what worked well for them into the classroom.

We will look back on this time in history. We will reflect. We will know that we all stood together at Mayville and that we were there with our pupils every step of the way. We are so proud of all that they have achieved and thank the parents for supporting their children (and their teachers) in incredibly difficult circumstances. We would like to think that the pupils and their families will remember that they were only remote by distance.

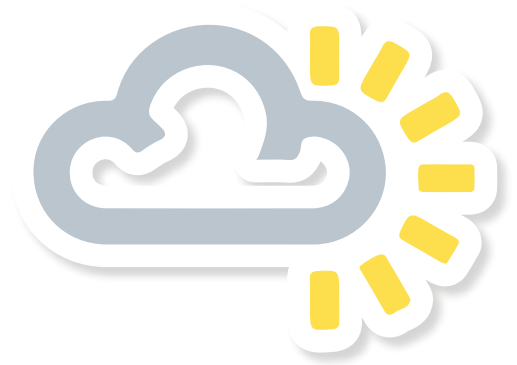
Kelly Hewitt, SENCO

(First published for 'Chorus', 22nd February 2021)

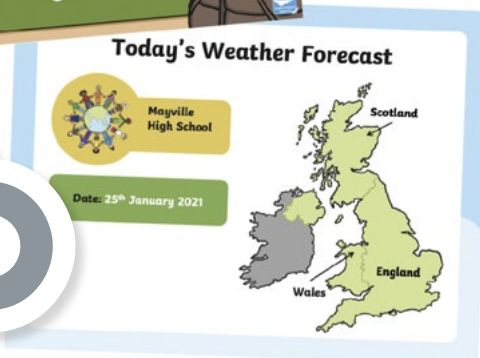
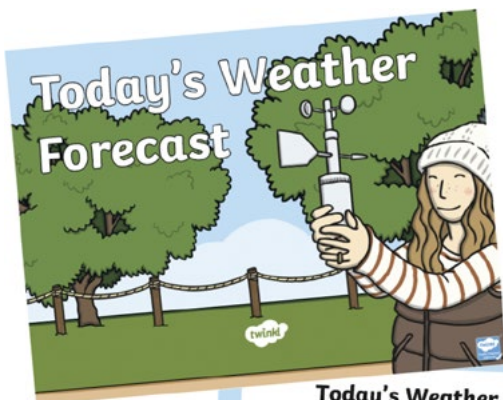


And now, we bring you

THE WEATHER



Year 1 (U1) have been learning about the weather by monitoring and recording it daily. During lockdown, they took on the role of weather reporters for the day and filmed their own forecasts.



THE IMPORTANCE OF KINDNESS*

At the time of writing this, we've just observed a minute's silence, to mark the anniversary of the start of the first lockdown. Over the past year, the coronavirus pandemic has brought grief and loss to many of our lives, whilst disrupting everyone's routine and sense of normality. Although our pupils have recently returned to on-site learning and the roadmap highlights cause for renewed optimism, there is still so much of daily life that feels far from anything resembling normal.

Much of the narrative around preserving 'normality' in education has focused on the importance of children not 'falling behind' and, of course, our online learning programme ensured that pupils continued to receive an excellent quality of education throughout the school closures. However, our approach to the return of on-site learning has been shaped by an equally important consideration for the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and their families.

We know that the return to school, welcome as it might be at the end of a year of disruption and lockdowns, may pose an entirely new set of problems, uncertainties or anxieties for children. We also know that the strategies and skills we promote now will engender a resilience in our pupils that will equip them well into the future.

In his book, *The Chimp Paradox*, psychiatrist, elite sport and Olympic performance coach, Steve Peters, uses a simple analogy to make sense of the complex workings of our minds. The rational, fact-based brain is 'human', whilst the part of our decision-making that is driven solely by emotion is our 'inner primate'. Conflict arises when the two clash or the wrong one ends up in charge. Our junior pupils recently took part in a 'Bring Your Chimp to School' day, focusing on the psychology of *The Chimp Paradox* and learning ways of managing our more impulsive behaviours.

Alongside this, we also launched 'Happy Books', to encourage children to see the positives in their day-to-day. It's a book we keep in school, in which pupils can record what makes them happy. It serves as a much-needed reminder for those days when it's all a bit much. We have increased the PSHE focus on the curriculum, in order to help develop pupils' emotional literacy. For the first few days back at school, Junior School pupils came off timetable completely, to help ease the transition.

We have introduced quiet or 'chill-out' rooms, for use during break times. These spaces are for children who might be struggling to adjust being back in a larger group. We've also created more opportunities for breaks from being inside in the afternoons, as we recognise that pupils are more likely to struggle with fatigue by this time.

Pupils are encouraged to nominate one another for Kindness Awards, which are presented during regular year-group assemblies. This is an opportunity to recognise and value the small acts of kindness and friendship that might otherwise go unnoticed.



“

Now, more than ever, wellbeing and our emotional literacy must be at the forefront of our thoughts and actions; Lockdown has affected everyone in different ways. To borrow from my favourite quote of all time – everyone is facing challenges that we may know nothing about so, if we can be anything, be kind.”

Mr Schmit, Assistant Head Junior School



Calming Sensory Bottles



Annabel's friendship boxes

“

At Mayville, the importance of educating the 'whole child' is at the forefront of what we do and, as we pull through this latest challenge, we have ensured that the adjustments we've made to our curriculum address the emotional needs of our pupils, as they reintegrate as one community.”

Ms Ross, Assistant Head Junior School



'Bring Your Chimp to School' Day & Happy Books

Throughout the whole school, time is at the heart of the activities and structures we have put in place, to help children adjust. Staff have worked tirelessly to take the time to listen, talk and coach pupils about any concerns they have about coming back to school, or indeed, what might be going on for them in their lives outside of school.

Our pastoral provision continues to be characterised by an individual child-centred approach. Through knowing our pupils well, teachers, tutors and the pastoral team are able to identify any pupils who might need additional support and are flexible in providing a helping hand. This might be referral to our school counsellor or just giving them a quiet space to take five minutes out of lessons, if needed.

On the initial return to school, we noticed that many of our senior pupils were somewhat subdued, as they readjusted to being back in the classroom environment and its dynamics – interacting with teachers and their peers in person, as opposed to online learning.

The transition gave rise to feelings of anxiety for some of our pupils, as they reacclimatised to the noise, bustle and general busyness of school. They had grown accustomed to being in a quieter environment at home. Some pupils even experienced a sensation of homesickness, after being with their families for so long. It took time to re-learn the 'norms' of school life and its daily expectations, to re-learn how to 'be' with so many other people again.

For those anxious about returning to school, staff invested a significant amount of time in talking to those individual pupils and working with them and their families (phone calls and Zoom meetings), to offer the necessary reassurance and support.

For other pupils, the return to school was characterised more by a sense of fatigue, their body clocks out of sync with the change of routine. Even though remote learning followed the school day, pupils now needed to adjust to waking earlier, having the time to get ready, pack bags and make the journey to school.

For all the excitement of being back in a 'normal' environment, seeing their teachers and friends in person, our senior pupils still need to wear masks and observe social distancing. The enjoyment of break times, being outdoors and unmasking is tempered by not being able to get close to one another, have contact or play in any way that might be considered 'normal'.

The return to school saw pupils able to enjoy a full range of extracurricular activities and clubs, including dance enrichment, orchestra, football, netball and St John Ambulance Cadets, to name but a few. Being able to return to something as close as possible to the full Mayville experience, after online learning, helped to make pupils' lives as full and as 'normal' as possible, as quickly as possible.

The first week of the Easter holidays offered pupils access to free Creative Arts and PE sessions, as we recognised that these were the activities that children missed most during online learning.

Whilst our educational provision has continued to be excellent online, we understand that some pupils may not have accessed that provision as fully as others, for whatever reason. To help these children, staff have put additional support in place, such as lunchtime and Easter holiday catch-up sessions in school.

Our current Year 11 (U5) pupils have faced their own unique set of challenges, coming back into school and taking their mocks, especially whilst being aware of the negative talk in the media and online about 'lost learning' and 'falling behind'. We have made ourselves readily available to listen to their worries and concerns about the new arrangements in place for this year's GCSEs. We have offered lots of reassurance that they are, in fact, in a strong position, not only having had excellent remote learning provision but also that they will be assessed on a more abridged version of the GCSE curriculum, in most subjects.

Senior PSHE has focused on Relationships and Health & Wellbeing. With the flexibility to adapt the curriculum, we've responded to any individual year groups' requests for what they'd like to discuss in PSHE. For example, Year 9 (U4) wanted to learn more about homophobia and so we introduced PSHE-Association accredited resources, to cover this vital aspect of RSE.

Whilst we edge closer toward a more familiar normal, we've worked imaginatively to ensure that pupils continue to receive a broad and balanced curriculum, with the wealth of educational opportunities that come from off-timetable activities, such as World Book Day and 'off-screen day' (see page 14-15). One pupil commented,

"This is one of the most fun school days I have ever had. I pray we can do this again sometime soon. This lifted all of my spirits while in quarantine."



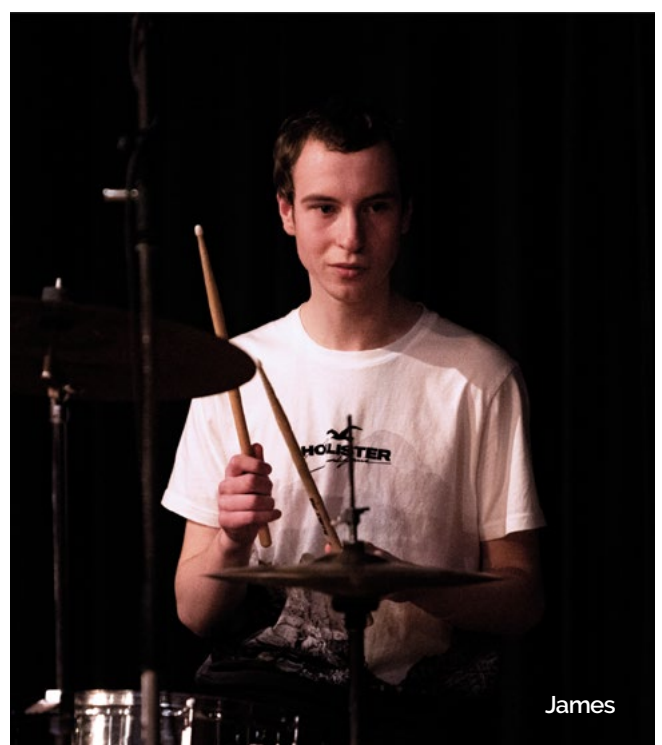
Consideration for pupils' wellbeing at Mayville goes way beyond 'hands, face, space'

A welcome return for

LIVE PERFORMANCE

YEAR 11 (U5) RSL MUSIC GROUP

On the last day of term, our Year 11 RSL Music Group performed to a small audience in Linda Owens Hall. This is the first time we've been able to stage a live performance, with any form of crowd, in over a year.





LAMDA AWARD WINNERS

INTRODUCTORY STAGE 2

Jake Pete	L3	Distinction
Laura Jeffrey	L3	Distinction

INTRODUCTORY STAGE 3

Dylan Jeffrey	U3	Distinction
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SPEAKING OF VERSE AND PROSE ENTRY

Isla Dillon-Jones	U3	Distinction
Leia Edyvane	U3	Distinction
Robin Lough	R	Distinction

SPEAKING OF VERSE AND PROSE GRADE 1

Charlie Braithwaite	L4	Distinction
Hana Ahmed	L4	Distinction
Matthew Hartridge	U4	Distinction

SPEAKING OF VERSE AND PROSE GRADE 2

Ava Banerjee	L4	Distinction
Ella Trise	L4	Distinction
Lottie Davenport	L4	Distinction
Ryan McGill	U4	Merit
Arthur Hookway	U4	Merit
Katie McGill	U4	Merit
Sarada Pillai	U4	Distinction
Adam Ahmed	L5	Distinction

SPEAKING OF VERSE AND PROSE GRADE 4

Noah Stitson	U4	Merit
Rebecca Wicks	U4	Distinction
George Hartridge	U5	Distinction

SPEAKING OF VERSE AND PROSE GRADE 5

Renee Saunders	U5	Distinction
Amelia Cox	U5	Distinction

SPEAKING OF VERSE AND PROSE GRADE 7

Matthew Wicks	Past Pupil	Distinction Silver medal
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ACTING GRADE 4

Rebecca Wicks	U4	Distinction
Jianna Mbata	U4	Distinction
Evie Morgan	U5	Distinction
Sofia-Alexia Tesfaye	U5	Distinction

These exams were held in December, to replace the ones cancelled in July 2020.

The Annual Mayville

EASTER BONNET

COMPETITION & PARADE







mayvillehighschool.com

virtual tour coming soon...



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